

LETTERS

A Kinder Word for Bureaucracy

While I have, for many years, considered the Church Building Division and its predecessor, the Building Committee, among the Church's less inspired parts, I must take issue with Dennis Lythgoe's (Winter 1982 issue) misstated claim that Max Weber saw bureaucratization of society pejoratively.

Weber defined bureaucracy in a rather neutral way as having the following elements: (1) division of labor in the organization, (2) a pyramidal authority structure, (3) position and role of individual members based on technical competence and normative values, (4) separation of ownership of the company from the worker, and (5) written rules governing operations. The emotion-laden definition Lythgoe presents ("excessive multiplication of bureaus," "complex procedures impede effective action," and "fixed routine without exercising intelligent judgement") were never part of Weber's definition, though they characterize the popular interpretation today. Weber viewed the bureaucratic pattern of impersonal appointment to office based on technical competence as an improvement over the earlier appointment by hereditary right or purchase of office.

Of course, bureaucracies have their problems, and better structures might be possible. For example, bureaucratic appointments sometimes fail to assure technical competence, either because selectivity goes awry or favoritism associated with friendship of family relations, which bureaucracy is supposed to override, still wins out. A more serious weakness is that the rationalism and impersonal aspects are so strong that unusual circumstances have dif-

ficulty receiving adequate attention, and people's emotions don't receive the attention they prefer.

These are the problems Lythgoe seems to have experienced.

Yes, there is a need for more attention to special environmental conditions and the affective aspects of the human condition in the way the Church Building Division operates. There is also great advantage in having a professional and knowledgeable staff to protect local bishops and congregations from costly mistakes.

M. P. Marchant
Provo, Utah

Disappearing Showers

Lythgoe (Winter 1982) can set aside his fear that the Church has begun discriminating against women by not providing showers for them. Our third phase has just been completed, and *neither* shower room is to be found. Lythgoe's experience in probing into the reason ("the Brethren prefer it that way") makes me wonder — is this entirely a cost-cutting measure, or is it partly for the sake of modesty, in line with the emphasis on the "one thing leads to another" idea?

Richard Pearson Smith
Westfield, N.J.

Impressed by LDS Women

A wife of one of my colleagues who is a rather orthodox Jewish young woman of thirty-five years of age and very intelligent has been reading *DIALOGUE*. She is pro-

foundly impressed with the articles by the women writers and eager to meet them. She is positive in her position that the intelligent LDS women will work out the best relationships to the current issues confronting American women today. She wishes to attend the next MHA meetings, and she probably will.

Garth N. Jones
Anchorage, Alaska

No Reconciliation

Steven H. Heath's article (Autumn 1982) "The Reconciliation of Faith and Science — Henry Eyring's Achievement" is, I submit, a false premise. Eyring's views on organic evolution are in contravention to the revealed word of God (scriptures.) Eyring, admittedly a brilliant chemist and scientist, achieved no such reconciliation in his lifetime. He kept his knowledge of the revealed truths of religion and his organic evolutionary views in separate compartments to "avoid resolving the obvious conflicts which would otherwise arise" as McConkie has stated.

First, let me make it crystal clear that what I have said and will say about Dr. Eyring has absolutely nothing to do with his character, which has been unimpeachable, as far as I know.

Those who side with Eyring's evolutionary views (and they are legion in the Church), give priority to human reasoning over revelation. The so-called scientific teachings concerning the age of the earth and the origin of man are in direct conflict with the simple and plain words of the Lord that have come through the scriptures. Actually, the spectacle of any Mormon scientist (Talmage, Widtsoe, Stokes, James, Jensen, etc.) adding God to the Lyell-Darwin mechanism as a prime mover is an anomaly — an utter impossibility. Lyell, Darwin, Spencer, Huxley would, of course, have none of it.

An organic evolution advocate worth his salt does not accept the biblical ac-

counts of the Fall, Adam and Eve, the Atonement, and the need of a Savior. The Bible is a complete myth to him and is so expressed by its foremost advocates. As Julian Huxley stated in 1859: "Darwin removed the whole idea of God as the creator of organisms from the sphere of rational discussion. Darwin pointed out that no supernatural designer was needed; since natural selection could account for any form of life there was no room for a supernatural agency in its evolution."

The whole program of organic evolution (natural selection, uniformitarianism, survival of the fittest) has come under serious question in recent years at the top level of investigative organic evolution, contrary to Dr. Eyring's views, absolutely leaves no room for Christ and the scriptures. You can accept one view or the other, but not both.

Professor Heath did a real service in his article by printing various letters of President Joseph Fielding Smith and Dr. Eyring. It affords the opportunity for the reader to make a choice between organic evolution and the gospel as expressed in their divergent views. The following statement from President Smith's *Man, His Origin and Destiny* is devastating to organic evolution:

We do have in the Church many members who do not have an abiding testimony, and are disturbed by philosophical theories in the Universities. Many of the theories are proclaimed with such positive finality that those weak in the faith are inclined to accept the deductions of these teachers, and think that the revelations must be wrong. We cannot accept the hypothesis of the scientific world which is in direct conflict with the Gospel. You cannot be a true member of the Church and reject Jesus Christ. You cannot be a faithful member and reject the scriptures (Standard Works) for those are the standards of our faith. If you accept them you cannot accept organic evolution, for they are diametrically opposed.

It is most interesting to note that President McKay selected President Smith as a

counselor in the First Presidency after his book was written; and, more important, the Lord chose him as his prophet after the book was written. The fact should give the organic evolutionists in the Church some serious moments of troublesome inquiry and contemplation—but probably won't!

The greater tragedy is not that the western world has bought the Lyell-Darwin explanation of earth history, but that most of the world has bought the Lyell-Darwin rejection of God. Therein lies the danger!

Julian R. Durham
Ogden, Utah

South Pacific Answer to Bureaucracy

Having been a ward clerk, executive secretary, son of a bishop, and government bureaucrat, I had a particular interest in the articles on Church administration in the Winter 1982 issue. Dennis Lythgoe's experiences in chapel building were especially familiar to me having peripherally participated in constructing or remodeling three ward buildings.

His account brought to mind an occurrence while I was a missionary in the South Pacific in the 1960s. The mission auditors discovered fifty dollars in the books of one of the districts with no indication which branch or account it belonged to. The mission presidency decided to have a contest among the branches of the district and award the money to the branch which did the most to improve and beautify its meetinghouse and grounds. A tiny branch won the competition and the fifty dollars was duly awarded. Imagine our surprise when, on our next visit to the branch a few weeks later, we discovered a brand new branch chapel! With fifty dollars the members had razed the thatched hut where they had previously met and replaced it with a frame building with a metal roof and crushed coral floor. They also had enough money left over for paint. So much for bureaucracy.

David M. Thomas
Chandler, Arizona

Cooling Fan

An avid DIALOGUE fan from the first issue, I found my enthusiasm cooling after a decade, as it seemed that DIALOGUE began to concentrate on scholarly rather than philosophical insights into the profound human problems within the Latter-day Saint community.

I was irked by the rambling, lengthy perusal of the Negro-priesthood problem which never really came to grips with the Prophet Joseph's revelations on the subject (twenty-year old compilation available on request). The poor perception of the Mormon missionary activity in east Germany under President Alfred C. Rees in pre-war Nazi Germany was annoying. (I was there.) The superficial story of Apostle John Taylor whose actions were, I feel, largely responsible for my grandfather's death, should or could have been expanded from the personal narrative to a far-reaching investigation of the ramification of such actions (and teachings) by Church authorities. ("Thou knowst not what argument thy life to thy neighbor's creed hath lent.")

I am distressed by the anti-intellectualism in the Church, and believe it axiomatic that you cannot bolster truth with lies (even well-intentioned ones) or with error (especially error from deliberate ignorance).

In the Spring 1982 issue, I thoroughly enjoyed Jan Shipp's article. We LDS are fortunate in being able to share her insights. The Hutchinson categorizing of Mormon attitudes toward the Bible was interesting. I think—to put it bluntly—that Mormons are biblical ignoramuses. In consequence, they are often literary ignoramuses also, since much great literature cannot be fully appreciated without knowledge of the Bible. They are also linguistic ignoramuses, and have no idea of the problems and pitfalls inherent in any translation, no matter how good the translator, and they definitely cannot comprehend the compounding of difficulty engendered by Jesus speaking

Aramaic, which the apostles (and others) rendered into Greek, which was translated into the seventeenth-century English, and is now being perceived in the twentieth-century English of the nonlinguistic Church authority. The Prophet Joseph Smith sensed the need to savor the scriptures in the original tongue when he established the classes in Hebrew in Kirtland in 1835.

Let's keep a good dialogue going, for a one-way flow of ideas results in intellectual disaster for all concerned.

Lew W. Wallace
San Gabriel, California

The Place of DIALOGUE

The message and mission of DIALOGUE is different from the message of *Ensign* and other periodicals. Each has its purpose and place. Church members who wish to have a broad background of information should read both.

Murray C. Harper
Lewiston, Idaho

Dialogue a Strength

Thank you, editors, for a stimulating, marvelous publication. Contrary to many DIALOGUE-doubters, some of whom admittedly have never read the journal, DIALOGUE has strengthened my Mormonism.

Ingrid Rees
Omaha, Nebraska

No Comment from President McKay

As I reviewed with interest Steven Heath's article on the evolution issue (Autumn 1982), I recalled a personal experience with Joseph Fielding Smith when he was president of the Quorum of the Twelve.

During the summer of 1961, I spent a week in the Church's Salt Lake City Missionary Home before a mission to West Germany. President Joseph Fielding Smith

customarily spoke to the missionaries once during that week of intensive missionary preparation.

President Smith had been a theological hero of mine so I was delighted that he would address our group. After giving his talk, he extended an open invitation to visit him in his office should we have any further doctrinal questions.

With the questioning mind of a nineteen-year-old and eager to meet President Smith personally, I made an appointment to talk to him about the position on evolution reflected in his book, *Man, His Origin and Destiny*. Having recently completed two years at BYU including a geology class, I was interested in knowing the Church's "official" position on the possibility of a God-directed evolutionary process. After all, I was being sent out as a missionary to represent the Church.

I explained to President Smith that our geology professor had given us a photocopy of a letter to a Mormon scientist in Salt Lake City signed by David O. McKay, then president of the Church, dated 15 February 1957 and explaining that on the subject of organic evolution the Church had officially taken no position. *Man, His Origin and Destiny* was not published by the Church and was not approved by the Church but contained expressions of the author's views for which he alone was responsible.

I was inquiring whether the antievolution teachings in President Smith's book were "official" doctrine that we as missionaries should represent or was the issue still open as President David O. McKay's letter would indicate? In other words, was it his opinion or Church doctrine?

I mentioned to President Smith that many of the Mormon scientists felt that significant evidence supporting some kind of evolutionary process could not be overlooked and that a divinely directed evolutionary process (at least in part) should not be eliminated as a possibility until more was revealed from the Church's First Presidency as well as more discovered from scientific findings.

He became a little irritated with my insistence about the Church's official position and asserted that he found the theory of organic evolution generally inconsistent with gospel doctrine. Then I asked directly, "If evolution is indeed contrary to the gospel and official doctrine, why don't you talk to President McKay about it?" His response was most interesting: "President McKay won't talk with me about it."

Robert F. Bohn
Danville, California

Nibley Defended

In his review (Winter 1982) of Dr. Hugh Nibley's *Abraham in Egypt*, Eric Jay Olson makes several general statements, but the only (ergo probably the worst and greatest) specific error he can find in the whole book is that on page 5 the name *Joseph* appears where *Jacob* should. This slip is an easy one to make, like saying *Elijah* for *Elisha* or vice versa. It is a small and inconsequential error, no matter how loudly Olson proclaims it is an

enormous and tremendous one that invalidates the whole book. Since perhaps he could find no others, I offer him two: *Ikhanton* for *Ikhnaton* (p. 113) and *statutes* for *statues* (p. 67). Like Joseph-for-Jacob, these are obvious typos. I could not find any substantial or important errors, any more than Brother Olson who perhaps should win an award for making the biggest mountain out of the smallest molehill.

Benjamin Urrutia
Salt Lake City, Utah

CORRECTION

In David John Buerger's article, "The Fulness of the Priesthood': The Second Anointing in Latter-day Saint Theology and Practice" (Spring 1983), p. 35, n. 88, a copy of excerpts from the First Presidency Letters is in Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, rather than the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, as cited.