

LETTERS

Broader than Brazil

Mark Grover (“Religious Accommodation in the Land of Racial Democracy: Mormon Priesthood and Black Brazilians,” Autumn 1984) has given us yet another new perspective on the seemingly unending ramifications of Mormonism’s late “Negro doctrine.” This particular perspective, however, has added significance in view of the apparent role played ultimately by the Brazilian Temple in the decision to terminate the priesthood ban. We definitely needed to know more about the Mormon racial experience in Brazil.

To some extent, however, I think the concentration on Brazilian sources has led to the impression that a number of problems relating to blacks in Brazil were unique. In fact, much of the experience in Brazil was only quantitatively different from that elsewhere, and the Church response in Brazil should probably be understood in this larger context.

Prior to and concomitant with its problems in Brazil, the Church wrestled with the question of racial identification in South Africa, the South Pacific, and the United States. As early as the turn of the century, Church leaders were grappling with problems relating to physically inapparent African ancestry, including at least one situation where a patriarchal blessing assigned someone of “Negro blood” to the “lineage of Ephraim” (Council Minutes, 11 March 1900). South African mission presidents early in the century studiously — but not altogether successfully — avoided tracting areas where those of ambiguous or uncertain ancestry were concentrated. Related concern was early voiced in First Presidency correspondence concerning Fiji,

Tonga, and Hawaii. As Grover has made clear, Church leaders — and especially J. Reuben Clark — indeed did worry over the priesthood question when missionary work was begun in Brazil. But in large measure, this was because the Church previously had been unable to avoid similar problems elsewhere.

Sure enough, there were problems in Brazil, and the Church tended to respond to these problems much as it had elsewhere. The question of the status of those of African ancestry who had “passed over” into whiteness was addressed and resolved at least theoretically and doctrinally at the turn of the century with a First Presidency decision that it mattered not “how remote” the African ancestry (Richards, c1906). And in a perverse sort of way, this view was not only in conformity with the American view of things but also was the only logical application of a restriction applicable to the *descendants* of Cain.

Unfortunately this policy did not solve all the practical problems — in Brazil or elsewhere. What was needed was something really conclusive. As early as 1947, a Central States Mission president confronting the problem wrote the First Presidency looking for just such an infallible key — a lab “test for colored blood” to which the First Presidency replied that they “assume there has been none yet discovered” (First Presidency to Brown). (But the idea appealed to Clark who, in fairness, was dismayed by the arbitrary judgments which had to govern actual church practice.) The Presidency advised the mission president that “people in the South have this problem to meet all the time in a practical way, and we assume that as a practical matter the people there

should be able to determine whether or not the [individual] in question has colored blood. Normally the dark skin and kinky hair would indicate but one thing. As you probably know,"— they continued, apropos Grover's Brazilian case study — "the races are badly mixed in Brazil, and no color line is drawn among the mass of the people. The result is, as the reports declare, that a great part of the population of Brazil is colored" (First Presidency to Brown).

With neither pedigree nor blood tests to resolve things, what was needed were at least a few good rules of thumb — as it were — such as the suggested dark skin and kinky hair. Brazilian missionaries have told me that in the late sixties everyone had his own surefire system for determining who had what was termed "the blood." Grover lists some of these in general terms, such as color of skin, eyes and hair, shape of nose or face, and texture of hair. Another popular system was to look for a line demarcating a light palm from a darker back side of the hand. Dark-to-dark meant an Indian; light-to-dark implied "the blood." So-called tell-tale clues became institutionalized by their symbolic use as "discreet" missionary signals that a potential or actual investigator was not a good candidate for further discussion — signals such as pressing in on the nose or running a finger along the "line" on the hand.

Unfortunately, however easy it was to rationalize this in Brazil, back in Fiji there were dark skinned, "kinky haired" members who were *not* considered of "Negro descent." The logical difficulties of the Church's policy was not lost on Mormon leaders, but remedial options were not much better. The whole notion of discrimination based on lineage or genealogy alone was reexamined by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve more than once in the 1940s — specifically because this approach failed when it was needed most. Communities with many mixed marriages potentially involving uncertain — and possibly suspect — racial lineages were the least likely to have reliable

genealogical data. But for a variety of doctrinal reasons the traditional approach was in every instance reaffirmed, in the extreme leading to a ruling against "priesthood blessings" in a case involving "one thirty-second of negro blood" (Council Minutes, 12 Aug. 1947). (It's impossible to resist noting that at this same time 97 percent caffeine-free coffee was being adjudged sufficiently "pure" to be acceptable to the Word of Wisdom.)

With the lineage doctrine re- and reaffirmed, both South African and Brazilian problems were solved for a time by requiring potential converts to prove genealogically they were pure by tracing their ancestry out of the country. Americans, in general blissfully ignorant that a stray Fijian — for example — in a North or South American congregation would have seriously undermined their more traditional approach, continued to turn where possible to anthropological stereotypes to resolve both American and Brazilian cases. Pacific islanders could be handled by neither of these simple techniques — and ultimately the Fijians were simply reassigned back into the cursed lineage (this in 1953) after a three-decade reprieve from an earlier policy. This tidied things up a little. President Clark meanwhile pressed his search for a blood test.

One simple, if very limited, solution was to insure that such problems be avoided in advance. Great care thus was taken in 1947 to learn ahead of time if there were "groups of pure white blood in the rural sections of Cuba" before opening a mission there, and if such pure folk were "maintaining segregation from the Negroes" (Meeks to Nelson). Even this belated effort backfired, for not only were there no "pure" groups, but the sociologist consulted responded indignantly to the whole thrust of the question and eventually published the first real article on Mormon racism to appear in a national publication (Nelson to Meeks, Nelson to Smith; Nelson 1952).

Ultimately a less legalistic and perhaps more compassionate view among the

Church leadership somewhat diffused the issue. In 1954, as Grover noted, the genealogical burden of proof was removed in both South Africa and — theoretically — Brazil. The following year Fijians were rehabilitated back out of the cursed lineage once again. Within the next decade, the patriarchal-blessing circumvention had been used both intentionally and unintentionally in the United States as well as in Brazil. Similarly, the overriding inspired judgment of local priesthood leaders was invoked in exceptional cases in the South Pacific and the United States to the same end as it later was in Brazil.

Eventually as part of this general liberalization it was even decided in 1963 to open a mission in Nigeria (where, presumably, there would have been no ambiguity of lineage). This plan was killed by Nigerian indignation at the full range of Mormon racial teachings as published in John J. Stewart's book on *Mormonism and the Negro*. It is interesting therefore but again not unexpected to learn from Grover's fine research that language essentially identical to Stewart's was omitted from Joseph Fielding Smith's *Way to Perfection* when it was published in Portuguese for the Brazilians just a few months after the Nigerian problems.

What I wish to suggest with these brief comments is that what Grover has described for us was not an isolated, nor even necessarily a sentinel experience in Mormon racial history. Rather it is a superb illustration of the problems repeatedly faced by the Church in its efforts to administer a scientifically anachronistic nineteenth-century policy in an increasingly international twentieth-century Church.

Lester Bush
Gaithersburg, Maryland

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Measures of Subservience

Having recently finished *Neither White nor Black*, sold through DIALOGUE, I would like to comment about "The Fading of the Pharaohs' Curse: . . ." by Armand L. Mauss.

Extremely well written, this article was informative and interesting, yet in its last paragraph, it failed to reach the shore.

The author suggests that we must be cautious "in what we believe and teach" to avoid "digesting dubious doctrine." He then slips back to the safety of being an apologetic observer or an impartial umpire (which morally he cannot be). It appears he lacked the courage to invoke the moral responsibility we have, individually and collectively, to demand accountability of those who give direction.

We should be appalled that, individually and collectively, (with, I am sure, some maverick exceptions), we sat in shameful silence induced by fearful respect of authority, following the directives of culture-bound managers while this "dubious doctrine" evolved through Mauss's "scale of authenticity." How contemptible that accountability has increasingly been seen as a one-way street. I do not agree with Mauss that we should not feel shame. We participated in the practical canonization of a demeaning and dehumanizing "doctrine" because leaders did not question the policy and followers did not question them.

I see the passing of time creating de facto canonization in other matters because of this same pattern of authoritarianism and dependence:

— Women and the priesthood. How much support of this prohibition originates in the teachings of Christ and how much is the result of thousands of years of culturally induced patriarchal tradition? There is no question that this practice is long established. But is it well established? Its antiquity does not relieve us of our duty to question its appropriateness. We no longer put the adulteress to death by stoning or banish all menstruating women to the outer-city walls.

— Forbidding parents from witnessing the marriages of their children, simply because they do not conform to an arbitrary interpretation of “worthiness.”

— The absence of a detailed annual financial statement.

May I suggest that the passivity of some members in regards to membership work is that they feel uncomfortable with some of what they see within the Church? That is not to say they do not love the Church or appreciate their membership. Nor is it a negative reflection of their testimony of Christ or of the Restoration. I think it is urgent to come to grips with the imagined conflict between sustaining and questioning. In the minds of many Mormons, you must choose between these two practices. In fact, the first should not be requested until the second has been granted—and not only at the highest levels.

It seems to me that there is a greater emphasis placed on obedience to leaders than to the Christian principles upon which our salvation depends. Why else would a temple-recommend interviewer ask about supporting leaders but not about accepting Christ as our personal Savior? As a result, these questions may well measure subservience rather than Christian worthiness.

Roger H. Morrison
Aylmer, Quebec

Soviet “Apologist”

Often it is difficult to distinguish between real ignorance and naivete, especially when it comes to understanding science, technology, nuclear weapons, and military affairs. Kent Robson (Winter 1984) is a different case: he is a professor of philosophy and languages, and he takes annual tours to the Soviet Union. One expects more. But even a cursory reading shows he is out of his field—more, he is a Soviet apologist. There is much wrong with his article; I can only scratch the surface.

Robson recommends *Scientific American*, but its editors are devoted to anti-defense and political advocacy of unilateral disarmament, therefore, it is a far from reliable source (Letters, *Commentary*, May and Sept. 1984, p. 10).

“Nuclear winter” is a *tour de force* in scientific speculation which Robson takes as factual and proven. The National Research Council (“The Effects on the Atmosphere of a Major Nuclear Exchange,” Washington, D.C., 1984), and the Defense Department (“The Potential Effects of Nuclear War on the Climate,” *Congressional Record*, 28 March 1985, S3729–34) emphasize the uncertainties of the data in the hypothesis.

Robson uses Swedish World Health Organization predictions of 1.1 billion deaths in a nuclear exchange. If every person in the USSR, Europe and North America were killed outright, it would not total 1.1 billion; therefore, to arrive at this huge figure, the total world megatonnage is evenly distributed in “nuclear winter” over the most densely populated portions of earth, including those in the southern hemisphere—a ridiculous assumption. Robson states (p. 55) that 2.2 billion people could be killed in a 5,000-megaton exchange but then concludes that a nuclear “exchange has the capability of virtually destroying humankind” (pp. 55, 57). A National Academy of Sciences study of a hypothetical 10,000-megaton war specifically concluded that both the biosphere and humans

would survive (“Long-term Worldwide Effects of Multiple Nuclear-Weapons Detonation,” Washington, D.C., 1975).

The author equates tons of explosives expended with the numbers of civilians killed in two World Wars (p. 55). Robson’s education is spotty. Most civilian deaths had little to do with explosives. The British blockade of Germany, 1914–18, caused starvation of 800,000, mostly women and children, and genocide of other types was practiced by both sides (F.J.P. Veale, *Advance to Barbarism*, [New York: Devin-Adair, 1968]; Nikolai Tolstoy, *Stalin’s Secret War*, [New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1981]).

The author uses Finland as an example of the Soviet Union’s good neighbor policy, or “logic of deterrence,” in which “Finland has a policy of neutrality with their next-door neighbor.” How else could Finland act considering the aggressive bully next door, with a history of invasion and untold suffering among the people of that hapless nation? He could just as easily use Afghanistan or any of the dozens of other nations that the Soviet Union has taken over since 1917. This comparison insults the reader’s intelligence.

Robson states: “There is a strong tendency to believe that the [nuclear] issue is so big and complex that only scientists or government officials . . . could truly understand the arms race” (p. 57). Lumping scientists and officials together in this way is ludicrous, suggesting the author has no comprehension about science.

Immediately before this, the author demonstrates he does not know the difference between “weapons” and “weapon delivery systems” (p. 57). He is unaware that more than five nations now have a nuclear capability (p. 57).

The author states that the USSR has “a very small bomber force,” like the B-52 (p. 56). However, his own reference, *Soviet Military Power*, shows that in 1984 the USSR had 400 such aircraft which could reach the U.S. vs. 325 with this capability for the U.S. Our aircraft are mostly the

ancient B-52s, with a subsonic speed of 580 knots, compared to USSR aircraft, such as the Backfire and Blackjack, which attain speeds of 1,200 knots. The Backfire, with a range of 8900 km. can deliver 30 per cent of the huge Soviet megatonnage, making it a major second strike force—a significantly different conclusion than Robson’s.

He believes the B-52 is still usable (p. 56) but says nothing about the illegal production of the Soviet intercontinental Backfire bomber. He is wrong when he tells us that “radar guidance” or simple countermeasures give the B-52 stealth qualities; these help, but subtle changes in aircraft architecture—airframe and engines—produce reduced radar return. Indeed, the B-1B has one-tenth the radar cross-section of the B-52 (*Aerospace America*, Nov. 1984, p. 80).

A further lack of objectivity is his statement that the U.S. record of cheating in arms control is as bad as the USSR’s. Nothing could be further from the truth, as any competent researcher, using readily available sources, can easily verify. (See Presidential General Advisory Commission on Arms Control and Disarmament, *A Quarter Century of Soviet Compliance Practices Under Arms Control Commitments: 1958–1983* [Washington, D.C., 1984]; *Congressional Record*, 25 Feb. 1985, pp. S2070–89, 28 Feb., pp. S2363–70, and 8 May, pp. S5589–91).

The reader ought to be aware that Robson is strongly biased toward the Soviet Union; there is not a single pro-U.S. statement in his article. He leaves the impression that it is the United States, instead of the USSR, which is most likely to initiate a first strike. Historically, the U.S. has never attacked or started a war by surprise, whereas this is accepted Soviet military doctrine (H. S. and W. F. Scott, *The Soviet Art of War* [Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1982], pp. 49, 53, 196, 277). Furthermore, Edward Pipes (*Survival is Not Enough*, [New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984]) reports an 1898 study by a group of Russian military specialists concluding that in the

thirty-eight wars which it had waged since 1700, Russia fought only two defense wars; the other thirty-six were offensive. The record for this century continues this trend: the Soviet Union was attacked only once — by Germany in World War II. In World War I the USSR attacked Germany. Soviet offensive wars include the attack on all Eastern European countries in World War II; four post-war military suppressions of uprisings in Eastern Europe, the invasion of Afghanistan, the direct involvement in Korea and Angola.

The USSR concern for security and fear of the U.S. which Robson mentions, based upon personal observations, can be best explained by Soviet General Alexei Yesoshev, who argued that Soviet leaders feared American "aggression" and cited the efforts to break the "monolithic unity" of Soviet society, the "subversive" campaign for human rights, the "slander" of the nationalistic policies of the CPSU, and the encouragement of "religious fanaticism" (Alex Alexiev, "What Arms Control Can't Do," *Register*, (Santa Ana, Calif., 13 Jan. 1985). These can hardly be placed in the category of "first strike."

The U.S. now has 8,000 fewer weapons and a megatonnage 60 percent smaller than in the 1960s. Although the U.S. has abided by its treaties, including the unratified SALT II, the Soviets increased their ICBM forces to a numerical advantage of 4 to 1 — 6 to 1 considering accuracy and megatonnage advantage. They have been working on an ABM defense since 1967; and in January 1985, we learned they will deploy a full-scale, nationwide ABM system in ten years — in clear violation of the treaty with us (*Congressional Record*, 8 May 1985, pp. S5589-91). In 1982, Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, then Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, reported that ballistic missile defenses were "not only desirable, but inevitable" (Maj. Gen. Richard Larkin, Address, Third National Intelligence Symposium, Naples, Fla., 27 Feb. 1984). In short, the Soviets use arms

negotiations to prevent the U.S. from building a ballistic missile defense.

The Defense Intelligence Agency reported (*Soviet Military Space Doctrine*, Dec. 1984; AP 5 Dec. 1984) that the USSR intention in space is two-fold: to acquire military superiority in outer space for both offensive and defense purposes and to fight a war in space and in support of ground operations. The propaganda war being waged by them and their apologists is that their outer space activities are purely "peaceful." Therefore, any U.S. attempt to protect themselves in space should be stopped. This is Robson's approach.

He does not support the *potential* means of protecting American lives from a Soviet first strike. The U.S. lacks an ABM system. The USSR has a widespread civil defense system (we don't) and strong air defense systems protecting their cities (we don't). A. M. Din, writing in the respected British publication *International Defense Review*, No. 1, 1985, p. 34, concluded that "to eliminate the threat of large-scale nuclear destruction, it is necessary to develop 'defensive' defense, which takes into account legitimate national security interests but does not represent a massive offensive capability." President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) goal was explicit: "To render nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete."

The final example is nuclear freeze. Alex Alexiev, with the National Security Division of the Rand Corporation, pointed out that arms control treaties, starting in 1922, are dismal failures and that there is little evidence that arms control significantly circumscribes the arms race ("What Arms Control . . ."). The Soviets have never permitted "live and let live." Herman Kahn in *Thinking About the Unthinkable in the 1980s* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985) considers the nuclear freeze a "nonissue" and provides many reasons for this conclusion (pp. 26, 208).

Robson's solution for defusing the nuclear dilemma is for the U.S. to sign agree-

ments and for Americans to study the Soviets so we can gain a "better estimation of their intentions and be more accurate and responsible" (p. 60). I submit that travel tours to the USSR in no way provide an understanding of the Kremlin and that Robson deludes himself if he believes that his "man on the street" contacts result in any real understanding of the Soviet power structure and its intentions.

Richard D. Terry
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Blaise-Nonsense

One has to wonder to whom Pierre Blaise (Winter 1984) has been listening when he makes his, by his own admission, "largely impressionistic" evaluations of Mormon attitudes toward war and peace. He concludes that Latter-day Saints have a "mind set" that "embraces a set of war-like attitudes that favor military solutions" but which is "nonchalant toward peace." Utter nonsense!

How does he reason that way? One can almost sympathize with the frustration he must feel while suffering from the paranoia of the radical left. In this case, the symptom is a suspicious, almost solitary view that unscrupulous anti-intellectual, pro-business, conservative politicians have somehow managed to seduce most Mormons — and almost everyone else for that matter — into opting for a pro-war mentality. But give him credit. He does point out that the LDS Church has a strated "theology" for peace. All can agree to that!

Blaise then goes on to produce a political tract that chastizes at length the behavior of the United States in foreign affairs, among other things. He recites a long list of "sins" committed in the interest of U.S. imperialism. The charges are familiar enough. For years they have been heard from the lips of people like Jane Fonda, Fidel Castro, and Andrei Gromyko.

U.S. foreign policy has had, over the years, its failures. The Vietnam War, for instance, was a disaster. But there have

been successes too. Even Blaise mentions the "equitable" and "ethical" success of the Marshall Plan and the Japanese peace treaty.

In a free society, honest people continue to debate the issues. It is likely that the individual Latter-day Saint is more astute and better-informed on the issues than Blaise is free to admit. It follows that there is no "Mormon attitude" toward war and peace, but rather a diversity of opinion on which policies should be pursued in the national interest.

To give equal space, DIALOGUE might want to solicit an essay from Cleon Skousen on the same subject.

Kenneth Taylor
Burbank, California

True Defenders of the Faith

Quinn's essay (Spring 1985) is disturbing, fascinating and provocative. It raises to an even higher pitch the differences between the expressions of those we are asked to sustain (not only as prophets, seers and revelators but as experts in every field of human endeavor) and the truth.

It puts a great burden on the believer when there are discrepancies between what they have been taught as truth by acknowledged ecclesiastical leaders and the common ordinary garden variety of truth discovered by our own senses. The choice between the two kinds of truth will obviously create discomfort, if not distrust. When a testator's credibility is diminished by the discrepancies between his recital of events and those things that we know of our own experience, the message of the testator is clouded. I am sure that is why Elder S. Dilworth Young told the Saints in my Oakland-Berkeley Stake conference, 16 Aug. 1969, that they have the burden of proving the truth of what they heard, regardless of its source. *Time Magazine* is not my favorite authority for fact. Neither is *The Ensign*. Neither is DIALOGUE for that matter, but I feel I have a better grasp on both fact and faith by reading all three.

Those who would have had me believe that the Adam-God matter was the result of a sloppy reporter have little credibility compared to the facts documented by some of your earlier contributors that the concept was the subject of intense and profound exploration by many of the brethren over a period of years. That loss of credibility makes me uncomfortable because I want to believe; it is much more comfortable. But it is much easier to believe if I do not always have to run everything I hear through the hard tests of doubt.

It has been and still is popular to challenge the historian. I regret this, for it seems to me that historians do a great service. For example, Mormon-baiters can't have much fun anymore over the Mountain Meadow Massacre. Juanita Brooks, by her reporting, took all the fire out of that matter. Those who denied or would hide those events weakened only their own credibility but gave comfort to those who wanted to fault the work and the workers.

Good historians — and intellectuals in the service of the faith — cannot be identified before the fact, but they are the true defenders of the faith and of the faithful. As long as the custodians of the records allow free access to the facts, most of the harm will be in the minds of those who have sought to manipulate the facts.

Quinn has barely scratched the surface in identifying the effects of the deceit of those who were in high places, both in 1890 and in 1904. I regret that I cannot now read some writers nor listen to some speakers without wanting to verify and prove. And how can I separate my lack of respect in those matters from my attitude about what they say of the present?

I do believe. I do not need every jot and tittle proved. But there is an estrangement. I want to be trusting and I cannot. I think I am the worse for it and resentful of those who caused it, though I love them for their good works, for their good words, and for their devotion to His work.

Thank you for your work and your efforts and those of your contributors which

allow us to examine ourselves and our place. I am convinced that while the results may make some uncomfortable, it is, long term and short, a necessary part of our growth and development.

William L. Knecht
Oakland, California

Doctrine by Consensus?

I'm intrigued by Richard Pearson Smith's letter (Autumn 1984) which states that, since Elder McConkie taught his views on evolution for some thirty years, he probably had "ample opportunity to find out if any of the General Authorities disagree with him." Smith finds it "hard to believe that [McConkie] would contradict the views of any of them in the *Ensign*."

Whether Elder McConkie went about the Church Administration Building seeking consensus is unknown, but there is ample evidence that several living and deceased General Authorities disagreed with him on various issues. Also, in spite of individual opinions, the First Presidency has left the matter of evolution open.

Further, President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., as a counselor in the First Presidency, reminded us that opinions have value so long as we remember this: "When any man, except the President of the Church, undertakes to proclaim one unsettled doctrine, as among two or more doctrines in dispute, as the settled doctrine of the Church, we may know that he is not 'moved upon by the Holy Ghost,' unless he is acting under the direction and by the authority of the President." ("When are the Writings or Sermons of Church Leaders Entitled to the Claim of Scripture?", J. Reuben Clark, Jr., 7 July 1954, to Seminary and Institute teachers assembled at BYU; *Church News*, 31 July 1954, p. 2.)

This differs considerably from Smith's apparent view that doctrinal questions can be put to rest through *Ensign* articles written by individual members of the Quorum of the Twelve, with the presumption of agreement by other authorities. Even if

such agreement were likely, President Clark tells us clearly that a consensus of General Authorities does not speak for the President of the Church. And as recently as 1976, President Kimball left the matter of evolution open (*Ensign*, March 1976, 72).

Interestingly, President Clark spoke that summer just nine days after Elder McConkie's father-in-law, Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, had addressed the same group on his own anti-evolution views (Speech, 28 June 1954, *Church News*, 24 July 1954).

Ron Woods
Provo, Utah

Greater Realities?

Michael Quinn's opus on post-Manifesto polygamy (Spring 1985) was a prodigious effort by a bright mind! But although many contradictions, ambiguities, and misstatements by leaders are cited, Quinn may ignore greater realities.

Mechanically and technically the piece is excellent. So far as understanding historical process and comprehending possible celestial modus operandi, I am reminded of a Hollywood "western town," a mock-up, a one-dimensional facade.

Quinn emphasizes his own perspective throughout: A revelation has President Woodruff "painted in a corner." "Splits" appear in the First Presidency. Leaders' messages are "muddy." Woodruff suffers in his "cruel dilemma." Millions view the post-Manifesto era with "inescapable melancholy." Prophets were guilty of things that don't strictly "conform to our definition of veracity." This language emphasizes Quinn's thrust and ignores the realities that sometimes require violation of inferior laws. Adam and Eve broke a law to fulfill a law. God told Abraham to lie to Pharaoh. Nephi killed a helpless man and tricked Zoram to get the plates. Abraham was commanded to kill his choice son as a frightening test. Jacob and Rebecca lied to Isaac for the promised birthright. The rabbis called Jesus a lawbreaker when his

disciples garnered food in the fields on the Sabbath.

In some cases prophets are empowered to alter former rulings and conditions. President Kimball wrestled with the ban on blacks holding the priesthood. God answered his faith and the needs of the situation with a new revelation. Moses, on Mount Sinai, persuaded God to rescind his vow to slay the Israelites.

Socio-religious patterns and institutions have not remained uniform. Paul and Peter argued over gentile converts and circumcision. In the nineteenth century, men were allowed high positions who did not observe the Word of Wisdom. The United Order was tried at different times, in different ways, and in different places. At one time the Church had its own army. The ancient Church not only allowed slavery but Paul encouraged the slaves to be good ones. Who has the capability to determine just what was in the hearts and minds of modern Church leaders in those tumultuous and confusing times? If they were God's servants in 1880, I can accept them as such in 1890 or 1904.

As to post-Manifesto offspring and descendents, the quality of the lives of those I knew speaks for itself without reference to their parents' marriages. One descendent, a schoolmate, was a campus leader. She and her family now have twelve university degrees. Another descendent was president of one of America's five largest universities. One was a leading California businessman, a widely respected millionaire. Another was a widely published author who sold at least one successful screen play. Another was a national champion who went to the Olympics. The only Mormon four-star general was raised in a post-Manifesto household. His divorced mother married a polygamist and the boy took his foster father's name.

Quinn cites questionable marriages performed in foreign countries and on the high seas, also some marriages that clearly violated temporal law. But to what extent God condemned, favored, or tolerated all

these marriages, I don't think Quinn will really know until he gets to interrogate Wilford Woodruff, George Q. Cannon, Joseph F. Smith, Francis M. Lyman, and John Henry Smith. Or until they interrogate him.

Adrian Cannon
West Valley City, Utah

Quinn Responds

I find myself in the curious position of agreeing with nearly everything in Adrian Cannon's letter, apparently intended by him as a criticism of my point of view. In my article on page 19 I quoted Joseph Smith concerning the supremacy of God's command over any of man's ethical assumptions. I had not wanted to do special pleading in the article and felt that the emphasis in the introduction would supply the sufficient context for what happened between 1890 and 1904.

Adrian Cannon has not been the only one who raised the kind of objection voiced in the first part of his letter. Therefore,

I can say that my great regret about the article is that I did not more clearly or emphatically affirm the context in which plural marriage after the Manifesto must be understood.

What the prophets did concerning plural marriage after 1890 was good, in my view, because they responded to the requirements of God's revelation. What the prophets said concerning plural marriage after the Manifesto that conflicted with what they were doing was God's truth. Man's truth and ethics must break upon the rock of God's truth and ethics, if there is a conflict between them. But what was said and done by authority concerning plural marriage from 1890 to 1904 did not diminish the discomfort or the confusion that many Church leaders and members experienced.

My article tried to emphasize both the theological and human dimensions, and my concluding comments were directed to those who might only see the latter.

D. Michael Quinn
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EVANS BIOGRAPHY AWARD

December 31 is the deadline for submitting manuscripts in competition for the David Woolley Evans and Beatrice Cannon Evans Biography Award. This \$10,000 prize is awarded annually to the book or books judged to be the best biography about a person who lived in the Utah region or had a significant impact upon it. Candidate manuscripts should be sent to Dr. Ted J. Warner, History Department, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602.

First recipient of the prize was Leonard J. Arrington for *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Knopf, 1984). This year's prize went to the authors of two books: Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery for *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith, Prophet's Wife, "Elect Lady," Polygamy's Foe, 1804-1879* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1985) and Richard L. Bushman for *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984).