

Letters to the Editor

reactions to dialogue's increased subscription rates

In the last issue we announced that due to spiralling paper, publication and mailing costs it was necessary to increase *Dialogue's* subscription price to \$20 a year. As the letter from the Executive Committee pointed out, we raised prices reluctantly and only after many efforts to find a way to continue publication without doing so. We had faith that there were enough *Dialogue* supporters who were genuinely interested in the journal's survival and committed to sustaining an open forum in the Mormon community who would pay \$20 a year. So far our faith has been more than justified.

Apparently other magazines and journals have come to the same conclusion we have concerning increased subscription rates. The March 9, 1974, issue of *Saturday Review/World* contained an editorial with the following commentary:

The big gamble we took in starting *World* and later, in combining it with *SR*, was that we might be able to depart from conventional magazine economics by eliminating cut-rate subscription practices altogether, and by severing connections with the multiple-sales subscription agencies. Some colleagues in the magazine business tell us we are putting ourselves at a competitive disadvantage. They say readers are so conditioned to cut rates that it will be difficult to persuade them to take our magazine or to stay with it.

This is not the way we see it. We are betting our professional lives that if we can publish a magazine that people will read and respect, the magazine will be sustained and will prosper.

Below are samples of the responses we have received to the increased rates.

Enclosed is my check. As a long-time *Dialogue* supporter, I feel it is a small price to continue a subscription to a journal which I enjoy so much.

In the most recent issue, I liked very much the article "Mormon World View and American Culture." It aided me with some distinctions I have often tried to make between "The Gospel," or light and truth, and "Mormon Culture," with its traditions, folklore and

myths. I had begun to wonder if trying to figure out which was which was only a useless intellectual exercise, but Sorenson convinces me otherwise. I shall continue to try.

Dialogue generally leaves me with a more positive feeling about the Church, a fact which I once used to counter the argument of a fellow member that *Dialogue* was a "tool of the Devil." I don't suppose it can be all bad if it helps some of us "hang in there." Keep publishing!

Nancy Folland
Oakland, California

We will eat from our food storage for awhile, and we hope \$15 will renew this wonderful *Dialogue* for us.

Mrs. Kenneth L. Duke
Durham, North Carolina

We agree with your decision, though it hurts the wallet. You have discovered that my demand for *Dialogue* is inelastic with regard to price.

By the way, I notice you have no more economists as editors. I suggest this may be unwise in these trying times . . .

Kelly J. Black Director
Center for Business and
Economic Research
California State University
Chico, California

I concur fully with your decision to sock it to those who are hard-core supporters of *Dialogue*. Those of us who find *Dialogue* to be important in our lives will be willing to pay whatever is necessary to continue the journal, and those who don't, would not buy it at half the cost. My only regret is that you have not discovered a way to separate one type of *Dialogue* reader from some of his money. I refer to the Church member who finds it socially unacceptable to have *Dialogue* found in his library, but still enjoys reading it and, therefore borrows his subscriber neighbor's copy.

Trevor C. Hughes
Logan, Utah

We suggest you start charging rent to these borrowers and forward it to us!—Ed.

Renew, please!
Dialogue is a refreshing breath of air.

Marion Russon
Concord, California

I was most disappointed to find that *Dialogue* has decided on a 100% increase in subscription rates. The regular \$10 subscription was expensive for a quarterly (*BYU Studies*, as you know, is \$16 for three years). I would suggest that you consider some economy measures, as the 50% of the readership below \$20,000 are certainly having to do.

Accordingly, here are my suggestions:

1. Eliminate entirely all awards, trips, and other expenses not directly associated with publishing the journal.
2. If non-slick covers and pages would be less expensive, use them.
3. Conserve space by eliminating large blank spaces, unnecessary drawings and photographs and oversize headings.
4. Since *Dialogue* began publishing, *BYU Studies* has improved in content. Perhaps they will reciprocate by suggesting how they economize.
5. Perhaps you can obtain more volunteer services if you suggest it to the readership.

Bruce G. Rogers
New Carrollton, Maryland

Thank you for your suggestions. We are constantly looking for ways to economize. In response to your specific suggestions:

1. *Dialogue* awards are paid for entirely from grants from the Silver Foundation made specifically for that purpose. The editor makes one or two trips a year to meet with the editorial staff, solicit manuscripts and raise funds.
2. According to our publisher, non-slick covers are the same price as slick ones. Our paper has always been of the non-slick variety.
3. While there might be some economizing by using every available inch of space for print, we feel that the aesthetic appeal of *Dialogue* is worth the small cost of space for art and photography — and occasional silent space.
4. *BYU Studies* enjoys a number of advantages that *Dialogue* does not: it is subsidized by the University (and therefore the Church), it is printed at the *BYU Press*, and it is publicized and promoted through official publications.
5. Almost all of our services—editorial, artistic, etc. are volunteer. In eight years *Dialogue* has paid for only one manuscript (\$12 for a poem) and has never paid for any art or design work.—Ed.

I am counting on you *not* to compromise the quality of this magazine—even if you are reduced to only one or two issues a year.

W. Roy Rackley
Portland, Oregon

I am very pleased that you are continuing the publication of *Dialogue*. I enjoy it very much.

The new subscription rate is reasonable and I hope it finally solves the publication's financial problems.

Thanks for all the work of everyone concerned for such a fine magazine that serves your fellow saints so well. You are anxiously engaged in a good cause, and I appreciate it.

Jan Worley
San Jose, California

I say in my heart, "I give not because I have not, but if I had, I would give." (Mosiah 4:24)

Would you please renew the subscription of a financially struggling law student with a wife and infant for \$10 because he cannot afford \$20? Those who are subject to extreme hardships need *Dialogue* to lift their spirits more than others.

Thank you.

A. Smith
Salt Lake City, Utah

Sure. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind" (1 Cor. 13:4)—Ed.

Editors:

The information given to you regarding my financial status was inaccurate. In point of fact, I am one of those unfortunate individuals for whom a \$20.00 annual subscription rate poses an extreme hardship. I have enclosed my check for \$100 which represents a \$10.00 annual subscription rate and a \$90.00 tax deductible contribution.

Wesley G. Howell, Jr.
Los Angeles, California

sisters of the church unite!

The Mormon Sisters of Greater Boston are happy to announce the birth of *Exponent II*, a quarterly newspaper for Mormon women.

Exponent II will be a forum for frank talk. We stand for Mormonism and feminism and cheer on our sisters in a variety of virtuous lives.

We hope to share news about the activities of individuals and groups throughout the Church. We invite articles of all kinds.

Let us hear from you with \$2.50 (for a

charter annual subscription), letters, articles and donations (soon to be tax-deductible).

Claudia L. Bushman, Editor
Exponent II
 Box 37
 Arlington, Mass. 02174

archeology and the book of mormon

The issue of *Dialogue* with my article arrived and I have been deluged with letters from angry readers. It reminds me of the time that I wrote a review of *One Fold and One Shepherd* by Thomas S. Ferguson. I was accused of being anti-Mormon by the believers and of being too kind to the Mormons by the non-believers. This made me think that after all I might have been fair to both sides. One reader has accused me of being theologically unsophisticated but this was not the purport of my article. I simply wanted to point out that even a sympathetic and knowledgeable outsider fails to be convinced by the so-called evidence put forward by over-zealous, would-be archaeologists. Those believers who think that the outside world is going to be bowled over by irrefutable archaeological evidence are deluding themselves I am afraid. To paraphrase a famous saying, "Render unto science what belongs to science, and unto religion what belongs to religion."

Michael D. Coe
 Department of Anthropology,
 Yale University

Dialogue is growing brave in allowing someone to address an issue so sensitive as the historical claims of The Book of Mormon. For too long we were told that the question of whether or not the archaeological record supported or refuted the claims of the Book of Mormon could not be asked because (1) no one who was an authority on American archaeology of the period claimed by the Book knew anything of the Book of Mormon and (2) no one who knew the Book of Mormon was competent enough in the archaeology of the period to talk authoritatively about it.

How did you convince Michael Coe, the authority on the archaeology of America in the period of which the Book of Mormon purports to be a record, to take time from his other commitments to bother to comment on it? It is a testimony of Coe's generous feeling toward Mormons, if not toward our Book, that he took the book seriously enough to read it before rejecting it.

Ian Montague
 Paris, France

May I make one small correction in Michael Coe's interesting and challenging article,

"Mormons and Archeology: An Outside View," in the last issue.

Prof. Coe places the event of the "nonsensical" Zelph, the white Lamanite, at Spring Hill, Missouri, and thereby confuses it with the equally nonsensical (from his point of view) nephite altar and the whole Adam-ondi-Ahman problem. While we do not know much about either problem or locale, we do know that the proper setting of the Zelph story was on top of a mound on the west bank of the Illinois river, probably in Pike Co., Ill., while everything connected with Spring Hill and Adam-ondi-Ahman is in Daviess Co., Missouri.

In case any of your readers wish further light and knowledge regarding these two places and problems they might read Lawrence O. Anderson's, "Joseph Smith: A Student of American Antiquities," *The University Archaeological Society Newsletter* (January 30, 1963, pp. 1-6; published at BYU), and Robert J. Matthews, "Adam-ondi-Ahman," *BYU Studies*, 13 (Autumn, 1972), 27-35.

Stanley B. Kimball
 Department of Historical Studies
 Southern Illinois University
 Edwardsville

continuing dialogue on the "negro question"

My gift subscription to *Dialogue* began with the recent arrival of Volume 8, No. 1. Its motif, the Negro and the Church, was particularly apropos, for my current inactive status was caused, in part, by "the Negro question." Therefore, I devoured the various articles voraciously. I found Bush's panoply of Church history impeccably researched and objectively stated, but it did not assuage my own philosophical questions. Thomasson's effort was only that. Nibley's apologia was a mixed bag that left me mixed up. It was not until I got to "The Mormon Cross" that I felt empathy. (Mr. England understands my dilemma; he is writing to me.) England's article is built around a curious framework that even he says "sounds like a cop-out," but his final paragraph (p. 85) left me with a satisfied feeling. There are things that all Mormons, jack and non-jack, can do. More than ever before, let us get on with the task.

If your Spring, 1973, issue is indicative of the general quality of *Dialogue*, then I look forward to the day when I can extend my gift subscription with a paid one.

Lon Rand
 San Rafael, California

I would very much like to express my appreciation for your efforts. Since joining the

Church, your journal has been one of the most valued of our periodicals. The "Negro Doctrine" issue, in particular, has helped me feel less alone in believing that some of the questions are not entirely heretical and the answers not so simple.

Michael E. Johnson
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

from borrower to booster

Please sign me up for a year's enlightenment and challenge through a subscription to *Dialogue*. You have become my friend and support through several "student" years of borrowing from friends and relatives. Now that I can afford my own subscription, I send my money with delight, hoping I can support you more in the near future.

Thank you for sharing with me the great minds and spirits who follow Christ.

Ann F. Florence
Denver, Colorado

the pressures of orthodoxy

The price is stiff, but I can make the sacrifice. My closest friend, with whom I am ideologically compatible, lives in Iowa. Thus *Dialogue* is my only contact with fresh thinking. While "other" views may only be disparaged out West where the Saints are strong, they are positively heretical in the mission field. Missionary work must not be jeopardized, or new members in any way upset.

My wife and I are the only life-long members in Stroudsburg. All the rest are converts of less than ten years, most of only a few years or months. While this is refreshing in a certain way, nevertheless, the pressures of orthodoxy are intense. The Mormon stereotype is not automatic without a well-established model. It has to be created. And this is the overwhelming goal of the Church organization.

I appreciate the journal. Please keep it coming.

M. J. Clarke
Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania

nowhere else in the world

As I compared the pictures of the old Coalville Tabernacle with the new Coalville Stake Center, I recalled the statement of Spain's King Charles V as he viewed the great mosque in Cordoba in 1526. Inside the mosque the Spanish Christians had ripped out hundreds of the magnificent marble pillars to build a full-size cathedral of "colossal ugliness." When Charles saw it he was ashamed of the deed and exclaimed, "If I had known what you were up to, you would not have done it.

For what you have made here may be found in many other places, but what you have destroyed is to be found nowhere else in the world."

Ted J. Warner
Department of History
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah

I was impressed by three photos in your last issue. Page 33: The classic Coalville Tabernacle, a monument to pioneer thrift and devotion that was destroyed in the night, and, if reports are true, against the will of the majority. On the same page: the cattle barn-like structure built to replace the tabernacle. On Page 36: The grotesque pile of stone that appears to serve more as an advertising medium than for any other purpose.

A. Russell Croft
Ogden, Utah

looking backwards

Is the picture of the new Washington D.C. temple on page 36 of the last issue printed backwards or am I driving on the wrong side of the capital beltway when I go west past the temple site?

P. J. Bottino
Laurel, Maryland

Our error! Stay on the right side.—Ed.

platitudinous pablum

Due to some matters of neglect on my part I have received no issues of *Dialogue* since last fall or winter. In reading a library copy of the Spring, 1973, issue I was appraised of the fact that *Dialogue* editors were considering termination of publication. This news was a blow. The decision may all ready have been made, in which case this letter would be irrelevant. But here goes anyway.

I sympathize with the problems of financing, dwindling subscriptions, etc. but this publication has just been too valuable to let die! May I say that, for me personally, it has definitely been a beacon of light, a source of communion with kindred souls as I have groped for answers in trying to reconcile faith with reason.

As a long unmarried, later married (to a non-member) and still later divorced "female member" I have had my own special problems in relation to this very family-oriented, anti-"Women's lib" church. As I have struggled to overcome doubts and serious intellectual problems in relation to some prevalent attitudes among some Church members I have found a source of solace and hope in the articles in your magazine.

I bitterly resent being spoon-fed platitudinous pabulum, resent the atmosphere that discourages any kind of independent thought and the seemingly complacent satisfaction with things as they are. *Dialogue* has been an antidote for this. I hope you are able to continue. Accordingly I am enclosing an address change, a check for renewal of my subscription and a gift subscription. Also, a promise to do recruitment work for *Dialogue*, if it is not too late.

Lula DeValve
Logan, Utah

You're just in time!—Ed.

reaching the individual

Dialogue has done so much in promoting our hope and faith in the Church by exposing us to individuals who are not afraid to express themselves.

The aim of the Church has been to "reach the individual." *Dialogue* has been touching our lives for five years and we thank you.

Jack and Adele Livingston
Granada Hills, California

"... and ye that are upon the islands of the sea"

I would like you to know that I am very impressed with *Dialogue*. I am now living and quietly going crazy in Laie, Hawaii, which as you probably know, is a predominantly Mormon community. Your journal is very much appreciated here, not only by me but by many faculty members at the Church College of Hawaii, where I am teaching. Yours is an intelligent voice many of us are eager to listen and respond to. Let nothing silence that voice.

Steven Goldsberry
Laie, Hawaii

the real anti-mormon literature

The following letter was written to Samuel Taylor in regard to his widely popular NIGHT-FALL AT NAUVOO.

Dear Mr. Taylor:

For several months I have been going to write you on your style. I felt we had finally raised up a worthy answer to Fawn Brodie in yourself. However, your book, *Nightfall at Nauvoo* killed the prophet and did him worse than George Q. Cannon, who sterilized him. Surely you can do better than this. You erred in the same way as John C. Bennett in his tirade on Mormonism. It seems ridiculous that 15,000 Saints would follow the prophet through thick and thin as they did if he was really as you portrayed in this book. I still have confidence

in your writing and hope you could make Joseph live for us Mormons.

O. D. Perkes, M.D.
Afton, Wyoming

Samuel Taylor Responds

If you can cite any misstatement of fact in my book, *Nightfall at Nauvoo*, I will be happy to know of it.

Unfortunately, we Mormons have been fed on literary mythology that often has scant relationship to the truth. For example, the Church Information Service made a film on Nauvoo, and a scholar whom I rate the world's greatest expert on Nauvoo told me it contained 87 errors of fact. When you can be wrong 87 times in a half hour, you're really dedicated to mythology.

I know of no truth in our history that should harm anyone. However, I consider half-truth as extremely dangerous. And it is this suppression and manipulation of truth which is, in my opinion, the real anti-Mormon literature.

Sincerely,
Samuel W. Taylor

more news on quetzalcoatl

I would like to publicly thank Marden Clark for his kind and gracious letter in the last issue.

In the same issue, on the last page, I am incorrectly listed as being from Uruguay. Actually, I was born in Ecuador (as far from Uruguay as Oregon is from South Carolina), and I have lived in the USA all of my adult life. The error derives, I suppose, from the phonetic similarity between my name (which, by the way, is a Basque name) and that of the "Oriental Republic."

I do not approve of the editorial insertion of the words "more recent" in the first paragraph of my review of Dr. Cheesman's book (p. 92). Most *Dialogue* readers, including myself, are descended from the European invaders of America, so there is no real need for qualification.

With respect to Pratt de Perez's letter, allow me to modestly point out that I had already indicated the needed correction on the subject of Quetzalcoatl (my letter on this appeared in volume 7, No. 4). I am grateful for the support and confirmation of the point I made, and even more for the additional information, especially the names of the divine Quetzalcoatl's parents, Ometecuhtli and Omecihuatl. Besides the god, and the priest born in the year Ce Acatl (843 A.D.), there was a Toltec conqueror in the 11th century who invaded Yucatan, and a large indeterminate number of people who also appropriated the name.

Benjamin Urrutia
Provo, Utah