

Letters to the Editors

Dear Sirs:

This is to acknowledge with gratitude the receipt of your letter of December 6. The honor accorded me* I consider a great one indeed, the more so as I reflect on the many worthy writings to appear in *Dialogue* during the past year. I appreciate the intent of the *Dialogue* prizes, and assure you that the recognition accorded me at this time is encouraging and sustaining.

As I look back over the first six years of the publication of *Dialogue* I am astonished at the magnitude of the accomplishment. The ups and downs of the journal I know only in a general way, but I know full well the sacrificial dedication that is behind such an accomplishment. I pay tribute to all those with both the vision and the perseverance to pull it off. And I might add that *Dialogue* has meant a great deal to me personally, who am not a member of the LDS community. In part because of this journal I have developed a deep appreciation and compassion for that community, its traditions, hopes, and perplexities. May *Dialogue* continue, as it has begun, in the mode of sensitive service to fellows which is such a meaningful part of the Mormon Way.

Robert Flanders
Department of History
Southwest Missouri State College
Springfield, Missouri

*First prize for Social Literature in the Third Annual Dialogue Prizes Competition.

Dear Sir:

There are few stranger commentaries on the tragic idealism of many Mormons than these few lines from a letter of Whittaker Chambers, dated January 1956:

About half the packages that reach this house remain unopened because, after a

while, I got tired of finding that they almost always contained the *Book of Mormon*. So we have all taken just to filing them anywhere. "Another *Book of Mormon* for you," Esther will say. "Aren't you going to open it?"

(Recently published in *Odyssey of a Friend: the letters of Whittaker Chambers to William F. Buckley Jr.*, p. 118.) I can't help wondering how many other "great Americans" have been so deluged.

Carl E. Pletsch
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Sirs:

I've been away to Southeast Asia for a year and have gotten behind in my subscription. I desire to have this subscription begin with Vol. VI, No. 1. The way I hear it you folks are a little behind in getting the issues out, but never mind, give me what you've got beginning with Vol. VI. I hope this tardiness in publishing the issues does not indicate that *Dialogue* is in trouble and about to fold. *Dialogue* has been an important part of my life for these past 5 years. In fact many of the articles have been inspiring, testimony building and influencing. A few of the articles have been influential enough to change my pattern of living for the better. Of all the tools that I use to deepen my faith, *Dialogue* ranks fairly high; higher even than Sacrament Meeting. I eagerly consume each issue and savor each piece of meat that gives me strength. Did you ever wonder if your journal was having any effect on anyone, fulfilling a need? Well, it is. I suppose there are many like me who consider *Dialogue* a boon, an important aspect of their lives. So, thank you for your efforts. — may your good work continue.

Steve Orton
Goldsboro, N.C.

Dear Sirs:

Your journal is far from some trash that's expendable.

The joys we've received from the reading stupendable.

Discussions of plight with financing commendable

And our continuous subscription has not been pretendable.

But your mailings of late are plain undependable

Causing us to guess our subscriptions expendable.

Numbers three and four of Vol. five came on time.

And the contents of each was with taste and sublime.

Your flyer on women expectations refine
And we knew that the quality would continue its climb.

Our vigil for six (one and two) still takes time

And we hope we weren't slighted by outright design.

Alas all our neighbors have now been alerted
On women in church from the home fires diverted.

But we in our ignorance overlooked and now slighted

Cannot argue cause with no knowledge provided.

The fashionable stands have for us been diverted

And we're left to guess. — were the ladies perverted?

Look over your records and they'll assuredly show

Our check you received, cashed and put in the flow.

The gal in the mail room surely won't have to go

Just because she missed us two issues in a row.

So fix up the problem and send us some mo
Of that original Gospel to help make us grow.

Richard and Janice Keeler
Logan, Utah

Dear Sirs:

As a Relief Society president, let me express my thanks and pleasure in your women's issue. It was used as a substitute when the social relations teacher became ill moments before a lesson and was resource ma-

terial for a delightful skit honoring the first women's lib organized in 1842 by Joseph Smith.

Personally I appreciated seeing the Mormon woman as I seem to see her today — complex because of the variety of demands made on her in world wide communities, and various because of the many new converts with such different backgrounds. The gentle humor invited a spirit and perspective of acceptance for individuality, and some of my sisters needed to feel a certain self-respect and enthusiasm which had been lacking in their church contacts before but was found in the expressions of other devout Mormon women.

Afton B. Smith
Wilmette, Illinois

ON MOTHERHOOD AND APPLE PIE

My heart leaps up, for I'm a Hausfrau,
And though they rarely heed me,
My children don't need Elliott Landau
For me to know they need me.

It's true at times the cold and pinworm
Raise my feminist hackles,
And when I groan beneath a frizzed perm,
I curse at women's shackles.

But time has made me skeptical
Of Friedan's siren creed,
That calls me a receptacle
Condemned to slave and breed.

For editors may sweetly scorn
Attempts to poetize,
But I've yet to see the child be born
Who scoffs at apple pies.

Kathryn Robbins Ashworth
Madrid, Spain

Dear Sirs:

We appreciate very much the outstanding contribution which *Dialogue* has made to the Church in general and to our lives in particular. It's the only journal which I read cover to cover, and my wife was so captivated and excited about your recent woman's issue I may never see it again. She wants to know when more such issues will appear.

Dee F. Green
Asst. Prof. of Anthropology
Weber State College

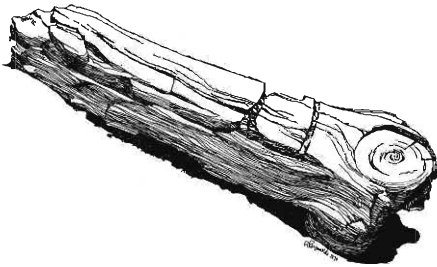
Dear Sirs:

I opened and read your issue on women with a great sense of anticipation and excitement. As I read through it, however, my anticipation turned to disappointment and my excitement became muted to a few brief exclamations about certain good portions. I was disappointed I suspect because I was expecting so much more.

I am a single male, 25 years old, who is both deeply committed to the doctrinal affirmations of Mormonism and committed to women's liberation. I would like to raise the following problems and questions with the women who wrote and edited the issue in an attempt to carry on a hopefully fruitful dialogue about women in Mormonism.

One gets the idea from the introduction that you planned to explore the many facets of Mormon womanhood. The issue, however, does not do that. There are several hidden biases in the material which represent a continuing cultural attachment to the past, and which belie the attempt to come to terms with the multitude of styles possible for Mormon women.

Perhaps the most pervasive of these biases is the bias in favor of the pattern of a woman with a family and a career and against the unmarried career girl or the marriage with no children. This bias was acknowledged by Mrs. Bushman in her introduction but it also appeared in one form or another in four of the articles and all five of the "short sketches."



Let me suggest that Mormon women who pursue careers have not yet escaped from feelings of guilt, defensiveness and depression. This is tragic for it robs a person of creative energy and it dissipates talents and strength. Frustrated because they are not what the Mormon culture says that they should be, such women forget to be who they are. What your issue subconsciously does is reinforce your own "middle ground" operating model by projecting it as the

model by which to handle the family-career tension. Such reinforcement may be good for you, but what of those who do not want that option and the negative valuation you have given to their hopes, desires and futures?

A second and perhaps more serious idea which pervades the articles in this issue is a sentiment best summarized by a statement in the Introduction:

While doctrinally it is perfectly clear that wives should support their husbands, indeed are pledged to them as their husbands are pledged to the Lord, and that having children and lots of children is a good rather than a bad thing, we question whether these priorities preclude other varieties of behavior.

It is in times like these that Mrs. Bushman's passion for "an orthodox gospel framework" leads her astray. I am prepared to suggest that what Mrs. Bushman and the rest of the writers in this issue seem to think is "doctrinally perfectly clear" is really not that clear at all, and that while for some those priorities may be good, for others they may be tragic, and that to suggest that what one person finds in the gospel is in all cases what others should find there is spiritually saddening and theologically untrue.

The penchant for autobiography in this issue led to a lack of systematic analysis on the problem of women in Mormonism in general. Only after this is done can we begin to affirm each woman as something unique and precious. Until then we will continue to condemn those who are "outside the camp" to the marginal wasteland of unfulfilled and insecure lives. In the apparent absence of any systematic approach to this problem in the special women's issue, I here offer a possible approach to the matter.

One of our central doctrinal tenets is that of the eternal nature of the individual. Each of us has always existed as distinct, free beings capable of growth and development. What marks each of us as different is a particular set of talents, abilities and intellectual assets. Furthermore, we affirm that it is our task to actualize the full measure of our potential; to make use of all of our particular set of talents, for as we do we become closer to achieving the status of gods ourselves. Only as we fully become ourselves, growing and developing to the

fullest are we on the way to becoming the kind of beings we can be — gods.

What I am saying is that given the Mormon affirmations about man's eternity, individuality and freedom, it becomes possible to affirm the liberation of women and men from the stereotyping that too often destroys the power, creativity and I think real beauty of some women. Given the fundamental assumptions about individual abilities and talents it becomes entirely possible to say that for some women the raising of five children would be to hide their talents under a basket, to refuse to let their own light shine forth, and in the end to deprive themselves of the fullest measure of self-development.

We must not continue to shackle our brothers and sisters with cultural models which prevent them from being themselves in loving, trusting community with all of us. We must not seek to impose our culture on others. If we really mean what we say when we affirm with our deepest convictions that the life and resurrection of Jesus are for all men, we cannot allow the spirit of that witness to be imprisoned by social and cultural factors that prevent our true growth and development.

This type of stereotyping occurs in many ways, but let me address myself to the idea that "a woman's place is to support her husband." Isn't it just as true that a man's role is to support his wife? Too often this idea is used only to support a dependence-dominance marital relationship in either a blatant or subtle form; while such a set of roles may be good for some, for others it may be wrong. To say simply that a woman is pledged to her husband as he is to the Lord is to ignore the equally beautiful if often unarticulated idea that the man is pledged to the woman as they both are to the Lord.

It seems to me that the only explicit authority a man has that a woman does not is the authority to perform certain designated religious duties, e.g. sacrament, blessings, healings. I would strongly suggest that none of this necessarily applies to the day to day task of sharing a life together. Furthermore, I am prepared to suggest that in a temple marriage the woman joins the man to receive his priesthood power in running a marriage. I have seen the priesthood at work in many lives and will bear testimony to it as firmly as the next man, but I have also seen the power of the Spirit

at work in the lives of many sensitive, articulate young women whose witness and strength is as great as any I know.

Let all of us, men and women alike, seek out in prayer and fasting the answers for our own lives; but let them be our answers and not those of the culture around us. Let us walk in fear and trembling; but let us be sure that we walk thusly before the Lord and not before social norms. If we love one another as He has loved us we will not seek to oppress, but to liberate, to draw from all their talents, not ours; and finally to trust each other because of our shared faith and not because of our shared culture.

Richard Sherlock
Cambridge, Mass.

CINQUAIN

women
obedient, believing
relieving, refraining, sustaining
safely sealed in
women

Lily Shults
Tempe, Arizona

Ms. Bushman and Ms. Ulrich respond:

How ironic that I should be called upon to defend traditional marriage, hearth and home when it was to escape the limitations of those institutions that I first became involved in the woman question. However, there is much to defend. What is mistakenly referred to as a "hidden bias," a prejudice in favor of marriage, children and career, is actually my platform, and I stand on it.

It is not good for man to be alone or for woman either. A couple choosing to remain childless cut themselves off from that great chain of linked beings stretching through eternal life. The career girls I know are less interested in justification than in being found by the right man.

The questioned woman-man-God relationship is explicitly stated in the temple ceremony and the Doctrine and Covenants. To toss these out because they are culturally shackling is to part with so much gospel teaching as to make the remainder meaningless. In the temple women promise to obey their husbands as their husbands obey the Lord. This relationship is a given, but

the statement is only the beginning of negotiation and rationalization.

The obedience clause is an administrative device to make married partners a single unit, and not license to command. We all know that priesthood authority is to be exercised only by patience and long suffering, and that a man's authority over a woman gives him the opportunity not to order her about but to protect and serve her. Husbands who browbeat their wives will soon have the wives they deserve and will be accompanied to heaven by eternal millstones, regretting their endurance to the end. In a good marriage a man will try to make his wife happy she signed on for the job. Indeed, to make any marriage *worth* preserving eternally requires endless sensitivity and support of both partners. But despite the labor, my observations suggest that a good L.D.S. marriage gives the best hope for a little peace and pleasure in this vale of tears.

The other view of a liberated marriage, free from stereotyping structures, uniting two equals free to develop the unique talents, abilities and intellectual assets with which each has been blessed is very attractive. But based on *The Way Things Should Be* rather than any scriptural suggestion or historical precedent, it is neither Mormon nor Christian. It is also short lived. When two individuals are bent on realizing their natural potential untrammelled, the relationship is likely to founder on who takes out the garbage.

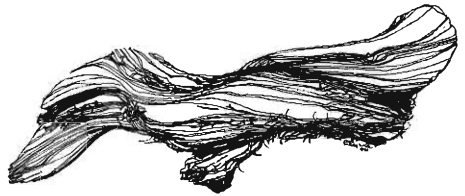
Most Church members will fall into marriage of some kind, and rather than worrying about self-development, they would be well advised to prepare for a life of duty and sacrifice. Before they set themselves up as beacons to the world, they could work on diligence, self-control, and cheerfulness, lesser ambitions perhaps, but the sturdy foundation that make genuine accomplishment possible.

Exposure to women's lib radicalizes some women; others, like me, become more conservative. The reasons range from long years of socializing into my traditional role and fear of competing in the real world to glimpses of the ever after and a rather attractive family. I see the same life as the most important; the rest is frosting.

Claudia L. Bushman

I confess that I opened Richard Sherlock's letter with anticipation and excite-

ment. He promised to perform a feat which several of our authors attempted and gave up — to reconcile Mormon doctrine and women's liberation. But, despite a few good portions which merit exclamation, his piece failed to come to terms with the problem. Though I am suspicious about the depth of his knowledge of Mormonism, I am willing to concede that given ten more pages he might define the difference between "culture" and "doctrine" and successfully assign Temple vows, scriptures, and Latter-day pronouncements on the primacy of marriage to the former, but what really concerns me is the depth of his commitment to women's lib. I cannot believe it is as thoroughgoing as he claims.



His comment on the priesthood reveals a clear though perhaps subconscious bias. He maintains that it gives a man very little more than a woman, just "the authority to perform certain designated religious duties." But if the ability to perform those very duties is the talent a particular woman is born with then a male priesthood denies her the right to fulfill her potential as a distinct free being. How can an intelligent and liberal Mormon male proclaim the right of a woman to be President yet deny her the right to be bishop?

The second rent in his position is less obvious, but to anyone sensitive to the subtleties of male chauvinism it is readily apparent. He says that for some women raising children "would be to hide their talent under a basket, and in the end deprive themselves of the fullest measure of self-development." The assumption is an old one, that *for women* marriage and children preclude the development of other talents. Its sexist orientation is obvious if the statement is reworded: "For some men raising children would be to hide their talents under a basket and refuse to let their own light shine forth." The true liberationist is looking for a world in which no one is penalized professionally by having children.

Maybe I misunderstand Mr. Sherlock's position here. Maybe what he is really de-

fending is the right of both men and women to remain single if they so choose. In this regard single men are certainly more discriminated against than women, who can always plead that no worthy male asked them. A single man is presumed to have the initiative. But this is another question entirely and one that (fortunately) nobody has asked me to respond to.

While I am unsatisfied with Mr. Sherlock's analysis, I am glad that he attempted it. He is quite right when he says that we did not succeed in exploring all the facets of Mormon womanhood. He is the second person to charge us with giving undue emphasis to our own "middle" position. The other critic felt, however, that it was the homemaker and the obedient, unsung church worker who had been slighted. We urge more readers to respond. At this point we would sooner be corrected than congratulated.

Laurel T. Ulrich

Dear Sirs:

Leland A. Fetzer in "Tolstoy and Mormonism," *Dialogue*, 6 (Spring, 1971), is in error in his identification of George Kennan as the father of George F. Kennan, the American diplomat, authority on Russia, and architect of the policy of containment. Actually, the elder Kennan was a cousin of the diplomat's grandfather. (George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925-1950*, pp. 8-9.)

Thomas G. Alexander
Associate Professor of
History
Brigham Young University

Dear Sirs:

First let me say how much our family enjoys reading *Dialogue*. I hope the delay in receiving it is merely indicative of busy editors and not financial woes that fore-shadow its demise.

Now I would like to comment briefly about the point of view expressed by Robert A. Rees in his review of *The Trial of the Catonsville Nine* (Winter 1970). While I appreciate his sympathy with the Berrigans and similar protestors and practitioners of civil disobedience, I also see another side of that coin — the deterioration of order and the development of anarchy. This might well introduce an authoritarianism undreamed of in this country.

The proper balance of freedom and authority is an elusive goal sought by man throughout the ages. No formula has been devised that can end the quest. If I believe it correct for me to disobey those laws which I believe to be unjust, how can I deny that same right to every other man? If a pornographer believes any form of censorship is unjust why should he obey those laws? If toplessness or bottomlessness is freedom of expression and protected by the the First Amendment why should the tavern operator obey laws against such expressions? If not paying taxes to support national defense is justifiable because of conscience why is it not equally justifiable to not pay taxes for support of welfare because of conscience?

Mr. Rees noted that Thoreau, Gandhi, King, and Joseph Smith would have understood the act of the Berrigans. That may be so, but we must also admit that Joseph Smith could not understand and sympathize with those who opened an unfriendly press in Nauvoo. He exercised force to remove it and without due process of law.

In his Farewell Address George Washington said, "The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty or every individual to obey the established government." In the Declaration of Independence Jefferson wrote concerning governments established by the consent of the governed "that whenever a government becomes destructive of these ends it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it."

I wish there was an easy answer to the complex problem but unfortunately there is not. The fabric which binds this society together is fragile indeed, and if each of us becomes a devotee of civil disobedience to each law we find unjust, I fear for the survival of our system. Imperfect as it may be, it is a far cry from the fascistic system that could replace it when people despairing over chaos turn to an authoritarian savior.

A. M. Rich
Portland, Oregon

Mr. Rees responds:

It was precisely because I felt that too many of us have lost sight of the tension that exists between obedience to government (your Washington quotation) and obedience to conscience (your Jefferson quotation) that I emphasized what I saw as the moral courage of the Berrigan brothers.

(This tension is also evident in D&C 134:4-6.) You are right in calling this a complex problem; I was trying to show that complexity by underscoring the moral dilemma faced by those at Catonsville as well as by, among others, Joseph Smith and the polygamists. We need to remember that at times even prophets have chosen to disobey the law (as Omer Dean Nelson illustrates in another letter in this section). Obviously, this is not a license for civil disobedience. Anyone who makes such a decision should do so only after long and thoughtful consideration (and perhaps prayer), as did the Berrigans.

Dear Sirs:

I regret that the editors of *Dialogue* did not give me the space to reply in *tandem* to the comment by Robert Smith (Spring 1971) on my review essay on the New English Bible (Winter 1970), for I wanted to both thank Smith for his interest in my view of the NEB (my cavalier epistemology, he calls it) and reply to his criticisms in the same genial tone with which he makes them.

As concurring "lovers" of Bible literature, we really have no quarrel, except that Smith's love is dependent on the "accuracy" of the text (noble and impossible goal) and mine on the way it *affects* a person (vague and full of hope as that position might be). That Smith wishes to argue the preferability of one modern version of the Bible over another (the beautiful Anchor series, for example) shows, however, that he really misses my point: *any* rewording or reworking of the Scriptures is an advantage if it sets one to doing *some thinking* about religious questions along with all of the *feeling* he may be doing. It is the shift from one version to another that is important, not the version shifted to, if it sets one free to *think* about his beliefs. All texts are beautifully corrupt and monstrously over-explicated and over-applied. They survive by how they affect us. The New English Bible could have a good effect (even on Rasmussen and Anderson, my co-reviewers, who like Smith himself vainly chase the wind of etymologies in search of signs to substantiate their faith) — especially on those who haven't given their beliefs a *thought* their whole lives long.

Karl Keller
La Mesa, Calif.

Dear Sirs:

Somebody botched my poem "The Comforter" (Spring 1971) and the last two lines don't make sense. In *Dialogue* they read:

and everything in the night
the spark of an alien in inalienable
delight.

They should instead read:

and everywhere everywhere in the night
the spark of an alien in inalienable
delight.

A parody of Blake was intended, and the poem is wasted without it.

Karl Keller

To err is . . . — Ed.

Dear Sirs:

The 1971 Spring and Summer issues of *Dialogue* came today and I have been busily devouring the first. May I compliment Leland A. Fetzer on his thoroughly absorbing article of Tolstoy and Mormonism, also Arnold Green and Lawrence Goldrup for their article comparing Joseph Smith with Mohammed.

For the benefit of E. Jay Bell in the Letters section, I would like to say that just because a public statement is issued over the signatures of the First Presidency, it does not necessarily follow that such statement is true. Witness the fact that Joseph and Hyrum Smith on several occasions publicly denounced polygamy and denied being involved in it, while both were practicing polygamists. (*Times and Seasons*, 5:423, 5:474, *DHC*, 6:411) In regard to the alleged 1886 revelation of John Taylor, it may well be false and it may well be true. If true, certainly it would not be the first time a revelation was sat on, and it is a fact that many people believed it to be true, including John W. Taylor and Melvin J. Ballard, who evidently saw it because he said the revelation ". . . never had his [Taylor's] signature added to it but was written in the form of a revelation and undoubtedly was in his handwriting." There is even a photocopy of the revelation in John Taylor's handwriting, for those who may be interested.

Regarding the article "The Manifesto Was A Victory," it appears to me that the author is either naive and uninformed or is attempting to put forth a snow job, perhaps for the benefit of the college students mentioned in the opening paragraphs. Cer-

tainly his basic conclusion, that the church won the conflict, with the government making the concessions, is false. B.H. Roberts states: "And hence adjustments were made, demands upon the church conceded to, so that statehood was won, deliverance from oppression obtained . . ." (CHC 6:xxiii). During the 1880's the church was disincorporated, all polygamous Mormons disfranchised, over 1300 leaders sent to prison, all church property in excess of \$50,000 escheated to Uncle Sam (this included the temples so that all work for the living and dead came to a halt), in short, the church came to a halt and something had to be done, with the Manifesto resulting. It would appear to me that we won the conflict just as the South won the Civil War.

Now, for some specific points. First, polygamy was not the main issue, politics was. Church and state were merged, with the church dominant. This was unpalatable to nonmembers in Utah. They had to destroy this "theocratic despotism" and the easiest way was to attack the church through polygamy. James R. Clark says, ". . . the real issue was not Mormon polygamy, but Mormon Priesthood and authority." (*Messages of the First Presidency*, III, preface) Senator Dubois of Idaho, a prominent anti-Mormon crusader, explained it this way: "Those of us who understood the situation



were not nearly as much opposed to polygamy as we were to the political domination of the church. We realized, however, that we could not make those who did not come actually in contact with it understand what this political domination meant. We made use of polygamy in consequence as our great weapon of offense and to gain recruits to our standard. There was a universal detestation of polygamy, and inasmuch as the Mormons openly defended it, we were given a very effective weapon with which to attack." (*Utah Historical Quarterly*, 21:291)

Now, as far as polygamy was concerned, the real issue was unlawful cohabitation, and not plural marriages, per se. It was easy to prove unlawful cohabitation but

almost impossible to convict anyone of practicing plural marriage. This was because the latter could only be proven by access to church records and the church refused to produce any. Consequently, of the more than 1300 men who served jail terms, less than fifty were convicted of practicing plural marriage, the vast majority being there because of unlawful cohabitation. Since the main thrust of the government's effort had been concerned with unlawful cohabitation, with the passing of the Manifesto all polygamous wives became immediately disfranchised or disinherited from their husbands who were required by both church and state law to stay arm's length from them, to have sexual relations with them no more. (Of course, since this no doubt was considered cruel and unusual punishment, very few if any Mormon men obeyed the law, including the President of the Church.) Thomasson, on page 45, sticks in a quotation about President Smith which would have you believe the opposite, that sexual relations with plural wives was tolerated and accepted by the government. Now, it is true that Joseph F. Smith did have those children by his plural wives after the Manifesto, and this he freely and almost defiantly admitted in the Reed Smoot case, but it is also true that by doing so, he was breaking both church and government law. Here is his own testimony.

Mr. Tayler (prosecuting attorney). Is the cohabitation with one who is claimed to be a plural wife a violation of the law or rule of the church, as well as the law of the land?

Pres. Smith. That was the case, and is the case, even today.

Mr. Tayler. What was the case? What you are about to say?

Pres. Smith. That it is contrary to the rule of the church and contrary as well to the law of the land for a man to cohabit with his wives. (Vol. 1:129)

Apostle Francis M. Lyman was another witness in this case.

Mr. Tayler. It was wrong according to the church law as well?

Mr. Lyman. It was wrong according to the rule of the church.

Mr. Tayler. So you violated both laws?

Mr. Lyman. Yes, sir.

The Chairman. And intended to?

Mr. Lyman. I had thought of nothing else, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman. And you are the next in succession to the Presidency?

Mr. Lyman. Yes, sir. (Vol. 1:428)

Both Joseph F. Smith and Heber J. Grant were fined in court for practicing unlawful cohabitation, a further indication it was against the law. Heber J. Grant was fined \$200 in 1899 and Joseph F. Smith \$300 in 1906.

Omer Dean Nelson
Tucson, Arizona

Mr. Thomasson responds:

Mr. Nelson's letter is a discouraging evidence that even where people are much read there can be little understanding. He seems unaware that my article was an effort at historical interpretation and that the "data" which he presents to "refute" my position are either alluded to in my text or are accounted for by the theories which I present. Indeed he seems to operate on the assumption that a historian can produce "truth" rather than one of many theoretical reconstructions of the past. He would do well to read his own words "just because a public statement is issued over the signatures of the First Presidency, it does not necessarily follow that such statement is true." Just three short paragraphs after making this assertion Nelson quotes one statement by President Smith to refute another. How, Mr. Nelson, do you know which of the two is really "true"? Are you sure that President Smith's testimony isn't a reflection of the fact that federal officials had reneged on *their* promises, rather than the reverse?

I will concede that my title was intentionally hyperbolic, but will insist that "Victory" is a proper term as contrasted to the almost universally held view that the Church suffered all the losses or made all the concessions in 1890. A more precise title would have been "The Manifesto was a Compromise," but while that is what most people think, they forget that a compromise involves *both* parties making concessions, gains and losses according to their priorities. My article simply attempted to remind the readers that according to its priorities, the Church as compared to the Government retained as much if not more than it lost, and when one discusses bargaining strategy and the logic of compromise such an outcome is a victory.

My article was an attempt to make four

main points, along with a number of lesser ones. These were: 1) the Church made real gains because politicians in both parties were jockeying for advantage with the electorate (to be) of Utah. This is evidenced, among other ways, by President Cleveland's lenient first term appointees, the removal of the Unlawful Cohabitation Clause from the Utah Constitution (though not from Federal statutes), and, perhaps of most interest today, Harrison's granting of a partial amnesty in 1893 (gaining some converts to Republicanism) and Cleveland's granting full amnesty in 1894 (winning Democratic support in the soon to become State of Utah). National parties and successive administrations made a crass political game out of the concept of forgiveness, and, as is the case today, amnesty was the football which was kicked around according to how both parties thought it would win them votes.

2) As one L.D.S. political scientist was candid enough to admit, it is amazing if not embarrassing that several generations of Mormon scholars have missed the implications of President Woodruff having met with the Republican Party Convention Chairman just a week before the Manifesto was issued. I pointed that out because it is highly doubtful that the subject of their conversations was the price of tea in China. Nelson's statement that "polygamy was not the main issue, politics was" is the best evidence of his careless reading, for that is my very point, and those politics involved the Government making real concessions to the Church.

3) I was making a strict and virtually undisputable sociological statement, from a personally neutral perspective, regarding how *not* to go about changing a minority group's attitudes and behavior. The course chosen by the Government through most of the 19th century is, even today, predictably the least likely to produce the results sought after.

4) Finally, only after having written the article, I realized that the section titled "Americanization" has ironic (and I believe valid) implications for contemporary U.S. foreign policy.

Mr. Nelson may dislike my conclusions, or my intentions, but he fails to produce any data which contradict them, and he offers no alternative interpretation which does a better job of accounting for the data under examination, though that is the task of the historian and his critics.