

THE
GREAT
AND
ABOMINABLE
CHURCH
OF THE
DEVIL

by

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MANY ARE CALLED BUT FEW ARE CHOSEN
THE MORAL BASIS OF A FREE SOCIETY
THE BOOK OF MORMON AND THE CONSTITUTION

Additions by
Hans V. Andersen, Jr.

This volume is dedicated to my wife, Shirley, who assumed far more than her share of our parental responsibilities to make this endeavor possible.

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PREFACE

Innumerable books have been written about Jesus Christ and His Church, but a book about the church of the Devil seldom if ever appears. Why is this so? The same scriptures which testify of the existence of one testify of the existence of the other. Granted the subject of Satan and evil is forbidding, distasteful, and depressing. But this alone cannot account for such an absence of interest and scholarship. Men are continually addressing themselves to the task of analyzing and trying to solve disagreeable problems such as crime, disease, ignorance, and poverty. Such ills of mankind are the source of suffering, misery, pain, and sorrow and men consider it their duty to attack such problems with their pens, analyze them, expose their causes, and offer a solution. Why should they not do the same with Satan who, the scriptures teach, is the motivating force behind all of this evil? He it is who has “sought the misery of all mankind;” who is the “father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive:” who “hath caused man to commit murder from the beginning.”

However, more astonishing than the failure of men to interest themselves in Satan is their failure to give attention to prophecies regarding his church. The prophets have predicted that in these last days that organization would completely cover the earth; have dominion among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people; entice everyone to belong to it except that few who belong to “the church of the Lamb of God;” overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries; make war against the saints and slay them; and finally be the cause of the destruction of all nations. Is such an organization worthy of our interest? Is there any problem facing mankind of greater importance? Why then the almost total lack of interest in those scriptures which testify of it?

Obviously, in this day “when the children of men shall esteem [the words of the Lord] as naught,” (Moses 1:4 1) the overwhelming majority of the people pay no attention to these scriptures because they don’t believe them. But how about those few who do? Some may have imagined that no useful purpose can be served by discussing Satan’s organization. Others may even consider it evil to do so. But let it be recognized that the prophets who wrote the scriptures did not view the matter in this light because they have discussed it at some length. It is true that there are certain practices of the devil’s organizations which they have been commanded to keep hidden, (Alma 37:27) but all which they have written, we are under obligation to know because we are commanded to “live by every word which proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God.”

It is submitted that Satan’s overwhelming success today is directly traceable to apathy and massive ignorance concerning him and his organization. The great majority of people would not join his church and participate in his plan if they were aware of what they were doing. Although the truth concerning him has been plainly manifest unto men, they receive not the light:

Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man; because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not the light.

And that wicked one cometh and taketh away light and truth, through disobedience, from the children of men, and because of the tradition of their fathers. (D&C 93:3 1, 39)

It is the “creeds of the fathers, who have inherited lies,” which are riveted upon the hearts of the children which constitute “the very mainspring of all corruption.” (D&C 123:7)

The “inherited lies” which have permitted Satan to extend his kingdom over all the earth today are principally those concerning organized activity. People don’t believe in a church of the devil. They do not believe that moral law applies to organized activity. Therefore, they have been deceived into using organizations to commit evil and destroy free agency. They do not believe that God holds them morally accountable for the actions they commit in concert with others.

To break this chain of inherited lies, parents must teach their children that God’s commandments apply to group action as well as individual action; that his negative commandments to refrain from evil group action are as important as his affirmative commandments to do good; that while it is essential to exaltation to identify and join the true Church of Christ, it is also essential to identify and reject the church of the devil.

It is submitted that the prophets have fully disclosed the identity of the devil’s church and kingdom and the nature of his plan to destroy free agency. In this book the author has under-taken to analyze some of their utterances.

—H.V.A.

A SATANIC WORLD-WIDE ORGANIZATION FORETOLD

PROPHECIES OF NEPHI AND JOHN THE REVELATOR

Students of both the Bible and the Book of Mormon have, for many years, speculated about the identity of a satanic, world-wide organization called, among other things, “THE GREAT AND ABOMINABLE CHURCH OF THE DEVIL” which prophets foresaw would cover the earth in the last days. Both Nephi, a Book of Mormon prophet, and John the Revelator were permitted to envision this monstrous evil and to record a portion of what they saw.

There is no doubt that these prophets saw and discussed the same wicked organization. Not only did they use the same names to describe it, (“Mother of Abominations,” “The Great Whore that Sitteth upon Many Waters,” etc.) but also they both were shown in the last days it would make war against the Church of the Lamb and being drunken with the blood of the saints and the prophets. (Rev. 17:6; 19:19; 1 Nephi 13:5; 14:13)

Furthermore, while making a record of what he saw, Nephi was told by the angel who was providing him with an explanation of the vision, to cease recording. The angel said, “one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb [shall].. write the remainder of these things.” (1 Nephi 14:20, 21) Nephi was told that the name of this apostle was John. (1 Nephi 14:27)

JOHN’S ACCOUNT OF THE DEVIL’S CHURCH MUTILATED

When we turn to the account of John’s vision of the devil’s church as contained in the Book of Revelations, we find it so mutilated and full of unexplained symbolism that one has great difficulty in gathering its meaning. Nephi was told that when the record of the Jews was first made it was:

plain and pure, and most precious and easy to the understanding of all men. (1 Nephi 14:23)

However,

...after they [the records of the Jews] go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the foundation of a great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away. (1 Nephi 13:26)

The succeeding verse tells why the devil’s church had corrupted the record:

And all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord, that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men. (v.27)

PROPHECIES OBSCURE AND INCOMPLETE BECAUSE OF GENTILE WICKEDNESS AND UNBELIEF

Why, one might ask, did the Lord allow this to happen? Knowing that John's account would be corrupted beyond the understanding of the people, why was Nephi commanded to cease recording his plain and undefiled account? Why was the devil's church allowed to blind our eyes by corrupting those very records upon which we must depend for an understanding of that Satanic organization? The scriptures tell us why, and the explanation is not complimentary. The Lord has deliberately permitted Satan to deceive us because of our wickedness. This is made plain in the writings of Moroni, When he was abridging the record of the Jaredites, he also was restrained from giving us Gentiles a full account of what he thought we should know. When he commenced to relate the vision given to the Brother of Jared concerning the end of the world, the Lord told him:

They [the records] shall not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord. (Ether 4:6)

Christ went on to state that it was because of our unbelief and wickedness that He was withholding from us a full account of the great prophecies concerning our day. In His explanation, He specifically mentioned that not until we repented, would the revelations written by John be unfolded:

Come unto me, O ye Gentiles, and I will show unto you the greater things, the knowledge which is hid up because of unbelief

Come unto me, O ye house of Israel, and it shall be made manifest unto you how great things the Father hath laid up for you, from the foundation of the world; and it hath not come unto you, because of unbelief

Behold when ye shall rend that veil of unbelief which doth cause you to remain in your awful state of wickedness, and hardness of heart, and blindness of mind

then shall my revelations which I have caused to be written by my servant John be unfolded in the eyes of all the people.... (Ether 4:13-16; see also D&C 6:26)

The Lord is withholding a pure and undefiled account of these visions pertaining to the devil's organization in our day until such time as we make ourselves worthy.

Nephi also commented upon our unworthiness to possess the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon records. In describing conditions "in the last days, or in the days of the Gentiles," he told us:

the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep. For behold, ye have closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; and your rulers, and the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity. (2 Nephi 27:5)

In the succeeding verses he continued thus:

And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a book, and they shall be the words of them which have slumbered

And behold the book shall be sealed; and in the book shall be a revelation from God, from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof.

Wherefore, because of the things which are sealed up, the things which are sealed shall not be delivered in the day of the wickedness and abominations of the people. Wherefore the book shall be kept from them. (2 Nephi 27:6-8, emphasis added)

According to this scripture not only are we unworthy to receive God's revelations "from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof," but our seers have been "covered" because of our iniquity.

THE WHOLE CHURCH UNDER CONDEMNATION FOR FAILURE TO HEARKEN TO THE BOOK OF MORMON

Even though many of the Book of Mormon records are being withheld, it appears that we are under condemnation because we are not studying and comprehending that which has already been given. The charge of "unbelief" made against us in the foregoing scriptures would seem to bear this out. Let us ponder the following modern revelation wherein the Lord has placed the whole Church under condemnation. He states we would remain there until we repent of our unbelief and failure to heed the messages of the Nephite scriptures:

And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief and because you have treated lightly the things you have received— Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.

And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.

And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written. (D&C 84:54-5 7)

Taken together, the above scriptures should convince us that there are some vital messages in the Book of Mormon which are addressed to us "Gentiles" which are not being heeded. Furthermore, if we fail to repent of this neglect, the succeeding verses promise that we will be punished:

That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgement to be poured out upon the children of Zion.

For shall the children of the kingdom pollute my holy land? Verily, I say unto you, Nay. (D&C 84:58-59)

The scourge referred to could be an attack by Satan's church on the Church of the Lamb, for Nephi was shown that it would:

gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God (1 Nephi 14:13)

THE NEED TO IDENTIFY THE DEVIL'S CHURCH

In spite of such predictions of a culminating conflict between the forces of good and evil, relatively few of those who consider themselves members of Christ's Church seem to concern themselves with the identity of the opposition. Such apathy may prove disastrous, because in order to prepare for battle it is essential to identify the enemy, especially if he is combined and organized. The Lord has instructed us to "Contend against no church, save it be the church of the devil." (D&C 18:20) But if we are going to contend only against the devil's church, we must be able to distinguish it from all others. If a diligent search of the Book of Mormon would reveal the exact nature of the danger which those prophets foresaw, then such a search should be made with all haste.

If a knowledge of how Satan used his organizations to destroy the Nephite and Jaredite civilizations would enable us to avoid the "scourge" and "judgement" which the Lord has decreed if we continue to ignore the Book of Mormon, such knowledge is worth any effort to obtain. The Lord has instructed his servants to set forth "clearly and understandingly the desolation of abomination in the last days." (D&C 84:117) To follow such an instruction, it is essential to identify the great and abominable organization which will cause such a desolation.

There is another compelling reason why the members of Christ's Church should be able to identify the church of the devil. There is much scriptural evidence that many of them will be deceived into joining Satan's organization, thus accepting his plan to destroy free agency. Such could hardly occur if the people understood that organization and that plan.

Before Nephi ceased recording what he saw, he made known some interesting facts about the Great and Abominable Church. Though he saw the rise of that organization before the Gentiles came upon the promised land, it was not until after the Americas were settled by them and the Book of Mormon came forth, that it assumes such terrifying proportions. It corrupts the entire earth with its awful wickedness and overwhelming power. Note from the following quotation that this monstrous evil is destined to hold dominion in every nation in the world, and everyone will belong to it, except the few who remain true to the Church of the Lamb:

And it came to pass that he [the angel] said unto me [Nephi]: Look, and behold that great and abominable church, which is the mother of abominations, whose foundation is the devil.

And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth.

And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people. (1 Nephi 14:9-11)

The above prophecy sets forth these startling facts:

1. There is on the earth in these latter days a specific, identifiable organization founded and operated by Satan which is "most abominable above all other churches."
2. This "church of the devil" will eventually control and have dominion over every nation on the face of the earth.
3. The time will come when a great division will occur and everyone will belong to the devil's church except a few who belong to the Church of the Lamb.
4. There will be a culminating war between Christ and Satan when this "whore of all the earth" will "gather together multitudes upon the face of the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God." (v. 13)

II

THE GREAT DIVISION

THE “TARES” AND “FOOLISH VIRGINS” ARE MEMBERS OF SATAN’S CHURCH

As unlikely as it may seem to those who regard themselves as members of Christ’s Church, the scriptures indicate that many will be deceived into belonging to Satan’s Great and Abominable Church also. According to the parables of the “wheat and the tares” and the “ten virgins,” when the “great division” comes, at least one-half of those who regard themselves as “faithful” members of the Lord’s Church will be classified as members of Satan’s organization. Let us examine these two parables with this possibility in mind.

Both were taught during the Lord’s ministry on earth, and are also presented in modern scripture as having application in this last dispensation. Regarding the “wheat and tares” parable, Elder James E. Talmage has said:

So important is the lesson embodied in this parable, and so assured is the literal fulfillment of its contained predictions, that the Lord has given a further explication through revelation in the current dispensation, a period in which the application is direct and immediate. (Talmage, Jesus the Christ, p. 288)

In the last days, the angels will be pleading with the Lord to allow them to reap down the fields, but he will restrain them with these words:

pluck not up the tares while the blade is yet tender (for verily your faith is weak), lest you destroy the wheat also. Therefore, let the wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest is fully ripe; then ye shall first gather out the wheat from among the fares, and after the gathering of the wheat, behold and lo, the fares are bound in bundles, and the field remaineth to be burned (D&C 86:6-7)

Another modern revelation states that these tares are indeed members of Satan’s great and abominable church:

That great church, the mother of abominations, that made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, that persecuteth the saints of God, that shed their blood—she who sitteth upon many waters, and upon the islands of the sea—behold, she is the tarès of the earth;. (D&C 88:94)

President Joseph Fielding Smith has assured us that there will be “tares” among the Church members. Said he:

There are so many influences at work to divide us asunder, right among the members of the Church, and there is going to come, one of these days in the near future, a separation of the wheat from the tares, and we are either wheat or fares. We are going to be on one side or the other. (Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, Vol.111, p. 16)

The parable of the “virgins” is perhaps even more explicit in warning Church members that Satan will ensnare many of them. We may assume that the group to which Christ referred in this parable are all “good Christians.” All of them believe in, and are looking anxiously forward to, the second coming. Each considers herself equally worthy to enter into the marriage with the bridegroom, and is waiting up even until midnight watching for the Master. Outwardly, they are indistinguishable one from another, however, at the last moment, fully one half of this “faithful” assemblage will be rejected by the Savior with these words:

Verily I say unto you, I know you not. (Matt. 25:12)

Another warning that Christ will reject “many” of those who have labored in his Church and regard themselves as worthy for the kingdom is contained in the Sermon on the Mount. Christ taught:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matt. 7:21-23)

The late President of the Church, John Taylor, commented on this scripture as follows:

We are told that, many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?’ Yet to all such will he say, ‘Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.’ You say that means the outsiders? No, it does not. Do they do many wonderful works in the name of Jesus? No.

This means you Latter-day Saints, who heal the sick, cast out devils and do many wonderful things in the name of Jesus...Hear it, ye Latter-day Saints! Hear it, ye Seventies and ye High Priests!... (D&C Commentary, pp. 462, 463)

A BOOK OF MORMON PROPHET FORESAW A “GREAT DIVISION” AMONG THE PEOPLE

The Book of Mormon also testifies of a great division. Nephi, who prophesied much concerning the Gentiles said:

For the time speedily cometh that the Lord shall cause a great division among the people, and the wicked will he destroy; and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire. (2 Nephi 30:10)

Nephi was also shown that everyone would belong either to Christ’s Church or to Satan’s:

Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth. (1 Nephi 14:10)

REASONS WHY MEMBERS OF THE LORD'S CHURCH MIGHT ALSO BELONG TO SATAN'S

In the following passage the Lord explains why fully one-half of those ten virgins who have faith in his second coming and consider themselves prepared therefore, will be rejected:

And at that day, when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins.

For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived—verily I say unto you, they shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day. (D&C 45:56-57)

If one-half of those members of the Church who are classified by the Lord as “virgins” can be deceived into belonging to Satan’s church, no member should disregard the possibility of his own deception. Neither can one take lightly the penalty for being “foolish,” which penalty is to be burned along with the rest of the wicked:

And until that hour [the day of the coming of the Son of Man] there will be foolish virgins among the wise; and at that hour cometh an entire separation of the righteous and the wicked; and in that day will I send mine angels to pluck out the wicked and cast them out into unquenchable fire. (D&C 63:54)

Some might question the justice of classifying the foolish virgins with the wicked and destroying them merely because they had allowed themselves to be deceived. However, when it is remembered that they have accepted Satan’s doctrines and supported his organization right during the time that they were members of the Lord’s Church with a prophet to guide them, this punishment is easier to understand.

Book of Mormon prophets also warned the Gentiles against deception. Nephi stated that “the humble followers of Christ...in many instances... do err because they are taught by the precepts of men.” (2 Nephi 28:14) The following verses indicate that the fault lies in hearkening unto the “precepts of men” and relying on the “arm of flesh” rather than the gift of the Holy Ghost and the power of God:

Yea, woe be unto him that hearkeneth unto the precepts of men, and denieth the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost!...

Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost. (2 Nephi 28:26, 31)

Nephi foresees that some of the prosperous ones in Zion are lulled

away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell.” (Ibid., v.21)

Still others are deceived and are “at ease in Zion” because they refuse to believe the scriptures and the prophets which teach that there is a devil:

And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell; and he saith unto them: I am no devil, for there is none—and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, from whence there is no deliverance. (Ibid., v.22)

Those who believe there is no Satan are not going to believe that he has a Great and Abominable Church on earth either. Such people could easily be led to accept those philosophies of men which are the doctrines of Satan, and thus support those organizations which teach and practice them. In the following verse, Nephi says these members of the devil’s kingdom must be “stirred up unto repentance,” or they will be “stirred up to anger, and perish:”

But behold, that great and abominable church, the whore of all the earth, must tumble to the earth, and great must be the fall thereof

For the kingdom of the devil must shake, and they which belong to it must needs be stirred up unto repentance, or the devil will grasp them with his everlasting chains, and they be stirred up to anger, and perish; (Ibid., v. 18-19)

The prophet Jacob also expressed concern about the Gentiles joining the devil’s church. Our salvation, he says, depends upon our not doing so:

And blessed are the Gentiles, they of whom the prophet [Isaiah] has written; for behold, if it so be that they shall repent and fight not against Zion, and do not unite themselves to that great and abominable church, they shall be saved;... (2 Nephi 6:12)

These scriptures, as well as many others, indicate an urgent need to identify Satan’s great church and the philosophies and precepts it teaches and practices so that those who sincerely desire to avoid the fate of the tares and the foolish virgins may do so.

Our Nation will continue to degenerate unless we read and heed the words of the God of this land, Jesus Christ, and quit building up and upholding secret combinations,...(Ensign, July 1988, p. 80)

I testify that wickedness is rapidly expanding in every segment of our society (See D&C 1:14-16; 84:49-53.) It is more highly organized, more cleverly disguised, and more powerfully promoted than ever before. Secret combinations that seek to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries is increasing its evil influence and control over America and the entire world. [See Ether 8:18-25] (Ensign, November 1988, p. 87)

THE UNIVERSAL PROBLEM OF DECEPTION

SATAN WILL DECEIVE “THE WHOLE WORLD”

If it be true that only one half of that small group designated by the Lord as “virgins” will avoid being deceived into joining the devil’s church, deception constitutes one of the gravest risks faced in this life. However, very few seem to give the problem much thought even though the scriptures are filled with warnings against it. Of course, many never read those warnings, but those who do tend to apply them to others. Consequently, indifference to the problem is quite general. Being unaware of the danger, people take no measures to defend themselves against it, and thus fall easy victims to one of Satan’s most formidable weapons.

The scriptures concerning it are numerous. Let us consider just a few. The following passage from Revelations reveals that Satan “deceiveth the whole world:”

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Revelations 12:9)

Then here are two scriptures from modern revelation which convey a similar meaning:

...for Satan is abroad in the land, and he goeth forth deceiving the nations. (D&C 52:14)

Verily, verily, I say unto you, darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people, and all flesh has become corrupt before my face. (D&C 112:23)

Even honorable people have reason to fear being misled, for among those who will inhabit the terrestrial kingdom are those,

who are honorable men of the earth, who were blinded by the craftiness of men. (D&C 76:75)

SPECIFIC WARNINGS TO MEMBERS OF CHRIST’S CHURCH

In many instances, the warnings are specifically directed to members of the Lord’s Church, of which the following are illustrative:

For in those days there shall also arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch, that, if possible, they shall deceive the very elect, who are the elect according to the covenant. (Smith, 1:22)

But ye are commanded in all things to ask of God,...that ye may not be seduced by evil spirits, or doctrines of devils, or the commandments of men; for some are of men, and others of devils. Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived....(D&C 46:7-8)

Behold, verily I say unto you, that there are many spirits which are false spirits, which have gone forth in the earth deceiving the world.

And also Satan hath sought to deceive you, that he might overthrow you. (D&C 50:2-3)

The following scripture speaks directly to those who bear the Priesthood. Note that it states that only a “few” of the “many” ordained thereto are not “walking in darkness at noonday:”

But behold, verily I say unto you, that there are many who have been ordained among you, whom I have called but few of them are chosen.

They who are not chosen have sinned a very grievous sin, in that they are walking in darkness at noon-day. (D&C 95:5-6)

A CAUSE OF DECEPTION—INHERITED LIES AND FALSE TRADITIONS

Having noted the magnitude of the danger of false beliefs, it may be of interest and profit to consider what the scriptures have, said regarding its causes. One of the chief problems is that of false traditions which are handed down from parents to children. The fact that we each enter mortality as helpless infants utterly dependent upon our parents with whom we spend so much of our early childhood, makes us highly amenable to their influence and those teachings. However, the frequency with which erroneous beliefs are perpetuated from generation to generation is indicated by the following revelation which speaks of,

the influence of that spirit which hath so strongly riveted the creeds of the fathers, who have inherited lies, upon the hearts of the children, and filled the world with confusion, and has been growing stronger and stronger, and is now the very mainspring of all corruption, and the whole earth groans under the weight of its iniquity. (D&C 123:7)

Attention is directed to the statement that this problem is “the very mainspring of all corruption.” Another scripture which speaks of the effect of false tradition is the following:

Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man; because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not the light.

And that wicked one cometh and taketh away light and truth, through disobedience, from the children of men, and because of the tradition of their fathers. (D&C 93:3 1, 39)

The failure of parents to search the scriptures inevitably leads to erroneous beliefs which are then passed on to the children as false traditions.

A CAUSE OF DECEPTION—FAILURE TO HEARKEN TO THE WORDS OF THE LORD

In the following passage, the Lord seems to be saying that everyone will be deceived who will not hearken unto his voice:

And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice. (Moses 4:4)

The prophet Nephi explained that the unbelief, wickedness and ignorance of the people was a consequence of their refusal to search and understand the knowledge given them:

And now I, Nephi, cannot say more; the Spirit stoppeth mine utterance, and I am left to mourn because of the unbelief and the wickedness, and the ignorance, and the stiffneckedness of men; for they will not search knowledge, nor understand great knowledge, when it is given unto them in plainness, even as plain as word can be. (2 Nephi 32:7)

The foregoing scriptures have special significance to those who know that the Lord has spoken to mankind and given to them “great knowledge... in plainness.” It is the people of this class who fail to search and understand revelation who will be severely condemned as the prophet Jacob has said:

But woe unto him that has the law given, yea, that has all the commandments of God, like unto us, and that transgresseth them, and that wasteth the days of his probation, for awful is his state! (2 Nephi 9:27)

Probably the most vivid scriptural portrayal of the fact that no one can escape deception without searching the scriptures, is contained in the “tree of life” vision given to both Lehi and Nephi. The central theme of that remarkable revelation is that all who come to earth must pass through “a mist of darkness; yea, even an exceeding great mist of darkness,” and no one can avoid being lost therein unless he grasps the iron rod which is “the word of God.” The angel told Nephi that the

mists of darkness are the temptations of the devil, which blindeth the eyes, and hardeneth the hearts of the children of men, and leadeth them away into broad roads, that they perish and are lost. (1 Nephi 12: 17)

Lehi was shown that even he, a prophet, was in danger; for in his vision, he became lost in a dark and dreary waste for the space of many hours and was rescued only when he fearfully pled with the Lord for guidance. The whole panorama of earth life was spread before him and he was able to see enormous multitudes pass through their entire mortal probation. He saw these great concourses of people divide themselves into four distinct groups, only one of which made it safely through the mists of darkness and stayed true to the faith. While there were actually two groups who clung to the iron rod until they reached the tree of life, one of them could not bear the mocking and taunting which is the lot of those who live righteously, and therefore, they “fell away into forbidden paths and were lost.”

A third group commenced along the pathway which led to the tree, but they faltered before reaching it because they tried to get there without holding to the iron rod. Their fate is described by Nephi in these words:

And I saw numberless concourses of people, many of whom were pressing forward, that they might obtain the path which led unto the tree by which I stood.

And it came to pass that they did come forth, and commence in the path which led to the tree.

And it came to pass that there arose a mist of darkness, insomuch that they who had commenced in the path did lose their way, that they wandered off and were lost. (1 Nephi 8:21-23)

The fourth group neither followed the path nor made any attempt to grasp the iron rod, but headed for the great and spacious building which was a representation of the wisdom and pride of the world: (1 Nephi 11:35-36)

And he [Lehi] also saw other multitudes feeling their way towards that great and spacious building.

And it came to pass that many were drowned in the depths of the fountain; [which represented the depths of hell] and many were lost from view, wandering in strange roads.

And great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building.... (1 Nephi 8:31-33)

According to this vision, Satan's deceptions take a terrible toll. Even if it were true that the four groups were all of the same size, not more than one in four can expect to follow the paths of righteousness to the end of their lives. But we cannot even assume this, for the size of the two groups which never reach the tree of life is indicated by the terms, "numberless concourses," and "great was the multitude." Let us note once more that it is failure to grasp the iron rod which makes such massive deception possible.

A CAUSE OF DECEPTION—SIN

We learn from D&C 93:39 that Satan is able to take "away light and truth" not only because of "the tradition of their fathers," but also because of "disobedience" or sin. One who is wicked is quite literally spiritually blind, and it is just as impossible for him to perceive the things of God as it is for a physically blind man to see physical objects. In his first epistle to the Corinthian Saints, Paul said:

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2:14)

In the wisdom of God, truth is withheld from those who do wickedly because to give them additional light when they are sinning against the light they already possess would curse rather than bless. Alma explained this vital truth to the wicked people of the city of Ammonihah in these words:

It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him.

And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction...(Alma 12:9-11)

Christ explained this same principle to His disciples in Jerusalem when they asked him why He taught in parables. (See Matt 13:10-15)

Certain kinds of sin are especially fatal to spiritual sight, adultery being one of them:

And verily I say unto you, as I have said before, he that looketh on a woman to lust after her, or if any shall commit adultery in their hearts, they shall not have the Spirit, but shall deny the faith and shall fear. (D&C 63:16)

Pride is another sin which renders one incapable of acquiring truths from God:

and the wise, and the learned, and they that are rich, who are puffed up because of their learning, and their wisdom, and their riches— yea, they are they whom he [God] despiseth; and save they shall cast these things away, and consider themselves fools before God, and come down in the depths of humility, he will not open unto them. (2 Nephi 9:42)

WHY SALVATION AND EXALTATION ARE IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S LAWS

Let us consider why it is that ignorance of God's laws is fatal to salvation or exaltation. These goals, like all others, may be reached only by compliance with certain immutable, inexorable laws. But no one can consciously obey a law without knowing what that law is, and no one can obtain this knowledge without going to God, the Source of all truth. There may be those who doubt the reign of inviolable law in the moral or religious realm, and because of such lack of faith and understanding, they may be deceived into assuming there is no need to learn and obey any particular commandments to attain salvation. Indeed, this may be one of the main deceptions practiced by Satan upon those who never seek to grasp the iron rod. It may be worthwhile to briefly consider a few points which argue for the existence of spiritual law.

THE REIGN OF LAW AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE USE OF INTELLIGENCE

Civilized man has learned that he lives in a universe governed by unchanging physical law. If he desires to accomplish any result whatsoever, he knows that he must discover and precisely obey those laws upon which the result depends. This reign of law in the physical world is not questioned by intelligent men. Scientists, as well as others, have proven over and over again the unvarying nature of the rules which govern changes relating to energy and matter such as the laws of gravity, electricity, and thermodynamics. All reliable evidence proves the existence of immutable laws in the physical world, and nothing man has ever done or observed has disproved their existence; therefore, there is general agreement on this matter among those who are informed.

Logical minds also agree on the fact that the existence of law is indispensable to the use of intelligence. A dictionary definition of intelligence is:

The ability to apprehend the interrelationships of presented facts in such a way as to guide action toward a desired goal.

Yet no one can work toward any goal unless he can foresee the results of his actions, and no one can foresee the results of his actions unless laws exist which assure that the same results will follow the same causes. From this we must conclude that intelligent conduct is possible only in the presence of law. Only when a person can predict the consequences of what he does can he "guide action toward a desired goal." Where law prevails and is understood, one is able to anticipate the results which will flow from any given course of conduct, and thus he can choose that course which will accomplish the goal he seeks.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to visualize an environment wherein law does not exist, but if such were possible, chaos would reign. Nothing could be depended upon to happen the same way twice. Past events and conditions would bear no relation to occurrences in the future. One could not survive under such conditions. He could not even feed and clothe himself. He could never work toward a goal because he could never know what to do to accomplish it. Knowledge, judgement, foresight, reason, memory, and all other qualities of the mind would be of no avail. In the absence of law, intelligent conduct would be impossible and intelligence unusable.

Obedience is the first law of intelligent existence. Anyone who allows himself to be deceived into assuming that there is no need to obey specific laws in some particular field such as religion or morality has in effect concluded that it is impossible for anyone to reach a goal in that field. Man is continually striving to bring about change; but every change occurs in strict accordance with natural law. Therefore, to produce any desired change, those laws which govern its occurrence must be discovered and obeyed. This constitutes the purpose of intelligent life. To attain goals in the spiritual realm, obedience to law is as necessary as in the physical. The Lord has assured us that this is so:

There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated— And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated (D&C 130:20-21)

We must also conclude that to obtain the full benefits of compliance, obedience must be precise and complete. If one complies only partially or imperfectly, he may expect no more than a partial or an imperfect result, because we have been told:

*For I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance; (D&C 1:31)
Broad is the gate, and wide the way that leadeth to the deaths; and many there are that go in thereat, because they receive me not, neither do they abide in my law. (D&C 132:25)*

One final comment regarding the reign of law is that it applies to all people without any exceptions. God is just; He is no respecter of persons; He will not play favorites even if He could. For anyone to attain a specific goal, exact compliance with law is essential. We are told:

*For he who is not able to abide the law of a celestial kingdom cannot abide a celestial glory.
And he who cannot abide the law of a terrestrial kingdom cannot abide a terrestrial glory.
(D&C 88:22-23)*

In reaching these hard and fast conclusions regarding the inviolable nature of laws, one should not lose sight of the fact that repentance and the atonement of Christ are among them. While every violation of the laws of God inevitably results in suffering, it is not inevitable that the violators do the suffering if there is seasonable repentance and a reliance on the atonement: In a manner which is difficult to comprehend, the law of God's mercy operates to permit One to suffer for the transgressions of all.

GOD'S LAWS ARE OF TWO KINDS—THOU SHALT, AND THOU SHALT NOT

When Satan fails to deceive a person into believing that there are no specific laws governing salvation and exaltation, we then might expect him to try to mislead concerning what those laws are. As a starting point in our discussion of the Lord's laws, let us observe that they are of two distinct kinds:

1. Those things we must do to obtain salvation and exaltation, and
2. Those things we must not do.

The things we are commanded not to do, Satan urges us to do. It is just as essential for us to learn and obey God's negative commandments forbidding evil, as it is to learn and obey His affirmative commandments to do good. The stated purpose of the fall was that men might become as Gods knowing "good and evil." (Moses 4:11, 28) Had Adam and Eve not partaken of the forbidden fruit,

they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. (2 Nephi 2:23)

This scripture appears to state that it is impossible for one to know good unless he also knows evil, and that man would be incapable of either understanding or doing good unless he also understood the nature of evil and the necessity of avoiding it.

Let us observe that the Lord's commandments have always dealt with the commission of evil as well as good. The plates given to Moses on Sinai contained not only the affirmative commandments to worship God, keep the Sabbath, and honor parents; but also the negative commandments to refrain from murder, adultery, theft, falsehood, and envy. In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord told us not only to love our fellow man, pray, forgive, and be charitable; but he also forbade anger, lustful desires, hypocrisy, and laying up treasures on earth. The Word of Wisdom specifies not only some of those physical substances which are good for the body, but also some which are harmful.

THE NECESSITY OF KNOWING SATAN'S PLAN AS WELL AS THE LORD'S

The scriptures contain numerous statements concerning Satan and evil which we are under obligation to study and learn if we obey the commandment to "live by every word which proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God." (D&C 98:11) Since God is omniscient, He knows evil as well as good, and if we are going to become "as gods knowing good and evil," we must be instructed in both.

A failure to learn about Satan's plan for man here on earth would be fatal to the full exercise of free agency. The reason for this lies in the fact that in the final analysis free agency is the opportunity to choose between good and evil. To intelligently make such a choice one must understand the alternatives—both of them. To the extent one is ignorant of these alternatives, to that same extent he has not made a complete choice. Until a person understands Satan's plan, he can never be certain he does not believe in it and is not helping to carry it out.

SATAN UNDERTAKES TO KEEP HIMSELF AND HIS PLAN HIDDEN FROM MAN

Everyone who has been permitted to come to earth and partake of mortality has presumably rejected Satan's plan in the pre-earth life. If he is able to get us to accept it here, he must use deception. His great success among men lies in keeping himself and his plan hidden. That he would succeed in doing this in these latter days was predicted by Nephi who wrote:

And behold, others he [Satan] flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell; and he saith unto them: I am no devil, for there is none—and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, from whence there is no deliverance. (2 Nephi 28:22)

Specific instances of his attempts to keep himself and his works hidden are recorded in the scriptures. One such case involved the removal from the Bible of the record of an encounter between Moses and Satan. We know of this from the Pearl of Great Price which tells us of the event:

And it came to pass that Moses began to fear exceedingly; and as he began to fear, he saw the bitterness of hell. Nevertheless, calling upon God, he received strength, and he commanded saying: Depart from me, Satan,... (Moses 1:20)

This account was originally included in Moses' writings, but as the following verse indicates, through Satan's influence it was removed:

And now of this thing Moses bore record; but because of wickedness it is not had among the children of men. (Ibid., v. 23)

It will also be remembered that Satan had a hand in corrupting the records which disclosed the nature of his Great and Abominable Church.

On a number of occasions, the Lord has permitted His prophets to have personal contacts with the Adversary and then bear record of such. The prophet Joseph Smith experienced Satan's awful power and described it for us in detail. (Smith 2:15-16) A record of Lucifer's efforts to tempt the Lord is also provided us. In the tremendous vision of the three degrees of glory, the Lord showed Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon a vision of Satan and "the sufferings of those with whom he made war and overcame." Thus, while the Lord has consistently undertaken to acquaint men with the existence of Satan and his terrible power, the evil one has just as consistently tried to destroy those records which testify of him, and keep himself concealed.

THE LORD'S PROMISE TO MAKE KNOWN SATAN'S OPERATIONS

Right from the beginning, Satan has tried to keep his plan hidden from view also. Thus, we learn from the Pearl of Great Price, (but not from the Bible which has been tampered with and many plain and precious things removed therefrom), that Satan had secret combinations among the antediluvians. The Book of Mormon, which has also come to us in its purity, testifies most extensively of Satan's secret operations among both the Jaredites and the Nephites. The Lord has always disclosed to his people who serve Him the nature of Satan's works, so that they need not be deceived into accepting his doctrines. And let us note that the scriptures contain a promise—at least to those who come upon this chosen land—that God will reveal Satan's operations to those of His people who are righteous. This promise is contained in the Book of Mormon. Let us consider it.

When Alma was turning over to his son, Helaman, custody of the Nephite and Jaredite records, he gave him some special instructions concerning the twenty-four plates containing the Jaredite history. Regarding them, he said:

And now, I will speak unto you concerning those twenty-four plates, that ye keep them, that the mysteries and the works of darkness, and their secret works, or the secret works of those people who have been destroyed, may be made manifest unto this people; yea, all their murders, and robbings, and their plunderings, and all their wickedness and abominations, may be made manifest unto this people; yea, and that ye preserve these interpreters. (Alma 37:21)

Alma also explained that the Lord had made special provision for disclosing to his prophets the secret operations of Satan:

For behold, the Lord saw that his people began to work in darkness, yea, work secret murders and abominations...

And the Lord said: I will prepare unto my servant Gazelem, a stone, which shall shine forth in darkness unto light, that I may discover unto my people who serve me, that I may discover unto them the works of their brethren, yea, their secret works, their works of darkness, and their wickedness and abominations. (Ibid., v. 22-23)

And then, through this great prophet, Alma, the Lord made this promise to all who should thereafter come upon this land:

I will bring forth out of darkness unto light all their secret works and their abominations; and except they repent I will destroy them from off the face of the earth; and I will bring to light all their secrets and abominations, unto every nation that shall hereafter possess the land (Ibid., v. 25)

This promise recalls to mind a modern day scriptural injunction which reads as follows:

Therefore, that we should waste and wear out our lives in bringing to light all the hidden things of darkness, wherein we know them; and they are truly manifest from heaven— These should then be attended to with great earnestness.

Let no man count them as small things.... (D&C 123:13-15)

There is also the latter-day commandment to the Lord's servants to enlighten the people regarding the desolation of abominations:

And verily I say unto you, the rest of my servants, go ye forth as your circumstances shall permit... setting forth clearly and understandingly the desolation of abomination in the last days. (D&C 84:117)

It is easy to conclude from these instructions that the Lord desires that His people of this dispensation have an understanding of Satan's works among them. Still another scripture from the Doctrine and Covenants tells us to:

Contend against no church save it be the church of the devil. (D&C 18:20)

One can obey the above directives only by gaining an understanding of Satan's organized activities on earth today.

Let us note in passing that there are certain things about Satan's operations and methods which the Lord has commanded His prophets not to make known to the people. In the following verse, Alma tells Helaman the nature of the information which was for the eyes of the prophets only:

And now, my son, I command you that ye retain all their oaths, and their covenants, and their agreements in their secret abominations; yea, and all their signs and their wonders ye shall keep from this people, that they know them not, lest peradventure they should fall into darkness also and be destroyed (Alma 37:27)

We might also observe that while it is essential that man learn of evil, he must beware that such knowledge fills him only with abhorrence, disgust, and sorrow. He should learn of it in order that he may reject and oppose it. If one ponders wickedness with pleasure, savors it and derives satisfaction therefrom, he is subjecting himself to the influence of Satan. The Savior has recommended in the Sermon on the Mount that we include within our prayers this petition: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." This would suggest that we continually try to remove ourselves from evil influences and from tempting circumstances.

SATAN'S OVERWHELMING SUCCESS IN KEEPING HIMSELF AND HIS OPERATIONS HIDDEN

The fact that so very few seem to have any fear of being deceived into believing in Satan's plan or belonging to his organization is in itself evidence of his overwhelming success in keeping himself and his operations secret. Those who do interest themselves in the prophecies of John and Nephi have difficulty agreeing among themselves upon the identity of the devil's church or even finding a "church" which fits the description given of it in the scriptures. One of the names used by John to describe Satan's organization was "Mystery," perhaps to indicate that its identity would not be known.

But whether the great deception being practiced is due to inherited lies, wickedness and unbelief, or a failure to search the scriptures, the Lord still has promised those who serve Him that He will,

bring to light all their secrets and abominations, unto every nation that shall here after possess the land (Alma 37:25)

In reliance on this promise, the members of the Lord's Church should be justified in assuming that if they live worthily the Lord will reveal through His living prophets that knowledge which will enable them to identify the devil's church.

Before turning to the words of the living prophets for information regarding organized evil today, let us consider the Lord's plan of providing free agency for His children and note the organizations which He uses to accomplish this purpose—the family, the Church, and government. Then let us consider those organizations Satan might most effectively use to defeat the Lord's plan. This should enable us to understand more easily what the living prophets are saying.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life , Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. (Declaration of Independence)

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury,...nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation. (U.S. Constitution, 5th Amendment)

IV

THE ELEMENTS OF FREEDOM

AN ACT MAY BE CLASSIFIED AS GOOD OR EVIL ACCORDING TO ITS EFFECT UPON FREE AGENCY

If Satan is to successfully deceive the world he must do so regarding (1) The Lord's plan for providing free agency, and (2) his own plan for destroying it. The central issue of the conflict between Christ and Satan is over the free agency of man. If we are to avoid being deceived, we must have a clear understanding of this fact and also of the means and methods by which these opposing forces are trying to accomplish their purposes. We must not only know the Lord's plan and how He is trying to effectuate it, but also Satan's plan and how he intends to put it into operation. In order to know what the Lord's plan includes we must know what it excludes and this means knowing the plan of Lucifer.

The scriptures inform us that the Lord's great purpose with His children is to make them free that they may have joy. In opposition thereto, Satan's aim is to enslave man, thereby making him miserable. There are numerous statements of the prophets such as the following which announce these truths:

Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great mediation of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself (2 Nephi 2:27)

This war over free agency commenced in the pre-earth life as the Lord revealed through Moses:

Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down; (Moses 4:3)

The same contest continues here on earth. When Satan was cast out of heaven, he and his followers came here to induce the two-thirds of God's children who rejected him there to accept the same plan here. Since both Satan and Christ carry out their purposes through man, we can classify an act as good or evil on the basis of the intent of the actor to preserve or destroy freedom. The late President David O. McKay stated that whether an act is committed by an individual or a group, it may be classified as good or evil depending upon how it affects free agency:

References in the scriptures show that this principle of free agency is (1) essential to man's salvation; and (2) may become a measuring rod by which the actions of men, of organizations, and of nations may be judged. (Era, Feb. 1962, p.86)

If all of the “actions of men, of organizations, and of nations” may be classified as righteous or wicked according to their effect upon freedom, then the only way Satan can deceive us regarding the distinction between his plan and the Lord’s is by confusing us regarding what acts preserve and what acts destroy freedom. This truth provides a single, easily-applied test which may be used to avoid deception.

In order to apply this test proposed by President McKay and the scriptures to which he had reference, let us analyze free agency by noting those possessions which are indispensable to its exercise, and then we will be in a position to classify any act as good or evil depending upon whether the purpose of the actor is to preserve, protect, and provide these possessions on the one hand, or destroy them on the other.

THE FOUR ELEMENTS OF FREE AGENCY

Those four possessions, without which it is impossible to exercise freedom or accomplish our purposes here on earth, are as follows:

1. Life, with some degree of physical and mental health and strength;
2. Freedom from the restraint or coercion of others;
3. Knowledge of laws;
4. The right and control of property.

Each of these possessions is indispensable to the achievement of any purpose whatsoever. It is most obvious that unless a person possesses some degree of physical and mental health and strength, he is incapable of exercising freedom. It is equally apparent that if he is subject to coercion or restraint, he is not free to achieve his own purposes. If he is being coerced or restrained, he is fulfilling the purposes of those using the compulsion rather than his own.

It is also easily demonstrated that without knowledge of truth, it is quite impossible for a person to achieve his goals. Law reigns supreme in the universe and no purpose can be attained without complying with that law upon which the desired result depends. But no one can knowingly obey a law of which he is ignorant, therefore, knowledge of law is another indispensable element of freedom. Or as the scriptures put it:

It is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance. (D&C 131:6)

In connection with our discussion of knowledge as an element of freedom, we should take note of the following scripture:

Wherefore, the Lord God gave unto man that he should act for himself Wherefore, man could not act for himself save it should be that he was enticed by the one or the other. (2 Nephi 2:16)

It might be appropriate to list “enticement” as a separate element of freedom because the above scripture states that it is essential in order for man to make a choice. However, it might also be properly classified as part of the element of knowledge since, when Christ and those doing His work “entice” one to live righteously, they do so by teaching truths and pointing out the benefits to be derived from living them. On the other hand, when Satan and his servants entice, they do so by suppressing and coloring the truth, thereby inducing the victim to act contrary to his best interests. In this sense, enticement consists of the use of truth and error to influence behavior and, therefore, might properly be considered as part of the knowledge element.

THE RIGHT AND CONTROL OF PROPERTY AS AN ELEMENT OF FREEDOM

The fourth element mentioned—the right and control of property— requires a more elaborate treatment than the other three because the necessity of this possession is not as easily recognized. Satan has been enormously successful in deceiving the world into believing that freedom may be preserved without it. However an accurate understanding of it and its relationship to the other three elements will demonstrate that without this possession, there can be no free agency on earth.

Life depends upon access to such things as food, clothing, and shelter; therefore, unless one can acquire these forms of property, his very existence ceases. Thus, at the outset we have demonstrated that property is just as essential to the exercise of freedom as life itself. If a person is deprived of freedom to control the fruits of his labors and is forced to remain dependent upon others for sustenance, he is essentially their slave because he is subject to their control. He will do nearly anything his provider commands merely to stay alive. As Alexander Hamilton expressed it:

A Power over a man’s subsistence amounts to a power over his will. (Federalist #79)

To be free then, one must be able to provide himself with those things upon which life depends. True it is that we all come into this world owning the same—nothing. During infancy and childhood, we are dependent upon our parents or others for our support. However, if the right and control of property is protected, we may, as we grow to maturity, take of the plentiful raw materials and energy about us, and through the efforts of our mind and body fashion these into consumable products thus freeing ourselves from dependence upon others. On the other hand if the right of private property is denied, we can never escape from our dependence upon, and subservience to, those who control the physical necessities of life, thus preventing us from becoming independent.

A second reason why the right and control of property is essential to the exercise of freedom is that property is the means to all ends. We may define freedom as the power and opportunity to achieve one’s goals. But no goal of any consequence can be achieved unless one is free to use property to aid him in reaching it. With property, we build our homes and support families therein; we acquire a farm, an office, a factory, machinery and tools and enter the occupation of our choice; we construct churches and exercise freedom of religion; we obtain a printing press, a lecture hall, a radio or TV station and exercise freedom of press and speech; we gain an education by using property to support us while we learn and pay those who teach us. Not one of these freedoms can be exercised without the right and control of property.

Still a third reason why the right and control of property is essential to the exercise of freedom is to enable one to hire the services of others. Through uniting the efforts of many, one may accomplish purposes completely beyond his own limited abilities. Only when one can employ the skill, knowledge, and experience of others and coordinate their efforts toward a common goal, can he accomplish miracles in the production and distribution of goods and services. While there may be other inducements which will procure cooperation, the offer to share one's possessions has proven to be the most effective.

ECONOMIC FREEDOM LIES AT THE BASE OF ALL LIBERTIES

A man's property is his life. It is what he spends his productive life to obtain and it is that with which he sustains life. It is also his liberty; he uses it to achieve his every goal; it is the means to the ends he seeks; it is the limiting factor in his dreams and ambitions. Property is the fruit of labor and naturally belongs to that person whose efforts created it. When you take from a person his property, you take from him his life—that part of his life he spent acquiring it. You also deprive him of his liberty—that portion of his liberty he would exercise were he permitted to retain it. It is most obvious that without the right of private property, the other elements of freedom—life, liberty, and knowledge—could not exist or would be useless. Indeed, all four of these possessions are mutually dependent one upon another to such a degree that if any one is missing, the other three are unusable. The late President David O. McKay recognized this important fact in the following statement:

The fostering of full economic freedom lies at the base of our liberties. Only in perpetuating economic freedom can our social, political and religious liberties be represented... (Church News, March 12, 1952)

The fact that the four elements of freedom are mutually dependent one upon another is of utmost importance to Satan's plan, because all he needs to do to achieve his purpose of destroying free agency is to abolish just one of them. Having done this, he has achieved success. All he needs to do to deceive us into joining his efforts is to convince us that any one of these elements is unnecessary. That he has been largely successful in deceiving the world into believing that the right of the individual to own and control the fruits of his labors should be abolished should be apparent to everyone.

AN ACT IS GOOD OR EVIL DEPENDING UPON WHETHER ITS PURPOSE IS TO PRESERVE OR DESTROY THE ELEMENTS OF FREEDOM

After having listed the possessions necessary to the exercise of free agency, we are able to recognize more clearly the truth of President McKay's statement that "the actions of men, of organizations, of nations" may be classified as good or evil depending upon their effect upon free agency. Let us observe that the intentional and unjustified destruction of any one of the elements of freedom has always been regarded as evil and punished as a crime by moral man.

The taking or injuring of human life is condemned as murder, mayhem, assault, and battery. The denial of human liberty is called slavery or false imprisonment. The intentional perversion of the truth is known as lying. The taking or destruction of the property of another is known as theft, burglary, arson, malicious destruction, etc. -

On the other hand, those intentions and acts which have always been considered good by moral man have the effect of providing, preserving, and protecting these elements. Here are some examples of acts considered good:

1. Parents provide bodies for children and rear them to maturity; the good Samaritan preserves life by acts of kindness.
2. The liberation or emancipation of slaves.
3. The teaching of truth.
4. The production of wealth and the charitable act of sharing it with others.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to think of any good act which does not provide or protect an element of freedom, or to think of any evil act which does not have the opposite effect. This is convincing evidence that the test proposed by President McKay for distinguishing between good and evil is valid.

THE USE OF ORGANIZATIONS TO PRESERVE OR DESTROY FREE AGENCY

To gain a more complete understanding of the Lord's plan of providing free agency, it is necessary to recognize that his principal method of doing his work is through organizations. Everyone recognizes that in unity there is strength and that organized effort is infinitely more effective in achieving goals than is individual effort. Not only is coordinated, cooperative activity more efficient and productive, but men also derive their joy in working with and for others. There are three organizations—the family, church and government—through which the Lord provides his children with the four elements of freedom. Let us note which elements are provided by which organizations.

THE FUNCTION OF THE FAMILY IN PROVIDING THE ELEMENTS OF FREEDOM

One of the first commandments given to man was that he should form the family unit and multiply and replenish the earth. Through the family, the most basic organization of society, the Lord has designed to provide His children with the first element of freedom—life. Not only is it the means by which children should be brought into mortality, but it is also the principal organization through which God has commanded us to provide two other elements of freedom—knowledge and property.

Both the training of children, as well as providing them with sustenance until they become of age, are primarily the duties of the family unit. A failure on the part of parents to properly teach their children will result in the sin being placed upon their heads. (D&C 68:25; 2 Nephi 4:6) The scriptures also tell us that “all children have claim upon their parents for their maintenance until they are of age,” and “if any provide not for his own...he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” (D&C 83:4; 1 Tim.5:8) If a child becomes economically independent before he marries, he may provide for himself outside the family organization, but the plan of the Lord is for the family unit to labor cooperatively together to provide the necessities of life for its members. It might be noted that under the Patriarchal order, the family organization also functioned in the capacity of government.

THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH IN PROVIDING THE ELEMENTS OF FREEDOM

The primary purpose of the Lord's Church is to aid the family in carrying out its purposes. It serves the family by providing divine guidance and instruction. Additional teaching, training, and development are offered, and missionary and genealogical work are undertaken. The sealing power to make the family an eternal unit is also available through it. And finally when the family unit is incapable of caring for the physical needs of its members, the Church stands ready to render supplemental aid. Under the plan of the United Order, the Church organization has certain responsibilities for determining stewardships and handling surpluses. Thus between the family and the Church, the three elements of freedom—life, knowledge, and property are provided.

THE FUNCTION OF GOVERNMENT IN PROVIDING THE ELEMENTS OF FREEDOM

It is the duty of government to protect the elements of freedom by punishing those who intentionally and without justification commit crimes against them. In doing this it also protects the family and the Church in performing their functions. The Lord has declared that His purpose in establishing government is the protection of freedom. When He caused “the laws and constitution of the people” of the United States to be established, His avowed purpose in doing so was:

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

In another revelation where He was discussing the constitutional laws of the land He made this comment:

I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law also maketh you free. (D&C 98:8)

If the Lord's purpose in establishing governments is to provide his children with free agency, we can be certain that He will deeply concern Himself with this institution because free agency is the key to the entire plan of life and salvation. In fact, without that freedom which only government can provide, neither the family nor the Church can function. The Lord could not restore His gospel to earth in these latter days without first establishing a government which guaranteed freedom of worship, speech, press, and the right and control of property. It would have been futile to have attempted to organize it in a nation which denied these rights. Christ, in noting the necessity of making the Gentiles in the Americas a free people so that the Book of Mormon could be brought forth, said:

For it is wisdom in the Father that they [the Gentiles] should be established in this land, and be set up as a free people by the power of the Father, that these things [the Book of Mormon] might come forth from them unto a remnant of your seed... (3 Nephi 21:4)

WE BELIEVE THAT GOVERNMENTS WERE INSTITUTED OF GOD

It is probably true that very few people regard government as an organization of the Lord, however, Latter-day Saints who accept their scriptures are not in doubt about the matter, since those scriptures state:

We believe that governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man; and that he holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them,... (D&C 134:1)

It is also probably true that many Latter-day Saints do not realize the extent to which the Lord has involved Himself in political affairs throughout history, not only in causing governments to be established, but also in choosing political rulers and revealing those laws He desires enforced.

These facts are so important to the subject of this book that it seems appropriate at this point to consider some of those cases in which the Lord has given guidance in the affairs of government.

In recognizing God as the source of their rights, the Founding Fathers declared Him to be the ultimate authority for their basis of law. This led them to the conviction that people do not make law but merely acknowledge preexisting law, giving it specific application. The Constitution was conceived to be such an expression of higher law. And when their work was done, Madison wrote: "It is impossible for the man of pious reflection not to perceive in it a finger of that Almighty hand which has been so frequently and signally extended to our relief in the critical stage of the revolution." (The Federalist, no. 37)

*This then, is the ingenious and inspired document created by these good and wise men for the benefit and blessings of future generations. We are the beneficiaries of their work, and we owe a great debt of gratitude to them and to our God who led them in their task. (President Ezra Taft Benson, [1986] *The Constitution, A Heavenly Banner* p.23, 24)*

THE LORD'S INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICAL AFFAIRS

POLITICAL SYSTEMS ESTABLISHED UNDER THE LORD'S DIRECTION

The first form of government established was "Patriarchal," and the following scripture indicates that it was set up under the direction of the Lord:

Now the first government of Egypt was established by Pharaoh, the eldest son of Egyptus, the daughter of Ham, and it was after the manner of the government of Ham, which was patriarchal Pharaoh, being a righteous man established his kingdom and judged his people wisely and justly all his days, seeking earnestly to imitate that order established by the fathers in the first generations, in the days of the first patriarchal reign, even in the reign of Adam, and also of Noah, his father... (Abraham 1:25-26)

The second form of government mentioned in the scriptures was the one established through Moses when he led the Children of Israel out of Egypt. Although it was called a theocracy because of the direct and continuous control exercised by the Lord over its activities, those administering the civil affairs and rendering judgments concerning disputes and infractions of the law were called judges. The Israelites continued under this government until the days of the prophet Samuel when they demanded a king. The Lord, after warning them that this was unwise, instructed Samuel to accede to their request. Thereafter, the people lived under the monarchal system until the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were destroyed.

Turning to the Book of Mormon, we find that both the Nephites and the Jaredites adopted a monarchal system of government upon first coming to the promised land, even though their prophets objected in both instances. Nephi's record says:

And it came to pass that they [the people] would that I should be their king. But I, Nephi, was desirous that they should have no king; nevertheless, I did for them according to that which was in my power. (2 Nephi 5: 18)

The adoption of a king among the Jaredites is told in these words:

And it came to pass that the people desired of them [Jared and his brother] that they should anoint one of their sons to be a king over them.

And now behold, this was grievous unto them. And the brother of Jared said unto them: Surely this leadeth into captivity.

But Jared said unto his brother: Suffer them that they may have a king....

And it came to pass that... Orihah was anointed to be king over the people. (Ether 6:22-24, 27)

While the Jaredites continued under a monarchical form of government until they were destroyed, the Nephites, after about five hundred years of king rule, were directed by the Lord to adopt a government called the “reign of the judges.” (Mosiah Ch. 29) Under this system the people chose their own political leaders rather than having the right to the throne descend from father to son as was the case under the monarchical system.

Modern revelation tells us that the Lord established the United States Constitutional form of government by the hands of wise men whom He raised up for this very purpose. (D&C 10 1:77, 80)

POLITICAL RULERS SELECTED BY THE LORD

The scriptures state that when His people were righteous, the Lord hand-picked their political leaders. The Lord’s selection of Moses as prophet, lawgiver, and judge over the Children of Israel needs no documentation. According to the following scripture, his successor was also chosen by the Lord:

And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses. (Deut. 34:9)

Upon Joshua’s death, the Lord continued to indicate who should serve as judges. Sometimes, the people would accept these judges and at other times reject them:

Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods...

And when the Lord raised them up judges, then the Lord was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge... (Judges 2:16-18)

When the people rejected the counsel of the prophet Samuel and demanded a king, the Lord chose first Saul, (1 Sam. 9:17), then David (1 Sam. 16:1), and then Solomon. (1 Chron. 22:9) Eventually, their kings became wicked and unworthy to receive divine guidance. Nevertheless, the Lord continued to chastise them through His prophets down to the end of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

Throughout most of their history, the Nephites had prophets as their political rulers. Nephi was chosen by the Lord to be a ruler, (2 Nephi 5:19), as were the kings, Benjamin (Mosiah 2:11) and Mosiah. (Mosiah 2:30) When, at the end of king Mosiah’s reign, the Lord gave the people the freedom to elect their judges and governors, they chose prophets like Alma, Helaman, Nephi, and Lachoneus. In fact, the following scripture indicates that the people also followed the custom of choosing prophets as their military leaders:

Now it was the custom among all the Nephites to appoint for their chief captains, (save it were in their times of wickedness) some one that had the spirit of revelation and also prophecy; therefore, this Gidgiddoni was a great prophet among them, as also was the chief judge [Lachoneus]. (3 Nephi 3:19)

THE LORD'S INTEREST IN POLITICAL LEADERS IN THIS LAST DISPENSATION

In these latter days, the Lord favored the Gentiles on this chosen land, not only by instituting their laws and Constitution, but also by giving them as their first political rulers the same wise men he had raised up to establish their government. Many of the men who sat in the constitutional convention and signed the Declaration of Independence served in the federal and state governments either as presidents, supreme court justices, legislators, or governors. They exerted a powerful influence in the political affairs of the nation by interpreting the Constitution as well as by executing the laws.

Upon establishing His Church and raising up a prophet through whom He could speak, the Lord directed His people to continue to choose honest and wise men for political leaders. One of the revelations says:

Nevertheless, when the wicked rule the people mourn.

Wherefore, honest men and wise men should be sought for diligently, and good men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise whatsoever is less than these cometh of evil. (D&C 98:9-10)

This was similar to the instruction the Nephites received when they were given the franchise to elect their judges:

we will newly arrange the affairs of this people, for we will appoint wise men to be judges, that will judge this people according to the commandments of God. (Mosiah 29:11)

In the early days of the Church, its members undertook to heed the Lord's counsel. They elected their prophet, Joseph Smith, as mayor of Nauvoo and were running him for president of the United States when he was murdered. After coming to Utah, Brigham Young was supported by the people as governor of the Utah Territory, and it was common practice to elect Church leaders to responsible positions in the territorial legislature.

THE LORD HAS REVEALED THOSE CIVIL LAWS HE DESIRES GOVERNMENTS TO ENFORCE

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS GIVEN AS CIVIL LAWS

It is surprising to some to learn that the Lord has provided man with a set of civil laws for the protection of freedom, and commanded that they not be altered. The first record we have of the nature of these laws is the Ten Commandments. While they are generally regarded as merely "religious" laws, violation of which will bring punishment only in the hereafter, the Old Testament shows that these were also the laws of the land and were enforced as such.

For example, the penalty for such crimes as murder and adultery was death. (Exodus 21:12; Lev. 20:10) Theft was punishable by compelling the criminal to pay the victim several times the value of the item stolen. (Exodus 22:1-2) The penalty for bearing false witness was as follows:

And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother;

Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother... (Deut. 19:18-19)

The penalties prescribed for violation of the laws were called “judgments” by the scriptures. They were given to Moses with the laws (Exodus 21:1) and were listed in some detail. Moses read both the law and the penalties to the people who accepted them and entered into a covenant with the Lord to be governed by both. (Exodus 24:3, 7, 8) This covenant, which was also made by the succeeding generation, (Deut. 5:1-3) was meant to be binding upon the posterity of the Children of Israel forever. (Deut. 29:29; Malachi 4:4; 3 Nephi 25:4) Moses wrote the law and delivered it unto the priests of the sons of Levi, saying:

At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles,

When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. (Deut. 31:10-11)

As long as the Israelites retained their status as self-governing nations, the Mosaic Code remained the basis for their legal system. Only during times of wickedness did they depart therefrom, and their wickedness was measured by the extent of their deviation.

THE NEPHITES USED THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AS THEIR CIVIL CODE

The Nephites also used the Ten Commandments as their civil laws. When they left Jerusalem around 600 B.C., they took with them the Brass Plates of Laban which contained the five books of Moses. (1 Nephi 5:11) So essential was it that they have these laws and judgments that Nephi was constrained to slay Laban to obtain them. Upon pondering the necessity of this act, he was brought to say within himself:

Yea, and I also thought that they [Nephi’s descendants] could not keep the commandments of the Lord according to the law of Moses, save they should have the law. (1 Nephi 4:15)

After their arrival in the Americas, the followers of Nephi separated from the Lamanites, established their own system of government, and enforced the law of Moses:

And we did observe to keep the judgments, and the statutes, and the commandments of the Lord in all things according to the law of Moses. (2 Nephi 5:10)

The following passage indicates that it was still the “law of the land” two centuries later:

And now, behold, two hundred years had passed away, and the people of Nephi had waxed strong in the land. They observed to keep the law of Moses and the sabbath day holy unto the Lord And they profaned not; neither did they blaspheme. And the laws of the land were exceedingly strict (Jarom 1:5)

Insofar as we can determine, the law of Moses constituted the civil laws of the Nephites throughout their history except during periods of wickedness. Even though they were commanded to alter their form of government in the year 92 B.C., the prophet-king, Mosiah, under whom this was done, instructed them to continue to use the same “correct” laws given to their fathers by the Lord:

Therefore, choose you by the voice of this people, judges, that ye may be judged according to the laws which have been given you by our fathers, which are correct, and which were given them by the hand of the Lord (Mosiah 29:25)

This alteration in the affairs of their government gave the people the power to choose their political leaders and also to alter their laws. Their prophet warned them of what would happen if, by majority vote, they corrupted those laws:

And if the time comes that the voice of the people doth choose iniquity, then is the time that the judgments of God will come upon you; yea, then is the time he will visit you with great destruction even as he has hitherto visited this land (Mosiah 29:27)

“GREAT DESTRUCTION” WAS INFLICTED UPON THE NEPHITES FOR CORRUPTING THE CIVIL LAWS GOD HAD GIVEN THEM

The account of what happened to the Nephites when the “voice of the people” corrupted the laws God had given them should interest us deeply. Writing concerning the political situation in the year 30 B.C., the historian tells us:

And they had altered and trampled under their feet the laws of Mosiah, or that which the Lord commanded him to give unto the people; and they saw that their laws had become corrupted, and that they had become a wicked people, insomuch that they were wicked even like unto the Lamanites. (Hela. 4:22)

Then a few verses later, Mormon makes it clear that this corruption had been brought about by majority vote:

For as their laws and their governments were established by the voice of the people, and they who chose evil were more numerous than they who chose good, therefore they were ripening for destruction, for the laws had become corrupted. (Hela. 5:2)

A terrible famine resulted from this national sin. However, the calamity brought repentance and, following a correction of their political beliefs and practices, the Lord again sent rain. (Hela. 11: 10) The famine ended in the year 16 B.C., but by the year 7 B.C. we are told:

they did war stronger and stronger in their pride, and in their wickedness; and thus they were ripening again for destruction. (Hela. 11:37)

An explanation of what was happening to their laws is provided by the following verse:

And now it came to pass in the eighty and sixth year (year 6 B.C.), the Nephites did still remain in wickedness, yea, in great wickedness, while the Lamanites did observe strictly to keep the commandments of God, according to the law of Moses. (Hela. 13:1)

The destruction which resulted from this second deviation from the law of Moses was the worst war they had ever experienced. Just one of the battles is described thus:

And the battle commenced in this the sixth month; and great and terrible was the battle thereof yea, great and terrible was the slaughter thereof insomuch that there never was known so great a slaughter among all the people of Lehi since he left Jerusalem. (3 Nephi 4:11)

This conflict continued for a period of four or five years and finally terminated only when the people,

did forsake all their sins, and their abominations, and their whoredoms...and put an end to all those wicked, and secret, and abominable combinations, in the which there was so much wickedness, and so many murders committed. (3 Nephi 5:3, 6)

Their repentance was accompanied by a reformation of the laws of the land:

And they began again to prosper and to wax great; and...there was great order in the land; and they had formed their laws according to equity and justice. (3 Nephi 6:4)

This second period of righteousness was also short-lived, for within eight or nine years following the end of the war, the Nephite people became so wicked that they utterly destroyed the government God had given them and broke up into tribes. For this great sin, and for having used the power of government to murder the prophets sent to call for repentance, the Lord all but obliterated them as a nation when He visited them following His resurrection.

That the Lord considered the destruction of their government as perhaps the worst sin a nation can commit is indicated in the following passage in which he explains the reason for burning the people of the city of Jacobugath:

And behold, that great city Jacobugath, which was inhabited by the people of king Jacob, have I caused to be burned with fire because of their sins and their wickedness, which was above all the wickedness of the whole earth, because of their secret murders and combinations; for it was they that did destroy the peace of my people and the government of the land; therefore I did cause them to be burned, to destroy them from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints should not come up unto me any more against them. (3 Nephi 9:9, emphasis added)

THE LORD HAS GIVEN THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES THEIR CIVIL LAWS AND COMMANDED THEY NOT BE ALTERED

The Lord has provided civil laws in this dispensation as in others. Although He had no prophet through whom He spoke at the time He caused a government to be established on this chosen land, still we have His assurance through a prophet, that both: “The laws and constitution of the people” were formed under His direction. (D&C 101:77) He raised up “wise men” and worked His will through them. (D&C 10 1:80)

Our latter-day scriptures also contain instructions similar to those given in prior dispensations: that we are not to alter or change in any way those laws which were established by the Lord to protect freedom. In the same scripture, which tells us that He suffered the laws and constitution to be established, He says that they,

should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to just and holy principles; (D&C 101:77)

A few months prior to this, the Lord had given what is perhaps even more explicit instructions concerning our obligation to preserve unaltered the laws of the land which are constitutional:

And that law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, belongs to all mankind, and is justifiable before me.

Therefore, I, the Lord, justify you, and your brethren of my church, in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land;

And as pertaining to law of man, whatsoever is more or less than this cometh of evil. (D&C 98:5-7, emphasis added)

Here then is the word of the Lord to the people in this generation, concerning the civil laws of government which protect freedom. Nothing can be plainer than this: If we deviate from them either one way or another, we have committed evil. Such laws “belong(s) to all mankind,” and we are under obligation to befriend and support them that everyone may enjoy the freedom they provide. Other modern day scriptures confirm this responsibility. In the revelation given as the dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple, the prophet said:

may those principles, which were so honorably and nobly defended, namely, the Constitution of our land, by our fathers, be established forever. (D&C 109:54)

It is recalled that the freedom guaranteed by those principles which were so honorably and nobly defended came at great cost, for as the Lord also said, “I...redeemed the land by shedding of blood.” (D&C 10 1:80)

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN “RELIGIOUS” AND “POLITICAL” COMMANDMENTS

The foregoing observations and scriptural citations should be sufficient to demonstrate that throughout the history of the world, the Lord has been deeply involved in the political affairs of nations. He has revealed those laws He desires governments to enforce and has meted out punishments when the nations to whom they were given were disobedient thereto. There are those who undertake to keep their “politics” completely separated from their “religion.” This is logically impossible for one who accepts the scriptures as the word of God. The following scripture is a warning against trying to draw such a distinction. It specifically enjoins Church members to accept the laws of the land which have been revealed, as “The laws of the church”:

Behold, the laws which ye have received from my hand are the laws of the church, and in this light ye shall hold them forth. Behold, here is wisdom. (D&C 58:23)

So widespread and deep seated is the belief that the Lord is not interested in our political beliefs, that the following chapter is devoted to a consideration of some of the reasons why He must concern himself with them in order to properly judge us. A correct understanding of the nature of government and the reasons why men adopt and enforce civil laws will demonstrate that a set of laws is in essence an expression of a moral code, and a person's political beliefs are an accurate reflection of his moral character.

THE LORD JUDGES MEN BY THE CIVIL LAWS THEY SANCTION OR OPPOSE

THE SCRIPTURES TEACH MAN'S POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY TO GOD

Having shown that the scriptures teach that the Lord has deeply involved himself in the affairs of government, let us now consider the interesting fact that He uses our beliefs regarding laws and government as a basis for judging us. Even though it may not be generally recognized, men are as morally accountable for the acts they commit through organizations as for those they commit as individuals. While salvation is an individual matter based strictly on individual decisions, there are few, if any decisions more important to our eternal welfare than those we make concerning the organizations we join and the organizational purposes we support or oppose.

Our personal accountability to God for our actions relating to family and Church is generally recognized by those who believe the scriptures. But there seems to be widespread doubt, and even disbelief, regarding a similar responsibility to our Creator for our actions and desires regarding government. The scriptures assert:

We believe that governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man; and that he holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them... (D&C 134:1)

In spite of this declaration of belief, few people seem to worry about what the Lord might think of their political philosophy. It seems probable that this indifference and disbelief arise from a lack of knowledge of what the scriptures teach and also from a failure to understand the moral or immoral nature of government action. Let us observe the direct relationship which exists between political convictions and moral beliefs by examining the basic nature of government.

THE BASIC NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Government stands in a class apart because it is the only organization in society which is legally empowered to deprive a human being of his life, his liberty, or his property. In fact, the only way in which a government can legally act is by the use of physical violence and the threat thereof. Every proper act of government must be done in accordance with a duly enacted law. But every law regulates human conduct by telling the citizens either what they must do or what they must not do, and every law contains a penalty which directs the officers of government to take either the life, the liberty, or the property of any who disobey.

Some may believe that certain government actions are no more than voluntary cooperation with no compulsion being involved. This view is demonstrably false and cannot be held by those who understand the nature of laws and government. The only reason we want to pass any law is to force those people to obey it who would not do so unless threatened with death, jail or fine. If we want to use only voluntary means to achieve a goal, we use a voluntary organization such as a church, a club, a lodge, or some similar non-government group. The only ones who join such organizations are those who do so of their own free will. The only ones who pay dues and obey the rules are those who voluntarily consent thereto. No one is threatened, compelled, or physically punished for non-conformance.

When we use government, every person must obey the laws whether they agree with them or not, and if they refuse or resist, they are physically incapacitated to continue their disobedience. Non-compliance is put down with all necessary force. Every taxpayer must support government projects no matter how violently he may disagree with them. Even those laws which merely provide for making “gifts” or hiring administrators to carry out so-called “optional” programs involve the use of force, because no gift can be made and no administrator can be hired without first collecting taxes under laws which compel the payment thereof. Physical force and the threat thereof is the essence of every government action and anyone who does not understand this fact is not fully aware of the nature of this organization.

THE INDIVIDUAL'S MORAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION

With the fact in mind that government is exclusively an agency of compulsion, we are now prepared to understand the basic moral nature of all government action. Throughout history civilized man has regarded the forcible taking of human life, human liberty, and human property rights as having the greatest possible moral significance. No ethical or moral question has been regarded of greater importance than that of determining when it is proper and when improper to put a person to death, take from him his freedom, and deprive him of the property with which he sustains life and exercises liberty. Since every government enforced law involves these very acts, the decision as to what laws should and should not be passed is the most moral problem we face.

Furthermore, the moral responsibility for acts performed in the name of government must rest on some person or persons. The actions of government are the actions of men performed by men at the command of men, and someone is morally accountable to God for every regulation of human conduct by force, and for every forcible taking of human life, liberty, and property. In a nation of self-governing people, that someone is everyone—everyone who approves of the law in question, or because of indifference has failed to oppose it. With the privilege of self-government comes the corresponding responsibility to answer for what that government does, and no member of a free society can avoid his own obligation.

Of course, if one opposes a law, justice demands that he neither be blamed nor given credit for the evil or good done under that law. Those who sanction it, or fail to take action regarding it, must bear the responsibility because there is no other place to rest it. Some may desire to charge the officers of government—the legislators, judges, and executive—with full responsibility. While these officers must bear their share, which may oft-times be great because of the sensitive positions they occupy, in the final analysis, they are the servants or agents of the people. The power to elect and defeat, to pass judgment on candidates, platforms and issues rests in the hands of the voters.

One's moral accountability for his political convictions arises not only from the political control he exercises, but also from the fact that his political beliefs constitute a most intense and accurate expression of his views on morality and justice. Let us observe that this is so.

A PERSON'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY EXPRESSES HIS MORAL CONVICTIONS IN THE STRONGEST MANNER POSSIBLE

A person's political philosophy is an expression of his moral beliefs because he cannot determine whether he favors or opposes a law without consulting his moral standards. Before he can approve of a law which forbids a certain act he must believe the forbidden act to be wrong or harmful. More importantly, he must determine that the law requires proof of an evil intent before punishment is inflicted. Who would be so lacking in justice and compassion that he would approve of taking a man's life, liberty, or property for having done a deed with a righteous or an innocent intent? To classify an intent as good or evil demands the use of moral judgment.

Similarly, before one can approve of a law which commands an act, he must believe the act to be good and a failure to perform it a culpable omission deserving of punishment. There would be an inherent contradiction in commanding the people to perform an act regarded as evil and punishing them for failing to perform it. It is contrary to logic for anyone to espouse a political philosophy which is inconsistent with his moral beliefs. On the other hand that philosophy is a formulation of his moral code.

A person's political philosophy not only reflects his moral convictions, but it also represents his most intense feelings regarding good and evil. Those acts which are prohibited by the laws he favors are not only regarded by him as evil, but are also so objectionable to him that he is willing to physically punish anyone who commits them. His feelings are equally intense regarding those acts he thinks he has a moral right to compel others to perform. When a person is so firmly convinced of the correctness of his political code that he is willing to impose it on all other members of society with death, imprisonment, and fine, he has expressed those convictions in the strongest possible manner.

POLITICAL BELIEFS REFLECT MORAL CHARACTER

Suppose one were given unlimited power to use force on his fellow man without fear of retaliation, physical punishment, or condemnation by other members of society. Under such circumstances, the manner in which he treated others would be an accurate index of his moral character. The only thing left to restrain him or to determine the good or evil he would do with that force, would be his conscience. This is substantially the position a person would be in if he were given the power to secretly direct the affairs of government. He would have in his hands the supreme physical force in society and could use it to control others without incurring either physical danger or condemnation.

In a society of self-governing people, this is essentially the position the voter occupies. While one man acting alone cannot control government, it is most obvious that the laws he favors represent his most uninhibited desires regarding what force he wants used on human beings. Indeed, if enough of his countrymen vote as he does, he will actually use that supreme physical force to accomplish his purposes.

Our political desires are an extremely accurate index of what we would do if the Lord made us a king, a judge, or a ruler with power to govern others. If we would exercise “control or dominion or compulsion,” unrighteously, then our support of laws which regiment and control the business and private affairs of our neighbors and deprive them of their stewardships would clearly indicate this. If we would steal, except for the fear of being punished or exposed, then our approval of laws which forcibly take property from its rightful owner and give it to those to whom it does not belong would demonstrate this trait. If we would commit extortion except for fear of being caught, then our support of licensing laws which forcibly deny people freedom to enter legitimate business and patronize whom they please will reflect this criminal tendency. We must expect the Lord to use our political beliefs as a measure of our moral or immoral character.

A PERSON’S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY CAN BE USED TO DETERMINE WHETHER HE IS JUST OR UNJUST

The Lord has revealed that He will judge us and divide us into groups in the next life on the basis of whether we are just or unjust. The revelation concerning the three degrees of glory emphasizes that the Celestial Kingdom is reserved for those who are just. Only those who “come forth in the resurrection of the just,” (D&C 76:50, 65) “who are just and true,” (v. 53) who are “just men made perfect through” the atonement of Jesus, (v. 69) can expect to inhabit the highest kingdom.

It is probably true that nowhere is a person’s sense of justice (or injustice as the case may be) more accurately reflected than in his political philosophy. The laws he favors and opposes constitute a statement of the acts and omissions he condemns in others and the penalty he desires to have inflicted for violation.

One of the primary tests we can expect the Lord to use to determine if we are just is whether we obey His “golden rule.” If a person is just, he will never do to others that which he would consider wrong to have done to himself. For example, every person would consider it unjust to be punished for doing an act with an innocent or righteous intent. Therefore, if we favor laws which provide for punishment without the necessity of proving an evil intent, we have acted unjustly. The following scripture states very plainly that we should never use government to punish a person unless he has violated his conscience and has a feeling of guilt:

the civil magistrate should restrain crime, but never control conscience; should punish guilt, but never suppress the freedom of the soul. (D&C 134:4; see also Alma 30:7-11)

If a person is just, he will want the burdens of government allocated among the people in an equitable manner. Let us illustrate. Governments exist for the purpose of protecting the lives, liberties, and properties of all of their citizens. Justice demands that each person whose freedom is protected bear his fair share of the cost thereof. The divinely inspired Constitution of the United States, as originally adopted, prohibited the Federal government from imposing direct taxes unless such were apportioned among the states according to their respective numbers. This provision used the cost of protecting life and liberty as a basis for apportioning the tax burden among the states apparently on the assumption that it costs as much to defend one person’s life and liberty as another’s. Of course, an additional reason for such a restriction was to discourage the Federal government from imposing direct taxes.

Most taxing schemes use property alone as a basis for apportioning the cost of government rather than life and liberty. The person with twice as much property or income as another is required to pay twice as much in taxes on the assumption that it costs twice as much to protect his property. Can anyone consider himself just in the eyes of the Lord if he favors a graduated tax scheme which forces a person with twice as much income or property as another to pay ten times or a hundred times as much tax? It is highly doubtful that a person with such views could ever expect to be classified with the just.

One should be able to determine whether any given law is “just” by mentally placing himself in the position of those against whom the law will likely be enforced. If after doing so, he discovers that he could violate the law without a feeling of moral guilt, he should oppose it on the grounds that it is unjust to punish anyone who is innocent of an intent to do evil. We are warned in the following passage from the Sermon on the Mount that we will be judged as we judge, and rewarded as we reward others:

Judge not unrighteously, that ye be not judged; but judge righteous judgment. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you again. (Matt. 7:2-3 JST)

Nowhere is a person’s judgment of his fellow men more clearly expressed than in those laws he supports and opposes, and nowhere is the measure he metes for disobedience more widely dispensed than through his agents in government.

The Savior’s command to “Judge not unrighteously” is an explicit order to use only His laws in judging our fellow man. We should condemn and punish only that which He has commanded should be condemned and punished. Only His laws are just and any deviation therefrom is unjust. In his great discourse on government, king Mosiah made this point very clear to his people:

we will newly arrange the affairs of this people, for we will appoint wise men to be judges, that will judge this people according to the commandments of God.

Now it is better that a man should be judged of God than of man, for the judgments of God are always just, but the judgments of man are not always just.

Therefore, if it were possible that you could have just men to be your kings, who would establish the laws of God, and judge this people according to his commandments...it would be expedient that ye should always have kings to rule over you. (Mos. 29:11-13)

A just law will never interfere with the freedom of a just man, for he will never intentionally commit an act which a just law forbids, nor will he refuse to voluntarily do that which a just law commands. Those who learn to live by just laws and thereby refrain from exercising “control or dominion or compulsion upon the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness” may qualify for this promise:

Thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever. (D&C 121:46)

Therefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down.

And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.
(Moses 4:3,4)

VII

THE LORD'S PLAN FOR PROTECTING FREE AGENCY

THE LORD'S PURPOSE IN ESTABLISHING LAWS AND GOVERNMENT—THAT MEN MAY USE THEIR MORAL AGENCY

In the foregoing chapters, we have shown the Lord's direct involvement in the affairs of government. We have also observed that the essential problem of government is moral in nature and that God will judge men by their convictions of right and wrong as expressed in their political beliefs.

In this chapter, we will consider the fact that the Lord's purpose in establishing government is to protect free agency, and He will judge us according to our support of or opposition to this purpose.

According to the following scripture, the Lord caused the laws and Constitution of the United States to be established to give men their agency:

According to the laws and constitution of the people, which I have suffered to be established, and should be maintained for the rights and protection of al/flesh...

That every man may act...according to the moral agency which I have given unto him...
(D&C 101:77-78)

In another revelation wherein the Lord discussed "the law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges," He said:

Therefore, I, the Lord, justify you, and your brethren of my church, in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land;

And as pertaining to law of man, whatsoever is more or less than this, cometh of evil.

I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law also maketh you free. (D&C 98:6-8)

Here the Lord reiterates His assertion that His purpose in establishing the laws of the land was to make men free. When His civil laws are properly enforced, they protect free agency by executing the divine law of retribution which we will now consider.

THE DIVINE LAW OF RETRIBUTION

The Lord's law of retribution (or restoration) decrees that as we give, so shall we receive. We will be rewarded in the same coin as we pay. One of the shortest and most precise statements of this law is contained in the Sermon on the Mount:

with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. (Matt.7:2; 3 Nephi 14:2)

Modern scripture states the law in these words:

Unto the day when the Lord shall come to recompense unto every man according to his work, and measure to every man according to the measure which he has measured to his fellow man. (D&C 1:10)

One of the clearest and most complete scriptural explanations of this law was given by the prophet, Alma, to his son Corianton. A portion of his words are as follows:

And it is requisite with the justice of God that men should be judged according to their works; and if their works were good in this life, and the desires of their hearts were good, that they should also, at the last day, be restored unto that which is good.

And if their works are evil they shall be restored unto them for evil.

The one raised to happiness according to his desires of happiness, or good according to his desires of good; and the other to evil according to his desires of evil; for as he has desired to do evil all the day long even so shall he have his reward of evil when the night cometh. (Alma 41:3-5)

Punishments decreed under this law are tempered with mercy where there is repentance and reliance upon the atonement of Christ. But in the absence of such, mercy cannot rob justice and “justice exerciseth all his demands.” (Alma 42:24-25)

No one can complain of the operation of this law. It is justice in its most poetic form. Why should one not expect to be treated as he treats others? Has he a right to demand any more or less than this? When one is judged according to that standard which he himself has set, he has no basis for complaint. Indeed, it would seem unjust to use any other standard by which to measure rewards and punishments. The great gift of the atonement appears to be more than we deserve, but forgiveness and avoidance of punishment are strictly conditioned upon obedience to the law of repentance.

THE LAW OF RETRIBUTION DETERMINES THE AMOUNT OF FREEDOM TO WHICH ONE IS ENTITLED

The inexorable law of retribution operates in every area, including that of free agency, so that the amount of freedom to which a person is entitled is strictly measured by the amount of freedom he is willing to allow his fellow man. Let us define freedom as the power and opportunity to accomplish one’s purposes. The law of retribution would dictate that each person will be permitted to accomplish his own goals only to the extent that he is willing for others to accomplish theirs.

To more fully understand the operation of this law, let us remember that those four possessions which are indispensable to the exercise of free agency are:

1. Life and some degree of physical and mental health and strength,
2. Freedom from the restraint or coercion of others,
3. Knowledge of those laws which must be obeyed to achieve any given goal,
4. The right and control of property.

Each one of these elements of freedom is necessary for a person to achieve any purpose whatsoever, and the more of these possessions one has, the greater is his freedom. Therefore, if we provide, preserve, or protect them in any degree, we increase freedom, while if we injure or destroy them we do the opposite.

Governments have been instituted to execute the punishments decreed under the law of retribution by taking some element of freedom from those who take or injure the freedom of others.

THE LORD'S LAW OF RETRIBUTION EXPRESSED IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND THE JUDGMENTS GIVEN THEREWITH

The first set of civil laws of which we have record, which were given by the Lord to men, is the law of Moses. The punishments or "judgments" prescribed by the Lord for violation of those laws appear to carry out the Lord's law of retribution with exactness. The following familiar scripture illustrates this:

And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. (Exodus 21:23-25)

The penalty for stealing was that the thief pay his victim several times the value of the property stolen. (Exodus Ch.22) The penalty for bearing false witness was stated thus:

*And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother;
Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother... (Deut. 19:18-19)*

Under these and similar laws, the Israelites were instructed to punish the guilty by taking freedom from them at least to the extent they had taken, or attempted to take it from another.

The law of Moses was enforced among the Nephites also. Except for the death penalty which was prescribed for murder (Alma 1:18), the punishments they inflicted upon criminals are not described. However, we do know that those who destroyed or injured one of the elements of freedom lost some element of their own freedom as punishment. In addition to inflicting the death penalty for murder, they punished slavery, (Alma 17:9) lying, (Alma 1:17) and theft. (Alma 1:18)

The late President of the Church, Joseph F. Smith, stated in the following quotation that the Ten Commandments are also the foundation of the laws and Constitution which the Lord established in the United States:

I do not think any honest and intelligent man or woman could help but believe in the justice, the righteousness and the purity of the laws that God wrote upon the tablets of stone. These principles that I propose to read to you are the foundation and basic principles of the Constitution of our country, and are eternal, enduring forever more, and cannot be changed nor ignored with impunity..."

Then after reading each of the Ten Commandments, President Smith continued thus:

Now, these are the commandments of God, the principles contained in these commandments of the great Eternal are the principles that underlie the Constitution of our country, and all just laws. (Oct. C.R., 1912, pp. 8-11)

The consistency with which the Lord has instructed His people in each dispensation to incorporate the principles of the Ten Commandments into their civil laws together with the penalties which enforce them, bears out the truth of President Smith's statement that these principles are "eternal" and underlie "all just laws." To properly carry out the Lord's plan of protecting free agency, governments must be utilized in every age to inflict the punishments called for under the divine law of retribution.

While that part of the law of Moses called the carnal ordinances, and blood sacrifices were done away with at the coming of Christ, the Ten Commandments are eternal gospel truths. The law of retribution is also eternal because it is the very essence of eternal justice. That there was no intention of superseding this part of the law of Moses was made plain by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount when He said: "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

While the Ten Commandments are eternal in nature, all of them could not with justice be enforced in every society because to do so would violate God's laws of justice. The Children of Israel in the days of Moses could properly be punished for violating the Sabbath and worshipping idols because they had been given overwhelming physical evidence that these commandments came from God. They also had before them constant reminders of His divine power such as the ten plagues, the destruction of the Egyptian armies, the pillar of fire by night, the cloud by day, the manna from heaven, and water from the rock. In the face of such evidence, no one could blaspheme or break the Sabbath with a clear conscience. But this would not be true in societies without such evidence.

Nevertheless, everyone can in fairness be punished for such crimes as murder, adultery, robbery and bearing false witness, because everyone knows that such acts are evil. No one can do to others that which he knows would be harmful and wrong if done to him without violating his conscience. Therefore, it is proper to execute the law of retribution in every nation with respect to those crimes committed against the four elements of freedom. (See Alma Ch. 30)

OTHER FUNCTIONS GOVERNMENTS MUST PERFORM TO PROTECT FREE AGENCY

GOVERNMENTS MUST DEFEND THEIR CITIZENS AGAINST FOREIGN AGGRESSOR NATIONS

One of the primary purposes for the establishment of government is to protect the citizen's lives, liberties, and properties against foreign nations. The performance of this function when properly done also carries out the punishments decreed under the law of retribution and has the Lord's approval. He has justified defensive wars in many instances. The careful guidance He gave to the Children of Israel during their periods of righteousness is well known to students of the Old Testament. The Nephites were commanded by their prophets to defend themselves and their families "even unto bloodshed." (Alma 43:46-47; 48:14) The Book of Mormon also states that "the power of God" was with the American Colonies when they won independence and freedom from "their mother Gentiles." (1 Nephi 13:17-18) Those circumstances under which a nation is justified in going to war are set forth in modern revelation. (D&C 98:31-37)

LITIGATION OF DISPUTES AND ENFORCEMENT OF CLAIMS BETWEEN CITIZENS

Another proper function of government is to provide an impartial tribunal wherein disputes between citizens may be settled and claims enforced. Under the law of Moses, the enforcement of many claims was handled as a necessary consequence of enforcing the criminal law, or the law of retribution. (Exodus Ch. 22) Fines which were assessed for violation of the criminal law were oftentimes paid to the injured party rather than to the law enforcement authorities. The following Book of Mormon scripture indicates that the Nephites may have followed this same practice:

Now if a man owed another, and he would not pay that which he did owe, he was complained of to the judge; and the judge executed authority, and sent forth officers that the man should be brought before him; and he judged the man according to the law and the evidences which were brought against him, and thus the man was compelled to pay that which he owed, or be stripped, or be cast out from among the people as a thief and a robber. (Alma 11:2)

The United States Constitution recognizes the authority of the Federal Government to handle bankruptcy cases and disputes over patents and copyrights. It also grants jurisdiction in all cases which arise in the District of Columbia or other federally owned territory.

The right and control of property being one of the four basic elements of freedom must be protected under the Lord's plan. The enforcement of claims helps to achieve this purpose. The protection of private property by government is also necessary to the maintenance of peace according to the following scripture:

We believe that no government can exist in peace, except such laws are framed and held inviolate as will secure to each individual...the right and control of property... (D&C 134:2)

COMPEL THE PAYMENT OF TAXES AND SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES

If government is necessary for the protection of freedom, then the people must provide that support without which it cannot perform its protective functions. Justice demands that those whose lives, liberties, and properties are protected, each bear his fair share of the cost of that protection. To provide this support, it is essential in most cases that government be given the power to compel the payment of taxes and conscript men for the armed forces.

There are instances on record where rulers have performed the functions of government without pay and have labored to support themselves while doing so. King Benjamin of the Book of Mormon reminded his people that he had served without compensation:

And even I, myself have labored with mine own hands that I might serve you, and that ye should not be laden with taxes, and that there should nothing come upon you which was grievous to be borne... (Mosiah 2:14)

But in the overwhelming majority of cases, the officers of government have received their support from the people. After the Nephites changed their government from a monarchy to the "reign of the judges," those who served as judges received pay therefore:

Now it was in the law of Mosiah that every man who was a judge of the law, or those who were appointed to be judges, should receive wages according to the time which they labored to judge those who were brought before them to be judged. (Alma 11:1)

The right of government to insist that the people provide men and means for the defense of the nation is recognized by the scriptures. (Alma 60:24-33)

The United States Constitution empowers the federal government to levy taxes and conscript men to perform its authorized functions.

ACTIONS OF GOVERNMENT WHICH DESTROY FREEDOM

WHATSOEVER IS MORE OR LESS THAN THOSE LAWS GOD CAUSED TO BE ESTABLISHED, "COMETH OF EVIL"

Since the Lord has stated that "whatsoever is more or less" than those freedom-protecting laws which He suffered to be established, "cometh of evil," we must conclude that unless the Constitution authorizes a law, it is evil to adopt it. Perhaps most people who accept the scriptures as the word of the Lord would agree with this conclusion, but there may be dispute regarding what laws it authorizes. Let us turn to the scriptures for guidance in determining how it should be interpreted.

The same scripture which states that the Constitution is a divinely inspired document also asserts that the laws originally adopted under the Constitution were divinely inspired. Attention is directed to that scripture which reads: "According to the laws and constitution of the people which I have suffered to be established..." (D&C 101:77) Perhaps some do not realize that there is a distinct difference between a law and a constitution, and therefore the full meaning of this scripture is not understood. The distinction between the two is very important and is not difficult to understand.

The Prophet Joseph Smith once said: "The Constitution is not a law, but it empowers the people to make laws." (DHC Vol. V, p. 289) This brief statement recognizes the essential difference between the two. Even though we may call the Constitution the supreme law of the land, strictly speaking it is not a man-made law at all. A law either commands or forbids human action and always provides a penalty under which those who disobey are punished. The Constitution contains no penalties whatsoever and therefore it cannot qualify as a law. On the other hand as the Prophet said, it is a delegation of authority by the people to their officers in government to make and enforce laws within the limits of its provisions.

The fact that the Lord caused both the laws and the Constitution to be established is of great significance when questions are raised concerning the correct interpretation of the Constitution. When legislators, executives, and judges adopt, apply, and enforce laws, they thereby interpret the meaning of the Constitution from whence their powers are derived. By their official acts they determine what authority they have been given and what has been withheld.

Therefore, when the Lord stated in the year 1833 that He caused the laws originally adopted to be established, He gave His approval to the interpretation placed upon the Constitution by those men who passed those laws. In that same revelation He stated that those same laws "should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh." (D&C 10 1:77) In another revelation given in that same year, He referred to "that law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom" and said that it "belongs to all mankind."

Among those who accept them as the word of God, these revelations should put an end to contention concerning the correct meaning of certain power-granting clauses in the Constitution. The original meaning is the correct one according to the Lord, and anything more or less than this “cometh of evil.” The fact that many of the same wise men who helped draft the Constitution held positions in government which required them to interpret the work of their hands should induce us to accept their views in preference to others. Certainly they were in a better position to know the correct interpretation.

It is not assumed that the Lord intended by the “more or less cometh of evil” statement to forbid making technical or procedural changes in the affairs of government, insofar as such changes do not destroy “that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges.” The very fact that He has sanctioned different types of governments indicates that He intends there be flexibility in procedures and methods.

Thus while He may not object to altering the date when the President of the United States takes office, He certainly would object to changing the interpretation of the “welfare clause” so as to empower the Federal Government to destroy the right of private property by welfare-statism and socialism. Similarly, a constitutional amendment permitting women to vote would not appear to destroy “rights and privileges,” but an alteration in the meaning of the “Commerce clause” to empower the Federal Government to regulate agriculture, labor, transportation, communication, health, education, welfare, etc., would appear to have this effect.

THE ETERNAL NATURE OF THOSE LAWS ESSENTIAL TO THE PROTECTION OF FREEDOM

When the Lord stated that those constitutional laws which He suffered to be established, “should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh,” (D&C 101:77) “belong(s) to all mankind,” and anything different therefrom “cometh of evil,” He made it plain that He regarded these freedom-protecting laws to be eternal in nature. They have application in every country and in every age. No change in circumstances or conditions can justify altering them. One may easily demonstrate the logic of this position.

Man’s desire for freedom never changes and neither do those possessions which are indispensable for its exercise—life, liberty of action, knowledge, and the right and control of property. They are the same for every person no matter where or when he lives. Furthermore, the nature of those evil acts and intentions which destroy freedom on the one hand, and the nature of those good acts and intentions which protect freedom on the other are always the same. Good and evil and the precise line which separates them are as eternal as the natures of God and Satan and the line which divides them.

This being so, those laws necessary to protect freedom by punishing those acts and intents which destroy its elements never change; neither does the nature of those laws which compel men to perform those acts necessary to protect freedom.

MEN SHOULD COMMIT NO ACT IN THE NAME OF GOVERNMENT WHICH CONSCIENCE FORBIDS THEM TO DO AS INDIVIDUALS

The inherent nature of a good or an evil act is unaffected by changing the number of people involved in its commission. An act which is beneficial and virtuous when done by one acting alone is the same when done in concert; and an act which is evil when done by an individual is equally evil when done by a group; and this is true even though the group is acting in the name of government.

Legislatures are as powerless to alter the fundamental laws of good and evil as they are to alter the physical laws. This being so, the rightness or wrongness of every act performed in the name of government can be determined by using the conscience of the individual. If, because of moral scruples, the individual should refrain from exercising the force called for under the law in question, then he should refuse to consent to the use of that force through government.

The following scripture enjoins us to use the test of individual conscience in determining the limits of government power:

the civil magistrate should restrain crime, but never control conscience; should punish guilt, but never suppress the freedom of the soul. (D&C 134:4)

We are here prohibited from using the whip of government to punish a person unless he has violated his conscience by committing an act he knew to be morally wrong. Unless there is a feeling of guilt, it would be merciless and inhumane to punish. George Washington recognized that our constitutional form of government was based upon the moral code of the individual when, in his first inaugural address, he said:

the foundation of our national policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality.

Benjamin Franklin apparently had this same thought in mind when he stated:

He who shall introduce into public affairs the principles of primitive Christianity will revolutionize the world.

THOSE ACTS WHICH DESTROY FREEDOM WHEN COMMITTED BY THE INDIVIDUAL ARE EQUALLY DESTRUCTIVE OF FREEDOM WHEN COMMITTED BY GOVERNMENT

The fact that the same moral laws which apply to individual action also apply to government action is easily seen when we note that any given act has exactly the same effect on freedom whether performed by one person or a group. The effect of a deed upon individual freedom is not changed in the slightest by a mere change in the number who undertake it. And once again, this is true even though it is committed in the name of government. It will be remembered that every law either commands or forbids human action. Its only purpose is to alter human behavior by compelling people to act in a manner different from the way they would have acted had not the law been passed. If a person refuses to change his behavior as the law dictates, then the officers are commanded to take either his life, his liberty, or his property as a penalty. Thus, it is seen that every law affects human freedom either through fear of physical violence, or by the actual use of physical violence.

If it would be wrong for an individual to be coerced or restrained by fear, or to lose his life, liberty, or property at the hands of one person, it would be equally wrong if these acts were committed by government. It makes not the slightest difference to an individual whether one man or a million put him to death, deprive him of his freedom, or take from him his property. The effect is exactly the same in either case. On the other hand, if it would be proper for such a person to be restrained by fear or punished for committing the forbidden act, it makes no moral difference whether the fear is induced and the punishment inflicted by one or many. It would be right in either case.

The necessity of viewing government action and individual action through the same eyes is also observed when we note that the officers of government are mere servants of the people and derive all the power they possess from those they serve. Since a power can rise no higher than its source, unless the people have the moral right to perform an act, they cannot confer that right upon government officials. No person can increase his authority merely by acting through an agent. Therefore, anything which would be wrong for citizens to do as individuals would be equally wrong for them to direct their representatives in government to do on their behalf.

The fact that government officials have no right to do to the citizens that which the citizens have no right to do to one another is succinctly stated by Jefferson in the following words:

Our legislators are not sufficiently apprised of the rightful limits of their power; that their true office is to declare and enforce only our natural rights and duties, and to take none of them from us. No man has a natural right to commit aggression on the equal rights of another; and this is all from which the laws ought to restrain him; every man is under the natural duty of contributing to the necessities of the society; and this is all the laws should enforce on him; and, no man having a natural right to be the judge between himself and another, it is his natural duty to submit to the umpirage of an impartial third. When the laws have declared and enforced all this, they have fulfilled their functions, and the idea is quite unfounded, that on entering into society we give up any natural right. The trial of every law by one of these texts, would lessen much the labors of our legislators, and lighten equally our municipal codes. (Thomas Jefferson, To Francis W. Gilmer, June 7, 1816; Works of Thomas Jefferson, Federal Edition, G.P. Putnam & Sons, (1905), Vol. XI, pp. 533-534.)

It is observed that in these words Jefferson has limited government to those functions authorized by the scriptures and the Constitution— (1) Punishing crime; (2) Arbitrating and enforcing rights between citizens, and (3) Compelling each person to bear his fair share of the cost of government. He states that every law may be tested by one of these three texts.

THE LORD'S PLAN OF PROTECTING FREE AGENCY IS EXPRESSED IN THE LAWS HE FAVORS AND OPPOSES

We have used both the scriptures and the divinely inspired Constitution of the United States to distinguish between those cases where the Lord had authorized governments to use compulsion against the individual and those where He has not. We have shown that He has approved of using the police power to (1) punish crime, (2) enforce rights between citizens, and (3) compel each person to bear his fair share of the burden of protecting freedom. We have also shown that it is destructive of freedom to use compulsion for any purpose other than these.

By correctly drawing the line between righteous and unrighteous compulsion, we are able to discern the Lord's plan for protecting the free agency of His children. Those acts which He would deny men their freedom to do or refrain from doing are forbidden or commanded by the laws He favors. Those acts which He would allow men their freedom to do or refrain from doing without fear of physical punishment are not forbidden or commanded by His laws. Thus, those bounds within which men are free to act without being restrained or coerced are delineated by the civil laws of God. Let us now consider the fact that all men are judged according to their acceptance or rejection of this plan to protect free agency.

VIII

FREE AGENCY IN HEREAFTER DETERMINED BY ATTITUDE TOWARD IT HERE

A PERSON'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE FREE AGENCY OF OTHERS IS EXPRESSED IN HIS POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Just as the Lord's doctrine of free agency is expressed in the civil laws He favors and opposes, even so do the views of men regarding such laws express their beliefs on this all-important subject. Every act which we want to deny our fellow men the freedom to do or not to do is forbidden or commanded by the laws we favor; and every act which we desire our fellow men to have freedom to do or not to do without fear of physical punishment is not forbidden or commanded by the laws we favor. Let us recognize that, ordinarily, a person will want to determine the intent of the actor before condemning or approving of what he has done. Therefore, the word "act" as used above must be defined to include the intent which motivated it.

But when this is done, the above statements cover all situations because in forming a complete political philosophy, we classify all acts which it is possible for men to perform into two categories, one of which we would prevent or compel with physical violence, and the other we would not. It is in drawing this line between those acts and omissions we condemn in others, and those we do not, that the extent of our own freedom in the hereafter is determined. We have already seen that God had instituted governments here on earth to execute His divine law of retribution by taking some element of freedom from those who destroy the freedom of others. Let us observe that this law of retribution also operates in the hereafter.

WE WILL SPEND ETERNITY WITH THOSE WHO WILL ALLOW US NO MORE FREEDOM THAN WE ARE WILLING TO ALLOW THEM

Over and over again, the scriptures emphasize that we will be judged according to our treatment of our fellow men. If we are charitable, we will be placed with the sheep in the Lord's kingdom rather than with the goats in outer darkness. (Malt. 25:31-46) If we forgive, we may be forgiven. (Matt. 6: 12) If we are just, we may rise in the resurrection of the just and dwell with them. (D&C Sec. 76) If we refrain from exercising compulsion unrighteously, our dominion in the hereafter may be everlasting and flow unto us forever and ever "without compulsory means." (D&C Sec. 121) In short, we can expect to be treated in the next life as we treat others here.

The exact implementation of this law of the harvest will occur at the end of this life, when we will be divided into groups and each will be consigned to spend eternity with those with whom he is most like. An unjust person will dwell with those who will treat him unjustly; a kind, forgiving persons will enjoy the companionship of kind and forgiving associates, etc. But the fact which is important to our discussion here is that each person will be with that group who will allow him to exercise no more freedom than he is willing to allow them.

If, during this life, we have been persuaded to believe that the force of government, or any other agency, should be used to deny our fellow men the stewardships which God has given them over their families, their property, and their private affairs, we can be very certain that we will be placed with a group in the hereafter who will hold similar views. With such an attitude, we cannot expect to have stewardships or dominions of our own because we do not believe in them for others and neither will those with whom we will dwell believe in them for us. The poetic justice of God decrees that if we deprive our fellow men of those unalienable rights which, according to the Declaration of Independence, they have been endowed by their Creator, we will lose our free agency to the same extent.

This point is of transcendent importance to those who live under a government subject to majority vote. When God gives a nation the power of self government, He gives them the highest freedom they can possess. Political freedom is more important than any other because upon the proper exercise of this one, all other freedoms depend. The level of freedom in any nation is measured by the civil laws and how they are enforced. Thus, the right of self-government enables each voting citizen to determine whether he will follow or reject the Lord's plan for protecting the free agency of the human race. But to some extent, the Lord can use political beliefs to judge even those who do not have the power of self-government. Everyone lives under a government of some type and forms opinions regarding the laws enforced by that government. The Lord may use these opinions as a basis for His judgment because they constitute a person's views on human freedom.

Some may question the justice of enforcing the Lord's laws of retribution in all nations and judging all men, both here and in the hereafter, by the same standard. However, justification for the existence of government in any nation rests upon the assumption that there is a code of moral behavior which all rational men hold in common and therefore all can be expected to conform their lives to. Unless all citizens have that same standard of good and evil which is expressed in their laws, the enforcement of such laws will create injustice. Some will be punished for committing acts which their consciences tell them are good, and others will be punished for refusing to do what they sincerely believe to be evil.

Fortunately, there is a universal moral standard and it arises out of the universal desire for freedom. While there may be extensive differences between the religious beliefs of the members of any society, there is one desire which all have in common and that is the desire for individual freedom. Every person, regardless of his religion, training, or background, wants his own liberty of action. He desires the freedom to carry out his own purposes, whatever they may be. It will be remembered that those possessions which are indispensable to the accomplishment of any purpose are exactly the same for every person. To achieve any goal, or exercise freedom in any degree, one must have: (1) Life, (2) Liberty of action, (3) The right and control of property, and (4) Knowledge.

Every rational person knows what injures or destroys these elements of freedom and strongly objects to acts committed against him for this purpose. This knowledge enables him to know what he should not do to others. Being acutely aware of what harms him, he is equally aware of what harms his fellow man. This same knowledge is possessed by people in every age and country. Murder and mayhem are the same whether committed with a bow and arrow or a gun; theft is theft whether the property taken is a string of beads or an airplane; human bondage consists of the forcible deprivation of liberty, whether the force is exercised by an individual acting alone, or by a group acting in the name of government; deceit consists of the intentional misrepresentation of what one believes to be true, whether by one who is educated or by an illiterate. It is also true that those motives which prompt men to destroy the elements of freedom—hate, envy, pride, lust, revenge, etc.—are the same whether found in the civilized man or the savage.

In this universal desire for freedom and the common knowledge of those acts and intents which destroy its elements, we have a moral standard to which all men can be expected to conform. Anyone who deviates from this standard, and without justification, intentionally injures or destroys an element of freedom has violated his own standard of right and wrong and may justly be punished. There is no injustice in punishing a person for doing to another that which the actor knows would have been evil if done to him. Furthermore, since every person wants his own freedom protected, and since he wants others to bear their fair share of the burden of protecting the freedom of all, there is no injustice in insisting that each pay his fair share of the taxes and perform other duties which might be necessary to accomplish this common purpose. But this is the only standard which all men hold in common, and therefore anything which is more or less than these freedom-protecting laws “cometh of evil.”

IX

SATAN'S PLAN TO DESTROY FREE AGENCY

SATAN'S OPPOSITION TO THE PLAN OF THE LORD

In the foregoing chapters, we have discussed the Lord's plan for providing and protecting the free agency of man and the affirmative commandments He has given for carrying it out. Let us now turn our attention to His negative commandments. These prohibitions may properly be called the plan of Satan because everything the Lord has forbidden, the Devil is trying to get us to do. He is "an enemy of all righteousness," (Mosiah 4:14) and "an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually." (Moro. 7:12) His purpose is to induce men to destroy the elements of freedom—life, liberty, property, and knowledge—and the three organizations through which the Lord provides and protects these elements—the family, the Church, and the Lord's form of government. Let us consider how Satan might best accomplish these purposes.

SATAN'S PLAN TO DESTROY THE ELEMENTS OF FREEDOM

SATAN'S PLAN TO DESTROY LIFE

The Lord has issued the commandment: "Thou shalt not kill," and has decreed the death penalty for murder. In opposition thereto, Satan induced Cain to kill Abel and has been constantly engaged in promoting the destruction of human life since then. The prophet Moroni described him as "that liar who hath caused man to commit murder from the beginning." (Ether 8:25) Men may murder to get gain as did Cain, to protect secret oaths as did Lamech, or because of passion stemming from anger, revenge, lust, etc. This crime occurs sporadically in nearly every society, and would happen much more often were it not for the institution of government whose function it is to seek out and punish it.

But Satan is not satisfied with an occasional death. He desires mass murder, and in order to achieve this he must gain control of that organization whose business it is to take human life and possesses the means of doing so. The only organization which can legally and efficiently perform this task for him is government, and until he is able to subvert it to his purpose, it will be the very organization which will thwart him. Therefore, it is only logical to assume that he has been trying to capture control of this supreme physical force in society since the beginning. Once in control, he can induce his servants to use the armies and navies at their disposal to wage international war, thus committing the mass murder he desires. The awful waste of human life which has resulted from war is incalculable and the history books are filled with accounts of power hungry men who have induced the citizens of their nations to support them in waging aggressive warfare. The Book of Mormon relates how two great civilizations perished in suicidal conflicts when Satan gained control of the hearts and minds of the people.

Not only can Satan induce government to destroy human life through war, but he can also turn it against its own citizenry. While it is in accordance with the Lord's laws and judgments to inflict the death penalty for certain crimes, government may also be used to kill the innocent on a massive scale. As great as has been the loss of life from war during the twentieth century, the number of people who have been put to death in gas chambers, execution cellars, concentration camps, and by deliberate starvation by the officers of their own government may be much greater. Millions upon millions have been murdered for no other reason than that they belonged to a certain race, owned property, or did not agree with the political system which committed these horrible atrocities.

It is most apparent that Satan can achieve his purpose of mass murder only by inducing men to prostitute the power of government. In most cases, he must do this by deceiving them into believing that they are justified in using the armies, the navies, and the police to kill and to get power and gain.

SATAN'S PLAN TO DESTROY INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY AND THE RIGHT AND CONTROL OF PROPERTY

Since one of the primary motives for slavery is to enable the master to steal the fruits of the slave's labor, it is convenient to discuss Satan's plan for destroying individual freedom, and his plan for destroying the right and control of property at the same time. In essence, they amount to the same thing. Of course an additional important motive for slavery is to enable the master to satisfy that satanic tendency to exercise unrighteous dominion which is common to almost all men. These two motives of power and gain are so strong in men that Satan has been able to induce them to practice slavery in some form in almost every age and in almost every nation.

The Lord's method of protecting these two elements of freedom is to use government to outlaw and punish those who injure or destroy them. While the Ten Commandments did not mention slavery specifically, the prohibition against stealing would necessarily cover it. The Nephite laws mentioned both, (Alma 1:18, 27:9) and one of the announced purposes for establishing the laws and Constitution of the United States was that "it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another." (D&C 101:79)

The word slavery brings to mind a practice in a nation where the right of private property is protected for some, but not for others. The property-owning class is permitted to own farms, factories, and other facilities for the production and distribution of goods and services, and to use the slave labor of the other class to operate the facilities. The police power of government not only gives its consent, but also protects and enforces the practice by recapturing slaves who run away and punishing those who flout the authority of their masters. If government prohibited slavery and thus refused to lend its aid to enforce the system, it could not operate. Therefore, unless Satan can induce those in control of government to sanction the institution, it is virtually impossible for him to destroy freedom in this manner.

But once again, Satan is not satisfied to destroy the freedom of only part of the population. He desires a system which will enslave everyone. This he can accomplish by using government to destroy the right of private property for everyone. Since a man's property is his life—that with which he sustains life and uses his productive life to obtain, and since a man's property is also his liberty—the means by which he exercises his freedom or accomplishes his purposes—all Satan needs to do to make everyone a slave is to use the police power to deny the right and control of property. Without this one element of freedom, the other three elements are either useless or unusable.

Those forms of government under which the right of private property is abolished are called socialism and communism. Under each of these systems, the state owns all instruments for the production and distribution of goods and services. Ownership of farms, homes, factories, machinery, etc., by the individual is forbidden by law. The state, being the exclusive owner of these facilities, owns the food, clothing, shelter and other consumable products which they produce. It also is the one and only employer in the nation.

The state, being the exclusive producer, can determine who will consume what is produced. Having plenary authority to do so, it may determine the wage of every employee, the price of every product, and the availability of goods and services to every consumer. Under these conditions, the individual is at the complete mercy of the state. No plantation owner ever exercised more control over his slaves than the socialist state does over its citizens. In both cases, the master determines what work the slave will perform, the hours and conditions of labor, what home he will occupy, what clothes he may wear, what food he may eat, and what will be done with the fruits of his labor.

But the one essential difference between the two systems is, that under slavery as practiced outside of socialism, at least the slave master has some degree of freedom. Having the right to own and control property, he is able to exercise freedom of religion, speech, press and occupation. He can determine what he will produce with the facilities he owns, and also what he will consume. Within the limit of his means, he may achieve his purposes. However, under socialism, the bureaucratic slave master is also a slave of the same system. The same laws which prevent the worker from acquiring and controlling property, thereby making him independent and free, also prevent his boss from doing so. They both are employees of the same employer; are subject to the same restrictions regarding the use of their time; and neither has any hope of escaping from bondage as long as the system continues. True, the slave master may occupy a larger house, consume richer food, and wear better clothing; but neither of them is free to change jobs at will, accumulate property, nor use the states property to achieve their own goals. Neither can claim to be free.

Not only do socialism and communism destroy freedom by abolishing private property, but they also achieve another goal of Satan at the same time. The vast army of bureaucrats which is the hallmark of every communist, socialist, and welfare state system provides unlimited opportunities for those who seek positions in which they can exercise unrighteous dominion. Socialism is then Satan's perfect system of slavery. To establish it, he must induce those in control of government to use the police power to prevent individual ownership and control of property.

SATAN'S PLAN TO DESTROY KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH

Since no one can achieve any goal without complying with those immutable laws upon which the result depends, and since no one can consciously obey a law without knowing what that law is, true knowledge is indispensable to the exercise of freedom. The Lord has given the commandment: "Thou shalt not bear false witness," and has consigned liars to the lowest degree of glory. (D&C 76:103) On the other hand, Satan is known as the "father of lies," and it is his great purpose "to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my [the Lord's] voice." (Moses 4:4)

Satan can induce men to deceive and lie to one another to get gain, to escape punishment for evil, and because of other weaknesses such as pride. But if the laws of the land punish perjury, give damages for deceit, and protect freedom of expression, Satan's efforts to induce men to intentionally deceive, are largely thwarted. Only when he can control government can he effectively and massively destroy truth. But having done this, his powers in this field are almost unlimited. Probably his most effective and far-reaching device is that of socialized education. By this satanic scheme, he takes children from their parents at an early age and places them under the tutelage of teachers whose jobs depend upon their teaching what the state wants taught. By using such teachers and carefully selected courses and textbooks, he can fill their innocent and unsuspecting minds with his false doctrines.

Control over government also gives him control over radio and television, over newspapers and magazines, over lecture halls and moving picture productions. Only those who will write, speak, and portray the lies he wants told will be permitted to use these powerful communication media. Then when we add to these controls the power to deny freedom of worship and assembly and to punish any who speak out against the "official lies," we can see that Satan's power to destroy truth is practically complete when he controls government. It is the ultimate weapon for this purpose; whereas if it is used to protect freedom and truth, he is virtually helpless.

HOW SATAN CAN BEST DESTROY THE LORD'S THREE ORGANIZATIONS WHICH PROVIDE AND PROTECT FREEDOM

By the act of corrupting government and putting his disciples in control of it, Satan has abolished a key organization in the Lord's plan of freedom. By this single act, he has destroyed that agency the Lord has established to punish evil, and replaced it with an equally powerful force which can now be used to commit and protect evil. No other goal can be of greater importance to him than this one.

Furthermore, control of government also puts Satan in a position to destroy families and the Lord's church. With the police power subject to his control, there are a variety of means Satan can use to prevent the family from functioning. Through socialized education and universal military training, he can take children from their parents and place them either in public schools or in the armed forces, thus making it impossible for parents to perform the most vital responsibility they have—the training of their own children.

Using the police power, he can destroy the right of private property thus preventing parents from owning a home in which they can raise their children. By this same means, he can effectively prevent them from supporting and educating their children as they wish. His control over the means by which life is sustained and freedom exercised makes it possible for him to effectively destroy the Lord's organization for the rearing of children.

Control over government also gives Satan all the power he needs to destroy the Lord's Church; its property can be confiscated; its meetings forbidden; its missionary work and publications banned; and its prophets imprisoned or executed. No religious movement can succeed in the face of determined opposition by government. History is replete with instances where the police power has been used to support and protect one religion while forcibly preventing the operation of all others. However, today Satan has been able to use the police power to abolish all churches and establish an official state religion of atheism. This is the ultimate goal for which he seeks, for as Mormon has told us:

whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him. (Moroni 7:17)

DO THE SCRIPTURES PERMIT THE CONCLUSION THAT PROSTITUTED GOVERNMENT IS SATAN'S CHURCH?

A VARIETY OF NAMES ARE USED TO DESCRIBE THE DEVIL'S ORGANIZATION

The discussion of Satan's plan in the foregoing chapter appears to compel the conclusion that only prostituted government can fill the role of "The Great and Abominable Church." With control over the armies, the navies, and the police, Satan is able to accomplish his purpose of destroying free agency with force, while without such control he cannot. But is such a conclusion permitted by the scriptures?

Many people make the assumption that when Nephi used the word "church" to describe Satan's organization, he meant the same thing as we do when we use that term today. Even though John the Revelator never used this term, and even though both prophets used a variety of other names to identify this world-wide evil, the tendency has been to fix attention upon the name church to the exclusion of all other names used, and to confine identification efforts to "religious" movements only.

There is no more justification for doing this than there is for looking exclusively at the name "Babylon," or "Mother of Abominations," or "Whore of all the Earth," for an understanding of what was meant. All three of these names appear in modern revelation as well as in John's writings. If we look to the name Babylon for enlightenment, we are fully justified in concluding that the prophets were describing prostituted government. Babylon was the name of the greatest city in western Asia for many years. It represented a terrible evil to the people of the Bible. It was the controlling center of a huge political empire whose armies devastated the holy land killing or enslaving everyone there. The survivors of one invasion were held in bondage in Babylon for upwards of seventy years, which event has come to be known as the "Babylonian captivity." It is not at all unlikely that John was describing a fearful political power when he used the term "Babylon the Great." (Rev. 17:5)

Some attach meaning to the fact that the prophets have oftentimes referred to the devil's church in terms used to describe a prostitute, i.e., "whore of all the earth," "mother of harlots," and "the great whore that sitteth upon many waters." They conclude from this that since the Lord established His Church and it was corrupted through apostasy, only a prostituted religious denomination could fill this description. But inasmuch as governments are also "instituted of God," and since the Lord's purpose in establishing them is to give men freedom, this same reasoning could apply to this organization. Satan has taken that agency with which God protects free agency and prostituted it to his purpose of destroying free agency.

WHICH ORGANIZATION CAN WE EXPECT SATAN TO USE— CHURCH OR STATE?

Suppose Satan were to pick the organization which best suits his needs; which would it be, a church or a government? Would the leaders of his organization build church buildings wherein congregations would gather each Sabbath to worship God, listen to sermons and have their sins forgiven? Or would it be more likely that they would build instruments to wage war, commit murder, inflict torture, and engage in plunder? Would Satan's forces use Bibles, statuaries, monasteries, and missionaries, or would they use guns, prisons, execution cellars, armies, and police forces? Would Satan merely invite people to attend his worship services once a week, or would he use the police power to compel them to attend his institutions every day to permit full indoctrination? Would he depend upon voluntary contributions to finance his operations, or would he compel everyone to subsidize him through the imposition of taxes?

Some may believe that in times past certain churches have engaged in murder, torture, and plunder to achieve evil purposes. They may assume that because one sect has been favored and subsidized, while all competing denominations have been suppressed with physical violence, that the protected religion should be charged with the crimes committed on its behalf.

We fall into serious error when we attribute such crimes to churches because, as such, they are powerless to commit them. Even though religious leaders may be in full accord with the violence used, they cannot use it themselves as church officials. Only when they either occupy positions in government, or are able to influence that power, can they destroy free agency by force. Only when a church is one and the same organization as prostituted government can it properly be called the church of the devil. In a nation where government is performing its proper function of protecting freedom, church leaders cannot carry out Satan's plan. They would be apprehended and punished as criminals if they attempted to do so.

SATAN'S CHURCH AND THE MURDER OF THE SAINTS AND PROPHETS

We should be able to identify Satan's church by its activities as they are set forth in the scriptures. It has been charged with enslaving, torturing, and murdering the saints of God:

Behold the foundation of a church which is most abominable above all other churches, which slayeth the saints of God, yea, and tortureth them and bindeth them with a yoke of iron, and bringeth them down into captivity. (1 Nephi 13:5)

Since only the police power can do these things with impunity; whereas, without the state's complicity they cannot occur, government comes immediately under suspicion. Let us recall some of the better known murders and persecutions of the prophets with this thought in mind.

It is commonly accepted that the Jews crucified Christ. While theirs may be the primary responsibility for this awful deed, it was actually carried out by the Roman government. Until the Rabbis, Scribes, and Pharisees were able to bend the civil arm to their will, they were afraid to kill the Savior. The martyrdom of Christ's apostles is also chargeable either directly or indirectly to the state. History records that Roman rulers tortured, imprisoned, and murdered Christians by the thousands. Later, the government used some of the beautiful principles of Christianity to solidify its political authority. After having done so, the police power was used to suppress and destroy all opposing creeds. Not only did it put down with force all other faiths, but the taxing power was used to enable the civil and religious leaders to live in idleness and luxury. Nephi saw:

the gold, and the silver, and the silks, and the scarlets, and the fine-twined linen, and the precious clothing, and the harlots... (1 Nephi 13:8)

This sensual living was made possible because government was used to collect “contributions” from the taxpayers, suppress the printing of books, and otherwise keep the people in ignorance and bondage. Prostituted government is truly the “mother of abominations” because of the numerous evils it commits and causes, and the wickedness it subsidizes and encourages.

Book of Mormon history verifies the conclusion that government is the organization ordinarily used to murder the prophets and saints. When Abinadi was sent to warn a group of Nephites of impending destruction, Noah, using his authority as king, first jailed this prophet and then put him to death.

Alma and Amulek who went on a similar mission to the city of Ammonihah were thrown in jail by the chief judge and brutally treated. Many of their converts were forcibly ejected from the city and those who remained were burned to death by the officers of government.

Immediately preceding Christ’s visit to the Nephites,

there began to be men inspired from heaven and sent forth, standing among the people in all the land, preaching and testifying boldly of the sins and iniquities of the people... (3 Nephi 6:20)

Once again the arm of government was used against the prophets. The record says:

Now there were many of those who testified of the things pertaining to Christ...who were taken and put to death secretly by the judges... (3 Nephi 6:23)

If we turn to the Jaredite record, we find all the recorded murders of the prophets among that people attributable to a corrupted government. (Ether 9:29; 11:5; Alma 37:30)

The use of the power of government to kill the Lord’s servants in this last dispensation is found in the murder of the prophet Joseph, his brother Hyrum, and others. Speaking specifically of the deaths of Joseph and Hyrum the scriptures state:

They were innocent of any crime, as they had often been proved before, and were only confined in jail by the conspiracy of traitors and wicked men; and their innocent blood on the floor of Carthage jail is a broad seal affixed to °Mormonism” that cannot be rejected by any court on earth, and their innocent blood on the escutcheon of the State of Illinois, with the broken faith of the State as pledged by the governor, is a witness to the truth of the everlasting gospel... (D&C 135:7)

Additional evidence that the police power was responsible for these murders is the fact that no one was ever punished for them.

OTHER SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE OF THE IDENTITY OF SATAN’S CHURCH

Let us consider other scriptures which should help to identify Satan’s church. The angel, in showing Nephi what would happen concerning that organization during these latter days said:

Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth. (1 Nephi 14:10)

According to this prophecy, everyone will eventually take sides and belong either to the Lord's or the devil's church. While a member of Christ's Church will have no difficulty identifying that organization, there is only one organization which will fit the description of the other, and that is prostituted government. This is the only "church" to which everyone belongs, and no other organization—religious or otherwise—can possibly meet the test of world-wide membership. The verse immediately following the one above quoted also leads to this conclusion. It says:

And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people. (Ibid., v. 11)

The only "church" which can exert a dominion of that extent is worldwide government, or a group of governments carrying out the same satanic purpose. No apostate religious denomination can ever be expected to wield power of those dimensions. But Nephi also saw that:

the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God. (Ibid., v. 13)

Only government has the power to assemble armies to fight a war. It was at this point that Nephi saw "wars and rumors of wars among all the nations which belonged to the mother of abominations..." (v. 15-16) This passage assures us that "nations" belong to the mother of abominations, and if such be true, we can assume that this membership is governmental or political in nature. The continuing adoption of the philosophy of communism (socialism) in every nation on earth is the fulfillment of Nephi's prophecies.

THE PROPHECIES OF JOHN ALSO POINT TO PROSTITUTED GOVERNMENT AS THE DEVIL'S CHURCH

While the prophecies of John in the Book of Revelation are not nearly as plain as those of Nephi, they serve to confirm the conclusion drawn. He foresaw, as did Nephi, that the devil's church would,

shed the blood of saints and prophets... (Rev. 16:6; 17:6; 18:24)

His assertion that "the kings of the earth have committed fornication with" the devil's church suggests the prostitution of government to Satan's purposes and a surrender of national power to a world-wide conspiracy. John also sees an interesting relationship between Satan's church and the merchants of the earth. He notes that they are:

waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. (Rev. 18:3)

He sees the time come when,

no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. (Rev. 13:17)

Then when Babylon the Great is destroyed,

The merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:

The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk...and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep...

The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing. (Rev. 18:11-15)

This appears to be a description of the tendency of governments today to license every trade, every business, every farm, every profession, and indeed, every job. Only those who have first received permission from the police power, or the mark of the beast can produce and sell goods and services to the public. Freedom of the people to patronize whom they choose, to work where they please, or to hire whom they will has been greatly restricted in every nation. When the “whore of all the earth” is destroyed, we can fully expect these licensees, and government-protected monopolists to mourn because “no man buyeth their merchandise any more.”

Modern scripture calls the devil’s church “the great persecutor of the church” [of Christ] (D&C 86:3) and Nephi commented that the numbers of the church of the Lamb “were few because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters.” (1 Nephi 14:12) Only government has the power to deny religious freedom, prohibit missionary work, and ban publications. Over much of the world today, these and many other restrictions prevent the growth of the work of the Lord.

RELIGIOUS HISTORY AFFIRMS THAT SATAN HAS ALWAYS TRIED TO CONTROL GOVERNMENT

If it be true that the central feature of Satan's plan for man on earth is to utilize the power of government to destroy the agency of men, religious history should confirm this fact. The prophecies of Nephi and John regarding the devil's church concerned the nations of the Gentiles from the days of Christ to the end of the world. Let us turn to the records of the Antediluvians, the Jaredites, and the Nephites for information concerning Satan's organized activities among them. If our conclusion concerning his "church" among the Gentiles is correct, these other histories should furnish substantiating evidence.

SATAN'S ORGANIZATIONS AMONG THE ANTEDILUVIANS

Virtually all references to Satan's organizations among the antediluvians have been painstakingly removed from the Old Testament. Not one word regarding the secret combinations he formed during the days of the Patriarchal reign appears in the book of Genesis. Neither is there any record in the Bible of the devil's appearance to Moses. However, the Lord made some of this deleted information available to us today by giving to Joseph Smith the revelation known as the Book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price. He told Moses he would do this very thing:

And in a day when the children of men shall esteem my words as naught and take many of them from the book which thou shalt write, behold, I will raise up another like unto thee; and they shall be had again among the children of men—among as many as shall believe. (Moses 1:41)

It is specifically mentioned in the Book of Moses that certain information regarding Satan had been removed. Following the account of Satan's appearance to Moses, the Lord said:

And now of this thing Moses bore record; but because of wickedness it is not had among the children of men. (Moses 1:23)

It appears that Satan has gone to great trouble to prevent the world from obtaining a knowledge of him and his organizations. It will be recalled that John's account of the Great and Abominable Church was badly mutilated by that very organization. *Nonetheless*, the Pearl of Great Price provides us with some information regarding evil organizations before the flood. Satan's first secret combination was headed up by Cain and the record shows that his posterity continued to give it leadership down through at least five direct descendants. (Moses 5:41-5 1; Hela. 6:27) Lamech was number five in the lineage of Cain, and concerning him and the secret combinations we have this information:

For Lamech having entered into a covenant with Satan, after the manner of Cain, wherein he became Master Mahan, master of that great secret which was administered unto Cain by Satan; and Irad, the son of Enoch, having known their secret, began to reveal it unto the sons of Adam;

Wherefore Lamech, being angry, slew him, not like unto Cain, his brother Abel, for the sake of getting gain, but he slew him for the oath's sake.

For from the days of Cain, there was a secret combination, and their works were in the dark, and they knew every man his brother. (Moses 5:49-51)

SATAN'S ORGANIZATIONS AMONG THE JAREDITES

Much more information has been given concerning Satan's organizations among the Jaredites than among the antediluvians. It may well be that one of the primary reasons the Lord has given us their record is to provide us with one additional warning about secret combinations. Although the Book of Ether covers some 2,000 years of history, and concerns itself with what was apparently the greatest nation which was ever on the earth (Ether 1:43), it is only thirty-two pages long. But within those thirty-two pages (15 Chapters), secret combinations and secret societies are mentioned sixteen times. One of the vital messages contained within this severely abbreviated account of this great civilization appears to be: beware of Satan's secret organizations,

Time and again, the historian Moroni tells of the formation of these secret societies. They invariably caused bloodshed and great wickedness. This was followed by calamity and destruction, after which the people would repent and the cycle would commence again. These secret combinations among the Jaredites were of the same nature and purpose as those established by Cain and Satan in the beginning. It appears that the Jaredites had a detailed account of their formation among the antediluvians. This fact is brought out in connection with the discussion of their first appearance in the Jaredite nation.

Jared, the son of the good king Omer, had rebelled against his father and taken over the reins of government, only to be deposed by force of arms. However, he had set his heart upon the kingdoms and glory of the world, and his daughter, seeing his sorrow and disappointment said to him:

Whereby hath my father so much sorrow? Hath he not read the record which our fathers brought across the great deep? Behold, is there not an account concerning them of old, that they by their secret plans did obtain kingdoms and great glory? (Ether 8:9)

Acting on this diabolical suggestion, Jared and a friend named Akish established a secret combination among his kinfolk and administered unto them an oath that whosoever would fail to support him and this wicked society would lose his head. These oaths, the record says, had been handed down from Cain:

And it came to pass that thus they did agree with Akish. And Akish did administer unto them the oaths which were given by them of old who also sought power, which had been handed down even from Cain, who was a murderer from the beginning. (Ether 8:15)

These secret combinations continued to wreak havoc in the Jaredite nation right down to the end and were the cause of its eventual total destruction:

And they [secret combinations] have caused the destruction of this people of whom I am now speaking, [the Jaredites] and also the destruction of the people of Nephi. (Ether 8:21)

SATAN'S ORGANIZATIONS AMONG THE NEPHITES

The Book of Mormon provides a wealth of detail concerning Satan's organizations among the Nephites, however the principal name applied to their secret combinations was the "Gadianton Robbers" after the name of the individual who was instrumental in first establishing this evil society among his people. Nevertheless, the record assures us that Satan was the real head and that his organizations among the Nephites were the same kind as those which had destroyed both the Antediluvians and the Jaredites. This fact is set forth in this passage:

Now behold, those secret oaths and covenants did not come forth unto Gadianton from the records which were delivered unto Helaman; but behold, they were put into the heart of Gadianton by that same being who did entice our first parents to partake of the forbidden fruit—Yea, that same being who did plot with Cain, that if he would murder his brother Abel it should not be known unto the world. And he did plot with Cain and his followers from that time forth.

And also it is that same being who put it into the hearts of the people to build a tower sufficiently high that they might get to heaven. And it was that same being who led on the people who came from that tower into this land; who spread the works of darkness and abominations over all the face of the land, until he dragged the people down to an entire destruction, and to an everlasting hell. (Hela. 6:26-28)

The Gadianton Band became a mortal threat to the Nephite nation three different times prior to the coming of Christ and at least once afterwards. Each time it prospered, it caused great wickedness, bloodshed, and suffering, and eventually caused the entire destruction of this people also. (Ether 8:21)

THE BOOK OF MORMON DISCLOSES THAT THE SECRET COMBINATIONS ALWAYS SOUGHT CONTROL OF GOVERNMENT

Let us examine the Book of Mormon for evidence that Satan seeks control of government through his secret combinations, thereby trying to establish his great and abominable church. While the pre-flood records are so brief that they disclose very little regarding this matter, the Book of Ether makes it clear that the secret societies among the Jaredites always sought to occupy the position of the supreme civil authority. The very first time the organization was established, it achieved this objective. The record says:

it came to pass that because of the secret combinations of Akish and his friends, behold, they did overthrow the kingdom of Omer.

And it came to pass that Jared was anointed king over the people by the hand of wickedness... (Ether 9:1, 4)

Poetic justice overtook this wicked son who had dispossessed his father, for his son-in-law who had helped establish the secret society to place him on the throne, used that organization to murder him and take his place:

And it came to pass that Akish sought the life of his father-in-law; and he applied unto those whom he had sworn by the oath of the ancients, and they obtained the head of his father-in-law, as he sat upon his throne, giving audience to his people therefore fared was murdered upon his throne, and Akish reigned in his stead. (Ether 9:5-6)

A few generations later, we find another wicked son setting up a secret society to be used to wrest the throne from his father:

and Heth began to embrace the secret plans again of old, to destroy his father.

And it came to pass that he did dethrone his father, for he slew him with his own sword; and he did reign in his stead (Ether 9:26-27)

At the time of the final destruction of the Jaredite nation, these secret combinations were still striving for political control:

Wherefore, it came to pass that in the first year that Ether dwelt in the cavity of a rock, there were many people who were slain by the sword of those secret combinations, fighting against Coriantumr that they might obtain the kingdom. (Ether 13:18)

The supreme object of the Gadianton Band among the Nephites was identical—the control of government. There is no indication of the existence of these secret combinations among this people until after they had established a government subject to the voice of the people in the year 92 B.C. But only forty years thereafter, a dispute arose as to which of three brothers should be the governor, and such an organization was formed for the purpose of murdering the successful candidate. (Hela. 1:7-11) Upon the death of this first victim, Helaman was elected governor and this secret band immediately undertook to murder him and seize power. Its purposes and methods are clearly set forth in the following passage:

For there was one Gadianton, who was exceeding expert in many words, and also in his craft, to carry on the secret work of murder and robbery; therefore he became the leader of the band of Kishkumen.

Therefore he did flatter them, and also Kishkumen, that if they would place him in the judgment-seat he would grant unto those who belonged to his band that they should be placed in power and authority among the people; therefore Kishkumen sought to destroy Helaman. (Hela. 2:4-5)

Due to some effective counter-espionage work by one of Helaman's servants, Kishkumen was killed while making an attempt on Helaman's life, and this put an end to the immediate threat to gain control. However, about twenty-five years thereafter, because of increasing wickedness, this band had grown to large proportions and in a single year, they murdered the chief judge whose name was Cezoram, and then his son who succeeded him. By means of these two assassinations, they were able to get their own candidate in office. The record says: "And thus they did obtain the sole management of the government..." (Hela. 6:3 9) Of course the Lord will not suffer that such abominations shall reign on this land, and therefore He sent a famine which caused the people to perish by the thousands, thus bringing repentance and a cleansing of their government. (Hela. 11:10-17)

Approximately thirty years later the Gadianton Band again assumed such a size that it became a mortal threat to the Nephite government. The leader of the robbers, Giddianhi, feeling that his forces were sufficiently strong to capture control of the entire Nephite nation, wrote an epistle to Lachoneus, governor of the Nephites, in which he demanded that the latter should:

yield up unto this my people your cities, your lands, and your possessions, rather than that they should visit you with the sword and that destruction should come upon you. (3 Nephi 3:6)

His main purpose in making this threat was the seizure of political power because everything else would naturally follow as a result thereof. This purpose is disclosed in another part of his epistle which reads:

And I write this epistle unto you, Lachoneus, and I hope that ye will deliver up your lands and your possessions, without the shedding of blood, that this my people may recover their rights and government, who have dissented away from you because of your wickedness in retaining from them their rights of government... (3 Nephi 3:10)

When Lachoneus refused this demand, an eight or nine year war ensued which caused the greatest slaughter which had occurred among the children of Lehi to that time. However, the Gadianton Band was eventually defeated, disbanded, and its leader executed. It was only about nine years thereafter that another secret combination was formed for the purpose of seizing political power. The record says of this new group:

And they did set at defiance the law and the rights of their country; and they did covenant one with another to destroy the governor, and to establish a king over the land, that the land should no more be at liberty but should be subject unto kings. (3 Nephi 6:30)

The combination failed again to control the entire Nephite nation. Although they once more murdered the governor, they were not sufficiently strong to install their own man in his place; therefore, they formed a separate government with a man named Jacob at its head. The more numerous part of the Nephite nation broke up into tribes. King Jacob led his people northward where they established a kingdom of their own, hoping to become numerous enough to return and take complete control. Jacob told his followers that in their separate location they would

there build up unto themselves a kingdom, until they were joined by dissenters, (for he flattered them that there would be many dissenters) and they become sufficiently strong to contend with the tribes of the people;... (3 Nephi 7:12)

Before they were able to make a complete political conquest, Christ obliterated them and their city with fire. His comments concerning their destruction indicates that He regards the destruction of government by these Satan-led combinations as being “above all the wickedness of the whole earth:”

And behold, that great city Jacobugath,...have I caused to be burned with fire because of their sins and their wickedness, which was above all the wickedness of the whole earth, because of their secret murders and combinations; for it was they that did destroy the peace of my people and the government of the land; therefore I did cause them to be burned...(3 Nephi 9:9)

Moroni confirms the fact that these secret combinations of Satan which eternally seek to prostitute government are the ultimate in wickedness:

And it came to pass that they formed a secret combination, even as they of old; which combination is most abominable and wicked above all in the sight of God (Ether 8:18)

ARE THE SECRET COMBINATIONS AND THE CHURCH OF THE DEVIL ONE AND THE SAME ORGANIZATION?

While Nephi prophesied that in these latter days there would be “secret combinations, even as in times of old, according to the combinations of the devil,” neither he nor the other prophets appear to have explicitly identified them as the church of the devil. Nevertheless, the question naturally arises as to whether they are one and the same organization. Let us observe some of their similarities. Satan is said to be the founder and head of both. (1 Nephi 13:6; Ether 8:25) They are both described by the prophets as being the ultimate in wickedness. (3 Nephi 9:9; Ether 8:18; 1 Nephi 13:5) They are both the source of abominations. (Hela. 7:25; 1 Nephi 14:9)

This evidence suggests that the two organizations are the same, but there is one additional consideration which is even more convincing. Nephi prophesied that during these latter days, Satan’s Great and Abominable Church would spread over the earth and have dominion among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people. He saw it become a terrible threat to the members of the Church of the Lamb in that it gathered multitudes from among all the nations of the Gentiles to make war against them.

At this point, he was commanded to stop recording what he saw, but John the Revelator finishes the story and states that this “whore of all the earth” became “drunken with the blood of the saints.” (Rev. 17:6) However, Moroni states that the secret combinations will be responsible for the murder of the saints among the Gentiles. After noting that,

the Lord will not suffer that the blood of his saints, which shall be shed by them shall always cry unto him from the ground for vengeance upon them and yet he avenge them not. (Ether 8:22)

he goes on to say:

Wherefore, O ye Gentiles, it is wisdom in God that these things should be shown unto you, that thereby ye may repent of your sins, and suffer not that these murderous combinations shall get above you, which are built up to get power and gain...

Wherefore, the Lord commandeth you, when ye shall see these things come among you that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation, because of this secret combination which shall be among you; or woe be unto it, because of the blood of them who have been slain; for they cry from the dust for vengeance upon it, and also upon those who built it up. (Ether 8:23-24)

It seems most unlikely that Nephi and Moroni would attribute the murder of the prophets to two separate organizations. Moroni also says that the secret combinations would seek world-wide dominion just as the devil’s church is predicted to do:

For it cometh to pass that whoso buildeth it up [secret combinations] seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries; . . . (Ether 8:25)

From all of this evidence it would seem safe to conclude that since the secret combinations are always seeking to obtain control of government, and since the devil's church is completely-corrupted government, the secret combinations are the devil's church in embryo until they achieve their purpose. Thereafter, there is no distinction between them.

IDENTIFICATION OF SATAN'S CHURCH BY LATTER-DAY PROPHETS

COMMUNISM—THE GREATEST SATANICAL THREAT ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH

Heretofore, we have concluded that the only organization which fits the description of the Great and Abominable Church of the Devil given by the scriptures is prostituted government. We have shown that Satan's church and his secret combinations are one and the same *in* purpose and method; that according to prophecy, this organization will have dominion over all the earth in these last days; that it will wage war against the Lord's Church and slay His saints and prophets. It now remains to observe that latter-day prophets have confirmed this identity of Satan's movement thereby fulfilling the Lord's promise that He would,

bring to light all their secrets and abominations, unto every nation that shall here after possess the land (Alma 37:25)

Probably the most direct and forceful statement regarding the identity of Satan's organizations during these latter days was made by the late President David O. McKay to the priesthood of the Church during the General Conference of April, 1966 when he said:

The position of this Church on the subject of Communism has never changed We consider it the greatest satanical threat to peace, prosperity, and the spread of God's work among men that exists on the face of the earth. (Era, June 1966, p. 477; CR 4/66:109)

This information was considered of such vital importance that President McKay repeated it in the General Conference Priesthood Session of April 1969.

President McKay had previously identified Communism or "domination by the state," as Satan's force in a talk given at Brigham Young University on May 18, 1960. At that time he stated:

I was due here two weeks ago, and had a theme to deliver which I thought was timely and appropriate, but I come with another theme this morning— 'Two Contending Forces.'

Those forces are known and have been designated by different terms throughout the ages. In the beginning they were known as Satan on the one hand, and Christ on the other...In these days, they are called 'domination by the state' on the one hand, 'personal liberty' on the other; communism on the one hand, free agency on the other. (McKay, Speeches of the Year, "Two Contending Forces," B.Y.U., May 18, 1960)

According to these statements, if Satan has a church on earth today it cannot be other than corrupted government or “domination by the state.” If there is a secret combination among us which is seeking “to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries” as Moroni prophesied, then it has to be the great Communist conspiracy and the movement to impose socialism world-wide. The “greatest Satanical threat on the face of the earth” and that “church which is most abominable above all other churches” must be one and the same organization.

Right from the beginning of this last dispensation, the prophets have been warning against socialism, communism and secret combinations. Speaking in 1881, the late President John Taylor said:

I am sorry to see this murderous influence prevailing throughout the world, and perhaps this may be a fitting occasion to refer to some of these matters. The manifestations of turbulence and uneasiness which prevail among the nations of the earth are truly lamentable...These feelings which tend to do away with all right, rule, and government, and correct principles are not from God...This feeling of communism and nihilism, aimed at the overthrow of rulers and men in position and authority, arises from a spirit of diabolism, which is contrary to every principle of the Gospel...

These things are beginning to spread among and permeate the nations of the earth. Do we expect them? Yes. These secret combinations were spoken of by Joseph Smith, years and years ago. I have heard him time and time again tell about them, and he stated that when these things began to take place the liberties of this nation would begin to be bartered away. (JD 22:142-3)

During the depression days of the 1930's when the United States as well as other nations were undergoing a political and economic crises, the late President Heber J. Grant and his councilors, finding that some Church members were ‘joining, directly or indirectly the Communists and taking part in their activities,’ called upon “all Church members completely to eschew Communism.” They went on to say:

The safety of our divinely inspired Constitutional government and the welfare of our Church imperatively demand that Communism shall have no place in America. (Era, Aug. 1936 p. 488)

Such warnings were reiterated by the prophets throughout the 1940's, 50's and 60's. Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve, whose great wisdom and extensive experience with government qualifies him to speak with deep understanding, is well known for his vigorous and repeated attacks against the devil's secret combinations. Here is just one of the many which could be quoted:

It is most unthinkable that any people would knowingly and willfully take on themselves the yoke of communist oppression... As a people who have known only liberty, we are inclined to feel, it cannot happen here. We have become lulled away into a false security...I say to you it can happen here. It is happening here. We have retreated from the Monroe Doctrine. Our liberty is in danger. But we go blithely and gullibly on our way. Some of us fall for the Kremlin line as planned by the mass murderer, Khrushchev and call patriots ‘extremists’ and accuse courageous liberty-loving citizens of ‘dividing our people.’ We must be vigilant. Let us unite. Let us join in our fight against the forces of anti-Christ. (CR, Oct. 1962, p.17)

In the April Conference of 1963, Elder Hugh B. Brown of the Council of the Twelve, and a man trained in the law, and familiar with the problems of government added his warning:

The threat of communism is sinister, and its dangers are imminent. Hundreds of millions of our fellow beings are being relentlessly imbued with the satanic ideology that the Father-hood of God, the Saviorhood of Christ, and the brotherhood of man are stupid myths, that religion is nothing but a tranquilizing opiate. They seek to deprive men of physical, mental, and spiritual freedom while endowing the state with monstrous supremacy. This relentless indoctrination is but a continuation of the war that began when Satan's plan of force was rejected by the Father. We live in the most dangerous period of all history... The Church is the main bulwark against communism. (CR, Apr. 1963, p. 7)

COMMUNISM DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED TO THE CHURCH

But it was in the conference of April, 1966 that Church members were told of Satan's organization and philosophy in terms so plain and so specific that no one who desired to understand could remain oblivious to the terrible danger which hangs over this nation, the Church, and the entire world. Not only did the living Prophet of God identify Satan's greatest Satanical threat, but he went on to point out that Communism is the philosophy of Lucifer.

Said he:

The entire concept and philosophy of Communism is diametrically opposed to everything for which the Church stands... Communism destroys man's God-given free agency. No member of this Church can be true to his faith, nor can any American be loyal to his trust, while lending aid, encouragement, or sympathy to any of these false philosophies; for if he does, they will prove snares to his feet. (Era, June 1966, pp. 477, 580)

In a second talk given at the same priesthood session by Marion G. Romney, socialism and welfare-statism were identified as being part of Satan's overall plan. Just a month prior to the conference, he had delivered a talk at the Brigham Young University entitled, "Socialism and the United Order Compared." He repeated that talk in the priesthood session. His excuse for doing so was that "the Brethren" requested it. The "Brethren" are, of course, the Church leadership. They knew what was in the speech. Its contents had their approval, and even though it was available for distribution in printed form, and even though it had been given to a large audience of Church members on March 1, 1966, they wanted the entire Priesthood of the Church to hear it. It contained some vital facts concerning Satan's plan.

WELFARE-STATISM, SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM

As to the relationship between Communism and Socialism, Elder Romney quoted George Douglas Howard Cole, a noted authority in this field who had prepared a statement on Socialism for the Encyclopedia Britannica. Part of the quoted material says:

The distinction between socialism, as represented by the various Socialists and Labour parties of Europe and the New World, and Communism, as represented by the Russians, is one of tactics and strategy rather than of objectives. Communism is indeed only socialism pursued by revolutionary means and making its revolutionary method a canon of faith. Communists, like other socialists, (1) believe in the collective control and ownership of the vital means of production and (2) seek to achieve through state action the coordinated control of the economic forces of society. (Era, June 1966, p. 536)

Attention is directed to the fact that “Communism is...only socialism pursued by revolutionary means.” Regarding the relationship between socialism and welfare-statism, Elder Romney said:

We here in the United States, in converting our government into a social welfare state, have ourselves adopted much of socialism. Specifically, we have to an alarming degree adopted the use of the power of the state in the control and distribution of the fruits of industry. We are on notice, according to the words of the President [of the U.S.] that we are going much further, for he is quoted as saying: we’re going to take all the money we think is unnecessarily being spent and take it from the ‘haves’ and give it to the ‘have-nots!’ (1964 Congressional Record, p. 6142) That is the spirit of socialism: We’re going to take. The spirit of the United Order is: We’re going to give.

We have also come a long way on the road to public ownership and management of the vital means of production. In both these areas the free agency of Americans has been greatly abridged (Era, June 1966, p. 536)

The following statement by Elder Romney indicates the extent to which the philosophy of socialism now covers the earth:

However, notwithstanding my abhorrence of it, I am persuaded that socialism is the wave of the present and of the foreseeable future. It has already taken over or is contending for control in most nations. (Ibid)

In support of this assertion he quoted again from the Encyclopedia Britannica:

At the end of the year [1964] parties affiliated with the [Socialists] International were in control of the governments of Great Britain, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Israel, and the Malagasy Republic. They had representatives in coalition cabinets in Austria, Belgium, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, and Switzerland; constituted the chief opposition in France, India, and West Germany; and were significant political forces in numerous other countries. Many parties dominant in governments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America announced that their aim was a socialist society. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1965 Book of the year, p. 736)

A more recent edition of this Encyclopedia has this to say under the heading: “The world-wide spread of socialism:”

The idea of socialism, which until World War I had inspired labour movements almost exclusively in the West, already manifested itself in the interwar period, both as Social Democracy and Communism in some Asian countries, and after World War II spread rapidly all over the globe. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1970, Vol. 20, p. 756 A)

Assuming the truth of the above statements, we must conclude that the time foreseen by Nephi is fast approaching when the Great and Abominable Church of the Devil will have:

dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people. (1 Nephi 14:11)

Since “Communism is indeed only Socialism pursued by revolutionary means,” and since the adoption of welfare-state measures has the affect of converting a nation into a socialist state, and furthermore since all nations must today be classed as having one of these three types of government, the devil’s plan either has been, or is in the process of being, adopted in every nation.

PRESIDENT MCKAY’S COUNSEL TO EDUCATORS

The late President David O. McKay’s views on socialism and welfare-statism were expressed in a letter dated May 25, 1967, written to Ernest L. Wilkinson, President of Brigham Young University. This letter, which gave instructions regarding what should and should not be taught regarding these matters, was regarded of sufficient importance that the entire Board of Trustees unanimously approved it

as the policy of the Board of Trustees for the guidance of the Board, the University Administration, and present and prospective members of the faculty.

Copies of the letter have been sent out to faculty members each year for the past several years along with their teaching appointments. In this letter, President McKay first called attention to

recent disturbing events in our country—such as an alarming increase in nearly all categories of crime, divorce, juvenile and adult delinquency, riots at colleges, strikes of school teachers, civil disorders which go far beyond peaceable assemblies, ‘ the resurrection of a pagan philosophy that God is dead, demoralizing movies, television programs which encourage lewd and lascivious conduct.

Then he traced these evils—in part at least—to the welfare-state:

I cannot help but think that there is a direct relationship between the present evil trends which I have above indicated, and the very marked tendency of the people of our country to pass on to the state the responsibility for their moral and economic welfare. This trend to a welfare state in which people look to and worship government more than their God, is certain to sap the individual ambitions and moral fiber of our youth unless they are warned and rewarned of the consequences. History, of course, is replete with the downfall of nations who, instead of assuming their own responsibility for their religious and economic welfare, mistakenly attempted to shift their individual responsibilities to the government.

After having condemned the welfare-state in those terms, he went on to connect its doctrines with the socialistic state and to warn faculty members to avoid advocating either:

I am aware that a university has the responsibility of acquainting its students with the theories and doctrines which are prevalent in various disciplines, but I hope that no one on the faculty of Brigham Young University will advocate positions which cannot be harmonized with the views of every prophet of the Church, from the Prophet Joseph Smith on down, concerning our belief that we should be strong and self-reliant individuals, not dependent upon the largess of government. None of the doctrines of our Church give any sanction to the concept of a socialistic state.

The above quotes are but a small sample of a great number of similar warnings by the prophets. However, these should be sufficient to demonstrate that the Lord has adequately fulfilled His promise to reveal the nature and identity of Satan's organizations and works in this dispensation.

Note: Those interested in an excellent compilation of the utterances of latter-day prophets regarding political matters should consult Newquist's book, *Prophets, Principles and National Survival*, Joe Ferguson, (801) 756-4452, American Fork, Utah.

*The prophets, particularly of the Book of Mormon, saw our day. You will learn more from studying and reading the Book of Mormon (about our current problems) than you will by reading the daily paper or the slick magazines...read it every day and become acquainted with it and gain a knowledge of how the adversary is organized and working, and what his designs are for this Church. (President Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p. 62)*

THE CONCEPT AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE DEVIL'S CHURCH

THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

Since a prophet of God has proclaimed to the people of the Church that:

the entire concept and philosophy of Communism is diametrically opposed to everything for which the Church stands,

and that one cannot be true to his faith while “lending aid, encouragement, or sympathy to any of these false philosophies,” a knowledge of those philosophies is essential to anyone who desires to avoid accepting them. Fortunately, the main concepts of this satanical doctrine are embodied in a fairly concise statement called the “Communist Manifesto.” It is not much longer than the United States Constitution. According to G.D.H. Cole who is a recognized authority on socialism:

The ‘communist manifesto’ drafted by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels for the Communist League...in...1848 is generally regarded as the starting point of modern socialism. (Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 20, p. 295, 1943 ed.)

Not only is the Manifesto regarded as the starting point of modern socialism, it has also served as the Communists’ Bible since then. Because it is regarded as authoritative, its essential parts, together with a preface written by Engels, have been included herein as Appendix II. Let us consider the philosophy and concepts of the Devil’s church, as revealed by these documents.

THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT A SECRET SOCIETY SEEKING CONTROL OF GOVERNMENT

The preface to the Manifesto admits that the Communist League commenced as a “secret society,” which is only to be expected in view of the fact that this has always been Satan’s method of operation. The Book of Mormon uses this identical name, (secret society) to describe his organizations among the Nephites and the Jaredites. (3 Nephi 3:9; Ether 9:6, 11:22) Also, we have noted that Satan’s combinations of the past had one unvarying aim which took precedence over all others—seizure of the control of government. The Manifesto announces that purpose in these words:

The immediate aim of the Communists is...conquest of political power.

ABOLITION OF THE THREE ORGANIZATIONS BY WHICH THE LORD PROVIDES AND PROTECTS FREEDOM

ABOLITION OF THE FAMILY

The Manifesto boldly proclaims the intention of Communists to abolish those three organizations by which the Lord provides and protects freedom. Their attitude toward the family is expressed thus:

Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists... The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital...But you Communists would introduce community of women, screams the whole Bourgeoisie in chorus...Bourgeois marriage is in reality a system of wives in common and thus at the most what the Communists might possibly be reproached with is that they desire to introduce, in substitution for a hypocritically concealed, an openly legalized, community of women.

ABOLITION OF THE CHURCH

Communists regard religion as the “opiate of the people” and it is well known that they systematically abolish churches wherever they come into power. The communist attitude toward religion and morals is reflected in the Manifesto by this passage:

Law, morality, religion are to him [the worker] so many bourgeois [capitalist] prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeoisie interests.

In this manner do Communists dismiss the church as a senseless, selfish, anachronism of the past. They want no interference from either the family or the church as they forcibly take children from their parents and try to mold them into hate-filled beasts without morals, without faith, without hope, and without charity.

ABOLITION OF GOVERNMENT

Their aim to overthrow all existing governments is admitted in these words:

In short, the Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things...The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workingmen of all countries, unite!

Compare this purpose with that of the secret combinations which was stated by Moroni thus:

For it cometh to pass that whoso buildeth it up seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries;... (Ether 8:25)

ABOLITION OF FREEDOM

The Manifesto also admits for its adherents the purpose to destroy freedom:

The abolition of bourgeois individuality, bourgeois independence, and bourgeoisie freedom is undoubtedly aimed at...

Of course, this statement only admits the intention to destroy the freedom of the propertied class, but since the laws apply to everyone alike, the abolition of the freedom of everyone is the aim and this is strictly in accord with Satan's plan. For example, one of the ten points of the Manifesto provides: "Equal obligation of all to work." Since the police will impose this obligation upon "all," slavery for the worker as well as the bourgeoisie is inevitable.

THE CENTRAL PURPOSE OF COMMUNISM—THE DESTRUCTION OF FREEDOM BY DESTROYING THE RIGHT OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO OWN AND CONTROL PROPERTY

Satan's great purpose here on earth is to destroy the free agency of man. Communists, like the Gadianton Robbers and secret combinations before them, undertake to achieve this goal by using government to rob everyone of the fruits of their labor. The Manifesto declares this purpose in these words:

the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: abolition of private property.

At another point, it says:

The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations.

If the Communists accomplished no more than this one goal, they would fulfill Satan's purpose of destroying free agency, because as has been shown elsewhere in this work, without the right of private property, individual freedom is impossible. As long as the state controls the food, clothing, shelter and other consumable goods as well as the instruments which produce and distribute them, the citizens can never be anything but slaves. They will do anything their masters say merely to stay alive.

Also, since no goal of any consequence can be accomplished without the use of property, only the goals of the state will be achieved rather than those of the individual. It is the abolition of private property which makes socialism and communism equally evil. Let us also observe that since every welfare state measure has the effect of transferring ownership and control of private property from the individual to the state, each such measure brings that nation which adopts it that much closer to socialist slavery.

THE MANIFESTO'S PLAN TO CONVERT A CAPITALIST NATION TO SOCIALISM—THE GRADUAL ADOPTION OF WELFARE-STATE MEASURES

It is a fact of the greatest importance that the method proposed in the Manifesto for transforming a capitalist nation into a socialist dictatorship is by the gradual adoption of a series of welfare-state measures. This was the purpose Marx and Engels had in mind in proposing the ten-point political platform contained in the Manifesto. In the following words, they urge voters to “wrest by degrees” all property from its owners:

The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest by degrees all capital from the bourgeoisie...These measures, will, of course, be different in different countries. Nevertheless, in the most advanced countries the following will be pretty generally applicable:

Following the above statement are listed the ten points of the platform. They constitute a political program of welfare-state measures which, when adopted, will destroy private property. There are various types of laws which help to accomplish this purpose and the Manifesto proposes most of them. They may conveniently be classified under the following headings:

1. Confiscation of property by means of taxation and other laws;
2. Regulation of entry into business and acquisition of jobs;
3. Regulation of the operation of businesses;
4. Regulation of the consumption and use of goods and services;
5. Regulation of the monetary system, banks, credit, and interest rates.

Let us briefly consider each of these five types of government controls, and the laws a capitalist nation might adopt to bring them to fruition.

CONFISCATION OF PROPERTY BY MEANS OF TAXATION AND OTHER LAWS

The quickest method of converting a capitalist nation to socialism is by government confiscation of all private property. The first four of the ten points of the Manifesto urge this method. The first one proposes that government confiscate all land. Under the guise of laws providing for national parks, irrigation districts, flood control, housing projects for the poor, etc., government may accomplish this. The second suggests the confiscation of all earnings above a set maximum by means of “a heavy progressive or graduated income tax.” If the tax is made heavy enough and the graduated rates are steep enough, the state can prohibit the accumulation of any capital by its citizens by taxing away all income except a bare subsistence.

The third point of the Manifesto says: “Abolition of all rights of inheritance.” Under such a policy when a person dies, instead of allowing him to pass his property on to his widow and children, government confiscates the entire estate. By means of steeply graduated gift and inheritance taxes this same result can be achieved. Large, medium, and even small estates can be destroyed upon the death of the owner by imposing a tax so high that the entire business must be liquidated to meet it.

The fourth point of the Manifesto provides for, “Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.” Having the power to determine who a “rebel” is, (presumably anyone opposed to socialism) and being able to claim the property of those who leave the country because they oppose socialism, the Communists can seize the property of everyone.

REGULATION OF ENTRY INTO BUSINESS AND ACQUISITION OF JOBS

There being no private ownership of property under socialism, the individual either works for the government or he does not work. The state, being the only employer, determines the economic activity of every person. However, in a capitalist nation this same result can be largely achieved by adopting laws which license all professions, trades, occupations, and labor unions. If no one can enter business without government consent, and if no laborer can obtain a job without the approval of the representative of a labor union which has been certified the exclusive bargaining agent, essentially the same controls which are exercised under socialism are present. The state controls every person because it can deny him access to the only means by which he can sustain life and exercise liberty.

REGULATION OF THE OPERATION OF BUSINESSES

Under socialism, the state, being the exclusive owner of the instruments of production and distribution of goods and services, has the exclusive right to make rules and regulations for the operation of such facilities. It determines where each business will be located, what products each will produce, what type of machinery and equipment will be used, what hours will be worked, wages paid, and which employee performs which job. These same controls can be exercised by government over “privately owned” businesses merely by adopting a complete set of regulatory laws. In this manner the right of private property can be essentially denied while leaving nominal title to the property in private hands.

Zoning laws give the state power to determine for what purpose each piece of land may be used and what goods and services, if any, may be produced thereon. Laws establishing product standards, safety standards, and pollution standards give the state power to determine what kind of machinery and equipment may be used and what kind of goods may be produced. Laws governing labor unions, wages, hours, working conditions and hiring practices, give the state power to control labor-management relations almost as extensively as it does under socialism.

The Manifesto suggests a number of laws designed to increase the power of government over private economic affairs. Point number six calls for:

Centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the state.

Proposal number seven provides:

Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the state; the bringing into cultivation of waste lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a single plan.

The ninth proposal suggests laws which result in,

Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country by a more equable distribution of the population over the country.

REGULATION OF THE CONSUMPTION AND USE OF GOODS AND SERVICES

Since the socialist state produces and owns all goods and services, it determines who occupies the houses, consumes the food, wears the clothes, gets the medical attention, etc., but being the only seller and the only employer, it can control consumption by regulating prices and setting wage rates. Thus, even though the wage earner may be given certain choices between various products which the state has decided to make available, it may limit the amount he may consume by controlling his income and the price at which he may buy.

In a capitalist nation, all of these powers may be exercised under a combination of (1) Wage and price controls, (2) Rationing, (3) Steeply graduated taxes, and (4) Welfare-state programs. Wage controls together with steeply graduated income taxes can be used to determine the income of every person. Price controls together with rationing and welfare state programs can be used to determine what every person can consume or use. Through rationing laws, the state can even control the press, religious institutions, and indeed, all private activities because it has the power to allocate all available resources. Government officials can make or break any business or any institution with such powers.

REGULATION OF THE MONETARY SYSTEM, BANKS, CREDIT, AND INTEREST RATES

Point number five of the Manifesto provides for:

Centralization of credit in the hands of the state by means of a national bank with state capital and an exclusive monopoly.

The late John Maynard Keynes considered this the most effective means available for destroying the capitalist system, as he states in the following quote:

*Lenin [first Communist dictator in Russia] is said to have declared that the best way to destroy the Capitalist System was to debauch the currency. By a continuing process of inflation, governments can confiscate, secretly and unobserved, an important part of the wealth of their citizens...Lenin was certainly right. There is no subtler, no surer means of over-turning the existing basis of society than to debauch the currency. The process engages all the hidden forces of economic law on the side of destruction, and does it in a manner which not one man in the million is able to diagnose. (Keynes, *Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Harcourt, Brace & Howe, 1920, pp. 235, 236.)*

In an economically developed nation where there is a high degree of specialization of labor, and where nearly all exchanges of goods and services are made for money, the state can largely control the people by controlling their money. If the currency being used for these exchanges is irredeemable so that government can print any amount it chooses without having to redeem it, it has a literal stranglehold on the economy.

Since prices and wages are expressed in terms of the paper money, government can manipulate those prices and wages upward at will merely by printing stacks of worthless currency. It can hire any number of employees and print the money with which to pay their wages. It can purchase goods and services from the business community and force the merchants to accept worthless paper as payment therefor. It can defraud the people by selling them bonds and other evidences of indebtedness, and then liquidating the debt with printing press money. "By a continuing process of inflation," government can wipe out the entire creditor class by destroying the value of all insurance policies, social security benefits, pensions, bonds contracts, savings accounts, annuities, old age benefits, and any other evidence of indebtedness.

In contrast to this plan of the Communists, the United States Constitution tied the hands of government so that it could not destroy the right of private property by manipulating the currency. Art. 1, Sec. 10 provides:

No State shall...make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts.

According to this provision, no debt which calls for the payment of money in the United States can be legally discharged except by the payment of the precious metals. Only these can release a debtor from his obligation.

This provision regarding “tender in payment of debts” will not be clearly understood unless it is recognized that the states have always had the power to determine when a debt was paid. They had this power before the Constitution was adopted and that document did nothing to alter it. The state courts have always litigated disputes over contracts and torts, and by so doing have determined the existence of debts. As a necessary part of this power, they must determine when debts are paid. The Constitution forbids them to decree that anything except gold and silver coin will serve this purpose.

To facilitate trade between the states and create a uniform monetary system throughout the nation, the Constitution gave the Federal government the power,

To coin money, regulate the value thereof and of foreign coin. (Art. 1, Sec. 8)

The power to “coin money” is the power to weigh, alloy, shape and stamp metal in such a manner that anyone can see at a glance how many grains of the indicated metal the coin contains. This is merely the mechanical act of making physical measurements of the gold or silver content of the coin and then impressing thereon what those measurements are.

The power “to regulate the value thereof” was necessary because there was more than one metal chosen as legal tender. Since only one of the metals could be used as the standard for the nation’s money, the value of the other metal would have to be regulated from time to time as the relative price of the two metals varied. Congress was thus given the power to make so many grains of one of the metals (a grain is a small measure of weight equal to the weight of a grain of wheat) the standard unit of money, and then specify that a certain number of grains of the other metal is equivalent in value to the standard chosen.

By the first Coinage Act passed in 1792, Congress chose silver rather than gold as that standard and made 371.25 pure grains of silver the basic unit of our entire monetary system. They called that unit the “dollar.” The value of gold was originally regulated at fifteen times the value of an equal weight of silver, and the 1792 Act authorized the minting of both gold and silver coins and declared them both to “be a lawful tender in all payments whatsoever.” (1 Stat. at Large, p. 250) In 1834, due to an increase in the value of gold relative to silver, Congress made 23.4 grains of gold equal to 371.25 grains of silver.

But once having established 371.25 grains of pure silver as the basic monetary unit, Congress had no constitutional authority to alter it. To do so would cause the states to violate that provision of the Constitution which prohibits them from “impairing the obligation of contract.” Such a change would also violate the following constitutional provision which protects the individual against a loss of his property by federal action:

No person shall...be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.

In defiance of the provisions of the Constitution, the Federal government has obtained control over the monetary system by passing laws which (1) Make it a crime to use gold as money, (2) Mint coins out of base metals, and (3) Make irredeemable paper a tender in payment of debts. It has also passed laws regulating banks, credit, and interest rates.

A frank appraisal of the laws prevailing throughout the nations of the world today indicates that most of the ten points of the Manifesto have been adopted in every country. The “despotic inroads on the rights of property and on conditions of bourgeois production” suggested by the Manifesto have been made. Governments in every country, if they have not done so already, are wresting “by degrees all capital from the Bourgeoisie,” and centralizing” all instruments of production in the hands of the state.”

By means of (1) licensing laws which dictate who may engage in business; (2) welfare programs which take property from the “haves” and give it to the “have-nots”; (3) regulatory laws which empower government bureaucracy to tell private owners how they must operate their enterprises, (4) graduated income, gift, and estate taxes, which confiscate virtually all income above certain minimums, and (5) laws which corrupt monetary systems, the Communist proposals have been largely implemented in the United States as well as in other so-called Capitalist nations.

PRIESTCRAFT

THE COMMUNIST PROPOSAL FOR STATE CONTROL OF THE EDUCATION OF ALL CHILDREN

The last of the ten points of the Communist Manifesto contains this provision:

Free education for all children in public schools.

This innocent sounding concept may be more essential than any other for the successful establishment and operation of the Devil's church. The use of government power to control what is taught in a nation—especially to the children—is perhaps the most effective means which exists for instituting and perpetuating falsehood.

Since government support and control of the education of children exists in nearly every country today, it may seem odd that this practice is advocated by the Communists as one of the ten most essential measures for changing a free enterprise system into a socialist dictatorship. There is no contrivance more useful for the establishment and maintenance of a dictatorship than that of thought control. If a government is to control the beliefs and attitudes of the citizens toward itself and the system of slavery to which they are subjected, it must control what the citizens are taught. The most effective means of doing this is by the imposition of a state religion, and so throughout history, political rulers have combined church and state for the purpose of seizing and perpetuating political control.

Perhaps the best known instances of the use of this church-state scheme are those of the not-so-holy Roman Empire and the various nations into which it disintegrated. The power of government was first used to imprison and kill the saints and leaders of Christ's Church. Then Christianity was made a state religion with the government leadership and control being imposed and the doctrines and ordinances being corrupted almost beyond recognition. But the most abominable doctrine of all was that the police power of the state should be used to forcibly destroy freedom of religion, press, speech, and property rights. This was all done in the name of Christ's religion of free agency.

Sensing the depth and power of religious conviction, political leaders cunningly used it for their own despotic ends. By combining church and state they added the force of religious prejudice steeped in ignorance to that of patriotic fervor, thus creating powerful support for themselves and the organizations through which they imposed servitude. Pretending to share the religious beliefs of their people, these tyrants demonstrated their zeal and maintained control over religious and political thinking by using the police power to physically suppress all religious denominations except the favored one. By taxation and outright confiscation, they supported the priestly class of the state church and financed the erection of state church buildings, proselyting, and "religious" instruction. By so doing, they bribed, seduced, and gained the cooperation of one of the most influential groups in the nation—the religious leaders and professional teachers who are in the most strategic position to impose thought control.

THE ESSENTIAL EVIL OF PRIESTCRAFT NOT GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD

In some circles, the odious practice just described is known as “priest-craft” because of the cunning intrigue and connivance between priests and politicians to use the police power to perpetuate a politico-religious monopoly for their mutual advantage. Deep and lasting antagonisms have been stirred up against certain religious denominations because of the many honorable atrocities which have been committed by governments in the name of these religions. The persecution and murder of many thousands of “heretics” among such religious groups as the Huguenots, the Waldenses, The Albigenses, the Hussites, and the Jews is remembered with loathing, horror, and sometimes prejudicial hate.

But these feelings of outrage have oftentimes blinded those who hold them to the real evil of priestcraft. Its great wickedness does not lie in the fact that there are religions who teach false doctrines about God and the hereafter, but rather that the force of government is used to abolish freedom and impose a particular creed on the people with fire and sword. It is the prostitution of the power of government which is the essence of the evil.

Of course, if some religious denomination is teaching the doctrine that the police power should be used to financially support it while forcibly suppressing all others, then it is trying to establish the very evil spoken of. It is promoting the devil’s program to destroy free agency through the use of the force of government and such a doctrine should be exposed and opposed with all energy.

COMMUNIST PRIESTCRAFT THE MOST WICKED OF ALL

The Communists and other advocates of modern dictatorships have benefitted enormously from this misunderstanding about priestcraft. While loudly pointing out and protesting the evil of using the police power to subsidize and give a monopoly to a particular religious creed, they have overthrown the old order and in its place imposed the priestcraft of atheism, socialism, and materialism which is worse than any other form known. Instead of using government to finance and compel the worship of a Supreme Being, they use it to compel and subsidize the worship of the state and its evil leaders; rather than advocating that compulsion be used to satisfy spiritual needs, they advocate that it be used to satisfy material needs; in place of the doctrine that man is a child of God who is answerable to his Creator for his sins, they teach that he is merely an animal with no higher goal than to satisfy the lusts of the flesh; instead of imposing their abominable creed merely on adults on the Sabbath, they take the children from their parents at an early age and place them under the tutelage of a priestly class hired to corrupt their tender minds all throughout the week.

But whether priestcraft is enforced by communists or religionists, the central evil is the same: The power of government is used to abolish freedom and compel the people to finance their own enslavement by supporting teachers who are paid to deceive them into believing that the particular brand of priestcraft they are subsidizing is the only true religion. It is veritably true that there is no principle of the Communist Manifesto more essential to the success of Satan’s plan than that of socialized education. If all children can be forcibly taken from their homes where the Lord intended they be trained, and during the innocence of youth their unsuspecting and defenseless minds are indoctrinated with a belief in organic evolution, atheism, materialism, and socialism, the perpetuation of these satanic doctrines is systematized and imposed uniformly upon each succeeding generation.

This diabolical scheme to destroy belief in God and His plan of free agency and substitute therefor faith in the arm of flesh and Satan's plan of slavery, is proving enormously effective in Communist nations. Before examining the effect of socialized education in the "non-communist" world, let us note some of the things the scriptures have said regarding priestcraft in prior dispensations and also what has been prophesied concerning its practice during this last dispensation.

PRIESTCRAFT AMONG THE NEPHITES

DEFINITION OF PRIESTCRAFT

It is seldom that the prophets have deemed it necessary to define a particular sin. Usually when a word is used to describe an evil act such as murder, adultery, lying, or robbery, the reader is aware of what is meant. But when the prophets use the word "priestcraft," how many can determine when a particular act falls within the correct definition of the term? Apparently the Lord wanted the readers of the Book of Mormon to be able to recognize the sin when they saw it because He had his prophet Nephi define it by stating both what it covered and what it did not cover. It seems significant that the following definition was included among Nephi's prophecies concerning us Gentiles during these latter days:

He [the Lord] commandeth that there shall be no priestcrafts; for, behold, priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion.

Behold, the Lord hath forbidden this thing; wherefore, the Lord hath given a commandment that all men should have charity, which charity is love. And except they should have charity they were nothing. Wherefore, 41 they should have charity they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to perish.

But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for 41 they labor for money they shall perish. (2 Nephi 26:29-31)

According to this definition, if a person preaches or teaches for the sake of getting "gain and praise of the world," he is guilty of priestcraft. On the other hand, if his purpose is the welfare of Zion, if he is in need, and if the people voluntarily give of their means for his support, there is nothing wrong in receiving aid.

The prophet Alma, who had once taught for hire as one of the wicked priests of king Noah, instructed his people concerning the compensation of priests in these words:

And he also commanded them that the priests whom he had ordained should labor with their own hands for their support.

And the priests were not to depend upon the people for their support...

And again Alma commanded that the people of the church should impart of their substance, to those priests that stood in need, yea, and to every needy, naked soul. (Mosiah 18:24-28)

These instructions accord with the distinction Nephi drew between those cases where a teacher should receive financial aid and where he should not.

THE PRIESTCRAFT OF KING NOAH AND HIS PRIESTS

The Book of Mormon describes several cases of priestcraft among the Nephites and one among the Lamanites. Let us discuss some of them.

King Noah ruled over a relatively small portion of the Nephite nation. His father, Zeniff, had led this group from the land of Zarahemla back to the land of Nephi where their fathers had previously dwelt. Upon becoming king, Noah “put down all the priests that had been consecrated by his father, and consecrated new ones in their stead, such as were lifted up in the pride of their hearts.” (Mosiah 11:5)

In order to support this priestly class, their wives and their concubines, Noah imposed a 20% tax on his subjects:

Yea, and thus they were supported in their laziness, and in their idolatry, and in their whoredoms, by the taxes which king Noah had put upon his people, ’ thus did the people labor exceedingly to support iniquity. (Mosiah 11:6)

Noah caused to be erected “many elegant and spacious buildings,” including a great palace, all of which were richly ornamented with precious metals and fine woodwork. Within the temple he built seats for his priests:

And the seats which were set apart for the high priests, which were above all the other seats, he did ornament with pure gold, ’ and he caused a breast-work to be built before them, that they might rest their bodies and their arms upon while they should speak lying and vain words to his people. (Mosiah 11:11)

The leadership of the people having become corrupt, the Lord chose the righteous Abinadi from among the people to call them and their wicked leaders to repentance. So angered were these evil rulers at the accusations made against them that they burned him to death. Shortly after this, the calamities he prophesied occurred. Noah was put to death by fire, his priests barely escaping with their lives, and the balance of the people were either slain or enslaved by the Lamanites. After an extended period of suffering in bondage, the survivors repented and were miraculously delivered by the Lord.

THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH PRIESTCRAFT IN ZARAHEMLA

During the very first year after the end of the reign of the kings and the institution of a government subject to majority vote, a man named Nehor came among the people preaching priestcraft. The record says:

And he had gone about among the people, preaching to them that which he termed to be the word of God, bearing down against the church; declaring unto the people that every priest and teacher ought to become popular; and they ought not to labor with their hands, but that they ought to be supported by the people. (Alma 1:3)

As he was going about advocating this evil doctrine and trying to “establish a church after the manner of his preaching,” he encountered the venerable Gideon who “withstood him, admonishing him with the words of God.” (Alma 1:6,7) Now Gideon had lived in the land of Nephi under king Noah and had observed the practice of priestcraft first hand. He had lived under a system where taxes had been imposed to support it, and was one of those who had been forced to “labor exceedingly to support iniquity.” (Mosiah 11:6) In fact, Gideon had led an insurrection against the king and would have slain him had not a Lamanite invasion caused him to desist. It is small wonder that Gideon would rise in opposition to the attempt to establish this wicked doctrine in the land of Zarahemla.

Nehor was so incensed at Gideon’s criticism that he slew this righteous old man, and in consequence thereof was brought before Alma, the chief judge to be tried for the crime of murder. There he “pleaded for himself with much boldness,” apparently trying to justify his doctrine and the crime he had committed in its defense. But,

Alma said unto him: Behold, this is the first time that priestcraft has been introduced among this people. And behold, thou are not only guilty of priestcraft, but hast endeavored to enforce it by the sword; and were priestcraft to be enforced among this people it would prove their entire destruction. (Alma 1:12)

In this passage, Alma points out that there are two kinds of priestcraft— the type which is enforced and the type which is not. Nehor was trying to establish the enforced type which, according to Alma, was so evil in its consequences that it would have caused the entire destruction of the people had they adopted it.

What did Alma mean by “enforced” priestcraft? All of the evidence indicates that he meant the enforcement of the practice by the police power of government. Nehor had advocated that,

every priest and teacher ought to become popular; and they ought not to labor with their own hands, but that they ought to be supported by the people. (Alma 1:3)

The enforcement of this system would require that taxes be imposed for the support of the priestly class just as Noah had done. The unenforced type would exist where the teachers and priests receive their pay from voluntary contributions.

In reality, there is only one way to enforce priestcraft and that is through the police power. Government has an exclusive monopoly on the use of force. Anyone who attempts to use compulsion outside its framework to support a movement as did Nehor is treated as a criminal and punished. He pled with Alma to approve of his attempt to enforce his doctrine, but of course Alma refused and had him executed. However,

this did not put an end to the spreading of priestcraft through the land; for there were many who loved the vain things of the world, and they went forth preaching false doctrines; and this they did for the sake of riches and honor. (Alma 1:16)

It is submitted that enforced priestcraft is Satan’s most potent weapon for teaching and maintaining state slavery in a nation. However, as the above scripture indicates, the system is popular only among those who love the vain things of this world and are willing to teach false doctrines for the sake of riches and honor. Events proved that there were too many good people among the Nephites at this time to permit the adoption of enforced priest-craft, but the issue was not settled until many thousands of lives were lost in fratricidal conflict. At the outset the warfare was merely one of words:

But it came to pass that whosoever did not belong to the church of God began to persecute those that did belong to the church of God...

Yea, they did persecute them, and afflict them with all manner of words, and this because...they did impart the word of God, one with another, without money and without price. (Alma 1:19-20)

But some of the saints began to be proud and refused to tamely submit to these persecutions, therefore they

began to contend warmly with their adversaries, even unto blows; yea they would smite one another with their fists. (Alma 1:22)

Thus there commenced to be physical violence between the two factions. However, a more strict enforcement of the law brought a measure of peace:

nevertheless, the law was put in force upon all those who did transgress it, inasmuch as it was possible.

And it came to pass that by thus exercising the law upon them, every man suffering according to that which he had done, they became more still, and durst not commit any wickedness if it were known; therefore, there was much peace among the people of Nephi until the fifth year of the reign of judges. (Alma 1:32-33)

THE ATTEMPT OF THE AMLICITES TO ESTABLISH PRIESTCRAFT

But the advocates of priestcraft refused to give up. And so under a new leader named Amlici, who was “very cunning” and wise as to the wisdom of the world, and who was “after the order of” Nehor, (Alma 2:1) they undertook to gain political control through majority vote, and change the laws to suit their philosophy. Amlici was so successful in promoting his program that the people of God became very alarmed,

for they knew that according to their law that such things must be established by the voice of the people.

Therefore, if it were possible that Amlici should gain the voice of the people, he, being a wicked man, would deprive them of their rights and privileges of the church; for it was his intent to destroy the church of God. (Alma 2:3-4)

From this passage it is very plain that the followers of Amlici were undertaking to establish Satan’s system of enforced priestcraft. Upon gaining control of the police power, they intended to use it to exterminate all other religions except their own and compel the people to support only the priests and teachers in their church.

But after “much dispute and wonderful contention,” Amlici lost the election.

But still this Satan-inspired group refused to cease their efforts to impose priestcraft on the Nephite nation. Therefore, they appointed Amlici their king, banned themselves, and undertook to gain control of the Nephite government by bloodshed. In this they failed also, but only after two terrible battles. In the first encounter in which only Nephites and Amlicites were engaged, more than nineteen thousand perished. The defeated Amlicites then induced a huge Lamanite army to join them for the second conflict but were again defeated by the inspired Nephite troops. So many were slain this time that the Nephites did not count them. And so at the cost of many thousands of lives, the issue of enforced priestcraft was settled among the Nephites after only five years of self government.

It might seem strange that both the Amlicites and the Nephites would consider this matter so vital that they would sacrifice their lives rather than yield their positions. But let us emphasize the point that enforced priestcraft is the most essential part of Satan's plan to impose state slavery upon a people. On the other hand, Alma had stated that "were priestcraft to be enforced among this people it would prove their entire destruction." So the issue was joined and neither side would yield unless forced to do so. Satan made a shrewd thrust to infect the new government with this fatal disease right during its infancy while the people were inexperienced in self-rule, and he almost succeeded. But there were too many righteous people who took an interest in their political affairs.

Being aware of Alma's prophecy which foretold their extinction if they prostituted their government as the Amlicites desired, the Nephites were willing to die rather than submit to it.

PRIESTCRAFT IN THE CITY OF AMMONIAH

Perhaps to show the fulfillment of Alma's prophecy and to give us gentiles fair warning as to what might happen to us if we enforce priestcraft, the Book of Mormon contains a rather detailed account of the utter destruction of the city of Ammoniah which adopted the practice into their laws. Alma, upon resigning his judgeship, went there in the course of his missionary labors to tell the people they would be destroyed unless they repented. He not only failed in his first attempt, but was bodily thrown out of the city. As he started for another field of labor, an angel appeared and told him to return and try again, warning him that the Ammoniahites were planning to destroy the liberty of all the Nephites:

For behold, they do study at this time that they may destroy the liberty of thy people, (for thus saith the Lord) which is contrary to the statutes, and judgments, and commandments which he has given unto his people. (Alma 8:17)

From this statement, along with other scriptures, it appears that the people of the city, having corrupted their own "statutes, and judgments, and commandments" with this evil practice, had plans to extend it throughout the Nephite nation. Amulek, an inhabitant of the city who had been converted by a vision and who joined Alma in his second missionary effort, preached to them and accused them of using their power of self-government to corrupt the laws:

Yea, well did Mosiah say, who was our last king, when he was about to deliver up the kingdom, having no one to confer it upon, causing that this people should be governed by their own voices—yea, well did he say that if the time should come...that...this people should fall into transgression, they would be ripe for destruction. (Alma 10:19)

An additional indication that the Ammoniahites had corrupted their laws is contained in this statement by Amulek:

And now behold, I say unto you, that the foundation of the destruction of this people is beginning to be laid by the unrighteousness of your lawyers and your judges. (Alma 10:27)

Other scriptures furnish evidence that the priestcraft practiced by the inhabitants of the city was of the most virulent type— “enforced priestcraft.” The chief judge “was after the order and faith of Nehor”; (Alma 14:16) the “many lawyers, and judges, and priests, and teachers,” who tormented Alma and Amulek in prison “were of the profession of Nehor”; (Alma 14:18) then after this great city was destroyed, it was called by the people the “Desolation of Nehors; for they were of the profession of Nehor, who were slain;...” (Alma 16:11) It will be remembered that Nehor had advocated that the priests and teachers should be supported by the people.

The free and uncompensated preaching of Alma and Amulek, and their warning against this evil system, threatened the livelihood of the paid teachers of the city and once again, as in the king Noah case, the hatred of the practitioners of priestcraft was so intense that they were willing to commit murder. The prophets had some success in their missionary efforts and so there were a few converts. But so wicked were the rulers that they drove the male converts from the city and then burned their wives and children to death along with their records.

Alma and Amulek, who had been tortured and held in prison many days without food, water, or clothing, would have been put to death but the Lord miraculously spared them by destroying their prison and all their tormentors who were within its walls. After their deliverance, the Lamanites invaded the Nephite lands and “every living soul of the Ammonihahites was destroyed and also their great city, which they said God could not destroy because of its greatness.” (Alma 16:9) In this manner was Alma’s prophecy concerning “enforced” priestcraft fulfilled to the letter. (see Alma 1:12)

PRIESTCRAFT AMONG THE LAMANITES

Another instance of priestcraft described by the Book of Mormon was practiced among the Lamanites by two groups of apostate Nephites called Amalekites and Amulonites. Little is known about the former group, but the Amulonites had at one time served as the wicked priests of king Noah and had learned this practice well. When they were ostracized from the Nephites they kidnapped some Lamanite maidens, took them to wife, and started a society of their own as outcasts in the wilderness. However, they were discovered by a Lamanite army which took them captive and turned them over to the Lamanite king. These cunning priests, remembering the soft life they had led among the Nephites, prevailed upon the king to employ them as teachers among his people:

And it came to pass that Amulon did gain favor in the eyes of the king of the Lamanites; therefore, the king of the Lamanites granted unto him and his brethren that they should be appointed teachers over his people...

And he appointed teachers of the brethren of Amulon in every land which was possessed by his people... (Mosiah 24:1, 4)

The Amulonites successfully taught the Lamanites the Nephite language and also taught them to read and write that they might engage in business and trade with one another. But much evil came of their efforts. Not only were the Lamanites harmed, but these former priests and their posterity became murderers in defense of their profession. As is the case with those who practice priestcraft, they became so intensely antagonistic against the Lord and his work that they willingly inflicted death upon those who embraced the true religion. When those Lamanites who were called the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi were converted by Ammon and his brethren, it was mainly these practitioners of priestcraft who slew a thousand of those saints while they were kneeling defenseless on the ground. The record says:

Now the greatest number of those of the Lamanites who slew so many of their brethren were Amalekites and Amulonites, the greatest number of whom were after the order of the Nehors. (Alma 24:28)

Their murderous disposition toward the people of the Lord is also reflected in the following passage:

And the remainder, [of the seed of Amulon and his brethren] having fled into the east wilderness, and having usurped the power and authority over the Lamanites, caused that many of the Lamanites should perish by fire because of their belief—For many of them...began...to believe in the Lord, ... and thus many of them were converted in the wilderness.

And it came to pass that those rulers who were the remnant of the children of Amulon caused that they should be put to death, yea, all those that believed in these things. (Alma 25:5-7)

But these wanton murders brought vengeance. The Lamanites turned upon the children of Amulon and his brethren and began to hunt and kill them. Mormon, writing hundreds of years later, stated that the angry Lamanites were still hunting and killing members of this group even in his day. And so ends another tragedy-filled story of priestcraft.

PRIESTCRAFT AND THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST

Our final case history involves the crucifixion of the Lord. The Book of Mormon prophet, Jacob, was permitted to foresee the death of Christ and wrote the following concerning it:

But because of priestcrafts and iniquities, they at Jerusalem will stiffen their necks against him, that he be crucified. (2 Nephi 10:5)

Thus once again we find priestcraft leading to murder. Those responsible for it were the religious and political leaders of the Jewish nation whose pride and hypocrisy Christ criticized so severely, and whose power and wealth were threatened by his teachings. The Scribes and Pharisees (Rabbis and lawyers) were the learned class, and also the rulers. They sat in Moses' seat as judges. (Mart 23:2) Elder James E. Talmage in his book, *Jesus the Christ*, says of them:

The title Rabbi is equivalent to our distinctive appellation Doctor, Master, or Teacher.

He then goes on to quote with approval the following from Geike's *Life and Words of Christ*, Vol. 1, Ch.6:

*If the most important figures in the society of Christ's day were the Pharisees, it was because they were the Rabbis or teachers of the Law. As such they received superstitious honor, which was, indeed the great motive, with many, to court the title or join the party. The Rabbis were classed with Moses, the patriarchs, and the prophets, and claimed equal reverence.... So far as the Roman authority under which they lived left them free, the Jews willingly put all power in the hands of the Rabbis. They or their nominees filled every office, from the highest in the priesthood to the lowest in the community unity. They were the causers, the teachers, the priests, the judges, the magistrates, and the physicians of the nation.... (Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 71)*

Regarding control over wealth which their positions gave them, Elder Talmage says:

The avarice of the Jewish hierarchy in our Lord's lifetime was an open scandal. By extortion and unlawful exaction under cover of religious duty the priestly rulers had amassed an enormous treasure, of which the contributions of the poor, and the confiscation of property, including even the houses of dependent widows, formed a considerable proportion; the perfidy of the practice was made the blacker by the outward pretense of sanctity and the sacrilegious accompaniment of wordy prayer. (Ibid., p. 555)

Clearly, we have here a case of "enforced priestcraft: since the power of government was used by those in control to "get gain and praise of the world" as Nephi phrased it. Those who practiced it committed the great crime of history. As punishment for this and the persecution and murder of many of Christ's apostles and disciples, the Jewish nation met one of the most terrible fates recorded in the annals of history. The story of the protracted siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, and its ultimate destruction, is one of unsurpassed cruelty, suffering, and horror. The continued affliction of this race of people, even down to the present, has no known parallel, and Nephi has predicted that this curse will continue until they are "persuaded to believe in Christ." (2 Nephi 25:16)

These four instances of priestcraft have elements in common from which we might draw some conclusions. Insofar as the record permits us to know, in each case, (1) A group of teachers who were either in control of government, or acted with the approval of those who were, engaged in the profession of education or instruction; (2) The teachers were supported by the taxing power of government; (3) When prophets exposed the evils of priest-craft, its practitioners used the police power to inflict death upon them and others of their faith, insofar as they were able to do so; (4) God avenged these murders by putting to death those who perpetrated them and severely chastising the nation which permitted them to go unpunished.

Another fact common to each case is that those who practiced priestcraft and "endeavored to enforce it by the sword," (Alma 1:12) had once known the true gospel but had apostatized. The devil seems to gain some special power over apostates who "preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world that they may get gain and praise of the world." They are truly in his employ when they engage in this evil.

SCRIPTURAL WARNINGS THAT PRIESTCRAFT WOULD BE PRACTICED AMONG THE GENTILE MEMBERS OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

Since enforced priestcraft is an evil of such dire consequences, those prophecies regarding its practice among Gentile members of Christ's Church in these latter days should concern us deeply. Let us consider a few of them. The Book of Mormon contains many predictions regarding occurrences on the "promised land" during the last dispensation, many of which concern us "Gentiles" as the Book of Mormon prophets described non-Jewish, non-Lamanite Church members. Nephi especially supplied us with important knowledge about ourselves. He foresaw and recorded the discovery of the Americas; the scattering of the descendants of Lehi; the rise of a mighty Gentile nation; the establishment of Christ's Church therein; the eventual wickedness and punishment of the Gentiles; and finally the restoration of the seed of Lehi as inheritors of the chosen land along with as many of the Gentiles as would repent.

In one of his prophecies, he defines the word priestcraft for us and in doing so issues a warning directly to the "laborers in Zion:"

He [the Lord] commandeth that there shall be no priestcrafts; for, behold, priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion.

Behold the Lord hath forbidden this thing...

But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for they labor for money they shall perish. (2 Nephi 26:29-31)

While priestcraft outside of Zion may not be fatal, those who practice it "in Zion" shall perish. The Lord speaking through Mormon also charges the Gentiles with priestcraft and calls upon us to repent:

Turn, all ye Gentiles, from your wicked ways; and repent of your evil doings, of your lyings and deceivings, and of your whoredoms, and of your secret abominations, and your idolatries, and of your murders, and your priestcrafts... (3 Nephi 30:2)

Perhaps the most direct accusation made by the Lord against us is contained in these words:

And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and...shall be filled with all manner of...priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them. (3 Nephi 16:10)

Of particular interest to those who regard themselves as members of Christ's Church is the fact that this accusation is made against them. Not only does this seem apparent from the statement that "the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel," but also from Christ's words which immediately follow and plainly show He was speaking specifically to them:

But if the Gentiles will repent and return unto me, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel.

But if they will not turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, I will suffer them, yea, I will suffer my people, O house of Israel, that they shall go through among them, and shall tread them down, and they shall be as salt that hath lost its savor, which is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden underfoot of my people, O house of Israel. (3 Nephi 16:13, 15)

Attention is directed to Christ's statement that those Gentiles who do not repent shall be "as salt that hath lost its savor." We are forced to conclude that He is speaking directly to his "covenant people" here because according to the following modern scripture they are the "salt of the earth":

When men are called unto mine everlasting gospel, and covenant with an everlasting covenant, they are accounted as the salt of the earth and the savor of men; They are called to be the savor of men;

therefore; if that salt of the earth lose its savor, behold, it is thenceforth good for nothing only to be cast out and trodden under the feet of men. (D&C 101:39-40)

It will be remembered also that Christ told his disciples in Jerusalem:

"Ye are the salt of the earth." (Matt 5:13) To his Disciples among the Nephites he said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the salt of the earth." (3 Nephi 12:13) In each instance, he warned his listeners that if the salt lost its savor it would be cast out and trodden under foot.

In his discourse to the Nephites, Christ mentioned priestcraft among the Gentiles a third time and stated that when the judgments came upon us, this practice along with other sins would be done away:

Yea, woe be unto the Gentiles except they repent; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and! will destroy thy chariots;

And it shall come to pass that all lyings and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, shall be done away. (3 Nephi 21:14, 19)

As difficult as it may be for those who regard themselves as the Lord's covenant people to face an accusation of practicing priestcraft, the conclusion that such is the case seems inescapable. Because this sin has caused the destruction of those who practice it, it seems important to identify what is being done to merit this charge.

From Nephi's definition (2 Nephi 26:29) we must conclude that if anyone "labor(s) in Zion for money," he will perish. However, if one labors "for Zion," it appears appropriate for him to accept voluntary contributions if such be necessary to sustain him. In fact the people are instructed to have sufficient charity that "they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to perish." Thus while it is possible for a person who teaches or preaches for hire in the Church to practice priestcraft, this could not be construed as "enforced priestcraft" since his wages are entirely from voluntary contributions. If Christ and the other prophets were speaking of the compulsory type which proved so fatal among the Nephites, the Lamanites, and the Jews, we must find it's practitioners supported by taxation. Only state-supported education can be classified as enforced priestcraft.

DOES SOCIALIZED EDUCATION FALL WITHIN THE MEANING OF "ENFORCED PRIESTCRAFTS?"

In view of the fact that here in the United States both the states and federal government have refused to permit the taxing power to be used to finance or support religious education, would the public school system fall within the meaning intended by the prophets? Is the teaching of religion by a "priest" or a minister necessary before the case is one of priestcraft? Let us have before us the essential part of Nephi's definition of the term which reads:

priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world... (2 Nephi 26:29)

If the word “preach” covers the teaching of secular subjects as well as religious, certainly public education would fall within the definition.

Fortunately, we need not speculate about the matter since one of the case histories of priestcraft discussed by the Book of Mormon clarifies it. It will be recalled that the Amulonites prevailed upon the king of the Lamanites to appoint them as teachers “among all the people of the Lamanites.” But even though these former priests of king Noah had posed as religious leaders and preached a religion of sorts to the Nephites, the following passage carefully explains that they taught no religion at all to the Lamanites, but only secular subjects:

And they [the Lamanites] were a people friendly one with another; nevertheless they knew not God; neither did the brethren of Amulon teach them anything concerning the Lord their God, neither the law of Moses; nor did they teach them the words of Abinadi..

But they taught them that they should keep their record, and that they might write one to another.

And thus the Lamanites began to increase in riches, and began to trade one with another and war great, and began to be a cunning and a wise people as to the wisdom of the world, yea, a very cunning people, delighting in all manner of wickedness and plunder... (Mosiah 24:5-7)

Here then is a case of priestcraft without religion because these Amulonites were after the order of Nehor, (Alma 24:28-29, 21:14) and the name Nehor stands for enforced priestcraft in the Book of Mormon. Just why the Amulonites taught no religion is not explained but it may have been because they were under strict orders from the king not to do so. The Lamanites had obstinately withstood all Nephite attempts to proselyte them in times past (Enos 1:20) and apparently they did not want to pay to have their enemies’ religion foisted upon them now. The Lamanite king’s purpose in employing these teachers had nothing to do with religion but, judging from the results, he wanted to make his people like unto the Nephites—prosperous and wise as to the wisdom of the world.

But without religion, this learning and affluence brought wickedness and this is a fact of the utmost importance. Not only does the scripture quoted above (Mosiah 24:5-7) together with other facts revealed about the Amulonites show that socialized education without religion constitutes priestcraft, but it also exposes the evil nature of the underlying philosophy upon which the entire system of public education is based. According to its proponents, the purposes of socialized education are to teach people to read and write, to become wise as to the wisdom of the world, to learn to trade one with another, wax great, and “to increase in riches.”

But when the Lamanites acquired worldly wisdom and riches without a faith in God and the moral restraints such would provide, they were harmed rather than helped. They became very cunning, “delighting in all manner of wickedness and plunder.” If this is the result which can be expected in all cases from an exclusively secular education forced upon the people by their rulers, then it is totally evil. Not only does it corrupt the teachers but also those whom they teach.

Other Book of Mormon scriptures substantiate this view. Nephi, while prophesying concerning these latter days, had this to say about learning the “precepts of men:”

Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost. (2 Nephi 28:31)

It is beyond question that secular education in the United States today constitutes the precepts of men. This being so, those precepts will curse rather than benefit the student unless taught “by the power of the Holy Ghost.” Nephi’s brother, Jacob confirms this conclusion and further states that it is Satan’s cunning plan to give men learning without humility and faith in God:

O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish. (2 Nephi 9:28)

This scripture is uncompromising in stating that unless the learned are willing to accept the guidance of the prophets, their education is unprofitable foolishness and “they shall perish.” Furthermore, there is no distinction drawn between the “wisdom of the world” which is true and that which is false. Some may object to the conclusion that the learning of provable facts can ever harm anyone. They may take the seemingly logical position that knowledge, as long as it be true is always better than ignorance.

While such a position may seem unassailable, still if by the learning of secular knowledge, one thereby becomes proud and incapable of believing religious truths without which there can be no salvation or exaltation, obviously one would be better off without the worldly wisdom,

For what shall it profit a man, 41 he shall gain the whole world and lose his soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Mark 8:36-37)

Or, to state the matter another way, if there be two sets of truths, one of which, set “A” is indispensable to salvation while the other set “B” is not, but if by learning set “B” first, it becomes virtually impossible to learn set “A” later, it is blind folly to acquire knowledge in that sequence. Or if, by studying set “B” without being fully grounded in set “A” one thereby destroys his ability to continue to believe in those truths which alone can save him, wisdom would dictate that he either place greater emphasis on learning set “A”, or defer his learning of set “B” until such a loss of faith becomes unlikely.

On the other hand, if by learning set “A” first and by continuing to study and accept it, he can then learn set “B” with safety, this alone is the wise course to follow for, as Jacob also said:

But to be learned is good 4f they hearken unto the counsels of God. (2 Nephi 9:29)

The hopelessness of the predicament of those who gain learning and wealth without faith as did the Lamanites under the tutelage of the Amulonites, is described by Jacob as follows:

And whoso knocketh, to him will he [God] open; and the wise, and the learned, and they that are rich, who are puffed up because of their learning, and their wisdom, and their riches—yea, they are they whom he despiseth; and save they shall cast these things away, and consider themselves fools before God, and come down in the depths of humility, he will not open unto them. (2 Nephi 9:42)

While repentance is possible to the learned and rich who will not “hearken unto the counsels of God,” its likelihood seems remote. For how many who have spent a large part of a lifetime achieving academic prowess and the wisdom of the world have the fortitude to cast away the honors, the positions, and the riches which have come to them as a consequence of their learning? How many are able to develop sufficient humility to admit that “the wisdom of the world is foolishness,” and they themselves are “fools before God?”

Granting the validity of the statements of Nephi and Jacob about the vainness, the frailties, and the foolishness of men, and the curse which results when the precepts of men are taught without the power of the Holy Ghost, it is quite apparent why Jacob would state that the acquisition of learning without faith constitutes the “cunning plan of the evil one.” So few seem able to recognize the terrible danger which these prophets saw in an education without faith. Even assuming that the public schools taught nothing but truth, the fact that the law forbids them to teach faith in God makes it impossible for them to promote the eternal welfare of those they teach unless their basic lack is supplied from another source.

therefore, they cannot sin, for power is not given unto Satan to tempt little children, until they begin to become accountable before me; or it is given unto them even as I will, according to mine own pleasure, that great things may be required at the hand of their fathers.

And again, I say unto you, that whoso having knowledge, have I not commanded to repent?
(D&C 29:47-49)

SOCIALIZED EDUCATION AND FALSE DOCTRINES

The scriptures indicate that even though socialized education were to teach nothing but provable facts, still it constitutes enforced priestcraft which is condemned by the prophets. But nothing could be so unwise as to assume that the truth will always be taught in a system which is itself evil. Its very nature precludes this possibility. Let us note several areas where we must expect to find error disseminated.

SOCIALIZED EDUCATION IS COMPELLED TO TEACH THAT THE MIRACLE OF LIFE IS THE RESULT OF BLIND CHANCE RATHER THAN THE DESIGN OF GOD

In a nation such as the United States or Russia where the laws are construed to forbid the teaching of religion in the public schools, educators cannot teach the Biblical account of creation or give any other divine or supernatural explanation of the miracle of life and the marvelous order of the universe. But no educational system can ignore these matters. They unavoidably arise in such courses as history, anthropology, psychology, geology, astronomy, sociology, biology, botany, and bacteriology. Therefore, the public schools have turned to organic evolution as the only explanation of life.

The student is taught to believe that plant and animal life are the result of a fortuitous coming together of atoms in nature; that the history of the world is completely explained by the actions of men and the operation of physical law. But if blind chance created life, it logically follows that God did not; and if the course of world events is purely the result of the actions of man and nature, then Providence does not govern in the affairs of men and of nations; and if this is so then the Bible is a false history and faith in God, a silly superstition of a bygone age. Massive destruction of faith in God is an inevitable consequence of the teaching of organic evolution which is a cornerstone of socialized education.

In the following words, President Joseph Fielding Smith has expressed his views as to what is happening in the public schools:

According to our constitutional government denominational religion cannot be taught in our public schools...In the scholastic world, however, no man's faith is respected. From one end of the land to the other it is assumed by most teachers with scholastic degrees, that those degrees place those who bear them in a superior class with academic freedom to teach what they will and to criticize and condemn, by virtue of this freedom, any doctrine or theory destructive of the faith of religious people. This idea that the teacher belongs to a superior class and his learning grants him immunity from showing respect for religious doctrines is a fallacy not sustained by justice nor constitutional law. Most of the textbooks written today boldly and impudently contradict the doctrines in the Bible and its history....

I know of no history published today [1954] dealing with ancient peoples that does not start out with a false conception in relation to the origin of man, the age of the earth, and the historical development of the human race. (Smith, Man His Origin and Destiny, pp. 4, 10)

Regarding the teaching of organic evolution, our prophet has also said:

It has been truthfully said that organic evolution is Satan's chief weapon in this dispensation in his attempt to destroy the divine mission of Jesus Christ. It is a contemptible plot against faith in God and to destroy the effective belief in the divine atonement of our Redeemer... There is not and cannot be, any compromise between the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the theories of evolution. Were evolution true, there could be no remission of sin. In fact there could be no sin. (Ibid., p. 184)

The effect of this and similar doctrines is manifesting itself, especially among the educated youth on college campuses throughout the land. The rising tide of crime, drug abuse, immorality, rebellion, and revolution are all evidence that many of this generation have little or no faith in God or belief in moral law. Acceptance of the theory of organic evolution is incompatible with such faith and belief. One is reminded of the consequences of the teachings of Korihor, the anti-Christ spoken of in the Book of Mormon. He went among the people denying the validity of the scriptures and teaching,

that there could be no atonement made for the sins of men, but every man fared in this life according to the management of the creature; therefore every man prospered according to his genius, and that every man conquered according to his strength; and whatsoever a man did was no crime. (Alma 30:17)

The evil influence he exerted upon the people through these teachings is told in the following verse:

And thus he did preach unto them, leading away the hearts of many, causing them to lift up their heads in their wickedness, yea, leading away many women, and also men to commit whoredoms—telling them that when a man was dead, that was the end thereof (Ibid., v.18)

SOCIALIZED EDUCATION TEACHES THAT THE STATE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN

Since public schools are supported by taxation, parents are compelled to finance them. Even though the law may allow them to send their children to private schools, in order to do so they must support two educational systems at once, and this the vast majority feel themselves unable to do. Since the law compels them to send their children to some school, the net effect of all of this is to force nearly all children into the public system. Therefore, those who favor socialized education take the position that the state and not the parents should have the responsibility of training children during a certain period of their lives.

Nor should it be imagined that the parent can control the education of his child in the public system. When the state hires the teachers, selects the courses and textbooks, and dictates where the child shall attend, it is impossible for individual preferences to be respected regarding these vital matters. Even though it were possible for one set of parents to have their way, all others with children in that same class who disagreed with the proposed change would necessarily be denied their wishes.

At what age state control of the child's education should commence and end is a matter of varied opinion and practice among those who favor socialized education. However, those working within the system are forever trying to extend state control at the expense of parental control. But no matter when it starts, or how long it continues, the concept violates the teachings of the gospel. The prophet Alma, who had personal experience with priestcraft under king Noah, told the group which he led away from the land of Nephi:

And also trust no one to be your teacher nor your minister, except he be a man of God, walking in his ways and keeping his commandments. (Mosiah 23:14)

To obey this instruction, a parent must be able to determine who teaches his child. But this he cannot do under socialized education.

When the Lord entrusts parents with his spirit children, He holds them accountable for the training of those children. If they fail to discharge their duty properly, the sin is answered upon their heads. (D&C 68:25) If the child is cursed because of the parents' neglect, the curse will be the parents rather than the child's. (2 Nephi 4:6) Any system, therefore, which forcibly takes from the parents the power to control what their children are taught, and who teaches them, is contrary to the Lord's plan. It deprives parents of their most sacred stewardship and takes the child away from those who are most deeply concerned with his welfare. No state employee whose purpose in teaching is to get gain can be expected to serve the interests of the child as well as the parents who render their service without compensation. More especially is this true when the teacher is prohibited by law from instilling faith in the child.

SOCIALIZED EDUCATION TEA CHES SOCIALISM BOTH IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Since state-financed education is one of the principal doctrines of Communism, those who accept it have adopted that much of the socialist program. But further than this, once the idea is accepted that it is the function of government to use its taxing power to solve the problem of ignorance, which it is claimed stems from poverty, the theory that poverty is the concern of the state has been accepted. If an inadequate education is the consequence of low incomes and if it is the inherent right and duty of the state to compel the "haves" to give to the "have-nots" to cure this social ill, then is it not logically the state's right and duty to provide the poor with food, housing, medicine, transportation, and entertainment?

The fact is that these socialistic programs are all incorporated into the socialized education system in the form of school lunches and dining facilities, student housing, medical care, busing, athletics, drama, music, etc. The teachers and administrators who administer and participate in these activities will, of course, approve of them and encourage their extension. They will teach their students such activities are proper. Furthermore, the students who are being educated and supported at state expense cannot be expected to object, or to cease desiring such doles upon graduation. Elder George Q. Cannon is quoted as having said:

If you want to pauperize a community unity, begin by giving them something they never earned. If the state owes to the child schooling, it also by a parity of reasoning, owes to it food and clothing at public expense. If you want to destroy in a child's mind that feeling of energy, self-respect, and self-reliance, which all should have, you would impress upon him that the state owes him something upon which he can depend (Salt Lake Tribune, April 12, 1877)

It is a widely recognized fact that public schools and universities are the foremost advocates of socialism because they teach it both in theory and practice. Furthermore, the most effective vehicle for convincing a nation that socialized education is beneficial is socialized education itself. The teachers and administrators whose livelihood and status depend upon a continuation and expansion of the system are in a most strategic position to promote its acceptance and growth. Not only is it their full-time employment to mold the opinions of the nation's children during the impressionable and uncritical period of youth, but they also write the texts and exercise wide discretion in the expenditure of billions of dollars of public funds each year.

SOCIALIZED EDUCATION TEACHES MATERIALISM

Public education is promoted on the ground that it better enables those it trains to make money, gain the wisdom of the world, and secure the honors of men. Throughout his schooling the student is urged to make the best grades and acquire the advanced degree because this evidence of superiority will assure him the best positions and the highest salaries. Few will deny that knowledge is power and a most potent tool for the acquisition of wealth. But when the acquisition of wealth and secular knowledge is given preference to spiritual training and religious faith which the public schools are not permitted to teach, a set of false values is instilled in the student. The scriptures teach:

seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matt. 6:33)

Seek not for riches, but for wisdom, and behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich....(D&C 6:7)

Public schools not only cannot advocate such a priority of goals but they also directly contradict it by teaching materialism. A dictionary definition of materialism reads:

The doctrine that the facts of experience are all to be explained by reference to the reality, activities, and laws of physical or material substance. In psychology, this doctrine denies the reality of the soul as a psychical being; in cosmology, it denies the need of assuming the being of God as absolute Spirit or any other spiritual ground or first principle.

This is essentially what the public schools are restricted to teaching and it is the official doctrine of the Communists termed by them "dialectical materialism," or materialism developed by logical argumentation.

IS SOCIALIZED EDUCATION "THAT CUNNING PLAN OF THE EVIL ONE?"

Nephi has bluntly stated that those who hearken unto the precepts of men shall be cursed unless those precepts are given by the power of the Holy Ghost;

Cursed is he that. . . shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost. (2 Nephi 28:31)

To parents who accept this scripture as true, the fact which it states is of awful moment when it is recognized that public schools are limited by law to teaching the “precepts of men” and the “wisdom of the world.” If a child will be cursed rather than blessed by learning the precepts of men from teachers who do not have the power of the Holy Ghost, this places severe limits on the availability of acceptable teachers.

But even though it were possible for parents to place their children in schools staffed only by those who have the Gift of the Holy Ghost, another difficulty arises by reason of the fact that no one is permitted to teach unless he has been to college and been trained for the profession.

According to the following scripture, by the very act of qualifying himself as a teacher by the standards of the world, a person disqualifies himself by the standards of the Lord:

O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish. (2 Nephi 9:28)

This statement by Jacob could be interpreted to mean that socialized education is “that cunning plan of the evil one.” If it be true that the devil’s church is prostituted government, and if we have correctly interpreted the statements of Jacob and Nephi concerning the vainness, the frailty, the foolishness, and the precepts of men, this is what Satan’s cunning plan consists of:

Using the force of government, he compels all parents to send their children to his church for training. There he permits nothing to be taught except the precepts of men and the wisdom of the world. His doctrines of organic evolution, atheism, materialism, and socialism are thus forced upon all children. No one is permitted to teach in his church until they have first been to college and there been indoctrinated with his philosophies. By reason of this learning and their own vainness, frailty, and foolishness, they tend to become proud of their degrees and status, and consequently refuse to hearken unto the counsel of God, or to be guided by the Holy Ghost. (2 Nephi 9:28) Since the precepts of men, when taught without the power of the Holy Ghost, can only curse those who hearken unto them, (2 Nephi 28:3 1) only evil can result from such teachings. Finally, parents are compelled by the devil’s church to finance with their tax money the corruption of their own children.

If evolution, atheism, materialism, socialism, and similar philosophies of men which are being taught by the public schools today are not the doctrines of Satan, one will find it difficult to find a set of teachings better calculated to serve his purposes; and if socialized education is not his “cunning plan” to spread these false teachings, one will also find it difficult to design a plan which does the job more effectively and completely. And finally, if this is his plan, he “deceiveth the whole world” (Rev. 12:9) with it because there are few indeed who regard it as such. In fact, socialized education has become so universally accepted that the suggestion that it promotes the plan of the evil one may shock some. Teachers, especially those who have spent so many years and so much of their means obtaining the credentials for employment will find it difficult to view the institution which feeds them as the Great and Abominable Church.

However, a teacher who accepts the gospel as true and is willing to be guided thereby will not lightly cast aside the many scriptures and statements of the prophets which point to this possibility. He will be deeply concerned with Nephi’s definition of priestcraft and also with his assertion that:

the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish. (2 Nephi 26:31)

It is also probable that parents whose beliefs have been deeply influenced by years of public school training will be inclined to reject the views herein expressed. However, if they realize that the privilege of parenthood is the most sacred stewardship of all and that the experience is designed to develop that divine skill without which one cannot expect to have eternal increase, they will hesitate before approving of a system which forcibly deprives them of their rights and responsibilities. They will want to precisely distinguish between the Lord's and Satan's plans for rearing children in order that they may be candidates for the role of parents during the eternities.

And also trust no one to be your teacher nor your minister, except he be a man of God, walking in his ways and keeping his commandments. (Mosiah 23:14)

LATTER-DAY PROPHETS AND SOCIALIZED EDUCATION

THE VIEWS OF BRIGHAM YOUNG

If it be true that socialized education does in fact constitute the sin of enforced priestcraft, and if an education without God is a curse rather than a blessing, why have latter-day prophets not spoken out against it? It may come as a surprise to many that back during the days before public schools were common in Utah, but were being advocated in some quarters, the prophets made their stand very clear—they were opposed to the education of children with public funds. Later on, after the principle had been incorporated into the constitution and laws of the state, and the people had come to accept it, little was or has been said.

Brigham Young, who was the prophet during those early days when the issue was being most hotly debated, fought valiantly against the adoption of tax-supported schools. He was bitterly criticized for so doing as the following excerpt from his general conference address of April 6, 1877 indicates:

Many of you may have heard what certain journalists have had to say about Brigham Young being opposed to free schools. I am opposed to free education as much as I am opposed to taking property from one man and giving it to another who knows not how to take care of it.

But when you come to the fact, I will venture to say that I school ten children to every one that those do who complain so much of me. I now pay the school fee of a number of children who are either orphans or sons and daughters of poor people. But in aiding and blessing the poor I do not believe in allowing my charities to go through the hands of a set of robbers who pocket nine-tenths themselves, and give one-tenth to the poor. Therein is the difference between us: I am for the real act of doing and not saying. Would! encourage free schools by taxation? No! (SD 18:357)

It is quite probable that in the above comments, President Young was replying to criticisms of his stand which appeared in the *Salt Lake Daily Tribune* from time to time, one of which reads as follows:

Of course such a soul-crushing priestly despotism can only exist where the people are kept in squalid ignorance; and we may naturally look that the voice of our Infallible masters should be raised against education and free schools. 'I am opposed to free schools,' said Brigham Young at a conference held a couple of years ago, 'and to all legislation in favor of free schools.' ...Apostle-delegate Cannon, under the eye of his divine master, whose mere echo he is, condemned free schools as degrading and pauperizing to the minds of the young. . . we will quote the gist of this disgraceful speech from the Ogden Junction, a perfectly orthodox Mormon sheet. The apostle said: 'There was an idea in some quarters that the greatest boon which could be conferred upon Utah was free schools. He begged to differ with those who clamored for free schools. Their Arguments were very taking but very sophistical. If you want to pauperize a community, commence by giving them something they never earned. If the state owed to the child schooling, it also by a parity of reasoning, owed to it food and clothing at public expense. If he wanted to destroy in a child's mind that feeling of energy, self-respect and self reliance, which all should have, he would impress upon him that the state owed him something upon which he could depend'

And Apostle Woodruff who dedicated the Mormon Temple at St. George a few weeks ago...figured up that the cost of free schools would eat up the entire property of the territory—real and personal—in twenty years, and recommended that the Saints save from their whiskey and tobacco indulgence the cost of educating their children. (Salt Lake Tribune, Jan. 23, 1877)

Enough of the above article has been quoted to enable the reader to observe the intensity of criticism against Brigham Young's stand and also to show that his views were shared by other Church leaders, were openly declared, and widely known.

HOW THE STATE OF UTAH CAME TO ADOPT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The ENABLING ACT passed by the United States Congress under which Utah was permitted to join the Union as a state, contained as one of the conditions thereto the following:

That provision shall be made for the establishment and maintenance of a system of public schools, which shall be open to all children of said state and free from sectarian control.

In compliance with this condition, the following provisions were included in the Utah Constitution:

The Legislature shall provide for the establishment and maintenance of a uniform system of public schools, which shall be open to all children of the State, and be free from sectarian control...The common schools shall be free... (Art.X, sec. 1-2)

And so as a condition of statehood, a public school system was forced upon the people with the common schools (grades one through eight) being "free." However, when the state legislature began to support high schools with public funds, the then Prophet of the Church, Joseph F. Smith expressed himself in General Conference thus:

I hope that I may be pardoned for giving expression to my real conviction with reference to the question of education in the State of Utah. The government of the State has provided for the common schools up to the eighth grade, and meets the general expenses of these schools....In addition to these, we are having forced upon the people high schools throughout every part of the land I believe that we are running education mad I believe that we are taxing the people more for education than they should be taxed. This is my sentiment. And especially is it my sentiment when the fact is known that all these burdens are placed upon the tax payers of the state to teach the learning or education of this world. God is not in it. Religion is excluded from it. The Bible is excluded from it. And those who desire to have their children receive the advantages of moral and religious education are excluded from all these state organizations, and if we will have our children properly taught in principles of righteousness, morality and religion, we have to establish Church schools or institutions of education of our own, and thus the burdens of taxation are increased upon the people. We have to do it in order that our children may have the advantages of moral training in their youth. I know that I shall be criticized by professional 'lovers of education, 'for expressing my idea in relation to this matter. (CR 10/1915:4)

THE VIEWS OF PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR

That prophet who most forcefully and persistently expressed his opposition to subjecting LDS children to non-LDS teachers was the late President John Taylor. In 1877, some three years before becoming president of the Church, he ran for, and was elected Territorial Superintendent of Schools. Although the Brethren were opposed to public schools, the Territorial Legislature had voted funds for this purpose, and doubtless the Church leaders felt that someone with the Church point of view should occupy this sensitive office, therefore Apostle Taylor became a candidate. This placed him in a very difficult position as is illustrated by the following remarks made by him in General Conference of April, 1879:

And then we want to study also the principles of education, and to get the very best teachers we can to teach our children; see that they are men and women who fear God and keep his commandments. We do not want men or women to teach the children of Latter-day Saints who are not Latter-day Saints themselves. Hear it ye elders of Israel and you school trustees. (SD 20: 179)

President Taylor, as well as all Latter-day Saints who accept the counsel of their leaders, want only teachers for their children who have a testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel. But how can parents select their children's teachers under socialized education? They cannot do so as is explained by President Joseph F. Smith in his statement quoted above, Latter-day Saints are just as entitled to have LDS teachers as Catholics and Protestants are to have teachers of their faith. But as has been stated heretofore, the parents cannot select their childrens' teachers under a system of public education unless they are willing to support two educational systems at the same time.

President Taylor was so opposed to the Latter-day Saints subjecting their children to non-LDS teachers that he gave it as his opinion that parents who did so would not make it to the Celestial Kingdom:

I am told in the revelations to bring up my children in the fear of God. Now we are engaged...in building our temples...that we may become united and linked together by eternal covenants that shall exist in all time and throughout eternity. And then when we have done all this go and deliberately turn our children over to whom? To men who do not believe the Gospel, to men who, according to your faith are never going to the celestial kingdom of God....And you will turn your children over to them. And you call yourselves Latter-day Saints, do you? I will suppose a case. You expect to be saved in the celestial kingdom of God Well, supposing your expectations are realized, which I sometimes doubt, and you look down, down somewhere in a terrestrial or telestial kingdom, as the case may be, and you see your children, the offspring that God had given you to train up in his fear, to honor him and keep his commandments, .

And supposing they could converse with you...what would be their feelings toward you? It would be, Father, Mother, you are to blame for this. I would have been with you if you had not tampered with the principles of life and salvation in permitting me to be decoyed away by false teachers, who taught incorrect principles. And this is the result of it. But then I very much question men and women's getting into the celestial kingdom of God who have no more knowledge about principles of life and salvation than to go and tamper with the sacred offspring, the principle of life which God entrusted to your care, to thus shuffle it off to imbibe the spirit of unbelief which leads to destruction and death. I very much doubt in my mind the capability of such people getting there. (SD 20:107-8; see also ID 19:248; 20:48, 60; 22:222, 315; 24:168, 352; 26:97, 112)

President Taylor has support for his position in the following scripture:

And also trust no one to be your teacher nor your minister, except he be a man of God, walking in his ways and keeping his commandments. (Mosiah 23:14)

He also believed that Church members should have their own books for their children's education:

And then with regard to our educational pursuits, let us do all we can in that direction. Some people talk about the means it takes; why money is not to be compared with intelligence. I wish we had our own text books, published by ourselves and read by our children. I think such things are indicated in the Doctrine and Covenants. (ID 20:169)

The scripture to which he doubtless had reference reads as follows:

And again, you [W.W. Phelps] shall be ordained to assist my servant Oliver Cowdery to do the work of printing, and of selecting and writing books for schools in this church, that little children also may receive instruction before me as is pleasing unto me. (D&C 5 5:4)

These quotations should be sufficient to indicate the attitude of the Prophets toward socialized education in the early days of the Church. Since the practice became law, and the people have overwhelmingly accepted it, for the most part the prophets have remained silent. The following scripture may explain the situation:

It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him.

And they that will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction. Now this is what is meant by the chains of hell. (Alma 12:9, 11)

In this connection, we might also contemplate the following prophecy by Nephi which says that in the last days, the Gentiles would reject their prophets and the Lord would cover their seers.

But, behold, in the last days, or in the days of the Gentiles—yea, behold all the nations of the Gentiles and also the Jews, both those who shall come upon this land and those who shall be upon other lands, yea, even upon all the lands of the earth, behold, they will be drunken with iniquity and all manner of abominations— For behold, the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep.

For behold, ye have closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; and your rulers, and the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity. (2 Nephi 27:1,5)

THE UNIMPORTANCE OF THE “PRECEPTS OF MEN” AND THE “WISDOM OF THE WORLD”

It is the “vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men” which makes it possible for them to believe that their own meager, and oftentimes erroneous store of knowledge is of such importance that it must be forced upon everyone. It is precisely because of these weaknesses that “they hearken not unto the counsel of God,” and because they will not hearken they believe in enforced priestcraft. But no one can convince them that “their wisdom is foolishness.” On the other hand, so arrogantly certain are they of the value of what they think they know, that they want to force everyone into the same mold of socialized education to learn it.

The relative unimportance of the worldly knowledge being taught in the public schools of today can be demonstrated by observing what happened to three great men of ancient times who had no opportunity to obtain such knowledge. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob made their living tending flocks and herds in a desert country. They lived completely outside of what we call “civilization” and had none of the “advantages” we ascribe to it. Certainly, they had no formal training in secular matters and even had they been given the opportunity of such training, the great bulk of the learning which educators of today deem important would not have been available. Much of the world’s history was yet to occur; very little of the “great literature” had then been written; and nearly all the discoveries of science were still to be made. Nonetheless, the scriptures tell us they “are not angels but are gods.” (D&C 132:37) All the knowledge essential to the attainment of the supreme goal of existence was theirs. What they did have was a knowledge of the things of God. Without this, “wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth [us] not. And [we] shall perish.”

ONLY THOSE WHO LACK FAITH IN THE OMNIPOTENCE AND JUSTICE OF GOD CAN BELIEVE IN PRIESTCRAFT

Anyone who believes in the omnipotence and justice of God and consequently has faith as did Alma of old that

the Lord doth grant unto all nations, of their own nation and tongue, to teach his word, yea, in wisdom, all that he seeM fit that they should have... (Alma 29:8)

will not use compulsion to spread knowledge. A person with such faith will realize there is nothing which he or anyone else can do or fail to do which will defeat justice. He will know that all men will receive the exact amount of knowledge which the Lord in His wisdom “seeth fit that they should have,” and no one can give them any more than this or withhold from them what they deserve. A person with such an attitude will seek only to learn the Lord’s will and do it, fully realizing that if God is just, the only person’s fate one can determine is his own.

But men have an extremely difficult time developing that kind of faith. Even Alma had to restrain his desires “to set the world straight” by reminding himself that God is at the helm and everyone will receive their just dues. One of the greatest lessons in the scriptures is taught by Alma’s experience. It will be remembered that this prophet (Alma II) in his younger days was going about trying to destroy the Lord’s Church when an angel appeared to Alma and told him:

Alma, ...why persecutest thou the church of God? For the Lord hath said: This is my church, and I will establish it; and nothing shall overthrow it, save it be the transgression of my people. (Mosiah 27:13)

Alma felt the almighty power of God and was fully convinced, as the angel had said, that no mortal power could overthrow the Lord’s Church save it were the wickedness of those who belonged to it.

He repented of his great sins, but in doing so he suffered as few men in mortality are permitted to suffer—he experienced “eternal torment,” or the “pains of a damned soul.” So exquisite was his torment that he wished to “become extinct both soul and body.” (Alma 36:15) No physical suffering can compare with it, but it is something unrepentant Church members must go through for the Lord has said:

Therefore I command you to repent—repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore—how sore you know not, how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not.

For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;

But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; (D&C 19:15-17)

Alma became one of the greatest missionaries of all time. So exceedingly anxious was he that men should avoid the sorrow and the eternal torment which he had experienced that he cried out:

O that I were an angel, and could have the wish of mine heart, that I might go forth and speak with the trump of God, with a voice to shake the earth, and cry repentance unto every people!

that they should repent and come unto our God, that there might not be more sorrow upon all the face of the earth. (Alma 29:1-2)

But just as Alma had been brought to realize by his earlier experience that the Lord’s work could not be hindered by man except according to the laws of justice, now he recognizes that the Lord’s work cannot prosper except according to those same laws. And so he chastises himself for desiring to preach to all the world with a trump of God:

But behold, I am a man, and do sin in my wish; for I ought to be content with the things which the Lord hath allotted unto me.

I ought not to harrow up in my desires, the firm decree of a just God, for I know that he granteth unto men according to their desire, whether it be unto death or unto life... (Alma 29:3-4)

Then in the following verse, Alma acknowledges the great truth which is important to our discussion here—that every person obtains that exact knowledge to which he is entitled:

For behold, the Lord doth grant unto all nations, of their own nation and tongue, to teach his word, yea, in wisdom, all that he seeth fit that they should have; therefore we see that the Lord doth counsel in wisdom, according to that which is just and true. (Alma 29:8)

If a person can bring himself to believe the profound gospel truth that God is indeed just to all men; that each one works out his own salvation; and that the only soul one can save is his own, he will take a completely different attitude toward the ills of mankind than otherwise. He will seek only to know what the Lord wants him to do about ignorance, poverty, sickness, etc., and then try to do it. He will learn the Lord's methods of handling these problems and follow them. He will recognize that compulsion is the devil's plan and avoid using it.

If God is not omnipotent and just; if He does not govern in the affairs of men and of nations; if a person's knowledge and his salvation which is dependent thereon are determined by the chance actions of associates who are oftentimes unwise and sinful—then are we mere pawns on the chessboard of fate being moved here and there by blind forces over which we exercise little or no control.

Although we have reached a terminal point in our discussion of the Lord's plan to provide free agency and Satan's plan to destroy it, let us undertake to confirm the conclusions drawn by viewing these plans in the light of scriptures dealing with the kingdom of God, the kingdom of Satan, and the Gentile apostasy of the last days.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD VS. THE KINGDOM OF THE DEVIL

MAN'S FOREMOST DUTY: "SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD"

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord advised, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33; 3 Nephi 13:33) Then in giving us the Lord's Prayer, the first request He suggested we make as we importune our Father in Heaven is: "Thy kingdom come." At the end of our prayers He recommended that we acknowledge before God: "For thine is the kingdom."

How many times have the words of this prayer been repeated without the supplicant realizing what Christ meant when He asked that we pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God? What is this kingdom for which we should earnestly seek; which should take precedence over other objectives and receive the foremost attention in our daily prayers?

WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

A dictionary definition of the word "kingdom" is:

The territory, people, state or realm ruled by a king or a queen; a monarchy; as the kingdom of Spain. 2. The spiritual dominion of God on earth; his reign over those who believe in Christ and submit themselves to God's will...

Perhaps the authors of this definition would limit the meaning of the term "kingdom of God" to things spiritual, but the scriptures and the prophets do not restrict it so. As has been shown herein, the Lord has repeatedly established civil governments, prescribed civil laws, and appointed rulers for the purpose of providing free agency for His children. His direct intervention in political affairs is one of the best attested facts of religious history. This suggests that His kingdom may include physical rule as well as spiritual.

Let us consider the meaning of the term "the kingdom of God" ascribed to it by the prophets. President Joseph Fielding Smith, using the words of Elder Orson Pratt has defined it as follows:

*The kingdom of God is an order of government established by divine authority. It is the only legal government that can exist in any part of the universe. All other governments are illegal and unauthorized God having made all beings and worlds, has the supreme right to govern them by his own laws, and by officers of his own appointment. Any people attempting to govern themselves by laws of their own making, and by officers of their own appointment, are in direct rebellion against the kingdom of God (Smith, *Seek Ye Earnestly*, p. 22, Deseret Book, 1970)*

President John Taylor's definition is similar. It reads:

The Kingdom of God, is the government of God, on the earth, or in the heavens....If the world be the Lord's, He certainly has a right to govern it; for we have already stated that man has no authority, except that which is delegated to him. He possesses a moral power to govern his actions, subject at all times to the law of God; but never is authorized to act independent of God; much less is he authorized to rule on the earth without the call and direction of the Lord; therefore, any rule or dominion over the earth, which is not given by the Lord is surreptitiously obtained, and never will be sanctioned by him. (Taylor, Government of God, pp. 1, 58)

These statements indicate that if the Lord's form of government is being used in a nation; if His prescribed laws are being enforced; and if His appointees are standing at the head of government and executing His will, then the people and the territory under such a government constitute His kingdom. If the people acknowledge the Lord as their king and His appointees as His servants holding office at His pleasure and receiving any authority they possess from Him, then they are His subjects. Under these conditions it would be accurate to say that the kingdom of God is on the earth.

This may give the impression that the Lord's kingdom exists only in that nation where no laws except His are enforced and where His leaders are in control of government. There are other statements by the prophets which appear to broaden this concept. For example, the prophet Joseph Smith stated:

What constitutes the kingdom of God? Where there is a prophet, a priest, or a righteous man unto whom God gives his oracles, there is the kingdom of God... (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 271-4)

Then let us consider these words of the Savior:

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. (Luke 17:20-21)

From this we might assume that even though a group lives under unrighteous laws and corrupt rulers, yet if they acknowledge God as their King, join His Church, and seek to establish only laws which have His approval, they are members of His kingdom. It would also appear that though a people belong to the Lord's Church and hold His Priesthood, unless they accept Him as their political guide and unless they seek to maintain and uphold only those laws which have His approval, they cannot claim to be members of His kingdom.

GOD HAS ESTABLISHED HIS KINGDOM AND RULED THROUGH GOVERNMENTS IN TIMES PAST

The Lord has established His kingdom on the earth and ruled over His people through government at various times throughout history. This is indicated in the following words of President Joseph Fielding Smith:

When the first government was formed on the earth, the Lord directed it by revelation and gave laws for the guidance of the people. In course of time when man began to multiply they refused to hearken to the voice of revelation and rebelled against the divine mandates that had been given them...In this manner the kingdom of God, as it was established by the Lord and intended by him to continue through all ages, came to an end. In its stead man-made governments were formed and man usurped the authority which rightfully belongs to his Maker.

*There have been times when governments have been directed by the Lord, and his will has been followed as it was made known through divinely appointed prophets. This was the condition of the city of Enoch; in the days of Israel in Palestine, when they were not rebellious; among the Nephites through much of their history, especially during the two hundred years following the crucifixion of Christ. However with these and a few other exceptions, almost from the beginning men have rejected the guidance of the Lord; they have cast out or killed the prophets and have refused to recognize the voice of God in their affairs. The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof but that has not retarded fallen man in his usurpation of governmental authority which does not rightfully belong to him. (Smith, *Seek Ye Earnestly*, Deseret Book Co., 1970, pp. 2 1-22)*

From this we learn not only that the Lord's kingdom has been on the earth in the past, but that it is His purpose to maintain it here at all times.

Most people refuse to obey the Lord's laws and leaders. Because they have freedom to do so, the overwhelming majority have refused His offer of political leadership. As President Smith has stated, "Almost from the beginning men have rejected the guidance of the Lord."

The foregoing material contains facts regarding man's duty to seek the kingdom of God. These facts seem to be receiving very little attention today. Among the more important of these facts are the following:

1. Membership in the Lord's kingdom is possible here and now and is not to be regarded as a goal attainable only in the distant future.
2. The Lord's kingdom encompasses not only what men call ecclesiastical matters, but also those which are political as well. His rightful sovereignty extends over government as well as Church. As Creator and Governor of the earth and all things therein, it is His inherent right to rule as King of Kings and Lord of Lords over all nations.
3. God's commandments cover political as well as religious duties, and it is not possible for man to become a completely loyal member of God's kingdom without complying with both.
4. Without the Lord's guidance, men are as incompetent to properly conduct political affairs as they are to conduct those which are religious, and any people "attempting to govern themselves by laws of their own making, and by officers of their own appointment, are in direct rebellion against the kingdom of God."

This last fact directs our attention to the "Thou Shalt Not" commandment here involved. As is usual, there are negative as well as affirmative duties here which must be understood and obeyed before the blessing is merited. The negative duty in this case is, "Thou shalt not build up the kingdom of the Devil." (See D&C 10:56) To better understand what this duty consists of, let us consider the nature of the devil's kingdom.

THE KINGDOM OF THE DEVIL

The kingdom of the Devil is as much a physical reality as the kingdom of God. The scriptures describe both as actual organizations among men here on earth. If the kingdom of God is “an order of government established by divine authority” as the prophets have said, we may assume that the kingdom of the Devil is an order of government established under his influence and subject to his control. This conclusion is supported by the thesis advanced herein that the devil’s church is prostituted government because according to the words of Nephi, the Great and Abominable Church and the Kingdom of the Devil are one and the same. Nephi equated the Devil’s Church with his kingdom in the following passage:

But behold, the great and abominable church, the whore of all the earth, must tumble to the earth, and great must be the fall thereof

For the kingdom of the devil must shake, and they which belong to it must needs be stirred up unto repentance... (2 Nephi 28:18-19)

THE GREAT CONFLICT OF MORTALITY: THE KINGDOM OF GOD VS. THE KINGDOM OF SATAN

If both the kingdoms of God and Satan, when established, include control of government, and if these two contending forces are both trying to build up their respective kingdoms, the ensuing conflict for control of government could be the most important contest of earth life. Furthermore, decisions regarding political matters may be some of the most vital men make because they constitute a choice between the two kingdoms. This choice between good and evil government comes before all people because everyone lives under a civil government of some type. This is the one organization with which all become familiar. Its activities are constantly before us, affecting our lives in innumerable ways. Thus everyone has the opportunity, and oftentimes the necessity, of making decisions regarding the rightness or wrongness of what government does. Whether or not the fact is realized, in making these decisions, men choose between organized good and organized evil.

Furthermore, every decision regarding a law constitutes a clear cut choice between good and evil. This is so because every law requires the use of compulsion in its enforcement. When compulsion is used, free agency is affected either rightly or wrongly. It cannot be both ways at once. If the only effect of the law is to punish evil (acts designed to destroy freedom), then it protects free agency by punishing those who undertake to destroy it. If the effect of the law is to punish good or innocent behavior (acts designed to protect or increase freedom), free agency is not protected but, on the other hand denied.

The following scripture confirms the truth that every act of compulsion must be classified as either righteous or unrighteous:

when we undertake to...exercise...compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness,...Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man. (D&C 12 1:37)

In this passage a distinct line is indicated between compulsion which is righteous and that which is unrighteous, and the penalty for crossing that line is most severe. Then in the following scripture, the Lord draws a distinct line between laws which protect freedom and anything which “is more or less than this:”

And that law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, belongs to all mankind

And as pertaining to law of man, whatsoever is more or less than this, cometh of evil. (D&C 98:5, 7)

From these scriptures we may conclude that some laws are suitable for the Lord's kingdom while others are suitable for Satan's. There is no law which is appropriate for both. Every use of force which Christ has commanded, the Devil opposes and vice versa. Compulsion is either right or wrong, but it cannot be both at once; neither can its inherent nature change; this is as eternal and unchangeable as the personage which commanded its use. It may not be wrong to assume that a knowledge of the distinction between righteous and unrighteous compulsion is essential to membership in God's kingdom. If we either oppose the Lord's laws or favor Satan's, we can expect to be excluded, thus the necessity of being able to distinguish between the two is most apparent.

We have undertaken elsewhere in this work to distinguish between those laws which preserve freedom and those which destroy it. Let us make that same distinction again by observing what government must and must not do to protect the Lord's system of stewardship which is an essential feature of His kingdom. But first let us consider what that system is and why it must be protected.

THE LORD'S SYSTEM OF STEWARDSHIP

There is much scriptural evidence that unless one is able to live the principles of the United Order, he is not a candidate for the kingdom of God or the celestial degree of glory. (D&C 78:4-7; 82:17-21; 105:3-5) On various occasions the members of the Lord's Church have successfully lived these principles. Regarding the City of Enoch we are told:

And the Lord called his people ZION, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them. (Moses 7:18)

Also according to the following scripture, the righteous Nephites and Lamanites who survived the destruction of the wicked among them complied with this higher law:

And it came to pass in the thirty and sixth year, the people were all converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land...and every man did deal justly one with another.

And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free... (4 Nephi 2-3)

Less than a year after the Church was established in these latter days, the Lord once again gave the commandment to live the United Order. (D&C 42:30-32) While that commandment has since been suspended until after the redemption of Zion (D&C 105:34) and replaced by the law of tithes and offerings, it appears that the necessity of learning to abide by its principles still remains for those who would obtain membership in God's kingdom.

There are two basic laws connected with living the United Order:

(1) Consecration, and (2) Stewardship. Those who live the law of consecration must recognize that the earth and everything therein belongs to the Lord. All they have including their time, their means, and their possessions constitute a stewardship given them by Him. To signify recognition of this fact, those in the United Order voluntarily transferred all of their property to the Lord's Church "with a covenant and a deed which cannot be broken." (D&C 42:30) Having done this, the consecrator then received back from the Church "as much as is sufficient for himself and family." (D&C 42:32) As is stated in another revelation, the bishop is to "appoint unto this people their portions, every man equal according to his family, according to his circumstances and his wants and needs." (D&C 51:3) This constituted a man's stewardship. It was his private property, and his rights thereto were protected by government. As the revelation states:

And thus all things shall be made sure, according to the laws of the land (D&C51:6)

As legal owner of the property which constituted his stewardship, a member of the United Order could do with it as he pleased. He could operate it for the purpose of making a living, sell it, give it away, or will it to his heirs. However, if he lived the principles of the United Order, any surplus which his stewardship produced over and above his necessities and wants was to be "cast into the Lord's storehouse, to become the common property of the whole church." (D&C 82:18; 70:7) Let it be recognized, however, that this duty was no more legally binding upon him than was his duty to consecrate the property in the first instance. A person was as free to refuse to live the principle of the United Order as we are free to refuse to live the law of tithes and offerings today. Private property should be fully protected by the laws of the land in either case. Thus, it is seen that the right of the individual to own and control property is indispensable to the operation of the Lord's system of stewardship. Therefore, government enforced laws must exist which protect this basic right.

STEWARDSHIP ESSENTIAL TO THE PLAN OF FREE AGENCY

Individual stewardships are the very heart of the Lord's plan of free agency, for without them there can be no accountability. Only where men are given custody over property or other possessions together with the freedom to superintend them can they be rewarded or punished. The necessity of stewardships is often mentioned in the scriptures. The following passage is typical:

For it is expedient that I, the Lord, should make every man accountable, as a steward over earthly blessings, which I have made and prepared for my creatures. (D&C 104:13. See also D&C 72:3; 70:4, 9)

The Lord explained His system of stewardships in His parable of the talents. Therein He stated that,

the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability... (Matt. 25:14-15)

Let us note that the Lord did not deliver the same amount of goods to each steward, but “to every man according to his several ability,” apparently as those abilities had been developed up to that time. Just as there are extensive differences in stewardship in this life, even so according to this parable, there will be even greater differences at the beginning of the next life, for when the Lord returned from his journey, he held each of these three stewards accountable for the use they made of their talents and rewarded them accordingly. The slothful servant was deprived of the single talent he had failed to improve, and it was given to the one who had doubled the talents given him.

Immediately following the account of the parable of the talents in Matt. Ch. 25, the Lord explains that He judges all men on the basis of what they do with their talents or stewardship:

*When the Son of man shall come in his glory...
And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another,
as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats;
And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.
Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit
the kingdom prepared for you... (Matt. 25:31-34)*

This scripture goes on to say that those who inherit the Lord’s kingdom use their stewardship to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and comfort the sick and in prison, while those who are selfish are sent away into everlasting punishment.

It is a fact of the utmost importance that the Lord cannot hold a man accountable for the development of the talents given him—whether he be given five, two, or a million—unless he has the freedom to develop those talents. It is a fact of equal importance that a person can neither be rewarded in the kingdom of heaven for his charity, nor punished for his greed, unless he is left free to dispose of his stewardship as he sees fit. Therefore, in the Lord’s kingdom, the right of the individual to acquire and control property must be protected.

LAWS NECESSARY FOR THE PROTECTION OF STEWARDSHIP

There are four types of laws which are authorized by the Constitution of the United States and were adopted by the founding fathers. These laws are necessary to protect individual stewardship. They are as follows: (Note: The U.S. Constitution is included herein as Appendix 1)

1. Criminal laws which provide protection against those who take, injure, or destroy the stewardship of others;
2. Laws which provide for defense against foreign aggressor nations; (These laws might be classified as criminal laws because they provide protection against foreign criminals.)
3. Contract and tort laws which permit those who have been injured by the intentional or negligent conduct of others to have their claims litigated and enforced;
4. Laws which make it possible for government to perform the above functions by compelling each person whose stewardship is protected to pay his fair share of the taxes and perform other necessary duties, such as serve in the armed forces.

LAWS WHICH DESTROY AND PROHIBIT STEWARDSHIP

Since every law which affects freedom either protects or destroys it, and since all laws essential to its protection were authorized by the original Constitution, unless a law which affects freedom is permitted by that document, it is inimical to the Lord's system of stewardships. There are almost an infinite number of laws which have this effect, but most of them may be properly classified into three groups which will now be discussed.

1. *Laws which hinder or prevent the acquisition of a stewardship.* In a well developed economy where there is a marked division of labor, one acquires a stewardship of property by entering some specialized field and producing a large quantity of goods and/or services for sale to or exchange with others who also are engaged in mass production. Under such conditions a person may be hindered or prevented from acquiring a stewardship by laws which make it difficult or impossible to enter business. There are a large variety of such laws including licensing laws, zoning laws, employment laws which forbid the hiring of a person because of age, sex, race, etc., and collective bargaining laws which prevent employees from bargaining directly with employers.

In trying to justify such laws, people tend to confuse a proper function of government—that of punishing crime—with an improper function—that of destroying stewardships. They erroneously imagine that licensing laws, for example, are necessary criminal laws. This utterly false notion can be dispelled by noting that existing criminal laws already provide for the punishment of every conceivable type of crime, and neither licensing nor regulatory laws can add anything to them. Neither do licensing or regulatory laws add anything to the rights of the buying public. The tort and contract laws already provide that a person may secure redress for injuries committed either intentionally or negligently, and that is all the protection which government can afford without destroying freedom.

2. *Regulatory laws.* Laws which deny the steward the freedom to manage his own property are not authorized by the Constitution and are destructive of those "rights and privileges" which belong to all mankind. The multitudinous regulatory measures under which government commissions, boards, bureaus, and agencies regulate agriculture and labor, finance and banking, transportation and communication, mining and manufacturing, trades, professions, etc. all have the effect of preventing the property owner from making his own decisions about his stewardship.

3. *Compulsory charity laws.* Laws which authorize and direct government officials to forcibly take property from its rightful owner and make a gift thereof to those to whom it does not belong, prevent the property owner from deciding for himself how charitable he will be with that property and thereby destroy the basis upon which the Lord intends to judge the world. (Matt. 25:31-46) This constitutes a direct violation of the commandment, "thou shalt not steal." The evil nature of the act is not changed in the slightest merely by changing the number who are involved in its commission. The Lord's commandments apply with as much force to group action as individual action, and anyone who favors laws which destroy stewardship in this manner can hardly expect to inherit the kingdom of God unless he repents.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF THE DEVIL OVER THE EARTH

So many freedom-destroying laws of the three types discussed above have been adopted in every nation today that the Lord's system of stewardship has been largely abolished all over the earth. Furthermore, lawmaking bodies at every level of government continue to grind out massive amounts of new legislation each year, almost all of which increase state activity at the expense of individual freedom. A substantially accurate description of conditions now prevailing in "democratic" nations is contained in a prediction made over 130 years ago by Alexis de Toqueville in his book, *Democracy in America* published around 1840. The following is an excerpt therefrom.

I think, then, that the species of oppression by which democratic nations are menaced is unlike anything that ever before existed in the world;...I seek to trace the novel features under which despotism may appear in the world. The first thing that strikes the observation is an innumerable multitude of men, all equal and alike, incessantly endeavoring to procure the petty and paltry pleasures with which they glut their lives....

Above this race of men stands an immense and tutelary power, which takes upon itself alone to secure their gratifications and to watch over their fate....It provides for their security, foresees and supplies their necessities, facilitates their pleasures, manages their principal concerns, directs their industry, regulates the descent of property, and subdivides their inheritances: what remains, but to spare them all the care of thinking and all the trouble of living?

Thus it every day renders the exercise of the free agency of man less useful and less frequent; it circumscribes the will within a narrower range and gradually robs a man of all the uses of himself...

After having thus successively taken each member of the community in its powerful grasp and fashioned him at will, the supreme power then extends its arm over the whole community unity. It covers the surface of society with a network of small complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate, to rise above the crowd.... Such a power does not destroy, but it prevents existence; it does not tyrannize, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people, till each nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd..

[The people] devise a sole, tutelary, and all-powerful form of government, but elected by the people. They combine the principle of centralization and that of popular sovereignty; this gives them a respite: they console themselves for being in tutelage by the reflection that they have chosen their own guardians. Every man allows himself to be put in leading strings, because he sees that it is not a person or a class of persons, but the people at large who hold the end of his chain.

*By this system the people shake off their state of dependence just long enough to select their master and then relapse into it again (de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Book Four, Ch. VI)*

This statement is a tribute to de Tocqueville's astonishing foresight, but only a prophet of God could predict present conditions 2500 years before their occurrence and provide a true explanation of them. This, the prophet Nephi did and the essence of that explanation is contained in the following passage:

And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people. (1 Nephi 14:11)

Latter-day prophets have given this same explanation. In a message from the First Presidency of the Church read in general conference, Oct., 1942, Satan's plans to set up the world's greatest tyranny were described in these words:

Satan is making war against all the wisdom that has come to men through their ages of existence. He is seeking to overturn and destroy the very foundations upon which society, government, and religion rest. He aims to have men adopt theories and practices which he induced their forefathers, over the ages, to adopt and try, only to be discarded by them when found unsound, impractical, and ruinous. He plans to destroy liberty and freedom—economic, political, and religious, and to set up in place thereof the greatest, most widespread, and most complete tyranny that has ever oppressed men. He is working under such perfect disguise that many do not recognize either him or his methods..

He comes as a thief in the night; he is a wolf in sheep's clothing. Without their knowing it, the people are being urged down paths that lead only to destruction. Satan never had so firm a grip on this generation as he has now.... We condemn the outcome [of the war] which wicked and designing men are now planning; the world-wide establishment and perpetuation of some form of communism on the one side, or some form of Nazism or Fascism on the other. Each of these systems destroys liberty, wipes out free institutions, blots out free agency, stifles free press and free speech, crushes out freedom of religion and conscience. Free peoples cannot and do not survive under these systems. (C/R, Oct. 1942 pp. 13, 15)

In 1962, the late President and Prophet, David O. McKay expressed how extensively Satan is destroying freedom throughout the world in these words:

Today, freedom—political, economic, and individual freedom—lies destroyed or is in the course of being destroyed over great areas of the globe. And it has been destroyed and is being destroyed in the name of freedom.... A ruthless dialectical battle is being waged against the Christian way of life, against political liberty, against individual freedom, and it is being waged in the name of Freedom. Black becomes White; Tyranny becomes Freedom; The Forced Labor Camp stands for Liberty; The Slave State is represented as Democracy. This is the deadly challenge of Communism. (Conf. Rep., Oct. 1962, pp. 6,7)

Our living prophet, President Joseph Fielding Smith in the following passage has stated that he believes that we are living in the days prophesied by Nephi when Satan's kingdom would be established "among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people:"

*The United States is not the kingdom of God, neither is England, Germany, or France... Satan has control now, No matter where you look, he is in control, even in our own land. He is guiding the governments as far as the Lord will permit him. That is why there is so much strife, turmoil, and confusion all over the earth. One master mind is governing the nations it is Satan himself (Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, pp. 314-315)*

While this statement was made some years ago, Satan's control has continued to increase since then. People everywhere are giving up more and more of their freedom to those conducting the affairs of his kingdom. Local governments continue to surrender their rightful powers to the states, the states to the nations, and the nations to a single world government. Massive wickedness, instantaneous communication, rapid transportation, and a fearful arsenal of sophisticated weapons are serving to establish Satan's kingdom and make him ruler over the whole earth.

THE DUTY TO SEEK FOR GOOD, HONEST, AND WISE MEN

In addition to the political duties to “befriend” the laws of God and oppose the laws of Satan, one who seeks for the establishment of God’s kingdom is also obligated to seek for officers who are disposed to uphold the laws of freedom. This duty is expressed in the following passage:

Wherefore, honest men and wise men should be sought for diligently, and good men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise whatsoever is less than these cometh of evil. (D&C 98:10)

Both the need as well as the difficulty of complying with this commandment is indicated by the following scripture:

We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion. (D&C 121:39)

The “sad experience” of mankind does indeed bear out the truth that there are extremely few men who can safely be entrusted with authority. Religious as well as secular history teach that only those who are righteous will curb the almost universal disposition to exercise unrighteous dominion. However, when a nation is righteous enough to deserve them, the Lord will make available men who can be entrusted with the power of government. This He did when He raised up the wise and God-fearing men through whom He established the laws and Constitution of the United States. Those men sought to establish a government of freedom under which the kingdom of God could be established. For example, they adopted as our national motto: “In God We Trust.” Washington, in his first inaugural address paid homage to—*that Almighty Being who rules over the universe, who presides in the council of nations...*

John Adams concluded his first inaugural address with these words:

And may that Being who is supreme over all, the Patron of Order, the Fountain of Justice, and the Protector in all ages of the world of virtuous liberty, continue his blessing upon this nation and its government.

It is men of this calibre who must be sought for diligently if we would maintain that atmosphere of freedom within which the Lord’s kingdom can be established.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

The conclusion has been drawn herein that to obey Christ’s commandment to seek His kingdom, one must favor only laws which are authorized by Him and seek only for men who acknowledge His right to reign. Does one violate the doctrine of separation of church and state when he takes this attitude toward his political duties? Let us consider what this “separation” doctrine means. Its correct meaning is succinctly expressed in the first article of the Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution which says:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...

It cannot be contended that there is a union of church and state as long as this prohibition is observed. As long as there are no laws adopted or enforced by government respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting its free exercise, there is a strict separation of church and state. The doctrine of "separation" cannot encompass either more or less than this without contradicting itself. If its meaning is broadened so as to prohibit men from holding political office because of their religious affiliation or convictions, then it sanctions laws respecting an establishment of religion. This is also the case if the doctrine is used to sanction laws which prohibit churchmen or church leaders from expressing their views on political issues either within the church or without. Of course, religious leaders are subject to the laws against libel, slander, and treason the same as other citizens. On the other hand, as citizens, they have the same rights to express their political convictions, even though such convictions find their basis in their religious creed.

Men who believe in God and belong to churches are entitled to as much political freedom as are atheists and agnostics; and religious leaders have as much right to seek and hold political office as do those who are not religious leaders. To deny a man the privilege of voting his conscience or running for office because of his affiliation with a religious movement is as much a violation of the doctrine of separation of church and state as to deny political freedom to one not so affiliated.

Thus, it is most apparent that there is no violation of the doctrine of "separation" when a person votes for a candidate for the reason that such candidate believes in the kingdom of God and acknowledges Christ as the head of that kingdom. Neither can there be any valid objection to the adoption and enforcement of laws which build up that kingdom, for within that kingdom every man's freedom is protected and no laws will be enforced respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise there

of. God's kingdom is one of perfect freedom and the only laws enforced therein are those which enforce the universal standard of morality discussed herein in Chapter VIII. It was there shown that this standard is based upon the universal desire for freedom and the common knowledge of those acts and intents which destroy its elements.

All rational men, regardless of religious differences, know this standard and although they may be inclined to ignore it and violate the freedom of others, they desire to have it enforced to protect their own. Therefore, it may with perfect justice be enforced against all men. The unbeliever and the skeptic as well as the pious may, without violating their consciences, be held morally accountable for failing to support those laws which protect freedom. As the Lord has stated:

that law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, belongs to all mankind... (D&C 98:5)

He has also stated that those laws which He suffered to be established,

should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to just and holy principles. (D&C 101:77)

XVIII

THE APOSTASY OF THE LATTER DAYS

HISTORY WARNS THAT APOSTASY MUST BE EXPECTED

Religious history testifies that, with the single exception of the inhabitants of the City of Enoch, no people to whom the gospel has been given have remained faithful to their covenants for more than a few generations. Time after time the Lord has established His Church among a group who have lived His commandments for a few years and then fallen away, thus bringing upon themselves His judgments. This cycle of human folly which so many prophets have noted, has repeated itself with such consistent regularity that any group which finds itself to be the favored recipients of the gospel would do well to assume that their apostasy is certain, and the only question about it is how long it will take.

Christ, who as the Governor of this world and has the painful duty of punishing transgression, has spoken of the infidelity of the House of Israel and the frequency with which it has rejected Him. Just before He made His appearance to those righteous Nephites and Lamanites who survived the terrible disaster inflicted upon them, He uttered these words of anguish:

O ye people of these great cities which have fallen, who are descendants of Jacob, yea, who are of the house of Israel, how oft have I gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and have nourished you.

And again, how oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, yea, O ye people of the house of Israel, who have fallen;.. . how oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not. (3 Nephi 10:4-5)

To the Jews, the Lord has said:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! (Matt. 23:37)

The fact that the Lord has found it necessary to restore His gospel so many times is in itself evidence of the regularity with which apostasy has occurred because the only thing which will cause the destruction of His Church is the wickedness of its members. As the angel told Alma who had been trying to destroy the Lord's work among the Nephites:

Alma, arise and stand forth, for why persecutest thou the church of God? For the Lord hath said: This is my church, and I will establish it; and nothing shall overthrow it, save it is the transgression of my people. (Mosiah 27:13)

The prophet, Mormon, whose labors as a historian gave him an opportunity to observe the frequency of the righteousness-wickedness-punishment cycle, spoke of it as though it were a law of life which operates as a certain consequence of universal human weakness. His analysis of apostasy and its causes should interest us deeply:

And thus we can behold how false, and also the unsteadiness of the hearts of the children of men; yea, we can see that the Lord in his great infinite goodness doth bless and prosper those who put their trust in him.

Yea, and we may see at the very time when he doth prosper his people, yea, in the increase of their fields, their flocks and their herds, and in gold, and in silver, and in all manner of precious things of every kind and art; sparing their lives, and delivering them out of the hands of their enemies... yea, and in fine, doing all things for the welfare and happiness of his people; yea, then is the time that they do harden their hearts, and do forget the Lord their God,...and this because of their ease and exceedingly great prosperity.

And thus we see that except the Lord doth chasten his people with many afflictions, yea, except he doth visit them with death and with terror, and with famine and with all manner of pestilence, they will not remember him.

O how foolish, and how vain, and how evil, and devilish, and how quick to do iniquity, and how slow to do good, are the children of men. (Hela. 12:1-4)

ARE THE CONDITIONS WHICH ORDINARILY ACCOMPANY APOSTASY PRESENT TODAY?

Do the words of Mormon quoted above have application today? If “ease” and “exceedingly great prosperity” are certain to cause people to “forget the Lord their God,” then the Church is in deep trouble because seldom, if ever, has any group been as prosperous as it is today. Its beginnings were humble enough. Starting in 1830 with an initial membership of six, the Church was persecuted, its property destroyed and confiscated, its leaders slain, and the people finally driven into a forbidding wilderness before they could find a measure of peace. But all that has now changed. After 140 years of growth, membership numbers in the millions, persecution has largely vanished, and instead of ostracism, members are, for the most part, accepted and respected.

These conditions in prior dispensations have been sure signs of weakened faith. To fail to consider the possibility that the members of the Church are again “falling away” would be to ignore one of the most thoroughly documented lessons of history. Especially is this true in light of the fact that the cultural, political, and educational life of Church members has become so deeply and thoroughly involved with that of non-members that they are being overwhelmingly influenced by the “ways of the world.” Through newspapers and magazines, motion pictures and television, schools and lecture halls, and a thoroughly integrated economic system, Church members come into close and continuous contact with those not of their faith.

Some may assume that a “Gentile apostasy” in these latter days cannot occur because Christ’s Church is here to stay this time. They may assume that widespread departure from gospel principles by Church members is contrary to prophecy. While the scriptures do assure us that the Church will continue to exist and be divinely led by prophets of the Lord right up until his Second Coming, they do not state that all, or even a majority of its members will follow those prophets. On the contrary, they foretell extensive, and in some cases, almost total defection from true principles. For example in Chapter 2 herein, we noted the Lord’s prophecy that only one half of that small group he calls “virgins” will avoid being deceived and destroyed. Let us consider other scriptures which discuss this problem.

PROPHECIES REGARDING APOSTASY IN THESE LATTER DAYS

The Book of Mormon contains many predictions of a falling away among the “Gentiles” in the latter days. While the non-Jewish, non-Lamanite members of Christ’s Church may not call themselves Gentiles, the Book of Mormon prophets did. This is clearly shown by the title page of the Nephite scripture which states in the following passage that this book will come forth “by way of the Gentile:”

Wherefore, it is an abridgement of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites—Written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel; and also to Jew and Gentile...to come forth in due time by way of the Gentile—... (See also D&C 20:9)

Christ also used the name “Gentile” to identify those through whom the gospel would go to the Lamanites. (3 Nephi 21:2-4) If Church members from Gentile nations will bear in mind that the term “Gentile” when used in the Book of Mormon includes them, the prophecies therein will have much greater meaning and be more disturbing.

Some of the predictions clearly refer to members of Christ’s Church. Consider, for example, the following statement which is found among Nephi’s comments regarding latter-day conditions:

They wear stiff necks and high heads; yea, and because of pride, and wickedness, and abominations, and whoredoms, they have all gone astray save it be a few, who are the humble followers of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err because they are taught by the precepts of men. (2 Nephi 28:14)

Even one who considers himself a “humble follower of Christ” is here warned that he will err “in many instances” because he is “taught by the precepts of men.”

Moroni was similarly explicit in predicting false teachings among the Saints. Reflect upon the unmistakable implications of this point-blank indictment of members of the “holy church of God:”

O ye pollutions, ye hypocrites, ye teachers, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, why have ye polluted the holy church of God? (Mormon 8:38)

Since there is only one “holy church of God” on earth, and since it is being polluted, the blame therefore appears to rest upon teachers and hypocrites within that church.

Christ levelled His own charge that iniquity would prevail among Gentile members of His Church in the last days in these words:

At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel... and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations... (3 Nephi 16:10)

That He was referring to members of His Church in this passage is evident not only from the fact that He states that the Gentiles will sin against His gospel, but also in discussing the possibility of their failing to repent, He refers to them as the “Salt of the earth:”

But if they will not turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, I will suffer them, yea, I will suffer my people, O house of Israel, that they shall go through among them, and shall tread them down, and they shall be as salt that hath lost its savor, which is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden underfoot of my people, O house of Israel. (3 Nephi 16:15)

When Christ uses the term “the salt of the earth”, He means His covenant people, as the following passage explains:

*When men are called unto mine everlasting gospel, and covenant with an everlasting covenant, they are accounted as the salt of the earth and the savor of men;
They are called to be the savor of men; therefore, if that salt of the earth lose its savor, behold, it is thenceforth good for nothing only to be cast out and trodden under the feet of men. (D&C 101:39-40)*

There are two other instances of record wherein the Lord told the Nephites that unless the Gentiles repented, they would be trodden down and torn in pieces. (3 Nephi 20:16, 21:12-14)

Mormon, who had witnessed the Lamanites exterminate his own people, used almost the same words as did Christ in the quotations referred to above, in predicting the destruction of the unrepentant Gentiles by a remnant of the house of Jacob:

*And then, O ye Gentiles, how can ye stand before the power of God, except ye shall repent and turn from your evil ways?
Therefore, repent ye, and humble yourselves before him lest he shall come out in justice against you—lest a remnant of the seed of Jacob shall go forth among you as a lion, and tear you in pieces, and there is none to deliver. (Mormon 5:22, 24)*

Then we have the following words of Moroni which state that the Gentiles would become so wicked that unless they repented they would be destroyed:

And this cometh unto you, O ye Gentiles, that ye may know the decrees of God—that ye may repent, and not continue in your iniquities until the fulness come, that ye may not bring down the fulness of the wrath of God upon you as the inhabitants of the land have hitherto done. (Ether 2:11)

It should be emphasized that the above quoted statements are not merely warnings against iniquity but they are prophecies also. In the clearest of language, they predict that the Gentiles will become so wicked that unless repentance occurs we will be destroyed. Or, as the last scripture quoted states it, our iniquities will become so great that if we “continue” in them, we will be swept off as were our predecessors.

That such a destruction will occur, and that it will consume everyone who fails to repent is indicated in the following words of Nephi:

And now behold, my beloved brethren, I would speak unto you; for I, Nephi, would not suffer that ye should suppose that ye are more righteous than the Gentiles shall be. For behold, except ye shall keep the commandments of God ye shall all likewise perish; and because of the words which have been spoken ye need not suppose that the Gentiles are utterly destroyed.

For behold, I say unto you that as many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord... (2 Nephi 30:1-2)

So sweeping had been Nephi's description of Gentile wickedness and destruction that in the above passage, he considered it necessary to warn his readers against assuming that the "Gentiles are utterly destroyed." As many as will turn from their wicked ways may be spared and numbered with the remnant.

THE FAILURE OF PEOPLE TO RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF APOSTASY

In the great majority of cases where apostasy has occurred, it appears that the people became wicked while believing themselves righteous. This happened time and again to the Children of Israel and the Nephites, and was plainly evident in the case of the Jews at the time of Christ. There are recorded exceptions to this rule. For example, when the Nephites apostatized immediately prior to Christ's visit, we are told:

Now they did not sin ignorantly, for they knew the will of God concerning them, for it had been taught unto them; therefore they did wilfully rebel against God. (3 Nephi 6:18)

But the typical situation is described thus by Mormon as he commented on the frequency and rapidity with which a people who have been blessed forsake the Lord:

they do harden their hearts, and do forget the Lord their God, and do trample under their feet the Holy One—yea, and this because of their ease, and their exceedingly great prosperity. (Hela 12:2)

Prophecies regarding the Gentile apostasy of the latter days indicate that it will be the typical one wherein Church members will be led away by false beliefs into evil practices. Nephi had much to say regarding the event. Among other things he predicted that:

1. "Because of pride, and because of false teachers, and false doctrine, their churches have become corrupted.." (2 Nephi 28:12)

2. "the humble followers of Christ" will err in many instances because they are taught by the precepts of men. (2 Nephi 28:14)

3. Some will be lulled away "into carnal security, that they will say:

All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell." (2 Nephi 28:2 1)

4. Others will be deceived into believing that there is no devil and no hell. (2 Nephi 28:22)

5. There will be many who will say:...

Eat, drink and be merry; nevertheless, fear God—he will just y5i in committing a little sin; yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this; and do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God.

Yea, and there shall be many which shall teach after this manner, false and vain and foolish doctrines... (2 Nephi 28:8-9)

THE VERY MAINSPRING OF ALL CORRUPTION

Since the scriptures state that the Gentile apostasy will be accompanied by many false beliefs, as has been the case in times past, it should be of profit and interest to attempt to discover wherein we are being misled today.

It will be recalled from our discussion in Chapter 3, that one of the most difficult problems we face in this life is that of distinguishing between right and wrong. We saw there that the purpose of the fall was that men might become “as gods knowing good and evil,” (Moses 4:11, 28) and that Satan’s great purpose here is to deceive mankind. (Moses 4:4) Having done this, he can induce honorable men to do evil because they believe it to be good, and induce them to refrain from doing good because they believe it to be evil.

Because of the very pronounced tendency of people to accept as proper, beliefs and practices of those amongst whom they are reared, the difficulty of distinguishing good from evil is greatly magnified for those who live in the midst of wickedness. The scriptures confirm this by pointing out that “the very mainspring of all corruption” is “the influence of that spirit which hath so strongly riveted the creeds of the fathers, who have inherited lies, upon the hearts of the children.” (D&C 123:7; see also D&C 93:39) Only those who have the faith and independence of character to seek the word of God in its purity from the scriptures and the teachings of the Holy Ghost can expect to escape the influence of inherited lies.

People who regard themselves as members of the only true Church have the fatal tendency to consider themselves immune from the disease of deception. Knowing that they belong to the Lord’s Church and have His scriptures and His prophet to guide them, they blindly assume that this adequately protects them against false beliefs. All history teaches the folly of such an assumption, and the scriptures specifically deny its validity. In fact, it is those who have the truth “plainly manifest unto them” who have the most to fear as the following scriptures state:

Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man; because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not the light. (D&C 93:31; see also 2 Nephi 32:7)

For of him unto whom much is given much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation. (D&C 82:3; see also 2 Nephi 9:27)

It is also true that people who conform to the outward ordinances, ceremonies, and practices of Christ's Church tend to assume that such activities assure them a place in His kingdom. This assumption, according to the scriptures, is likewise false. For example, the parable of the Ten Virgins teaches that only one half of that select group of Christians who wait expectantly for the Lord's second coming and consider themselves acceptable to Him, will be admitted to the marriage. Another scripture assures us that "many" who have prophesied in the Lord's name, cast out devils in His name, and in His name "done many wonderful works," will be excluded because of their "iniquity." (Matt. 7:22-23) People of this type—the foolish virgins who have been deceived, (D&C 45:57) and the "many" who have worked iniquity right while doing many wonderful works in the name of the Lord—should be interested in how they are being deceived and what they are doing which will keep them out of the kingdom. Let us turn to modern revelation for a possible explanation.

THE GREATEST REVELATION THAT GOD HAS EVER GIVEN TO MAN

That section of the D&C which President McKay has called "The greatest revelation that God has ever given to man," (B.Y.U. Speeches of the Year, Alvin R. Dyer, 3/20/63) contains an explanation of why only a "few" of the "many" who are called by the Lord will enter the highest degree of glory. This scripture (Sec. 121) affirms the conclusion drawn above that nearly every one will be deceived. It goes on to describe those weaknesses men have which makes this massive deception possible. There are certain basic flaws found in the characters of "almost all men" which prevent all but a "few" of the "many," who are given the Priesthood in this life, from retaining it in the hereafter. Let us quote the verses of this section which reveal this sobering fact:

Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson—That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon principles of righteousness.

We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion.

Hence many are called, but few are chosen. (D&C 121:34-36, 39-40)

From these verses we learn that almost all men set their hearts so much on riches and honor that they are blinded to those basic rules governing the exercise of power. We also learn that almost all men will immediately abuse any power given them. Because they fail to recognize and overcome these two fatal faults here on earth, and because such faults cannot be tolerated in those who exercise power in heaven, almost all men will be disqualified in the hereafter. The following verse explains that even though men receive the Priesthood here on earth, when they undertake to abuse power and gratify their pride and vain ambition, that Priesthood will be taken from them:

That they [the rights of the priesthood] may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man. (v. 37)

Evidence that almost all men will abuse any power given them, and that they will do it for the purpose of seeking the things of this world and the honors of men, is easily found. There is one, and only one, situation where people may exercise unrighteous compulsion without fear of physical punishment or condemnation from their fellow men, and that is through the agency of government. When they use this organization for the purpose of gratifying their pride and vain ambition, not only are they safe from retaliation by those they oppress, but also the agency whose function it is to punish such acts is now being used to commit them. When a person or group have such a power at their disposal, the only thing left to restrain their abuse of it is conscience. But since the Lord has said that the restraint of conscience is insufficient for “almost all men,” we must expect that when men gain control of government, they will abuse its powers. Let us note that this is true.

HOW MEN ABUSE THE POWER OF GOVERNMENT TO COMMIT PLUNDER

All rational men know it is wrong to steal. Not only is it a crime forbidden by the laws of God and man, but also since each person’s possessions are sacred to him, he is aware of his duty to respect the property rights of others. In spite of this universal moral code, it is common practice throughout the world for men to use government to forcibly take property from its rightful owner and transfer it to one to whom it does not belong. Every welfare-state measure has this effect. While the Lord has authorized the use of force to compel each person to bear his fair share of the cost of defending freedom, never has He authorized robbery either by men acting singly or in groups. On the other hand, He has forbidden it and those who believe otherwise are deceived.

Wo unto you poor men, whose hearts are not broken, whose spirits are not contrite, and whose bellies are not satisfied, and whose hands are not stayed from laying hold upon other men’s goods, whose eyes are full of greediness, and who will not labor with your own hands! (D&C 56:17)

HOW MEN USE GOVERNMENT TO COMMIT RACKETEERING

When a group uses physical violence outside the framework of government to give themselves monopoly power in a certain field of economic activity, we call it racketeering. When the machinery of government is used to accomplish the same purpose, we call it licensing. But the effect and purpose are the same in the two cases. In each instance, the buying public is prevented from patronizing whom they please and are forced to deal with those having the monopoly. Men’s hearts are “set so much on the things of this world and the honors of men” that they do not learn this one lesson—“that the real purpose of licensing laws is to obtain “the things of this world and the honors of men.” They easily deceive themselves into believing that such laws are necessary to prevent crime. But the criminal laws already punish every conceivable type of crime and licensing laws can add nothing to them. On the other hand, the enforcement of such laws is in itself a crime—the crime of racketeering. That it is sanctioned by a legislative body cannot change this fact in the least degree, even though men deceive themselves into believing it does.

MEN USE GOVERNMENT TO COMPEL OTHERS TO HIRE THEM

Government has one legitimate function—that of defending freedom. The armies and navies which defend our borders; the executive and judiciary which enforce our rights and protect us against criminals; the legislature which adopts laws for these purposes—each are essential to the defense of human liberty. Everyone desires liberty for himself and wants his own protected. Therefore, when anyone is required to help bear the cost of this protection, he is not being compelled to purchase something he does not want or use.

But when government is employed for any purpose except the defense of freedom, many taxpayers will be compelled to support functions they neither want nor use. Therefore, any person who favors a law which has some purpose other than “supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges” is committing evil. (D&C 98:5-7) Any person who is employed by government to execute such laws is compelling taxpayers to pay his salary against their will and is committing extortion. This the Lord has forbidden. (D&C 59:20) Furthermore, if government is used to compel a private employer to hire an employee or pay a minimum wage or other compensation against his will, this also is extortion. Man’s desire for the things of this world tends to blind him to this truth.

GOVERNMENTS ARE USED TO EXERCISE UNRIGHTEOUS DOMINION

Each man desires to be free to spend his own money, manage his own home, operate his own farm or business, and otherwise conduct the affairs of his life which are personal to him. Usually, he doesn’t want others even knowing about his personal affairs, much less does he want them using force and the threat thereof to dictate how he shall handle them. Therefore, people are not inclined to intrude into one another’s concerns—at least on a private level. It would not only be in poor taste, but criminal as well.

But that which is seen clearly when done by an individual becomes hidden when done by a group. When men act in the name of government, no person’s property or business is sacred. No longer do they hesitate to deny others the privacy and freedom they desire for themselves. No longer is there any fear of retaliation or public condemnation to restrain them from exhibiting that disposition common to almost all men—the tendency to exercise unrighteous dominion.

MAN’S BLINDNESS TO IMMORAL GROUP ACTION

If the four activities of government listed above constitute an essential part of the devil’s plan, then the predictions of a Gentile apostasy accompanied by wholesale deception have been largely fulfilled because “almost all men,” whether within the Church or without have been deceived into believing in and participating in some or all of them. Over the years the power of government in every nation has been corrupted and men have become accustomed to, and have accepted, this massive system of privilege and plunder; of regulated monopoly and legalized oppression. If these activities constitute the exercise of “unrighteous dominion,” then the reason “many are called but few are chosen” is also apparent.

Satan's overwhelming success in destroying free agency lies in his ability to seduce men into doing as a group that which they know to be evil when done by the individual. Men are deceived into believing that moral law which applies to individual action does not apply when men act in groups. They fail to recognize that each person is morally accountable unto God for the compulsion exercised under every law he favors. They do not study and understand those scriptures which command men to adopt no laws except God's laws for protecting freedom, but blindly assume that when the Lord gives to a nation of people the power of self-government, He thereby authorizes them to adopt any laws they desire. They tend to ignore that great lesson of religious history which teaches that both the Lord and Satan seek to control government and that man chooses between these two contending powers by deciding what laws and leaders he supports and opposes. Thus, have men in each generation been led to believe in and help execute Satan's plan to destroy human liberty.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE DEVIL'S CHURCH

THE END OF THE WORLD

The end of the world has been predicted since its very beginning. According to prophecy, that end will be reached somewhere near the close of the six thousandth year which, according to man's calculations, is some 25 or 30 years hence. The end of the world means "the destruction of the wicked," (Smith 1:4) and the "destroying of Satan and his works." (D&C 19:1) Therefore, the fall of Satan's Great and Abominable Church will occur simultaneously therewith.

Nephi, who provides most of the information about the devil's church, was not permitted to describe its fall. He did state that such was inevitable. (2 Nephi 28:18) He also described a world-wide war between all nations which belong to "the Mother of Abominations." (1 Nephi 14:15-16) This war followed the attack made by these nations on the Church of the Lamb, and according to other prophecies, that attack signals their utter destruction. Modern scripture describes the end of the devil's church in these words:

For the hour is nigh and the day soon at hand when the earth is ripe; and all the proud and they that do wickedly shall be as stubble; and! will burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that wickedness shall not be upon the earth;

And the great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall be cast down by devouring fire,...for abominations shall not reign. (D&C 29:9, 21)

THE POINT OF NO-RETURN

The time of the end of the world has not been revealed, but Moroni has told us that the people on the promised land will be "swept off" when they become "ripened in iniquity." Four different times in as many verses he repeats this as an everlasting decree of God, and his last warning is directed to us "Gentiles." (Ether 2:8-11) But at what point does a nation on this land become "ripened in iniquity" so that its destruction is made certain? Is there a point of no-return which, when reached, guarantees extinction? Is there a particular kind of wickedness which, when committed, will be punished with death, terror, famine, and pestilence?

Moroni, in the following passage assures us that there is a national sin which brings certain destruction to the nation which commits it, and he specifies what that sin is:

And whatsoever nation shall uphold such secret combinations, to get power and gain, until they shall spread over the nation, behold, they shall be destroyed; for the Lord will not suffer that the blood of his saints, which shall be shed by them, shall always cry unto him from the ground for vengeance upon them and yet he avenge them not.

Wherefore, O ye Gentiles, it is wisdom in God that these things should be shown unto you, that thereby ye may repent of your sins, and suffer not that these murderous combinations shall get above you... (Ether 8:22-23)

This scripture is just one of many which teaches that the one unforgivable sin which has invariably brought the judgments of God upon that nation which has committed it is the unpunished murder of the saints and the prophets. When, instead of using government to protect God's servants, the people use it to persecute, imprison, and kill those sent to call them to repentance, at that point disaster becomes inevitable. To state the matter another way, when a nation becomes so corrupt that they allow their officers of government to condone or participate in crimes against the saints and prophets, this is a sure sign of destruction. Let us observe that religious history confirms this truth.

THE PERSECUTION AND MURDER OF NEPHITE AND JAREDITE PROPHETS

The Book of Mormon commenced with a story of prophet-persecution and the calamity which followed. It tells us that the Jews imprisoned Jeremiah and sought to kill Lehi who fled with his family for their lives. It was only a short time thereafter that the entire Jewish nation was either slain or carried away into captivity.

When Abinadi was sent to warn the people of king Noah, he was first cast into prison and then burned at the stake. Within a year or two thereafter, king Noah was himself burned to death and all of his people were either killed or enslaved by the Lamamites.

Alma and his missionary companion Amulek tried to call to repentance the people of Ammonihah. They did succeed in converting a few, but so wicked were the people that those in charge of their government first expelled the male converts and then burned their wives and children to death. Alma and Amulek were terribly abused in prison until the Lord miraculously delivered them from the sentence of death. For these crimes, every soul remaining in the city of Ammonihah was slain by the Lamanites.

Commencing in the year 71 B.C., the entire Nephite nation suffered a calamity which continued for five years. It commenced with a civil war and ended with a famine. The people had so corrupted their government that when a prophet pointed this out to them they tried to kill him rather than using the police power to protect him. The famine became so severe that it threatened the extinction of the entire nation. When the survivors finally repented and the Lord sent rain the record tells us:

And behold, the people did rejoice and glory God, and the whole face of the land was filled with rejoicing; and they did no more seek to destroy Nephi, but they did esteem him as a great prophet... (Hela. 11:18)

The awesome destruction which preceded the Lord's visit to the Nephites in the meridian of time followed immediately upon the murder of many of their prophets. Let the record tell the story:

Now there were many of those who testified of the things pertaining to Christ who testified boldly, who were taken and put to death secretly by the judges... (3 Nephi 6:23)

These murders occurred in the year 30 A.D. It was just three years later that one of the greatest calamities ever suffered by any nation came to the Nephites. Whole cities were obliterated. The inhabitants were burned to death, crushed by falling buildings, buried under mountains, drowned in the depths of the sea, and carried away in violent whirlwinds. After the terrible storm had subsided and the earth ceased its convulsions, the Lord appeared to the survivors and told them the extent of the disaster and why it happened. In the first twelve verses of the ninth chapter of 3rd Nephi, He describes the destruction of 16 great cities and in these twelve verses He reiterates over and over again the fact that the people of these cities had slain the saints and prophets. The following phrase appears six different times:

that the blood of the prophets and the saints should not come up unto me any more against them.

Concerning those who were spared the record says:

And it was the more righteous part of the people who were saved, and it was they who received the prophets and stoned them not; and it was they who had not shed the blood of the saints, who were spared— (3 Nephi 10:12)

The Jaredite record confirms this important lesson. Let us note one or two examples. Heth was the name of one of the many Jaredite rulers who gained control of government by means of secret combinations. When this occurred:

there came prophets in the land again, crying repentance unto them...

But the people believed not the words of the prophets, but they cast them out; and some of them they cast into pits and left them to perish. And it came to pass that they did all these things according to the commandment of the king, Heth.

And it came to pass that there began to be a great dearth upon the land, and the inhabitants began to be destroyed exceeding fast... (Ether 9:28-30)

Following the killing of the prophets by the secret combinations who obtained control of the government in the days of Corn, the record says:

wherefore, there began to be wars and contentions in all the land, and also many famines and pestilences, insomuch that there was a great destruction, such an one as never had been known upon the face of the earth... (Ether 11:7)

The end of the Jaredite nation is summed up by the prophet Alma in these words:

these people were destroyed on account of their wickedness and abominations and their murders.

For behold, they murdered all the prophets of the Lord who came among them to declare unto them concerning their iniquities; and the blood of those whom they murdered did cry unto the Lord their God for vengeance upon those who were murderers... (Alma 37:29-30)

We could pursue our examination of this subject by turning to the history contained in the Bible, but perhaps it is sufficient to note that following-the crucifixion of Christ and the murder of His apostles, the people primarily responsible therefor have suffered more terribly and for a longer period than any group in history.

THE PERSECUTION AND MURDER OF THE SAINTS AND PROPHETS IN THE LATTER DAYS

The United States has already experienced the judgments of God which inevitably flow from the unpunished murder of prophets. The 135th Section of the Doctrine & Covenants which describes the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith says of them:

They were innocent of any crime, as they had often been proved before, and were only confined in jail by the conspiracy of traitors and wicked men; and their innocent blood,...with the innocent blood of all the martyrs under the altar that John saw, will cry unto the Lord of Hosts till he avenges that blood on the earth. Amen. (v. 7)

In a revelation given to the Saints while they were camped at Winter Quarters where they had been driven by their enemies just prior to their forced exodus to the west, the Lord said:

Thy brethren have rejected you and your testimony, even the nation that has driven you out; And now cometh the day of their calamity, even the days of sorrow, like a woman that is taken in travail; and their sorrow shall be great unless they speedily repent, yea, very speedily. For they killed the prophets, and them that were sent unto them; and they have shed innocent blood, which crieth from the ground against them. (D&C 136:34-36)

A few years following the expulsion of the saints and the murder of their leaders, a terrible civil war was suffered by the nation responsible therefor. President Brigham Young, through whom the last revelation cited was given, spoke of the connection between the murder of the prophets and the Civil War on a number of occasions. In a talk given in 1867 just a couple of years after the cessation of hostilities, he said:

The destruction of property and life during the war has been enormous They killed the prophet. The mob that collected at Carthage, Illinois, to commit the deed of blood contained a delegation representing every State in the Union. Each has received its bloodstain. If they had hearkened to the counsel of Joseph Smith, this nation would have had no wars; there would have been no division in the Government, but it would have gone on in harmony and prosperity. (JD 12:120-121)

THE REASON FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF SATAN'S CHURCH

A critical examination of the accounts of the persecution and murder of saints and prophets throughout history will reveal that in virtually every instance, the crime is traceable to corrupted government. Indeed, such crimes could hardly occur without the concurrence and cooperation of those in charge of the police power. According to the scriptures, this is to be expected. Nephi, in referring to Satan's Great and Abominable Church, described it as that organization which,

slayeth the saints of God, yea, and tortureth them and bindeth them down, and yoketh them with a yoke of iron, and bringeth them down into captivity. (1 Nephi 13:5)

Then it will be recalled that Moroni prophesied that any nation which upholds Satan's organizations until they shall spread over the nation will be destroyed because the Lord will not permit the prophet-murders which these organizations always commit when they gain power to go unpunished. As he stated it:

for the Lord will not suffer that the blood of his saints, which shall be shed by them, shall always cry unto him from the ground for vengeance upon them and yet he avenge them not, (Ether 8:22)

This scripture in effect predicts that any time Satan gains control of government, the murder of the saints is certain to follow. He can be counted upon to oppose the Lord's work in this manner. In a later verse in speaking directly to the Gentiles (us), Moroni confirms this prediction and also says that those who help build up Satan's secret combinations will be called upon to suffer for the murder of the prophets:

Wherefore, the Lord commandeth you, [Gentiles] when ye shall see these things come among you that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation, because of this secret combination which shall be among you; or woe be unto it, because of the blood of them who have been slain; for they cry from the dust for vengeance upon it, and also upon those who built it up. (Ether 8:24)

There is one additional prophecy of Moroni regarding the building up of Satan's secret organizations which should be cited here because in it he speaks directly to those who pollute the holy Church of God in these latter days:

O ye pollutions, ye hypocrites, ye teachers, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, why have ye polluted the holy church of God?...

Yea, why do ye build up your secret abominations to get gain, and cause that widows should mourn before the Lord, and also orphans to mourn before the Lord, and also the blood of their fathers and their husbands to cry unto the Lord from the ground, for vengeance upon your heads?

Behold, the sword of vengeance hangeth over you; and the time soon cometh that he avengeth the blood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any longer. (Mor. 8:38, 40-41)

These scriptures constitute clear warnings to those who engage in building up Satan's church and kingdom. They will be called upon to answer for the murders of the saints which are bound to result therefrom. Let us observe that according to the following modern day prophecy on war, such murders will occur and the Lord will make "a full end of all nations," i.e., the devil's Great and Abominable Church.

And thus, with the sword and by bloodshed the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn; and with famine, and plague, and earthquake, and the thunder of heaven, and the fierce and vivid lightning also, shall the inhabitants of the earth be made to feel the wrath, and indignation, and chastening hand of an Almighty God, until the consumption decreed hath made a full end of all nations;

That the cry of the saints, and of the blood of the saints, shall cease to come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, from the earth, to be avenged of their enemies. (D&C 87:6-7)

For of him unto whom much is given much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation.
(D&C 82:3)

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY

We have now completed our examination of the two plans for man on earth—the Lord’s plan to provide free agency and Satan’s plan to destroy it. In doing so, we achieved the goal outlined in the first chapter of identifying the Great and Abominable Church of the Devil. We concluded that the only organization which will adequately serve his purposes and fulfill the description given of it in the scriptures is prostituted government. In the light of this conclusion, those prophecies of a “great division” discussed in Chapter II and those predicting universal deception which were discussed in Chapter III, are logically explained. When great divisions have occurred in times past, they have been along political lines. It is only to be expected that when the “great division” and war between the church of the devil and the Church of the Lamb comes, it will be a contest between groups with opposing political philosophies who have aligned themselves with opposing governments.

The massive deception predicted in the last days is also easily understood when it is concluded that Satan’s church is corrupted government. His great deception consists of inducing men to do in the name of government, that which they know would be wicked and destructive of freedom if done outside its framework. Man’s lust for power and gain blinds him to the fact that such actions are equally as evil and equally as destructive of freedom when done by a group as when done by an individual. Men are also deceived into assuming that they are not morally accountable for evil done in the name of government. The devil’s overwhelming success has been rendered doubly easy in this age of irreligion because almost no one believes in his existence; much less do they accept the teaching of the scriptures that he controls a world-wide organization to which almost all people belong. Let us summarize the more important conclusions we have reached regarding the nature and purposes of this organization and its rise to world dominion.

THE LORD’S PLAN TO PROVIDE FREE AGENCY

To better understand Satan’s plan, we deemed it necessary to discuss the Lord’s plan which it is Satan’s purpose to defeat. To this end we analyzed the problem of man’s free agency and observed that there are four possessions which are essential to its exercise—life, liberty of action, property and knowledge. It was seen that these possessions are the same for people in every age and in every country, and that the nature of those evil acts and intentions which destroy these elements never varies either. Because every person desires freedom for himself and is acutely aware of the nature of the acts and intents of others which destroy the elements of his own freedom, every person knows what acts are evil for him to do to others.

It is this universal understanding of evil which makes it possible for the Lord to establish a single set of civil laws which prohibit the destruction of the elements of freedom, and hold all mankind morally accountable for disobeying them. We saw that while the Lord uses the family and the Church to provide life, sustenance (property), and knowledge, He uses government to protect these elements of freedom. Government performs this function by executing the law of retribution which decrees that he who undertakes to destroy the freedom of others shall lose his own. We examined religious history for evidence that:

governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man; and that he holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them...(D&C 134:1)

Our research confirmed the following words of John Taylor:

By a careful perusal of the scriptures, however, we find that God in ancient days had as much to do with governments, kings, and kingdoms, as he ever had to do with religion. (Mill. Star 5:8-9)

The scriptures conclusively show that when men have been righteous enough to accept the Lord's political guidance, He has designated forms of government, revealed laws, and appointed civil rulers. They also demonstrate that when nations to whom such guidance has been given deviate therefrom and corrupt their laws, they are severely punished.

GOD MAY JUDGE ALL MEN BY THEIR POLITICAL BELIEFS

We saw that the Lord may use our political philosophy as a reliable measure of moral character and that this standard may be used for all men because all men, regardless of religious or other differences, live under a government of some type and form beliefs regarding what is right and what is wrong for government to do. The propriety of judging men by this standard was based upon these observations:

1. One's views on government constitute his most sincere beliefs regarding good and evil and thus reflect his inherent moral nature. Those acts which he considers most evil are forbidden by the laws he favors, and those acts he considers so good and beneficial that he assumes he has a moral right to compel others to perform them are commanded by the laws he favors. Furthermore, so certain is he that his code is right that he is willing to force it upon all other members of society by the use of physical violence. It is most apparent that if a person uses government to punish those acts which provide free agency and allows those acts which destroy it to go unpunished, he will be condemned by the Lord.

2. The Lord may use a person's political philosophy to determine whether he is entitled to rise in the resurrection of the "just." One's views on laws constitute his code of justice because those acts and omissions he condemns in others are set forth in the laws he favors as are the penalties he wants imposed for disobedience. If such laws deny others a freedom he desires for himself, or if they impose a punishment he would consider inequitable were he called upon to suffer it, then he may expect to be classified with the unjust.

3. A person's views on government can be used to determine the extent to which he adheres to the Lord's plan of freedom on the one hand, or Satan's plan of slavery on the other. Every act he would deny others the freedom to do or not do is forbidden or commanded by the laws he favors, and every act he would allow others the freedom to do or not do is not forbidden or commanded by the laws he favors. Thus, a person's political code can be used to determine the extent to which he agrees with or opposes the Lord's plan of free agency.

THE PLAN TO DESTROY FREE AGENCY

We then discussed the devil's plan to defeat the plan of the Lord and concluded that the only effective way he can destroy the four elements of freedom and the three organizations the Lord uses to provide and protect them is by prostituting the agency of government. In confirmation of this fact, we examined religious history and found that since the beginning, Satan has built up secret combinations whose primary purpose is to seize control of the armies, navies, and police power and use them to thwart the work of God. While the Lord has openly and often revealed His own purpose to control government and establish His kingdom, Satan has always worked in darkness and deepest secrecy. Only those who study and accept the scriptures and prophets will believe that Satan's plan is to control government and induce wicked men to use it to wage war, commit murder, impose slavery and get power and gain.

The Lord has promised that He will expose Satan and his combinations by making known

all their secrets and abominations, unto every nation that shall hereafter possess the [chosen] land (Alma 37:25)

We saw that He has kept his promise by revealing the identity of Satan's organization through modern prophets. One of these prophets on two separate occasions testified to the priesthood of the Church that Satan's greatest threat on earth today is "domination by the state," or Communism. From this and other utterances by latter-day prophets, we concluded that the socialist-communist movement which is being implemented by the welfare-state programs proposed by Marx and others for this purpose constitutes Satan's Great and Abominable Church.

Prompted by the statement of a latter-day prophet that "the entire concept and philosophy of Communism is diametrically opposed to everything for which the Church stands," and using a concise statement of this philosophy called the "Communist Manifesto," which had been drawn up by the so-called father of modern socialism, we examined the doctrines of the Devil's church. We found them to be as the prophet had stated—diametrically opposed to everything for which the Church stands. The program outlined therein proposes that believers in the Devil's plan, i.e., Communists, Socialists, and Welfare-statists seize control of government and then use it to destroy individual freedom by destroying the basis upon which it rests—the right and control of property. It also outlines plans for abolishing the Lord's three organizations—family, Church, and government.

We examined the various types of laws proposed by the "Manifesto" for the destruction of private property and discovered that the ten point program contained therein is being adopted all over the earth. Those laws which the Lord revealed for the protection of freedom are being ignored while on the other hand innumerable laws are being adopted in every nation which destroy it. We concluded that since the sole purpose of any law is to compel people against their wills, every law which does not have the effect of protecting free agency, has the opposite effect. This agrees with the Lord's statement that anything which is more or less than those freedom-protecting laws He caused to be established cometh of evil.

SATAN'S SCHEME TO PERPETUATE HIS SYSTEM OF SLAVERY

That proposal of the Manifesto which demanded our greatest attentions was the one which provides for:

Free education for all children in public schools.

We concluded that this political measure was more essential to Satan's plan than any other because through it he can indoctrinate each child with a belief in that plan and largely prohibit the teaching of contrary doctrines. By instilling in each succeeding group of children a faith in socialism, and more especially in socialized education, his diabolical system is perpetuated and each generation of parents is induced to enslave their own children. In the words of the scriptures,

the creeds of the fathers who have inherited lies, [are] strongly riveted...upon the hearts of the children, and filled the world with confusion, and has been growing stronger and stronger, and is now the very mainspring of all corruption, and the whole earth groans under the weight of its iniquity.

It is an iron yoke, it is a strong band; they are the very handcuffs, and chains, and shackles, and fetters of hell (D&C 123:7-8)

We observed that there is nothing new in using government to impose thought control on citizens. Secular as well as religious history shows that whenever given the opportunity, Satan has induced men to use the police power to establish enforced priestcraft. Time and again, church and state have been combined and the power of government used to deny religious freedom as well as freedom of speech and press which are an inextricable part thereof. Government has been used not only to suppress all but the favored sect, but also the taxing power has been used to support its priests and their activities. The essential evil of priestcraft lies in prostituting the power of government and using it to promulgate false creeds and deny religious freedom.

Communism is more diabolical than any other type of priestcraft because its central doctrines are atheism and the destruction of free agency through socialism. Organic evolution, materialism, and humanism are the theories used to justify atheism and socialism by providing false explanations of the origin of life and its purposes.

Our discussion of government controlled learning included a survey of three cases of priestcraft from the Book of Mormon and one from the Bible. In each case, we found this evil practice leading to murder of the saints and bringing terrible punishment upon those who engaged in it. Prophecies which predicted priestcraft among the Gentiles in these latter days were considered and it was concluded that such prophecies were meant to include the enforced priestcraft of socialized education.

We then considered the doctrines taught by government schools in non-communist countries and noted that where the laws forbid state financed religious instruction, such doctrines are very similar to those taught in communist nations. Since public schools cannot teach that God is the source of life, they attribute it to the blind chance of organic evolution; since their admitted goals are to prepare their students to obtain wealth, the wisdom of the world, and the honors of men, and since they are prohibited from giving priority to the spiritual goals taught by true religion, the philosophy instilled is essentially that of dialectical materialism or humanism; since socialized education is itself one of the most important points of the communist manifesto, and since it generally encompasses many other socialist programs, students are taught socialism both in theory and practice.

We noted the strenuous opposition of the prophets to the introduction of government schools among the Saints in the early days of the Church. While little has been said in public since this system has become part of our Constitution and laws, the Brethren were at one time very outspoken. Our living prophet has expressed himself on the subject in these words:

The education of the present day is very largely knowledge without the accompanying intelligence, of light and truth. It is bound to be so, and much of the knowledge will be mixed with error, where faith in God and in his revelations is eliminated, and only the cold and many times barren conclusions of mind and reason are the guide. Such learning leads to spiritual death, not to spiritual life. (Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, Vol. I, p. 320)

THE KINGDOMS OF GOD AND SATAN

To better understand the nature of the earthly organizations of Christ and Satan, and to confirm the conclusion that these contending forces utilize government in the freedom battle, we discussed what the prophets have said regarding the kingdoms of God and Satan. Since the beginning of time the Lord has tried to maintain His kingdom here on earth and He has advised men to consider it their foremost duty to assist Him in this purpose. We saw that the Lord's kingdom includes political sovereignty and that any nation which ignores this fact by adopting laws of its own, and making and selecting rulers of its own choosing, is in rebellion against that kingdom. It was noted that throughout most of the history of the world, people have rejected the Lord's political guidance and have used government to destroy His system of stewardships. Prophets, both ancient and modern, were cited to show that Satan's kingdom has been established in every nation and he now reigns over the earth.

THE APOSTASY OF THE LATTER DAYS

Additional evidence of the establishment of the church and kingdom of the devil was found in those prophecies which foretell world-wide wickedness and apostasy in these latter days. Scriptures were cited indicating that there would be extensive defection from gospel principles among the members of Christ's Church, and that only a "few" of the "many" called to hold the Priesthood would retain it in the hereafter. Because of the universal disposition to exercise unrighteous dominion, almost all men when given the freedom to abuse the power of government without fear of retaliation or condemnation will use it to commit crimes, thus adopting Satan's plan to destroy freedom.

CONCLUSION

The conclusions reached herein regarding Satan's church and kingdom seem to the author to be so at variance with prevailing opinion that he anticipates they may engender ridicule and even animosity in some quarters. Today, people are inclined to look to government for the solution to almost all problems. The remedy for ignorance, poverty, disease, or the lack of culture, facilities, or opportunities of any description is commonly sought for through the compulsion of state action. As President McKay once stated, there is today a "trend to a welfare state in which people look to and worship government more than their God." (Letter to BYU Admin. & Faculty, 5/25/67) To attack this god as has been done herein by denominating all government functions, except the preservation of freedom, as part of the devil's plan to destroy free agency, may produce in some, feelings of resentment.

Let those who may experience such feelings know that in writing this book, the author has been motivated only by a desire to present the correct meaning of certain scriptures for which he could find no other explanation than the one herein given. For example, if these are the last days as the prophets are saying, and if the prophecies of Nephi and John regarding Satan's organized efforts during this period are true as the author believes them to be, then the following conclusions cannot be avoided:

1. Satan is a personage who is as real as is Jesus Christ;
2. Satan is guiding a specific identifiable organization here on earth today just as surely as Christ is guiding his Church.
3. Satan's organization covers the entire earth and either now has, or shortly will have, dominion "among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people."
4. Everyone except a few either belong to Satan's organization now or will belong to it in the near future.

If the reader believes the scriptures to be the word of God, and if he rejects the explanation of Satan's activities herein given, he is invited to find an organization other than government which executes the devil's plan and satisfies the descriptions of it given by the prophets. Insofar as the author is aware, government is the only organization which has dominion over all the earth; it is the only organization to which all men belong; according to the scriptures, it is the one organization Satan has always sought to use; and finally the only freedom-destroying philosophy which almost all men have in common is that the police power should be used to limit or destroy the Lord's system of individual stewardships. It is probably true that upwards of ninety percent of the laws being enforced by governments throughout the world today are unjust in the sight of God because their purpose is not to punish evil, but rather to deny men their freedom to manage their private affairs. One may test the validity of this assertion for himself and if he does, he will find that in the overwhelming majority of cases, proof of an evil intent is not required to convict one for violating a law.

There may be some who will take vigorous exception to comments made herein regarding public education. But once the decision is made that prostituted government is indeed, Satan's Great and Abominable Church, the conclusions reached herein regarding socialized education naturally follow, because to the extent that the devil is in control of government to that same extent will government schools teach his doctrines. No other result can be expected. People who have come to equate the wisdom of the world and the acquisition of wealth with happiness and joy may find it difficult to believe that secular knowledge could ever prove harmful. Believing as they do that worldly knowledge and the production of wealth is the supreme goal of life, and knowing that learning and knowledge has made an abundance of wealth possible, when it is stated that an education without faith in God is harmful, their whole philosophy of life is attacked. On the other hand those who have not set their hearts so much upon the things of this world and the honors of men will not find it incredible that "free education for all children in public schools" is part of the devil's program.

THE ONE AND ONLY SOLUTION TO THE TRANSCENDENT PROBLEM OF THE HUMAN RACE

Concerning government, it might truthfully be said that;

1. There are no convictions about which there is more dispute, more strife, and more hatred;
2. There is no organization which has caused more death, more misery, more suffering and more sorrow;
3. There is no institution from which man has more to fear; and
4. There is no problem which is in greater need of solution.

The great and desperate need of this age—of any age—is to find the one correct solution to the problem of providing governance for mankind. This transcends all others. There are, in reality, only two choices: one is the kingdom of God; the other is the kingdom of the devil; one leads inevitably to freedom and happiness; the other leads to slavery and misery.

It is unthinkable that a kind and loving Heavenly Father would leave His children without guidance in solving this, the greatest of all their problems. That He has provided such guidance may be said to be the thesis of this book. While the author's manifest lack of writing skill and his imperfect understanding may serve to convey erroneous impressions, if he has pointed out convincing evidence that the only correct solution to the problem of government is to be found in the words of God's prophets, he will have accomplished his main purpose.

If we can come to realize that, throughout history, governments have been instituted of God for the benefit of man; that He has revealed those civil laws He desires enforced; and that He stands ready to provide civil leadership whenever we are ready to accept it, we will have learned some of the most important truths taught by the scriptures. But such knowledge is woefully incomplete unless it is also known that Satan is attempting to establish his kingdom on earth; that anything which is more or less than those freedom-protecting laws God caused to be established, cometh of evil, and that when we befriend any laws except those constitutional laws designed to protect freedom, we are building up the kingdom of the devil. Each political decision constitutes a partial choice between the kingdom of God and Satan.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A BELIEVER

Throughout the centuries, millions of people have believed in Jesus Christ and have accepted as true the scriptural account of the establishment of his Church upon the earth. On the other hand, even though the same scriptures testify to the truth of the matter, it is probable that relatively few people have believed that there is a literal Satan who has his organizations on earth. He has kept his church and his works so well hidden that only those who search the revelations of God for knowledge concerning him will be aware of his existence and his plans. But a knowledge and rejection of evil is as essential to salvation and exaltation as a knowledge and acceptance of good. Belonging to Christ's Church and believing his scriptures may prove a curse rather than a blessing if at the same time one permits himself to be deceived into belonging to the church of the devil and participating in his works:

For of him unto whom much is given much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation. (D&C 82:3)

Since there are so very few who seem to believe in the existence of Satan's church and his plan to destroy free agency, those who acquire such knowledge have an obligation to share it with others. The following scriptures appear to impose such a responsibility:

Therefore, that we should waste and wear out our lives in bringing to light all the hidden things of darkness, wherein we know them; and they are truly manifest from heaven— These should then be attended to with great earnestness.

Let no man count them as small things; for there is much which lieth in futurity, pertaining to the saints, which depends upon these things.

You know, brethren, that a very large ship is benefited very much by a very small helm in the time of a storm, by being kept workways with the wind and the waves.

Therefore, dearly beloved brethren, let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and for his arm to be revealed. (D&C 123:13-17, see also D&C 84:117 and D&C 18:20)

APPENDIX I

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

ARTICLE ONE

Section 1.

All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Section 2.

The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year by the people of the several States, and the electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislature.

No person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained the age of twenty-five years, and been seven years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons. The actual enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent term of ten years, in such manner as they shall by law direct. The number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty thousand, but each State shall have at least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to choose three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina Five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.

When vacancies happen in the representation from any State, the executive authority thereof shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker and other officers, and shall have the sole power of impeachment.

Section 3.

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the legislature thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in consequence of the first election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three classes. The seats of the Senators of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the second year; of the second class, at the expiration of the fourth year, and of the third class, at the expiration of the sixth year, so that one-third may be chosen every second year; and if vacancies happen by resignation or otherwise during the recess of the legislature of any State, the executive thereof may make temporary appointments until the next meeting of the legislature, which shall then fill such vacancies.

No person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the age of thirty years, and been nine years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

The Vice-President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall choose their other officers, and also a President pro tempore in the absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the office of President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole power to try all impeachments. When sitting for that purpose, they shall be on oath or affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: and no person shall be convicted without the concurrence of two thirds of the members present.

Judgment in cases of impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States; but the party convicted shall, nevertheless, be liable and subject to indictment, trial, judgment, and punishment, according to law.

Section 4.

The times, places, and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives shall be prescribed in each State by the legislature thereof, but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations, except as to the places of choosing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

Section 5

Each house shall be the judge of the elections, returns, and qualifications of its own members, and a majority of each shall constitute a quorum to do business; but a smaller number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the attendance of absent members, in such manner, and under such penalties, as each house may provide.

Each house may determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its members for disorderly behavior, and, with the concurrence of two-thirds, expel a member.

Each house shall keep a journal of its proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such parts as may in their judgment require secrecy, and the yeas and nays of the members of either house on any question shall, at the desire of one-fifth of those present, be entered on the journal.

Neither house, during the session of Congress, shall, without the consent of the other adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than that in which the two houses shall be sitting.

Section 6

The Senators and Representatives shall receive a compensation for their services, to be ascertained by law and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall, in all cases except treason, felony, and breach of the peace, be privileged from arrest during their attendance at the session of their respective houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any speech or debate in either house they shall not be questioned in any other place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil office under the authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the emoluments whereof shall have been increased during such time; and no person holding any office under the United States shall be a member of either house during his continuance in office.

Section 7.

All bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with amendments as on other bills.

Every bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate shall, before it becomes a law, be presented to the President of the United States; if he approves he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it with his objections, to that house in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the objections at large on their journal and proceed to reconsider it. If after such reconsideration two-thirds of that house shall agree to pass the bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two-thirds of that house it shall become a law. But in all such cases the votes of both houses shall be determined by yeas and nays, and the names of the persons voting for and against the bill shall be entered on the journal of each house respectively. If any bill shall not be returned by the President within ten days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law, in like manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their adjournment prevent its return, in which case it shall not be a law.

Every order, resolution, or vote to which the concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two-thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the rules and limitations prescribed in the case of a bill.

Section 8.

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts, and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate commerce with foreign nations and among the several States, and with the Indian tribes;

To establish an uniform rule of naturalization, and uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and fix the standard of weights and measures;

To provide for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States;

To establish post-offices and post-roads;

To promote the progress of science and useful arts by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries;

To constitute tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court;

To define and punish piracies and felonies committed on the high seas and offenses against the law of nations;

To declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water;

To raise and support armies, but no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years;

To provide and maintain a navy;

To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces;

To provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively the appointment of the officers, and the authority of training the militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever over such district (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular States and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of the government of the United States, and to exercise like authority over all places purchased by the consent of the legislature of the State in which the same shall be, for the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dockyards, and other needful buildings; and

To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any department or office thereof.

Section 9.

The migration or importation of such persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each person.

The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in cases of rebellion or invasion the public safety may require it.

No bill of attainder or ex post facto law shall be passed.

No capitation or other direct tax shall be laid, unless in proportion to the census or enumeration hereinbefore directed to be taken.

No tax or duty shall be laid on articles exported from any State.

No preference shall be given by any regulation of commerce or revenue to the ports of one state over those of another; nor shall vessels bound to or from one State be obliged to enter, clear, or pay duties in another.

No money shall be drawn from the Treasury but in consequence of appropriations made by law; and a regular statement and account of the receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published from time to time.

No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States; and no person holding any office of profit or trust under them shall, without the consent of the Congress, accept of any present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatever, from any king, prince, or foreign State.

Section 10.

No State shall enter into any treaty, alliance, or confederation; grant letters of marque and reprisal; coin money; emit bills of credit; make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts; pass any bill of attainder; ex post facto law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts, or grant any title of nobility.

No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any imposts or duties on imports or exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection laws; and the net produce of all duties and imposts, laid by any State on imports or exports, shall be for the use of the Treasury of the United States; and all such laws shall be subject to the revision and control of the Congress.

No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any duty of tonnage, keep troops or ships of war in time of peace, enter into any agreement or compact with another State or with a foreign power, or engage in war, unless actually invaded or in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay.

ARTICLE TWO

Section 1.

The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, and together with the Vice-President, chosen for the same term, be elected as follows:

Each State shall appoint, in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors, equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress; but no Senator or Representative, or person holding an office of trust or profit under the United States, shall be appointed an elector.

[The electors shall meet in their respective States and vote by ballot for two persons, of whom one at least shall not be an inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a list of all the persons voted for, and of the number of votes for each; which list they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates, and the votes shall then be counted. The person having the greatest number of votes shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such majority, and have an equal number of votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately choose by ballot one of them for President; and if no person have a majority, then from the five highest on the list the said House shall in like manner choose the President. But in choosing the President the votes shall be taken by States, the representation from each State having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the States, and a majority of all the States shall be necessary to a choice. In every case, after the choice of the President, the person having the greatest number of votes of the electors shall be the Vice-President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal votes, the Senate shall choose from them by ballot the Vice-President.]

The Congress may determine the time of choosing the electors and the day on which they shall give their votes, which day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No person except a natural-born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.

In case of the removal of the President from office, or of his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office, the same shall devolve on the Vice-President, and the Congress may by law provide for the case of removal, death, resignation, or inability, both of the President and Vice-President, declaring what officer shall then act as President, and such officer shall act accordingly until the disability be removed or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated times, receive for his services a compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the period for which he may have been elected, and he shall not receive within that period any other emolument from the United States or any of them.

Before he enter on the execution of his office he shall take the following oath or affirmation:

“I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.”

Section 2.

The President shall be Commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy of the United States: he may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices, and he shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States, except in cases of impeachment.

He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the United States, whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law; but the Congress may by law vest the appointment of such inferior officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments.

The President shall have power to fill up vacancies that may happen during the recess of the Senate, by granting commissions which shall expire at the end of their next session.

Section 3.

He shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the state of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary occasions, convene both houses, or either of them, and in case of disagreement between them with respect to the time of adjournment, he may adjourn them to such time as he shall think proper; he shall receive ambassadors and other public ministers; he shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed, and shall commission all the officers of the United States.

Section 4.

The President, Vice-President, and all civil officers of the United States shall be removed from office on impeachment for and conviction of treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.

ARTICLE THREE

Section 1.

The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The judges, both of the supreme and inferior courts, shall hold their offices during good behavior, and shall, at stated times, receive for their services a compensation which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office.

Section 2.

The judicial power shall extend to all cases, in law and equity, arising under this Constitution, the laws of the United States, and treaties made, or which shall be made, under their authority; to all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers, and consuls; to all cases of admiralty and maritime jurisdiction; to controversies to which the United States shall be a party; to controversies between two or more States; between a State and citizens of another State; between citizens of different States; between citizens of the same State claiming lands under grants of different States, and between a State, or the citizens thereof, and foreign States, citizens, or subjects.

In all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and those in which a State shall be a party, the Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction. In all the other cases before mentioned the Supreme Court shall have appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and fact, with such exceptions and under such regulations as the Congress shall make.

The trial of all crimes, except in cases of impeachment, shall be by jury; and such trial shall be held in the State where the said crimes shall have been committed; but when not committed within any State, the trial shall be at such place or places as the Congress may by law have directed.

Section 3.

Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying war against them, or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort. No person shall be convicted of treason unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act, or on confession in open court.

The Congress shall have power to declare the punishment of treason, but no attainder of treason shall work corruption of blood or forfeiture except during the life of the person attainted.

ARTICLE FOUR

Section 1.

Full faith and credit shall be given in each State to the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general laws prescribe the manner in which such acts, records, and proceedings shall be proved, and the effect thereof

Section 2.

The citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States.

A person charged in any State with treason, felony, or other crime, who shall flee from justice, and be found in another State, shall, on demand of the executive authority of the State from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having jurisdiction of the crime.

No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.

Section 3.

New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the junction of two or more States or parts of States; without the consent of the legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.

The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States or of any particular State.

Section 4.

The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion, and on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened), against domestic violence.

ARTICLE FIVE

The Congress, whenever two-thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the Legislatures of two-thirds of the several States, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three-fourths of the several States, or by conventions in three-fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress; provided that no amendment which may be made prior to the Year One thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any manner affect the first and fourth Clauses in the Ninth Section of the first Article; and that no State, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate.

ARTICLE SIX

All debts contracted and engagements entered into, before the adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this as under the Confederation.

This Constitution and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof and all treaties made, or which shall be made under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by oath or affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.

ARTICLE SEVEN

The ratification of the Conventions of nine States shall be sufficient for the establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the same.

Done in convention by the unanimous consent of the States present the seventeenth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven and of the independence of the United States of America the twelfth, in witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names.

Go. Washington-Presid't
and deputy from Virginia
Attest
William Jackson Secretary

AMENDMENTS

ARTICLE ONE

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

ARTICLE TWO

A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

ARTICLE THREE

No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

ARTICLE FOUR

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the person or things to be seized.

ARTICLE FIVE

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

ARTICLE SIX

In all criminal prosecutions the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

ARTICLE SEVEN

In suits at common law, where the value of controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

ARTICLE EIGHT

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments be inflicted.

ARTICLE NINE

The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

ARTICLE TEN

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively or to the people.

ARTICLE ELEVEN

The judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by citizens of another State, or by citizens or subjects of any foreign State.

ARTICLE TWELVE

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same State with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate; the President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted; the person having the greatest number of votes for President shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President the votes shall be taken by States, the representation from each State having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the States, and a majority of all the States shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President. The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of that whole number of Electors appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN

Section 1.

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

ARTICLE FOURTEEN

Section 1.

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Section 2.

Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of Electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

Section 3.

No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or Elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State Legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may, by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

Section 4.

The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.

Section 5.

The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

ARTICLE FIFTEEN

Section 1.

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Section 2.

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

ARTICLE SIXTEEN

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

ARTICLE SEVENTEEN

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislatures. When vacancies happen in the representation of any State in the Senate, the executive authority of such State shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies: Provided, That the Legislature of any State may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the legislature may direct.

This amendment shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any Senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the Constitution.

ARTICLE EIGHTEEN

Section 1.

After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

Section 2.

The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Section 3.

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

ARTICLE NINETEEN

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

ARTICLE TWENTY

Section 1.

The terms of the president and Vice-President elect shall end at noon on the twentieth day of January, and the terms of Senators and Representatives at noon on the third day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

Section 2.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the third day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

Section 3.

If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President-elect shall have died, the Vice-President elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning of his term, or if the President elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice-President elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President elect nor a Vice-President elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such person shall act accordingly until a President or Vice-President shall have qualified.

Section 4.

The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the House of Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate may choose a Vice-President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them.

Section 5.

Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the fifteenth day of October following the ratification of this article.

Section 6

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission.

ARTICLE TWENTY-ONE

Section 1.

The eighteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

Section 2.

The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

Section 3.

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by conventions in the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

ARTICLE TWENTY-TWO

Section 1.

No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of the President more than once. But this Article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when the Article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

Section 2.

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by the Congress.

ARTICLE TWENTY-THREE

Section 1.

The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct:

A number of electors of President and Vice-President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered, for the purposes of the election of President and Vice-President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment.

Section 2.

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

ARTICLE TWENTY-FOUR

Section 1.

The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

Section 2.

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

ARTICLE TWENTY-FIVE

Section 1.

In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death or resignation, the Vice-President shall become President.

Section 2.

Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice-President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both houses of Congress.

Section 3.

Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice-President as Acting President.

Section 4.

Whenever the Vice-President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice-President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President.

Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office.

APPENDIX II

EXCERPTS FROM THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

EXCERPT FROM PREFACE BY FREDRICH ENGELS

“The MANIFESTO was published as the platform of the Communist League, a working man’s association, first exclusively German, later on international, and, under the political conditions of the Continent before 1848, unavoidably a secret society.... Drawn up in German in January, 1848....at present it is undoubtedly the most widespread, the most international production of all socialist literature...The MANIFESTO being our joint production, I consider myself bound to state that the fundamental proposition which forms its nucleus belongs to Marx. That proposition is:

the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes; that the history of these class struggles forms a series of evolutions in which, nowadays, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class—the proletariat—cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting class—the bourgeoisie—without at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions and class struggles.

This proposition, which in my opinion is destined to do for history what Darwin’s theory has done for biology, we, both of us, had been gradually approaching for some years before 1845.”

—Written January 30, 1888

EXCERPT FROM COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

“The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles...Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other—bourgeoisie and proletariat.

“The social conditions of the old society no longer exist for the proletariat. The proletarian is without property; his relation to his wife and children has no longer anything in common with bourgeois family relations; modern industrial labour, modern subjection to capital, the same in England as in France, in America as in Germany, has stripped him of every trace of national character. Law, morality, religion are to him so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests...

“The immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat.

“...the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: abolition of private property...

“And the abolition of this state of things is called by the bourgeois, abolition of individuality and freedom! And rightly so. The abolition of bourgeois individuality, bourgeois independence, and bourgeois freedom is undoubtedly aimed at...

“Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the communists.. . The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital...

“The Communists are further reproached with desiring to abolish countries and nationality. The workingmen have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got...

“The charges against Communism made from a religious, a philosophical, and, generally, from an ideological standpoint are not deserving of serious examination.

“Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man’s ideas, views, and conceptions—in one word, man’s consciousness—changes with every change in the conditions of his material existence, in his social relations and in his social life?

“When the ancient world was in its last throes the ancient religions were overcome by Christianity. When Christian ideas succumbed in the 18th century to rationalist ideas, feudal society fought its death-battle with the then revolutionary bourgeoisies. The ideas of religious liberty and freedom of conscience merely gave expression to the sway of free competition within the domain of knowledge.

“Undoubtedly, it will be said, ‘religion, moral, philosophical and juridical ideas have been modified in the course of historical development But religion, morality, philosophy, political science, and law, constantly survived this change.’

‘There are, besides, eternal truths such as freedom, justice, etc., that are common to all states of society. But Communism abolishes eternal truths, it abolishes all religion and all morality, instead of constituting them on a new basis; it, therefore, acts in contradiction to all past historical experience.’

“What does this accusation reduce itself to? The history of all past society has consisted in the development of class antagonisms, antagonisms that assumed different forms at different epochs.

“The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations;...

“We have seen above that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to establish democracy.

“The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest by degrees all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the state...

“Of course, in the beginning this cannot be effected except by means of despotic in-roads on the rights of property and on the conditions of bourgeois production...

“Nevertheless, in the most advanced countries the following will be pretty generally applicable:

1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.
2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.
3. Abolition of all right of inheritance.
4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.
5. Centralization of credit in the hands of the state by means of a national bank with state capital and an exclusive monopoly.
6. Centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the state.
7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the state; the bringing into cultivation of waste lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.
8. Equal obligation of all to work. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.

9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country by a more equable distribution of the population over the country.

10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of child factory labour in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, etc.

“In short, the Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things...

“The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win...

“Workingmen of all countries, unite!..

APPENDIX III

ADDITIONS BY HANS V. ANDERSEN, JR.

This book was first published in 1972 when communism was clearly identified as evil. Many now believe the evils of that enemy are defeated. The following information, taken from the books and files of H. Verlan Andersen (Deceased July 16, 1992) has been added as an appendix. As you read this appendix, and the book, we hope it is apparent that the prophets concerns in this area went beyond worrying about an enemy with a gun attacking us. All the prophets have condemned it. President McKay called it “soul destroying,” and said it would “sap the individual ambitions and moral fiber of our youth...” He seemed to believe it was more than a minor mistake in judgment, on the part of those who opposed him. As is pointed out below, the principle is significant. The battle over it started in the preexistence. President Benson also called it “soul destroying” and considered it the political philosophy of those secret combinations seeking to overthrow the freedoms of our country. This is all the more evident in his book, “The Red Carpet — — —” with the rest of the title on the front cover reading “Socialism—the Royal Road to Communism.” That IS the “red carpet.” We are embracing it, and it has been a concern of the prophets, past and present.

As Latter-day Saints, it should be of more than passing interest that at the very time the world was celebrating the down fall of communism, the living prophet of God, in his final address in General Conference to us would say,

I testify that wickedness is rapidly expanding in every segment of our society. (See D&C 1:14-16; 84:49-53.) It is more highly organized, more cleverly disguised, and more powerfully promoted than ever before. Secret combinations lusting for power, gain and glory are flourishing. 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. [See Ether 8:18-25] (Ensign, November 1988, p. 87)

For those not endowed with a keen perception of the obvious, President Benson, when he had his address put in the *Ensign*, referenced Ether 8:18-25. It in part says,

And whatsoever nation shall uphold such secret combinations, to get power and gain, until they shall spread over the nation, behold, they shall be destroyed;...

Wherefore, O ye Gentiles, it is wisdom in God that these things should be shown unto you, that thereby ye may repent of your sins, and suffer not that these murderous combinations shall get above you,...

Wherefore, the Lord commandeth you, when ye shall see these things come among you that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation,

Is our prophet in the same predicament the prophet Nephi was 24 years before Christ’s birth? Mormon, telling us about his situation said they,

had seduced the more part of the righteous until they had come down to believe in their works and partake of their spoils,.. . (He!. 6:38)

And seeing the people in a state of such awful wickedness, and those Gadianton robbers filling the judgment-seats — — — (Hel. 7:4)

Nephi, filled with sorrow, got on his tower and accused the people of joining with the Gadianton robbers and corrupting their laws. He warned them of pending destruction for their personal and political sins. Then, just as our prophet (from his tower) began each of his closing statements with “I testify”, Nephi closed his warning with, “I testify that they shall be.” (Hel. 7:29)

How did the prophet Nephi’s detractors respond to him? It has a familiar ring.

Why seest thou this man, and hearest him revile against this people and against our law?

Therefore they did cry unto the people, saying: Why do you suffer this man to revile against us? For behold he doth condemn all this people, even unto destruction; yea, and also that these our great cities shall be taken from us, that we shall have no place in them.

And now we know that this is impossible, for behold, we are powerful, and our cities great, therefore our enemies can have no power over us. (Hel. 8:2, 5-6)

If our views as LDS can hardly be distinguished from the views of other americans, are we blind and also ripening for destruction? Do President Benson’s warnings apply to the LDS, or just the non-mormons who have not read his warning, or the warning he refers to in the Book of Mormon? How many of us can cling to the hope Nephi offered some of us, when he saw our day, and said, “ye need not suppose that the Gentiles are utterly destroyed.” (2 Ne. 30:1) He gave that much comfort, after he too, said he saw us, our pride, and our secret combinations. (2 Ne. 26).

One of daddy’s concerns was that those who felt concern about this principle of agency sometimes allow that concern to cause them to break the law, thinking that would show their willingness to follow the prophet. Others, upon learning about the principle of agency, would become angry with the Lord, His prophet, His local leaders, because so little is being done or said about it in His Church. Their concern for having the principle of agency hammered into others RIGHT NOW is exceeded only by their ignorance of the Lord’s plan of allowing men agency to reject Him and His prophet. Possibly He feels many would reject His prophet, even if it was hammered, and hence they will be under less condemnation for rejecting less exposure to the opportunity to believe. Suppose He has other reasons our puny minds haven’t conceived of. If 1/3 part of us rejected Christ and agency in the preexistence, and in coming to the earth all but our Savior brought with us weaknesses and faults which might again lead us to fall away from Christ, who are we to steady the Ark? God and His prophet see that we each get exactly what we deserve, past, present and future (Alma 29:1-8). Absolutely nothing happens to us, save that which we deserve, and whether we see it as best for us or not, it is. All is designed to take us back, if we will but once again follow Christ. It may take faith, but nothing else has changed.

All that we do is for our Father in Heaven, our Savior, the Holy Ghost and the leaders Christ chose to organize and lead us. We are fortunate to have this knowledge. We were led by such leaders in the pre-existence, and we are once again here on earth. Christ leads us, and we have no more right to “improve” on His decisions here, than we did there. Satan’s sin of pride led him to be angry, to refuse counsel, to refuse to follow his leader. Pride and its resulting anger will reap another harvest here, of those who refuse to be loyal to Christ and His prophet.

Over the years, President Benson has given many copies of daddy’s books to many people, always encouraging them to read them. This pleased daddy to know that someone he felt such great loyalty and love for was a constant source of encouragement to him.

Daddy received a lot of calls and letters from people who love President Benson, who are concerned about our freedom, and wanted to know what they should do. Below is a copy of a letter he sent to one such person, five months before he (daddy) died on July 16, 1992.

I am in receipt of your recent letter regarding my boo/c The Great and Abominable Church of the Devil and I do hope I can help you solve the problems you face. Since as you say in your letter, you already believed the things written in the book before you read it, the philosophy expressed therein did not cause a turmoil in your own mind.

However as I understand it, by voicing those beliefs, you have encountered some opposition from others.

It probably will not surprise you to learn that the difficulties you are experiencing are quite common among politically conservative Church members. Perhaps some of the discourses delivered by our prophets will help explain why.

In the April, 1966 general conference of the Church, President David O. McKay who was then the prophet, issued a statement entitled: A statement concerning the position of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Communism. You probably are quite familiar with that pronouncement.

At the time it was issued, I was teaching at the Brigham Young University and discovered to my consternation that the statement caused considerable contention among those I associated with.

In the October, 1967 general conference, President McKay, seeming to sense the discord, delivered another address entitled, A Plea for Unity. In that talk he again condemned communism and charged that those subscribing to its philosophy were causing contention both in this nation and others. He asked that members who were unable to solve their problems on a local level, to appeal to the brethren in Salt Lake who would give the needed help.

President McKay waited another eighteen months and then in the April, 1969 general conference, he repeated some of the things he had said against communism three years earlier, but suggested that those fighting communism should not do so in such a way as to cause contention. It is my suggestion to you that you obtain these three addresses by President McKay, study them carefully and prayerfully, and then follow his advice.

You apparently have become aware that it is virtually impossible to discuss either communism, socialism or welfare statism in Church meetings without causing contention. For this reason we do not now hear much from the pulpit on these subjects as was formerly the case. This does not mean however that we should not study and take a stand on these matters as President McKay advised in 1966 when he said:

We therefore commend and encourage every person and every group who is sincerely seeking to study constitutional principles and awaken a sleeping and apathetic people to the alarming conditions that are...

We should still follow that advice, provided we do so without causing discord. As you are doubtless aware, our living prophet has perhaps been more vigorously outspoken on these matters than anyone and he has never indicated that he has changed his mind. On the other hand he has continued to admonish us to read the Book of Mormon and beware of secret combinations. No prophet has ever advised that we ignore the warnings of Moroni expressed to us Gentiles in Ether 8, nor can this be done without rejecting the Book of Mormon.

The prophecies of Nephi contained in 2 Ne. 27 through 2 Ne. 31:1 seem to explain what is now happening in the Church. Since these chapters are explanations of Isaiah's writings which the Lord has admonished us to search diligently, (3 Ne. 23:1, 2) they should be very meaningful to us today.

But even though we can no longer publicly discuss what President McKay has called the greatest satanical threat to peace, prosperity, and the spread of God's work among men which exists on the face of the earth, we can educate ourselves, our families, and our close friends....and I hope that the Lord will continue to bless you as you try to follow the prophets and stand up for that which they stand for. (H. Verlan Andersen, Letter to a member, 2/20/1992)

WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

We here in the United States, in converting our government into a social welfare state, have ourselves adopted much of socialism. Specifically, we have to an alarming degree adopted the use of the power of the slate in the control and distribution of the fruits of industry. We are on notice according to the words of the President, that we are going much further, for he is quoted as saying:

We're going to take all the money we think is unnecessarily being spent and take it from the 'haves' and give it to the 'have nots.' (1964 Congressional Record, p. 6142, Remarks of the President to a Group of Leaders of Organizations of Senior Citizens in the Fish Room, March 24, 1964)

That is the spirit of socialism: We're going to take. The spirit of the United Order is: We're going to give. (Romney, Marion G., Conference Report, April, 1966, p. 98)

As Bastiat pointed out over a hundred years ago, once government steps over this clear line between the protective or negative role into the aggressive role of redistributing the wealth and providing so-called 'benefits' for some of its citizens, it then becomes a means for what he accurately described as legalized plunder.

How is the legal plunder to be identified? Quite simply. See if the law takes from some persons what belongs to them, and gives it to other persons to whom it does not belong. See if the law benefits one citizen at the expense of another...(The Law, p. 21, 26)

In the end, no one is much further ahead, and everyone suffers the burdens of a gigantic bureaucracy and a loss of personal freedom. (Ezra Taft Benson, The Proper Role of Government, p. 136-7)

15 SOCIALISM SATAN'S PLAN OF GOVERNMENT?

Force, on the other hand, emanates from Lucifer himself. Even in man's pre-existent state, Satan sought power to compel the human family to do his will by suggesting that the free agency of man be inoperative. If his plan had been accepted, human beings would have become mere puppets in the hands of a dictator, and the purpose of man's coming to earth would have been frustrated. Satan's proposed system of government, therefore, was rejected, and the principle of free agency established in its place. (McKay, David O., Conference Report, April 1950, pp. 33-35)

I was due here two weeks ago, and had a theme to deliver which I thought was timely and appropriate, but I come with another theme this morning— “Two Contending Forces.” Those forces are known and have been designated by different terms throughout the ages. In the beginning they were known as Satan on the one hand, and Christ on the other....In these days, they are called “domination by the state” on one hand, “personal liberty” on the other; communism on one hand, free agency on the other.

Students, two forces are at work There might be a conflagration such as the world has never known. Mankind will have to choose the one course or the other. (Mckay, David O., “Two Contending Forces,” Speech at BYU, May 18, 1960)

WHO OPPOSES SOCIALISM?

JOSEPH SMITH

Wednesday, 13. I attended a lecture at the Grove, by Mr. John Finch, a Socialist, from England, and said a few words in reply.

*Thursday, 14. I attended a second lecture on Socialism, by Mr. Finch; and after he got through, I made a few remarks, alluding to Sidney Rigdon and Alexander Campbell getting up a community at Kirtland, and of the big fish there eating up all the little fish. I said I did not believe the doctrine. (Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 33)*

BRIGHAM YOUNG

We heard Brother Taylor's exposition of what is called Socialism this morning. What can they do?

*Live on each other and beg. It is a poor, unwise and very imbecile people who cannot take care of themselves. (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 14, p. 21)*

JOHN TAYLOR

the world have generally made great mistakes upon these points. They have started various projects to try to unite and cement the people together without God; but they could not do it. Fourierism (authors note:

Francois Fourier was a French socialist and writer), Community unism—another branch of the same thing—and many other principles of the same kind have been introduced to try and cement the human family together. And then we have had peace societies, based upon the same principles; but all these things have failed, and they wi//fail, because, however philanthropic, humanitarian, benevolent, or cosmopolitan our ideas, it is impossible to produce a true and correct union without the Spirit of the living God, .

*(John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 18, p. 137)*

*I was speaking, a while ago, about the people there being divided into three classes. One of them you may call infidel, under the head of socialism, fourierism, and several other isms. Communism is a specimen of the same thing,...(John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, p. 23, August 22, 1852)*

WILFORD WOODRUFF

You may wish to know why I make these remarks. I will tell you. Because God himself grants this right to every human being upon the earth irrespective of race or color; it is part of the divine economy not to force any man to heaven, not to coerce the mind but to leave it free to act for itself

He lays before His creature man the everlasting Gospel, the principles of life and salvation, and then leaves him to choose for himself or to reject for himself with the definite understanding that he becomes responsible to Him for the results of his acts. (Wilford Woodruff, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 23, p. 77)

LORENZO SNOW

In things that pertain to celestial glory there can be no forced operations. We must do according as the Spirit of the Lord operates upon our understandings and feelings. We cannot be crowded into matters, however great might be the blessing attending such procedure. We cannot be forced into living a celestial law; we must do this ourselves, of our own free will. And whatever we do in regard to the principle of the United Order, we must do it because we desire to do it. .

The United Order is not French Communism. (Lorenzo Snow, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 19, p. 346, 349-350)

JOSEPH F. SMITH

We must choose righteous men, good men to fill these positions. Hence if you will only get good men to fill these offices no one should care who they are, so that you have agreed upon them, and were one. We want you to be one both in temporal, political and religious things, in fact, in everything you put your hands to in righteousness. We want you to be one, one as God and Christ are one, seeing eye to eye. Do not try to crush anybody, or build yourselves up at the expense of your neighbor. Do not do it; it is a custom of the world, and it is a wrong principle. (Joseph F. Smith, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 25, p. 251)

HEBER J. GRANT

Among the Latter-day Saints they speak of their philosophy and their plans under it, as an ushering in of the United Order. Communism and all other similar “isms” bear no relationship whatever to the United Order. They are merely the clumsy counterfeits which Satan always devises of the gospel plan. Communism debases the individual and makes him the enslaved tool of the state to whom he must look for sustenance and religion; the United Order exalts the individual, leaves him his property, “according to his family, according to his circumstances and his wants and needs,” (D&C 51:3) and provides a system by which he helps care for his less fortunate brethren; the United Order leaves every man free to choose his own religion as his conscience directs. Communism destroys man’s God-given free agency; the United Order glorifies it. Latter-day Saints cannot be true to their faith and lend aid, encouragement, or sympathy to any of these false philosophies. They will prove snares to their fret. (Heber J. Grant, J. Reuben Clark Jr., David O. McKay, The First Presidency, CR, April, 1942, p. 90)

GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

Consider the condition in the world, the number who are determined to take from the rich man not what belongs to themselves, but that which belongs to the others. God has permitted men to get wealth, and if they obtained it properly, it is theirs, and he will bless them in its use if they will use it properly...

We must not fall into the bad habits of other people. We must not get into the frame of mind that we will take what the other man has. Refer back to the ten commandments, and you will find one short paragraph, "Thou shalt not covet." That is what is the matter with a good many people today.

They are coveting what somebody else has, when as a matter of fact, many of them have been cared for and provided with means to live by those very ones from whom they would take property. (President George Albert Smith, Prophets, Principles and National Survival, p. 343 [compiled by Jay Newquist], CR-10/49: 17 1-2)

DAVID O. MCKAY

We are placed on this earth to work, to live; and the earth will give us a living. It is our duty to strive to make a success of what we possess—to till the earth, subdue matter, conquer the glebe, take care of the cattle, the flocks and the herds. It is the Government's duty to see that you are protected in these efforts, and no other man has the right to deprive you of any of your privileges. But it is not the Government's duty to support you. That is one reason why I shall raise my voice as long as God gives me sound or ability, against this Communistic idea that the Government will take care of us all, and everything belongs to the Government. It is wrong! No wonder, in trying to perpetuate that idea, they become anti-Christ, because that doctrine strikes directly against the doctrine of the Savior.

*No government owes you a living. You get it yourself by your own acts/—never by trespassing upon the rights of a neighbor; never by cheating him. You put a blemish upon your character the moment you do. (David O. McKay, *Statements on Communism and the Constitution of the United States*, p. 23)*

*During the first half of the twentieth century we have traveled far into the soul-destroying land of socialism... (David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals*, p.273)*

JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

*We have all been taught the doctrine of personal free agency and that no individual is ever compelled by force or other means to comply with divine edicts and philosophy. We have been informed that a long time ago in the pre-existence there was a rebellion in heaven, and because one notable character, who had been entrusted with great authority, rebelled and led many away with him, he had to be cast out of the kingdom. However we should remember that every principle and law existing in the celestial kingdom has been proved to be perfect through the eternities through which they have come. If any individual proves himself worthy for the exaltation in that kingdom, it will be by strict obedience to every principle and covenant here existing. Therefore we may be assured that every law and principle thereunto pertaining is perfect and cannot be amended or discarded because of its perfection. (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, Vol. 4, p. 69)*

*The modern trend of the nations is towards dictatorship. It is taking form in two great camps, but, nevertheless, the direction is the same, although it is being reached by different routes. On the one side the direction to make an end of all nations, is through communism;... (Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Progress of Man*, p. 397)*

HAROLD B. LEE

*There are some things of which I am sure, and that is that contrary to the belief and mistaken ideas of some people, the United Order will not be a socialistic or communistic setup;... (Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places*, p. 280)*

SPENCER W. KIMBALL

*Assume that you become the world leader of Socialism and in it have marked success, but through your devotion to it you fail to live the gospel. Where are you then? Is anything worthwhile which will estrange you from your friends, your Church membership, your family, your eternal promises, your faith? You might say that such estrangement is not necessarily a result of your political views, but truthfully hasn't overpowering interest in your present views already started driving a wedge? (0/0/45) (Spencer W. Kimball, *Teachings*, pp. 408-409)*

EZRA TAFT BENSON

The fifth and final principle that is basic to our understanding of the Constitution is that governments should have only limited powers. The important thing to keep in mind is that the people who have created their government can give to that government only such powers as they, themselves, have in the first place. Obviously, they cannot give that which they do not possess.

*By deriving its just powers from the governed, government becomes primarily a mechanism for defense against bodily harm, theft, and involuntary servitude. It cannot claim the power to redistribute money or property nor to force reluctant citizens to perform acts of charity against their will. Government is created by the people. The creature cannot exceed the creator. (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, Sept. 1987, p. 8)*

*No true Latter-day Saint and no true American can be a socialist or a communist or support programs leading in that direction. (Ezra Taft Benson, *Title of Liberty*, p. 190)*

*Our nation will continue to degenerate unless we read and heed the words of the God of this land, Jesus Christ, and quit building up and upholding secret combinations,... (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, July, 1988, p.80)*

*We must keep the people informed that collectivism, another word for socialism, is a part of the communist strategy. Communism is essentially socialism. (Ezra Taft Benson, *This Nation Shall Endure*, p. 90)*

SUMMARIZATION OF PROPHET'S ATTITUDES

(by H. Verlan Andersen)

In a letter written in 1967 by the late President David O. McKay to the BYU Administration and Faculty, explicit instructions were given regarding what should and should not be taught here

regarding laws and government. This letter was considered of sufficient importance that the entire Board of Trustees approved it,

as the policy of the Board of Trustees for the guidance of the Board, the University Administration, and present and prospective members of the Faculty....This trend to a welfare state in which people look to and worship government more than their God, is certain to sap the individual ambitions and moral fiber of our youth unless they are warned and rewarned of the consequences....

*I hope that no one on the faculty of Brigham Young University will advocate positions which cannot be harmonized with the views of every prophet of the church, from the Prophet Joseph Smith on down, concerning our belief that we should be strong and self-reliant individuals, not dependent upon the largess or benefactions of government. None of the doctrines of our Church give any sanction to the concept of a socialistic state. (H. Verlan Andersen, *The Moral Basis of a Free Society*, p. 7)*

WHO HAS BEEN TRICKED INTO BELIEVING IN SOCIALISM?

(by H. Verlan Andersen)

We have also gone a long way on the road to public ownership and management of the vital means of production. In both of these areas the free agency of Americans has been greatly abridged. Some argue that we have voluntarily surrendered this power to government. Be this as it may, the fact remains that the loss of freedom with the consent of the enslaved, or even at their request, is nonetheless slavery.

As the fruits of socialism, we all have our own opinions. I myself have watched its growth in our own country and observed it in operation in many other lands. But I have yet to see or hear of its freeing the hearts of men of selfishness and greed or of its bringing peace, plenty, or freedom. These things it will never bring, nor will it do away with idleness and promote "industry, thrift and self-respect," for it is founded, in theory and in practice, on force, the principle of the evil one. (Marion G. Romney, "Socialism and the United Order," *Conference Report*, April 1966, p. 100)

As a college law teacher, I have made it a practice over the years to give a questionnaire to my students on the first day of class in which they were asked to respond to a number of questions regarding their acceptance or rejection of the proposals contained in the Ten Points of the Communist Manifesto. Of course I did not inform them that they were registering opinions about Communism and the questionnaire revealed that very few had ever read the Communist Manifesto. Their responses were therefore presumably not colored by any anti-communist bias. The results of the poll might be surprising to some. They revealed that on the average, my students were approximately two thirds communists in their political beliefs. That is, on an average, they accepted about two-thirds of the Communist program for socializing a capitalist nation.

Doubtless, much of the explanation for this apparent discrepancy lies in the fact that people are generally ignorant about Communist practices and methods. They do not realize that the political beliefs they are espousing will lead to the same loss of liberty in America as in Russia. (H. Verlan Andersen, "Speech on Socialism," 10/8/79)

(Note: Below is a copy of the questionnaire referred to above, which daddy used during one of the years he was teaching at BYU. The percentages to the right show the percent of the students who responded with a "Yes", or "No". The "No Response" would be the difference, if any. To grade your own beliefs, compared to Karl Marx, Lenin, Stalin, etc., please take the test yourself, then acquire a copy of Marx's Communist Manifesto.)

Please place a check mark in the yes or no column or fill in the blanks to indicate your response to the following questions. Do not place your name on your paper.

A.

1. Have you read the Constitution within the last four years?

Yes/Agree [] No/Disagree [] No response [] 39% 60%

2. Have you ever read the Communist Manifesto?

Yes/Agree [] No/Disagree [] No response [] 12% 86%

B.

Do you favor—

1. Graduated tax rates on income?

Yes/Agree [] No/Disagree [] No response [] 55% 43%

2. An unrestricted power in government to tax inheritances?

Yes/Agree [1] No/Disagree [1] 4% 96%

3. A return to the gold and silver standard of the Constitution?

Yes/Agree [1] No/Disagree [1] No response [1] 39% 60%

4. Federal regulation of transportation and communication businesses?

Yes/Agree [] No/Disagree [] 54% 46%

5. A system of free public education?

Yes/Agree [1] No/Disagree [1] No response [] 72% 23%

C.

1. For the purpose of providing for the less fortunate, do you feel government should have the power to completely equalize all incomes?

Yes/Agree [1] No/Disagree [] 2% 98%

2. If not, do you believe the poor have some claim on government for their subsistence needs?

Yes/Agree [1] No/Disagree [1] No response [] 55% 43%

D.

1. Should government have the power to prohibit child labor?

Yes/Agree [] No/Disagree [1] No response [1] 67% 30%

2. Should government have the power to set minimum wages?

Yes/Agree [] No/Disagree [] No response [] 65% 30%

3. Should government have the power to license every economic activity?

Yes/Agree [1] No/Disagree [1] No response [1] 18% 80%

4. Should government be completely without such licensing power?

Yes/Agree [1] No/Disagree [1] No response [1] 13% 82%

5. If you believe in some, but not complete licensing power, indicate three trades, professions, businesses, etc. which should be licensed:

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

List three which should not be licensed:

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

E.

1. Government should have the power to regulate the operation of all economic activities.

Yes/Agree [] No/Disagree [1] No response [1] 9% 89%

2. Government should not have the power to regulate any legitimate economic activity.

Yes/Agree [] No/Disagree [1 No response [1 24% 73%

3. If you believe in some, but not complete government regulation, do you feel you could draw a precise line between those activities which should and should not be regulated?

Yes/Agree [J No/Disagree [1 No response [1 17% 79%

4. Government should have the power to set minimum standards for all goods and services.

Yes/Agree [] No/Disagree [1 No response [1 43% 41%

5. If you favor a partial, but not complete set of government standards, name three products or services for which standards should be set by government:

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

Name Three products or services for which standards should not be set:

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

F.

1. Should government have the power to bring waste lands into production and engage in soil conservation programs?

Yes/Agree [] No/Disagree [] No response [1 77% 19%

2. Should government have the power to control natural resources such as rivers, lakes, forests and mineral deposits?

Yes/Agree [1 No/Disagree [1 No response [1 78% 19%

3. Should governments sell to private individuals all the land they now own except that which is necessary for defense and protection of rights?

Yes/Agree [] No/Disagree [] No response [1 21% 76%

G.

I. I believe that there is a distinct line between those circumstances under which the government should compel people against their will and those where it should not.

Yes/Agree [1 No/Disagree [] No response [] 48% 47%

2. I believe that the scriptures provide accurate guidance regarding the distinction between good and bad laws.

Yes/Agree [1 No/Disagree [] No response [1 81% 14%

WHAT TO DO, TO HAVE UNITY WITH THE PROPHETS

Below is a letter from the First Presidency (Heber J. Grant, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., and David O. McKay) to the U.S. Treasury, dated September 30, 1941.

Thus, according to the gospel plan under which the Church is established and operates, the care of the widow, the orphan, and the poor, is a Church function, is a part of the brotherhood of man which underlies our whole social and religious life. As God's children all, and as brothers and sisters in Christ, we must as a matter of spiritual responsibility and pursuant to positive divine command care for the helpless, the unfortunate, and the needy. Furthermore, it is essentially a neighbor to neighbor obligation. It is not a function of civil government. This is fundamental....

The primary aim of this program is to provide for the material wants of faithful members of the Church who find themselves now in difficulty, to rebuild them spiritually, and to restore to them the proper concept, pride, and appreciation of American citizenship...No effort has been spared to teach the people to be self reliant, independent, to take a humble, righteous pride in being, individually and as communities, fully self supporting.

These things have been told in order that you may have a background and understanding of what we are now to say.

Viewing all of these things it will be easy for you to understand that the Church has not found it possible to follow along the lines of the present general tendency in the matter of properly rights, taxes, the curtailment of rights and liberties of the people, nor in general the economic policies of what is termed the "New Deal". The great bulk of what these people are trying to do is, in the final analysis, absolutely contrary to the fundamental principles of which we have spoken. It is the considered, long considered opinion of President Grant and those who are associated with him, that our nation cannot be preserved if the present governmental policies shall continue. We do not believe that any other great nation or great civilization can be built up or maintained by the use of such policies.. .. As we see it, there is no way in which we can, to use your own words, "preserve and perpetuate our freedom—freedom to govern ourselves, freedom of speech, and freedom to worship God according to our own light," except we shall turn away from our present course and resume the normal course along which this great country traveled to its present high eminence of prosperity, of culture, of universal education, and of the peace and contentment which we enjoyed prior to the inauguration of the "New Deal,"

We have done in the past, we are doing now, and we shall continue in the future to do everything within our power to secure this turning of which we speak We confess to you that it has not been possible for us to unify our own people even upon the necessity of such a turning about, and therefore we cannot unfortunately, and we say it regretfully, make any practical suggestion to you as to how the nation can be turned about. But the President of the United States could do it in good part if he were willing to exert his effort along that line, but this he appears not to be willing to do.

this we feel we can definitely say, that unless the people of America forsake the sins and the errors, political and otherwise, of which they are now guilty and return to the practice of the great fundamental principles of Christianity, and of Constitutional government, there will be no exaltation for them spiritually, and politically we shall lose our liberty and free institutions.

Returning to your original letter and our reply thereto regarding the selling of Defense Bonds. The Church as a Church does not believe in war and yet since its organization whenever war has come we have done our part.... we do thoroughly believe in building up our home defenses to the maximum extent necessary, but we do not believe that aggression should be carried on in the name and under the false cloak of defense. We therefore look with sorrowing eyes at the present use to which a great part of the funds being raised by taxes and by borrowing is being put....We believe that our real threat comes from within and not from without, and it comes from the underlying spirit common to Naziism, Fascism, and Communism, namely, the spirit which would array class against class, which would set up a socialistic state of some sort, which would rob the people of the liberties which we possess under the Constitution, and would set up such a reign of terror as exists now in many parts of Europe.

We trust you will pardon this long letter, but we feel we must say that you invited it.

Trusting that the Lord will point out some way, will somehow bring about a rejuvenation of the American spirit along with a true love of freedom and of our free institutions, and for Constitutional government, we are,

Faithfully yours, /s/ Heber J. Grant, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., David O. McKay. (First Presidency letter to U.S. Treasury, September 30, 1941)

From Marion G. Romney:

Now, we may rest assured of this. ' if there is no devil, there is no God But there is a God and there is a devil, and the bringing of peace requires the elimination of Satan's influence. Where he is, peace can never be. Further, peaceful coexistence with him is impossible. He cannot be brought to cooperate in the maintenance of peace and harmony. He promotes nothing but the works of the flesh.

As a prelude to peace, then the influence of Satan must be completely subjugated Even in heaven there could be no peace with him after his rebellion. There, in the world of spirits, the Father and the Son could find no ground upon which they could cooperate with him. He had to be cast not—not compromised with, but cast out. (Marion G. Romney, First Presidency Message, Ensign, Oct. 1983, p. 5)

From President Ezra Taft Benson:

How is it possible to cut out the various welfare-state features of our government which have already fastened themselves like cancer cells onto the body politic? Isn't drastic surgery already necessary, and can it be performed without endangering the patient? In answer, it is obvious that drastic measures are called for. No half-way or compromise actions will suffice. Like all surgery, it will not be without discomforts and perhaps even some scar tissue for a long time to come. But it must be done if the patient is to be saved, and it can be done without undue risk

*Obviously, not all welfare-state programs currently in force can be dropped simultaneously without causing tremendous economic and social upheaval. To try to do so would be like finding oneself at the controls of a hijacked airplane and attempting to return it by simply cutting off the engines in flight. It must be flown back, lowered in altitude, gradually reduced in speed and brought in for a smooth landing. Translated into practical terms, this means that the first step toward restoring the limited concept of government should be to freeze all welfare-state programs at their present level, making sure that no new ones are added. The next step would be to allow all present programs to run out their term with absolutely no renewal. The third step would involve the gradual phasing-out of those programs which are indefinite in their term. In my opinion, the bulk of the transition could be accomplished within a ten-year period and virtually completed within twenty years.... (Ezra Taft Benson, *An Enemy Hath Done This*, p. 141-2)*

MAN HAS HIS AGENCY

(by Hans V. Andersen, Jr.)

Those who disagree with the prophets, or discount the importance of the principles of agency, as it applies to their personal views will say to themselves, "If this is so important, why doesn't the government fall apart when it does what you say is so wrong? If these are truly eternal laws, why are the heavens so silent? We alter laws and nothing happens!

To such an attitude, I would make the observation that when the adulterer, the fornicator, the homosexual completes their act, they too can lay back and say, "The roof didn't fall in on me. The floor did not fall out from under the bed. Who is this God who pretends to *make laws*, and call me a sinner? Why should I fear Him?"

Our Father in Heaven loves free agency. He has let man choose to do evil. He will never give His power to such men. Man can violate God's laws. He can even appear to have "gotten away" with something. Our Father gave us this life, this probationary time to taste the bitter, to repent, confess, forsake and return. (2Ne. 2)

Will God still work with and love those who reject His counsel? You recall the story of Israel and the reign of the Judges. Israel came to Samuel, demanding a king. (1 Samuel, 8) Samuel and the Lord counselled against it and warned them. The people rejected that counsel. did Samuel then anoint Saul king? Did he anoint David king? Did Nathan, the prophet anoint Solomon king? The Lord's hand was in all this, but was it the first or second loaf the people got? In our case, will rejecting our prophets counsel on God's laws and government (not just as a nation, but as Church members) lead to captivity for us? Will the great promise of the Book of Mormon regarding this land prove our blessing? Christ was our champion in the battle over agency before we came to earth, and He is now.