

TROJAN HORSES IN MORMON LAND

A great deal has happened since we began working on the last issue of the *Salt Lake City Messenger*. For example, on April 23, 1991, we were informed that Darrick Evenson, a Mormon writer who has worked very hard in an attempt to discredit our work, had been unmasked as a deceiver. Mr. Evenson now admits that he was secretly engaged in dishonest practices to gather information which he could use to discredit people or organizations he disagreed with. He, in fact, confessed that he used aliases and a "Trojan horse" technique to carry out his questionable operations.

Some of our readers may remember that this is not the first "Trojan horse" that we have encountered in our work. Those who are familiar with our newsletter may remember that in October 1976 we received a letter from a man known as "Stan Fields." He claimed he was an "Ex-Mormon for Jesus, and would like to be added to your mailing list . . . God's blessings on you as you do His work, Sincerely in Christ." This man spent a great deal of time spying on various people who were critical of the Mormon Church. We later learned that his real name was Steven Mayfield and that he was also working for the FBI at the time he sent us this letter. In 1980, we discovered his deceitful game and the fact that at that very time he was employed at the Mormon Church Office Building. We confronted him on the job and he confessed to his duplicity and consented to a tape-recorded interview (see our publication, *Unmasking A Mormon Spy*). During the time that Steven Mayfield was carrying out his nefarious operations, he went to great lengths to protect his "cover." In a letter to Latayne Covett Scott, Mr. Mayfield went so far as to say that the Mormon Church was inspired by the Devil: "I read some of the Tanner's material and became thoroughly convinced that the Mormon **cult** the church of my youth, the church of my ancestors was **wrong, false,**



Darrick Evenson

ALIAS:

Troy Lawrence

and Satan inspired." In the same letter, Mayfield went on to complain concerning "the falseness of man-made religion (like Mormonism) which **leads men to hell.**" After he was exposed, Steven Mayfield admitted that these statements were only made in an attempt to gain the confidence of Mormon critics so that he could spy on them.

Besides the important development with regard to the unmasking of Darrick Evenson, some Mormon scholars at the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (F.A.R.M.S.) became so upset with our book, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, that they have published rebuttals. In addition, they have also made a vicious attack against some Mormon scholars who are also convinced that the Book of Mormon is not what it claims to be. We will have more to say about the charges later in this publication.

SPECIAL OFFER!

Offer ends October 31, 1991

(Mail orders add 10% — minimum \$1.00)

***Covering Up the Black Hole
in the Book of Mormon***

By Jerald and Sandra Tanner

Reg. \$5.00 — **Special \$3.95**

Evenson's Claims

The editors of this newsletter (Jerald and Sandra Tanner) probably first became aware of the name Darrick Evenson when we read volume one of *They Lie in Wait to Deceive*, by Robert and Rosemary Brown. This book was written to show how "anti-Mormons work to obstruct and distort the truth." While the first edition of this publication did not have anything about Mr. Evenson, after it was revised in 1982, two pages were devoted to a long letter written by Evenson. In this letter, dated October 26, 1981, we find the following:

Extra Newsletters Free at the Bookstore — By Mail: 5 for \$1.00 - 25 for \$3.00

My name is Darrick Troy Evenson, and I am writing you this letter in appreciation of your new book, "They Lie in Wait to Deceive." I, too, am no stranger to the anti-Mormon campaign of today. . . . I call it simply the "Counter-Mission." To be sure, when I was only a convert of a few months (this was back in February of 1979) I walked into a "Christian" bookstore looking for something that was written by the Church (you can see how naive I was back then). I glanced over to the far wall of the building and noticed dozens of books with the picture of the Salt Lake Temple on them. . . . But when I glanced at the sign above, it said, "Cult/Occult Section." I was confused. I picked up one of the books that were on the shelves and began to read. Something inside of me told me to put it down, but because of intense curiosity I had to read on . . . I read only a short ways into it when I recognized that the Church hadn't printed that book. I spent about three hours in the bookstore, and I became familiar with all the anti-Mormon books that were there. I walked into that store a joyous person, but I did walk out a confused and embittered person. It struck me with such alarm and seriousness that I made a vow to myself. I vowed that if I had been deceived by the Church (as the Tanner's and others said), then I wanted to know Who, What, Where, How, and Why! I immediately quit my job and quit school. . . . I took the money that I had saved up in the service to use in my search for the pro or con. I began to read, and I read so much that more and more questions were coming into my head, and no answers as of yet. . . . I began to visit other churches. . . . All this time I was totally inactive from the Church. . . . I must now say that it was several times that I confided to my friend that the Church was false; the "evidence" to me then seemed so overwhelming. . . . At the sectarian libraries, there was NOTHING BUT anti-Mormon in regard to the church. However, even after I succumbed to the anti-Mormon propaganda, something inside me (which I recognize now as the Holy Ghost) kept telling me to dig deeper to find the truth. After awhile, I began to regularly study at the Institute libraries . . . **One by one the claims of the anti-Mormons began to fall.** Eventually, after 17 months of research and study, the last anti-Mormon claim fell. I then asked, in extreme violation of the "Tanner Code of Truth," my Heavenly Father in prayer to confirm my findings. And He did in a most joyful way! Now **I have been fully active for more than a year**, and I am now saving up **for my mission**. I want to share my knowledge and joy with others. . . . I read your book and I truly enjoyed it. To be sure many things . . . can point to **the truthfulness of the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith.** . . .

I still study the counter-mission . . . I remember that you mentioned in your book that you found other people who were exposing the counter-mission also. I feel that someday it could be productive for all these individuals to exchange information . . . I wish for a project that would get good, scholarly, apologetical works in the libraries—public libraries. . . . The goals of the counter-generation (the nationwide anti-Mormon campaign) is:

1) To use a well-financed campaign of misinformation to inject doubt, hoping to destroy the faith of the membership of the church; and . . . to halt the exodus of members of other churches into this church—while at the same time **making a very good living in the process.**

2) To carefully misinform the Christian public as to the origin, beliefs, and ultimate goals of the Church hoping to make it appear unpopular.

To the first goal they have overwhelmingly failed, except the part about "making a good living in the process." Their campaign is now confined to investigators and new converts.

To the second goal I can only say that so long as there exists uninformed people in the world this will persist to some extent. As you know, Christ said that in the latter days men shall persecute the Saints in his name. . . . Each individual must have the evidences presented to him without deceit. I have talked to many ministers who, after I had made my presentation to them, have admitted to me that there "maybe" was some misinformation given against the Church, but such means were justifiable because the "end" was so desirable! . . . **I have been assaulted on several occasions.** I am now positive that nothing can halt the counter-mission, for it is not of man alone (if you know what I mean). . . . I am sure there are many who fight against the Church in sincerity. They do so because they have been deceived by the likes of the Martin's, Tanner's, and . . . the Nelson's. . . .

Many here in Tacoma are looking forward to your next book. Truly, **if there is anything I could do for you (I am quite a researcher), just let me know.** Right now I am saving up for my mission; I feel that the joy that this gospel brings is, in me, bursting at the seams, and I must share it with everyone I can. . . . Our testimony is sure, and what a joy it truly brings! . . . (Letter by Darrick Evenson, as printed, in *They Lie in Wait to Deceive*, by Robert and Rosemary Brown, revised edition, vol. 1, pages 279-280)

Promoting Dissension

Our records show that Darrick Evenson was in contact with us as early as October, 1983, when he was serving as a missionary for the Mormon Church. In 1989, Horizon Publishers published a book by Mr. Evenson entitled, *The Gainsayers: A Converted Anti-Mormon Responds To Critics of the LDS Church*. On the dust jacket of Evenson's book we find the following:

When new LDS convert Darrick Evenson encountered anti-Mormon literature for the first time, it devastated him. He naively accepted it as true, and it led him out of the Church into the ranks of the "Ex-Mormons for Jesus." Darrick learned their "witnessing" approaches and techniques and began functioning with them in the fight against the Mormon Church. But as he became familiar with them and their message, he found himself increasingly uncomfortable in their midst. . . . And though they professed to "love" the Mormons, he found the "Ex-Mormon" motivation to be just the opposite. . . . As he encountered more and more instances of **falsehoods and deception** in the "Ex-Mormon" teachings, his conscience began to work on him more and more. He finally renounced his affiliation with them and returned to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. . . . Darrick is aware that the message and methods of anti-Mormon gainsayers have kept many truth-seekers from hearing and accepting the gospel of Jesus Christ. . . . Anti-Mormon organizations such as "Saints Alive" and "Ex-Mormons for Jesus" are modern gainsayers in the truest sense of the word. . . . the author presents evidence which shows that the same techniques used by those who fought against Christ's Church in the meridian of time . . . are being used against the Mormons today. **Satan's work** follows the same patterns down through time. . . .

A powerful chapter is devoted to a presentation of responses to many of the anti-Mormon distortions and misrepresentations currently being used. It is obvious that the author is well acquainted with the nature of yellow journalism used against the Church. . . .

The Gainsayers is a powerful book! It refutes many of the falsehoods currently circulated against The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by those who seek to thwart the work of God. . . . it's a book that will serve as a significant tool in defense of the faith.

Although we had to admit that Darrick Evenson made some points regarding excesses in what is often called "the anti-Mormon" movement, we felt that the claims concerning his affiliation and work with "Ex-Mormons for Jesus" seemed somewhat nebulous. In any case, Mr. Evenson began visiting our bookstore, and it soon became obvious that one of his most important goals in life was to destroy our ministry. He claimed that he was investigating us and had found evidence that we had been very dishonest. Evenson maintained that he was working hand-in-hand with Robert and Rosemary Brown and others who opposed our work. A friend of Darrick Evenson, who is a devout Mormon, told us that in 1988 or 1989 Evenson moved in with the Browns to do research for them. It is unclear whether he was receiving a salary or just board and room. From research that Mike Mistretta has done, he feels that Evenson's work at that time related to getting negative material for the Browns to use against Ed Decker. It has been suggested that the Browns felt that Mr. Evenson's research was not progressing as rapidly as they had anticipated and that he left about a week after he moved in with them. Whether he continued working for the Browns is not known, but those involved in other ministries to Mormons claim that Mr. Evenson often represented himself as working for the Browns.

In his attempt to create problems for critics of the Mormon Church, Darrick Evenson has used some very divisive tactics. Mr. Evenson was aware that we have been accused of being secret agents for the Mormon Church and that we had some differences of opinion with Ed Decker. Evenson seized upon these facts and attempted to stir up a serious battle between us. He visited our bookstore and related to Sandra that Mr. Decker had told him he had **enough information on Jerald to put him away for life**. Since we did not have any confidence in Darrick Evenson, we dismissed this statement as a trick on his part to create problems between the two ministries. Mr. Evenson also told Sandra at that time that he had evidence that Ed Decker was living an immoral life and said that he would give us this material if we would print it. Sandra said that she was not interested in receiving the material.

This incident, of course, made us wonder if Darrick Evenson had told Ed Decker that we had made some inflammatory comments concerning him in the hope that he would say something outlandish about us. Later we learned the truth about the matter. On May 4, 1991, Ed Decker was on Mike Mistretta's Saints Alive in Jesus radio program, which is broadcast on KHEP in Phoenix, Arizona. (We should probably mention here that Mike Mistretta has provided us with a great deal of important information regarding Darrick Evenson which we have put to good use in this article. Because of financial problems Mr. Mistretta has temporarily suspended broadcasting. He hopes to be back on the air on 1280 AM in October. Any of our readers who would like to help Mike Mistretta can send contributions to Saints Alive In Jesus, PO Box 54762, Phoenix, AZ 85078.) At any rate, Mr. Decker revealed on Mistretta's program that Darrick Evenson had told him that we had been in contact with the Browns to obtain the "filth" they had on Decker:

About four weeks ago I got a phone call . . . it was Darrick on the phone and he . . . said that he was working as a research assistant for Robert and Rosemary Brown . . . that has been his

story for many years with us. . . . At any rate, he called and said he had some very serious filth about me that he was going to expose . . . that he had control of it and that **Jerald and Sandra Tanner had been in contact with Robert and Rosemary Brown to acquire this material to expose me as a phony** and to show what an evil life I had. . . . and I said, "Darrick . . . there's nothing in my past that I worry about and if you've got some garbage go ahead and publish it". . . . Darrick said, "I'll scratch your back if you scratch my back . . . I have the ability to get rid of all this information away from the Browns and the Tanners if you promise that in a little while, in a week or so or a few days something is going to come out about me and you have to keep your mouth shut. If you open your mouth, I'm going to reveal all this. And I said, "Darrick you're blackmailing me."

The truth about the matter is that we have not talked to the Browns since 1981 and have not requested any derogatory material about any of the church's critics from either the Browns or Darrick Evenson. At one time the Browns' lawyer contacted us in an attempt to force us to retract a statement we had made about them in the *Salt Lake City Messenger*. Although we refused to back down from our statement, no lawsuit was ever filed. For more information concerning our opposition to the Browns' work see our publication, *Can The Browns Save Joseph Smith*. An article by Steve Eaton in the Brigham Young University student newspaper indicated how the Browns felt about us after we wrote this book: "Mrs. Tanner said she will sometimes send people . . . a book . . . titled 'Can the Browns save Joseph Smith?' The Browns said the Tanner book will only get the Tanners in trouble. **'That book is going to hang them,'** Mrs. Brown said" (*The Universe*, August 10, 1982). Although nine years have passed since the Browns made this threat, they have still been unable to get the noose around our neck.

Unfortunately, however, Darrick Evenson must have convinced Ed Decker that we were in league with the Browns. On Mike Mistretta's radio program Mr. Decker went on to say that he had to call his pastor "and let him know that he was going to be getting material from the Browns, the Tanners or . . . probably just Darrick that says that I'm having sex with three young women in my office and that I'm committing sodomy . . ." Mr. Decker also claimed that he had a copy of a tape-recorded telephone conversation with Darrick Evenson in which Evenson told him "that he got that material from Robert and Rosemary Brown . . . that this is their material that he got with them to use to destroy me . . . he will release it to **the Tanners who are negotiating with the Browns to get the material** . . . And I have that on tape." On the same radio show, Ed Decker said that the publication of material against him is "not a particular problem, but don't blackmail me first and be on tape because the day the stuff hits the street, the day that Darrick Evenson releases it, is the day that I'll have him arrested for blackmail."

As we indicated earlier, we did not receive material about these accusations from Darrick Evenson and have never negotiated with the Browns to obtain any material at all. Even if the Browns had such information, it seems unlikely that they would allow anyone to obtain a copy before publication. We understand that they are very closefisted with regard to their research materials and question the fact that they would allow Darrick to run around the country with copies of such documents. Furthermore, we should point out that Darrick Evenson's claims cannot be trusted and that he is prone to make rash judgments with regard to people with whom he disagrees. For example, the last time he was in our bookstore, two Christian ladies came in to talk to Sandra about the Mormon

Church. Mr. Evenson, however, took it upon himself to engage them in a heated discussion about Mormonism and Christianity. Evenson became extremely upset and began to make derogatory comments about them. Although he had never met these women before they came into the bookstore, he claimed that he knew they were lesbians and began to use explicit language with regard to their supposed sexual sins. Finally, the situation became so intolerable that Sandra had to ask him to leave the bookstore. (This was only the second time in almost thirty years that we have had to ask a Mormon to leave our store.) Although a statement made on a radio station indicated that Darrick was physically ejected, he actually left under his own power.

Trojan Horse Toppled

In his book, *The Gainsayers*, Darrick Evenson's middle name is abbreviated: "Darrick T. Evenson." The reader will remember, however, that in the letter Robert and Rosemary Brown published seven years earlier, he referred to himself as "Darrick Troy Evenson." As we will show, Darrick later assumed the alias, "*Troy* Lawrence," to carry out his deceitful work. The word "*Troy*" is interesting because it fits well with Evenson's statement that he used a "Trojan horse" technique in his secret operations. The reader may remember that in the story of the Trojan War, the Greeks left a huge wooden horse outside the city of *Troy*. The horse was actually filled with warriors, but the Trojans, not recognizing the trick, desired to have it and breached the wall of their own city to take the horse in. During the night the men who were in the wooden horse came out and the Greek troops destroyed the city of Troy and most of its inhabitants.

Darrick Troy Evenson's "Trojan horse" method of operation was actually working very well until Constance Cumbey began throwing away some back issues of a publication which she had concerning Mormonism. The reader may remember that Constance Cumbey wrote a book attacking the New Age Movement. It was published under the title, *The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow*, and stirred up a great deal of controversy. It is interesting to note that Walter Martin, a well-known critic of the Mormon Church, was one of Cumbey's most vocal critics and that after Martin's death Darrick Evenson sought to obtain any information Cumbey had which was critical of Walter Martin. (Constance Cumbey has freely provided copies of some important documents and information which we have used in this article.)

In any case, as Constance Cumbey was throwing away old issues of *The Inner Circle*, a publication put out by John L. Smith's Utah Missions, Inc., she discovered an article entitled, "The Facts on Evenson." It was written by Robert McKay and noted that although Darrick claimed "to have been a member of Ex-Mormons for Jesus, there is no record of his membership in any of the chapters of that organization. . . . Clearly Darrick T. Evenson is not what he claims to be" (*The Inner Circle*, November 1989).

As Constance Cumbey read this article she remembered that Huntington House Publishers had asked her to review a manuscript for a book they were thinking of publishing on the New Age movement. It was printed in 1991 under the title, *New Age Messiah Identified: Who Is Lord Maitreya?* Although the author of the book was later given the "assumed name, *Troy Lawrence*" (see back cover of *New Age Messiah Identified*), as Cumbey read about Darrick Evenson in *The Inner Circle*, she recalled that the original manuscript she had looked at had

the name *Darrick Evenson* on it. In a FAX letter to Huntington House Publishers, dated May 1, 1991, Constance Cumbey wrote:

Now as regards Darrick T. Evenson, let's recap the events. I was contacted . . . last summer about a manuscript you were thinking of publishing. Teresa told me excitedly that this man had been converted out of the New Age and believing in Benjamin Creme's Maitreya the Christ and had since his conversion gone back into Tara Center, gained access to their computer "working long feverish hours" and learned the identity of the New Age "messiah."

My immediate counsel to Teresa Trosclair was one of caution. I told her that this type of tactic was often used by New Agers to have Christians scurrying after something that was just not so. Teresa seemed disappointed at my response but asked if I would be willing to talk with the "young man" and review his manuscript. I told her I would be willing to do both, but I was extremely skeptical about the entire business. The manuscript and a tape from Darrick Evenson were sent. . . . He continually left messages pressing me for a decision on his manuscript. . . . I was home one evening when I received a phone call from Darrick T. Evenson. Darrick said to me, "I know you can't endorse my manuscript and I know why. After much prayer, I have decided to withdraw the manuscript and abandon that project. Since **I came to the Lord reading your book**, I want to help you in anyway I can. Walter Martin unfairly attacked you and I have talked with Huntington House and they agree with me that it would be good to do a book about it." . . . I thought the new project had splendid possibilities and I did encourage Darrick. He called again asking me to **bundle up all my documentation on Walter Martin and send it to him**. . . . but I never got around to sending it.

Darrick called me again . . . and said that since **it was my work that had brought him out of the New Age Movement** . . . that he just wanted to help me in any way possible. I told him . . . I had trouble getting up the steam to continue to do my newsletters. Darrick suggested he could work with me . . . We vaguely agreed to talk more about it in the future. A few weeks later I received a faxed message from Darrick Evenson demanding my mailing list to get out an issue of something he called "World Crusade Journal." . . . I faxed . . . a message saying "I send my mailing list to nobody, particularly without copy." . . .

Throughout all of this, I had no idea that you were publishing the book that Darrick told me he had abandoned! . . . I thought nothing more of Darrick Evenson until I was throwing out back issues of *The Inner Circle*, an anti-Mormon paper that has never been kind to me. As you know, I found a 1989 article entitled "The facts on Evenson." . . . I immediately called Teresa Trosclair to share this with her and rejoice in the fact that the Lord had spared us this particular snare. I heard Teresa groan and I said, "Teresa, you didn't publish him, did you?" Teresa replied, "15,000 copies." I said, "Teresa, I warned you." She said, "I know." . . . The next day Mark called and vigorously and almost affectionately defended "Troy" (Troy Lawrence) who had always been known to me as Darrick T. Evenson. . . . I demanded and received a conference call between "Troy" and Mark Trosclair . . . the next day.

As Mark is witness to on that conference call, "Troy" denied that he in THE GAINSAVERS claimed to have been a former part of Ex-Mormons for Jesus **or indeed that he had ever been a Mormon**. Mark accepted these lying denials at face value . . .

Ed Decker says he received threats of blackmail for false allegations by Darrick/Troy four weeks ago. This would have exactly coincided with the time I discovered the article that quoted Ed Decker. (FAX letter by Constance Cumbey to Huntington House Publishers, dated May 1, 1991)

Since Darrick Evenson knew that Constance Cumbey was acquainted with Ed Decker and that she was aware of the deceitful game Darrick was playing, he must have realized that it was only a matter of time before Mr. Decker would find out the truth. It seems reasonable, therefore, to believe that this might have led Evenson to contact Decker and threaten him with exposure if he did not keep quiet about the dual role which Darrick himself was playing.

Not a Mormon?

We first learned of Darrick Evenson's duplicity on April 23, 1991, when we received a phone call from Al Kresta. Mr. Kresta has a radio program called "Talk From The Heart" on WMUZ FM in Detroit, Michigan. He said that he was concerned about a man who went by the name of "Troy Lawrence" whom he was about to interview on his program. He had reason to believe that the man's real name was Darrick Evenson and wondered what we knew about him. Sandra was able to give Mr. Kresta a report concerning the insulting language Darrick had used in our bookstore just the day before.

Before the radio interview took place, Al Kresta read the following comment from the book Darrick Evenson had written attacking the New Age movement: "Someone put in my hands a copy of a little book entitled *The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow* by Constance Cumbey. This powerful book precipitated **my conversion** out of the New Age deception and **into the light of Christianity**" (*New Age Messiah Identified*, page 2). Mr. Kresta felt that he should call Cumbey before the interview and find out what she knew about the author. Cumbey, of course, informed him of Evenson's deception. This led Kresta to call us as well as others for more information.

The radio program started out in a peaceful way as Al Kresta began questioning Darrick Evenson about his book and concerning his involvement in the New Age movement. The fireworks, however, began shortly after Kresta asked Evenson if he had written any other books. He replied that he had written another book entitled, *The Secret Message of the Zodiac* for Here's Life Publishers. (Here's Life is a noted Christian publishing company that has published books by Josh McDowell.) Evenson stated that the purpose of that book "was to be like a **Trojan horse** for New Agers." To Evenson's surprise, Kresta then asked if he had also published "a book called *The Gainsayers*?" Evenson responded truthfully to that question: "**Yeah, I did.**" Kresta then asked if it was true that he was "writing as a Mormon" in that book. The following dialogue then ensued:

EVENSON: Well, what I do is I'm also going to do one for the Masons and I'm also going to do one for the Catholics.

KRESTA: Are you a Mormon?

EVENSON: **No, I'm not.**

(Interview of Darrick Evenson on Al Kresta's radio program; transcribed from a tape-recording of "Talk From The Heart," April 23, 1991)

Darrick Evenson confessed that he had written material "under a few different names." He then began to show animosity towards Al Kresta and said, "I think it's very dishonest of you to know that you're supposed to **keep all my aliases that way** . . ." Evenson seemed to know that Constance Cumbey had exposed him. He, therefore, launched into an attack on the woman he had praised in his book. He spoke of her "many outrageous reactionary statements." He went on to say that one organization felt that she was "a nut" and implied that he held the same opinion.

Darrick Evenson told the radio audience that "Constance Cumbey believes that Jerald and Sandra Tanner, who have been preaching against Mormonism for thirty years . . . and who also published another book by Moody Monthly [Moody Press] — **she believes that Moody Monthly, Moody Bible Institute, is a Mormon front.** She believes that **Jerald and Sandra Tanner are also actually Mormons** because this is what Ed Decker has told her, and she believes it." Constance Cumbey was listening to the program on her radio and when she heard this statement about us and Moody Press she called Al Kresta on the phone. Mr. Kresta asked her if Moody was a "front for the Mormon Church"? Cumbey responded: "That is pure fiction . . . I've never heard that in my life except out of Troy—Darrick Evenson's mouth just a minute ago. That's what prompted my phone call to you."

Later in the interview, Darrick Evenson made this comment to Constance Cumbey: "You told me that Jerald and Sandra Tanner were, in fact, **Mormon fronts.**" In her reply, Cumbey said, "I never told you that . . . No, I've never made such a statement to you." Evenson then claimed that Cumbey had told him that "the late Dr. Walter R. Martin, was probably . . . also a Mormon front." Although Constance Cumbey admitted that she had serious disagreements with Walter Martin over the New Age Movement, she denied the allegation that she had said he was a "Mormon front": "No, I never made that statement . . ."

In the same interview Darrick Evenson denied again that he was a Mormon: "**I'm not a Mormon.** I'm not a Mason. I'm not a Catholic. I'm not a Satanist. I'm not a New Ager." On another part of the tape Evenson stated: "I wrote for the Masons as being a Mason. I wrote for the Mormons as being a Mormon. I wrote for the New Agers **as being a New Ager, which I was.** I was raised in that. I'm also going to write a book for the Catholics." When Al Kresta asked Evenson if he was going to write as though he were an ex-Catholic, Mr. Evenson responded: "No . . . I was going to write . . . **as if I was a Catholic** . . ." When Kresta continued to point out the deceptive methods that Darrick Evenson was using, Evenson finally became upset with him and emphatically stated, "Sir, sir, **you are a liar!**" According to Al Kresta, Mr. Evenson later threatened that the station would be hearing from his lawyer.

Now that we know what a treacherous game Darrick Evenson was playing, we wonder if this might help explain how some Mormon critics came to the conclusion that we were really spies who were working for the Mormon Church. Although the idea probably did not originate with Mr. Evenson, he certainly wanted Ed Decker to believe that we were negotiating with the Browns to obtain material against him. After the rumor concerning us secretly working for the Mormon Church was spread about, there was a claim put forth that "in the last few weeks, there has been information from several high level LDS sources" which confirmed the charge. It was alleged that this secret information was "given to two or more people, and on several occasions." No information, however, was given as to whether this important knowledge was derived from a telephone conversation or delivered in person. It is certainly possible that Darrick Evenson or others working with him in his "Trojan horse" scheme could have impersonated LDS officials. Although we have no real evidence that this did in fact occur, it would certainly be the type of thing that would fit very well in Mr. Evenson's plan of attack—i. e., to stir up serious trouble between those involved in ministries.

In any case, shortly after Darrick Evenson was interviewed on Al Kresta's program, he was interviewed on the "Steel On Steel" radio program on KLTT in Colorado. In spite of the fact that he had previously admitted on the Detroit radio station that he was the "Darrick Evenson" who wrote the book *The Gainsayers*, when he was questioned on KLTT he denied

that fact. He acknowledged, however, that he “deceived” the people in the New Age movement to gain his information. He claimed that he had “also infiltrated other groups in order to get information I need . . . I’ve done that with the Mormons. I’ve done that with the Masons, and I’m trying to do that with the Jehovah’s Witnesses . . .” When he (“Troy Lawrence”) was first asked if he was, in fact, Darrick Evenson, he evaded the issue. He revealed, however, that he had “**a number of pseudonyms and I work with a number of individuals.**” He went on to state that he would not “reveal who I’m working with; I’m not going to reveal my other pseudonyms.”

Darrick Evenson said that “back in 1987 I started working **with individuals** for ideas and ways to get material to witness to different cultists and whatever in their hands . . .” When he was asked later in the interview what he knew about Darrick Evenson, he replied: “I’m working with him.” He went on to state, “I’m not that individual.” Shortly after that, however, Constance Cumbey called in on the phone and affirmed that Troy Lawrence and Darrick Evenson “are the same” individual and that “the original [manuscript] copies I have of the book, *New Age Messiah Identified*, are signed ‘Darrick T. Evenson.’”

On May 20, 1991, Darrick Evenson provided a letter to Huntington House Publishers in which he made the preposterous claim that his book, *The Gainsayers*, was actually a book which was critical of the Mormon Church. Moreover, notwithstanding his public denial on KLTT, in the letter to Huntington House Mr. Evenson admitted that he and Troy Lawrence were actually the same person. The following is taken from Darrick Evenson’s letter (the original is almost entirely in capital letters):

There have been reports surfacing from certain parties that I, Darrick Evenson (Troy Lawrence) am a Mormon. The rumors of me **being a Mormon have been greatly exaggerated!!!** In other words, **yes, I did write a book supposedly “for” the Mormon Church.** However, all one needs to do to recognize my methods is to read the back cover of *New Age Messiah Identified*. On the back cover it says that I “played the part” of a New Age advocate after my conversion to Christianity. **I even helped write several pro-New Age articles.** All this was for the same reason a cop pretends to be a drug smuggler, or a spy pretends to work for the other side.

In *The Gainsayers* I revealed thus far “secret” Mormon Church doctrines that rank-and-file Mormons never see. They read it because it seems to defend Mormonism, but does it? It does condemn certain exaggerations and misinformation by the film “The God Makers” . . . This was the “key” that set the book before thousands of Mormon eyes . . . I used such criticism as the bait . . . The Mormons took it, and now the secret doctrines of Mormonism is being shown to thousands of Mormons who would have never have known otherwise.

Huntington House never knew about “The Gainsayers” until Constance Cumbey told them. I didn’t tell them because I wanted to be a respected Christian publisher before all else . . . and Huntington House just barely printed the book in the first place. I didn’t want to give them one more thing to think about. I wanted to be published! . . .

If I am a Mormon, or a Mason, or a New Ager, or just a guy out for a buck or a laugh, then Huntington House cannot be blamed. . . . I did my homework, and they did their’s to the best of their ability. . . . if I am a Christian, then Decker and Constance has injured a good work for selfish reasons. Keep an eye on both of them for the next few years, and I think you’ll see who has been giving you a line. (Letter by Darrick Evenson to Huntington House Publishers, dated May 20, 1991)

The reader will remember that when Darrick Evenson was on WMUZ Radio, he was asked if he were a Mormon. He

replied, “**I’m not a Mormon.**” When he was asked a second time, he gave the same answer. All of the evidence, however, indicates that Mr. Evenson has been a Mormon for many years. In the letter published in Robert and Rosemary Browns’ book, *They Lie In Wait To Deceive*, Darrick Evenson wrote that in “February of 1979” he was “a convert of a few months.” He claimed that for a while he had been disturbed by “anti-Mormon” literature but at the time he wrote the letter (October 26, 1981), he had “been fully active for more than a year, and I am now saving up for my mission.”

In his book, *The Gainsayers*, Mr. Evenson said that he “served a mission in California” (page 22). Eric Pement has written an article entitled, “Troy Lawrence Identified,” which was published in *Cornerstone* magazine, vol. 20, no. 95, 1991. In this article (page 16) we find that the Missionary Department of the Mormon Church has confirmed to Mr. Pement that Darrick T. Evenson completed an 18-month mission for the church: “According to the Missionary Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Darrick T. Evenson was a full-time Mormon missionary from July 1983 to January 1985, stationed in San Jose, Calif.”

Our own records show that Evenson had us send material to him in October 1983. The address given was 220 Bery Court #5, Morgan Hills, California. A map shows that Morgan Hills is close to San Jose. In June, 1984, Mr. Evenson sent a letter to Bill McKeever from “Mountain View”—another city located near San Jose.

In order to serve on a mission for the church a man has to be a member of the church in good standing. Moreover, he must be ordained an Elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood and receive his endowments in a secret ritual in a Mormon temple. While serving on his mission he is supposed to use the word “Elder” before his name. In the letter to Mr. McKeever, Darrick conforms to this pattern. His name is signed, “Elder Darrick Evenson.” From the evidence presented it is evident that Darrick Evenson was indeed a missionary for the Mormon Church.

It seems very curious that Darrick Evenson would now deny the church he has defended for so many years. While we can not be certain of his motive, it may be possible that he wants to spare his church the embarrassment that is certain to follow the unveiling of his duplicity. If Mr. Evenson were able to convince people that he never really was a Mormon, he could place the whole scandal in a different light. In his book *New Age Messiah Identified*, Evenson would have us believe that he is a “born-again” Christian: “I . . . became a **born-again Christian** in 1984.” (page 7) On page 47 he describes himself as a “fundamentalist” Christian, and on page 199 he says: “I discovered, to my surprise, that **Evangelical Christianity** was the only system consistent with the observable facts. After my intellectual conversion, I had a **born-again** experience.”

Prior to his visit to our bookstore on April 22, 1991, Darrick Evenson continually stressed that Mormonism was the true form of Christianity. This idea is clearly set forth on page 101 of his book, *The Gainsayers*:

Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God. **Joseph the Prophet** is the high Prophet of God over the sixth dispensation, and the prophet-herald of Christ. *If one rejects the herald the King has sent, he likewise rejects the King that sent him.* . . . Jesus is the Christ, and **Joseph is His Prophet.**

In his last visit to our bookstore, Mr. Evenson said that he believed in the Bahai religion and that this group fulfilled one of the prophecies given by Joseph Smith. As we have noted earlier, on this occasion Evenson used some very crude and insulting language to two women who were in the bookstore. Sandra

finally asked him how he could claim to be a Christian and talk that way. He responded: “**Who said I claim to be a Christian?**” This was a surprising statement to be coming from the mouth of a man who previously claimed to be a member of an organization he felt was Christ’s true church on earth—i.e., Mormonism.

While Darrick Evenson seemed to be denying that he was any type of Christian when he visited our bookstore, he has subsequently maintained on radio stations that he is, in fact, a Fundamentalist Christian who was “born-again” in 1984. If Mr. Evenson could successfully palm off this deception on the public, he would save Mormonism from a great deal of embarrassment. According to this scenario, Evenson would not be a Mormon who had gone astray and deliberately set out to deceive Christian publishers and those who have ministries to Mormons; instead, he would be a “born-again” Christian who used unethical means to try to destroy Mormonism! Instead of being an embarrassment to the Mormon Church, he would be pointed out as a wicked outsider who was persecuting the LDS faith. We, of course, do not believe that it is possible for Mr. Evenson to pull off such a brazen deception. The facts all point in the opposite direction.

It also seems likely that a financial motive might have played a part in Darrick Evenson’s decision to repudiate Mormonism. In his book, *The Gainsayers*, Mr. Evenson accused ex-Mormons of profiting from their work on Mormonism:

While working in the anti-LDS movement, I also observed several instances in which anti-Mormons tried to fabricate or exaggerate their Mormon backgrounds. They would attempt to establish that they somehow held stature or prominence among the Latter-day Saints before leaving the LDS Church. . . . It also became increasingly clear to me that their **deceptive teachings and half-truths** were the very **antithesis of the gospel of Jesus Christ**. . . . their anti-Mormon claims and assertions fell, one by one . . .

I regained my testimony of the Gospel and Church of Jesus Christ . . . I was back among the Saints of the Most High . . . I also discovered that **if one will check the statements, claims, and credentials of most of the outspoken anti-Mormon adversaries, he will eventually discover just who is telling the truth and who is opposing the Lord’s work**. . . .

The only difference between being an ex-Mormon and being an “ex” anything else is that **you can make a profit being an ex-Mormon**, even making it a full-time occupation! . . .

So, if anyone wants to ask the Latter-day Saints what they believe, the Saints are more than happy to tell them. And if anyone wants to know what the anti-Mormons are saying, the Saints will show them what the anti’s are saying in books that weigh both sides of the argument. An offering plate won’t be passed in front of them, and **the Saints won’t ask for love offerings** or send them a price list! (*The Gainsayers*, pages 20, 22-25)

It is interesting to note that after he wrote his book, *New Age Messiah Identified*, Darrick Evenson himself set out to speak in Protestant churches and received “love offerings.” We know that in one church in Arizona he received \$50 for a short presentation. Moreover, in the back of his book, he offers his *World Crusade Journal* for “\$12.00” a year and asks for gifts: “We would appreciate any financial support to our ministry; that support will allow us to continue bringing the Gospel of Jesus to New Agers across the nation.”

While Darrick Evenson probably made some money from his book attacking ministries to Mormons, he apparently had far greater success with his books concerning the zodiac and the New Age movement which were published by Christian

publishers. We have been told that Mr. Evenson thought that his book, *New Age Messiah Identified* would bring him about \$50,000 the first year and that there were plans to eventually market about 200,000 copies! One of Mr. Evenson’s associates claimed that Evenson felt that he would be financially secure for the rest of his life because of this book. When his mask began to fall off, he found himself faced with a financial dilemma. If he admitted that he was really a Mormon, he would probably lose all royalties from the Christian publishers. He had misrepresented himself to them as someone who was a New Ager and was “born again” in 1984. Since he served as a missionary for the Mormon Church from July 1983 to January 1985, he could not have become an “Evangelical Christian” in 1984.

In his book, *The Gainsayers*, page 16, he had an entirely different story; he maintained that he attended a “Protestant church” when he was a young man: “I accepted the Lord as my personal Savior when I was fifteen.” According to the chronology Evenson gave in the Browns’ book, this would have been in the mid-1970’s—about eight years earlier than the date given in *New Age Messiah Identified*, page 7—i. e., “1984”) In *The Gainsayers*, pages 16-17, he stated that “When I was eighteen, I was invited to services of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. . . . after considerable study and preparation, I was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints . . . and shortly thereafter, after more prayer and study, I received a personal testimony that Jesus truly was the Christ, and that Joseph Smith was His Prophet.”

In the *New Age Messiah Identified*, however, Darrick Evenson claimed he was brought up as an occultist:

I was raised a Theosophist . . . I was taught to view Christians, or at least the “fundamentalist” variety, as bizarre, fanatical, ignorant, and, above all, dangerous. . . . In my young adulthood I became an ardent **student of the occult**. I initiated several of my friends **into the occult**. Later, after I became a born-again believer, I used the contacts and knowledge that I had in the occult to go “undercover” back into the New Age. (page 46)

Besides these contradictory stories, Darrick Evenson also referred to his own Mormon religion as one of the “cults” that teach false doctrines. We find the following in *New Age Messiah Identified*:

Here we see a genuine delineation between the truth of the Gospel and the **lies of the cults**. True Christians believe in the resurrection of the body. Jehovah’s Witnesses, Moonies, all the various **cults** and aberrations of Christian thought, deny the reality of the physical resurrection. Some **Mormons** claim to believe in the resurrection of the body, but their **error** lines up with the esotericists in **their belief that God is a man who advanced to a higher level of perfection**. Not dissimilar to Creme’s and other secret temple teachings of the esoteric mystery religions. Only those who hold to the Scriptures as God’s revelation, have any chance of not being deceived. (*New Age Messiah Identified*, page 55)

The **Cults** are growing at alarming rates: **Mormonism**, Russellism (Jehovah’s Witnesses, etc.), and even the lesser cults, such as Armstrongism, are growing so fast that they can’t build churches fast enough to house their converts. . . . Something needs to be done. (*Ibid.*, page 197)

Darrick Evenson’s duplicity is clearly revealed by the following information which has come to light. In his book, *The Gainsayers*, Evenson vigorously attacks the film, “The God

Makers.” On page 166 of his book, Mr. Evenson commented: “This chapter has been a brief refutation of some of the major accusations that are the very foundation of the film and book ‘The God Makers’ and other similar anti-Mormon works. Have the gainsayers been accurate in portraying what Latter-day Saints ‘really’ believe? It is obvious that accuracy has not been their objective. Instead, they have **intentionally sought to distort the truth and malign the Saints.**” Chapter 6 of Evenson’s book is entitled, “‘The God Makers’ Film: An Example of Extreme Anti-Mormon Propaganda.” This 24-page chapter is devoted to explaining and refuting the charges of the films, “The God Makers” and “Temple of the God Makers.”

One would think that after making such an attack on the two films mentioned above, Darrick Evenson would have nothing but contempt for those who had a part in producing them. As unbelievable as it may seem, however, in the “Acknowledgments” for his new book Mr. Evenson pays tribute to Pat Matrisciana: “I would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for making this book possible: Pat Matrisciana of Jeremiah Films . . .” (*New Age Messiah Identified*, page v). It is a well-known fact that Pat Matrisciana’s Jeremiah Films did “The God Makers” and “Temple of the God Makers” for Ed Decker’s organization!

In his article in *Cornerstone* magazine, page 24, Eric Pement reveals that there is even more to the story:

“Troy Lawrence” met Pat Matrisciana, owner of Jeremiah Films, at a prophecy conference in 1989 and told Matrisciana he was a former New Ager. He said he’d been converted after reading *Gods of the New Age*, written in 1985 by Pat’s wife, Caryl. “Troy” wanted to publish a new manuscript and needed help finding a publisher. Pat contacted Huntington House on his behalf. (Pat had no idea Darrick/Troy had just published a book attacking Pat’s film *The Godmakers* as a “perverted” portrayal of Mormon doctrine.) Ironically, when his New Age book *Messiah Identified* came in 1991, “Troy” said he had been converted through reading Constance Cumbey’s *Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow* in 1984!”

In April, 1991, Darrick Evenson must have realized that his devious past had caught up with him. If he admitted he was really a Mormon who was posing as an orthodox Christian, he stood in danger of losing his royalties, “love offerings” from churches and donations to a so-called non-profit organization he had set up. Mr. Evenson chose to repudiate his connection with Mormonism and maintain that he was really a “born-again” believer in the Evangelical Protestant faith. This desperate action, however, will probably not save Evenson’s reputation as a “Christian” writer.

Although we may never know for certain, we feel that at one time Darrick Evenson really believed the Mormon faith. His book, *The Gainsayers*, which was published two years before *New Age Messiah Identified*, may really reflect the views he held at the time he penned it. He probably believed that Mormonism was the only true religion and that those who attack it must be very evil and even satanically inspired. Below are some interesting quotations from the book. The reader will note his fervent appeals for honesty and truth:

The *gainsayers* of today are well organized and financed. . . . They’re aggressive and rapidly expanding their outreach . . . They spread many *false* and slanted reports about the Church. Their anti-Mormon propaganda frequently utilizes numerous “yellow journalism” techniques of *deception* to mislead the perceptions of those who read it. . . .

I was rather upset, and I was determined to speak with the leaders of the ministry in order to set things straight. I was beginning to feel that **it wasn’t ethical to use lies** in order to destroy what they thought was a lie; it didn’t make sense to me. (*The Gainsayers*, pages 14, 15, 20)

. . . the truth is that every accusation can be answered to not only refute it, but to bring an added testimony that Jesus is the Christ, and Joseph is His latter-day prophet! . . . it is the work of Satan to oppose the work of God by trying to deceive men into believing that the truth is a lie and his lie the truth. His influence is clearly seen on the anti-Christ movement against the Saints in both former and latter-days! . . .

Who are the *gainsayers*? Today as in ancient times, **they are anti-Christ**s who do all they can to thwart the true work of God. (*Ibid.*, pages 94-95, 100)

. . . I heard about incidents where Ex-Mormons for Jesus (who probably had never been Mormons) were attending Testimony Meetings at local LDS Church meetinghouses, going up to the microphone, and giving their ‘testimonies’ that Joseph Smith was a false prophet and that the Mormon Church was false as well.

This sickened my very soul! How could anyone who professed to believe in Christ deceptively approach and enter any church with such audacious and deceptive conduct as that? . . . I couldn’t justify this conduct in my heart, to myself, or to my Lord. . . . I spoke with several Ex-Mormons for Jesus . . . I explained to them how I felt and how I couldn’t justify the deception involved in their movement to myself. I began to point out to them the deceptive nature of some of their witnessing techniques and to refute their claims. . . . I kept them on one subject . . . asking them how it could possibly be justified for them to lie and misrepresent in the name of Christ? (*Ibid.*, pages 106-107)

While it could be argued that these comments were only part of an act by Darrick Evenson, we are inclined to believe that they represented his true feelings about Mormonism. We tend to believe that he really felt that Mormonism was true and that he was going to stop the mouths of the “gainsayers.” His zealous and hostile attitude toward Mormon critics might even be compared to Apostle Paul’s confrontations with Christians before he became converted to their faith.

When he began his research Darrick Evenson may have really believed that the Mormon Church was led by revelation. In his book, page 138, he stated: “Sandra Tanner . . . says she knows of a Mormon bishop that doesn’t believe in Mormonism. Again, no name is given.” Mr. Evenson could not seem to believe that this was the case and came down to the bookstore to question her on this matter. She, of course, did not reveal the bishop’s name. While this did not set very well with Evenson, some time later he returned and admitted that he himself had encountered a bishop who did not believe. Like many others, Darrick Evenson could have started out as a true believer, but when he learned how devastating the case is against Mormonism he may have lost faith in all religion.

Non-Profit?

On pages 198-199 of *New Age Messiah Identified*, Darrick Evenson claimed that he had a publication known as “*The World Crusade Journal*” and had also set up a nonprofit organization to counter cults and the occult: “*The World Crusade Journal* is the official publication of *The Society for the Propagation*

& *Revival of the Gospel, Incorporated*. You can call us the S.P.R.G. We are named after the first Protestant missionary society: The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG).” One page 201 of his book, Mr. Evenson stated: “All donations to the S.P.R.G. Inc. are **tax deductible**.” On the next page the address for his non-profit organization is given: “S.P.R.G. Inc., P.O. Box 9535, Tacoma, WA 98409.” Toward the bottom of the page we read that “The Society for the Propagation and Revival of the Gospel, Incorporated, is a non-profit evangelistic organization . . .”

In a letter to Huntington House Publishers, dated May 2, 1991, Ed Decker claimed that a check with the IRS showed that Darrick Evenson had never set up such an organization: “. . . we were able to get access to the IRS’s national database for non-profit Corporations this morning. . . . Darrick’s SPRG is nowhere in the system. Name similarity checks showed nothing either. . . . This means that the book offers tax receipts for a non-existent corporation with a fraudulent offer of Federal Tax deductible receipts.” An organization which desires to gain non-profit status has to be incorporated in some state before it can even begin to be considered by the Federal Government. As we have shown, the address Darrick Evenson lists for his “non-profit” organization is in Tacoma, Washington. Mr. Decker, however, claimed on Mike Mistretta’s radio program that a check with the state of Washington revealed no such organization. Both Decker and Mistretta, however, stated that in a tape recorded conversation Mr. Evenson claimed that he had really set the organization up in Arizona. Mike Mistretta, therefore, checked with the state of Arizona and found nothing that even resembled the name that Evenson had given.

Although such an organization was never actually set up in Arizona, information which we have shows that at one time Darrick Evenson was hoping to be involved with Robert Brown in a new non-profit organization in Arizona. This information came from Evenson himself. Mr. Evenson seems to have felt that he could frighten us by revealing what he and other Mormons were planning to do to oppose our work. On June 20, 1988, he sent us a 19-page document purporting to be a “Proposal For A Non-Profit Organization For The Defense Of The Faith.” The organization was to be known as the “Watchtower Committee.” In this document we find the following:

In January of 1977, Dr. Heber Wolsey—then head of the Church Public Communication Department . . . declared, “You know, what we *really* need is a sort of LDS Anti-Defamation League like our Jewish friends have formed to fight anti-Semitism.” . . . Since that speech the anti-LDS Movement has grown tremendously, and their anti-LDS campaign has spread across the nation and globe . . . Many people, some claim ten thousand or more, have left the Church as a result of this disinformation campaign, and untold numbers have either stopped taking the missionary lessons or have refused to investigate the Church because of negative information they have been given by anti-LDS ministers or missionaries. . . . Anti-LDS books and articles are now among the top selling “Christian” books in the nation, and there’s no end in sight. . . . There has definately [*sic*] been an impact! . . .

It is proposed that a non-profit organization be formed to counter the campaign of misinformation promulgated [*sic*] by the powerful anti-LDS Movement. The organization will essentially be the “Anti-Defamation League” that Br. Wolsey called for . . . it will provide the Saints with reasonable and scriptural ans[*w*]ers to anti-LDS allegations and accusations. . . . The organization [*sic*] will also monitor anti-LDS activities . . .

Information will be gathered and organized on the anti-LDS Movement and message. Researchers will then investigate the claims, credentials, and allegations of anti-LDS ministers, their publications, and its impact on the Saints. When the *truth* is documented it will be prepared and published in either books, cassette tapes, video tapes, pamphlet[s], or by the film media. . . . The Watchtower Committee will serve as the umbrella organization for all groups and individuals who wish to defend the faith. . . .

#14. SPECIAL SERVICES shall be responsible for the OPERATIONS of the Committee. Because of the sensitive, and sometimes *hazardous*, nature of this work the Committee shall deem some OPERATIONS overt and some covert. It shall be the job of SPECIAL SERVICES to conduct OPERATIONS; meaning activities of a special nature not covered by the other departments of the Committee. . . .

We need your help . . . Your financial support is needed, so that we may continue to research and publish the truth about those who misrepresent the Church and its teachings. Those that contribute at least \$25 will receive one year’s issues of *THE WATCHMAN QUARTERLY JOURNAL*. We welcome any donation, large or small. Tax deductible contributions may be sent to: The Committee for Latter-day Research, P.O. Box 2671, Mesa AZ 85204. . . . Please write to us today at the above address, or phone (602) 834-5676.” (*Proposal* . . . pages 2, 8, 9, 13, 15)

It is interesting to note that the address given, “P.O. Box 2671, Mesa AZ 85204,” is the same as Brownsworth Publishing Co., Inc. (see the title page of *They In Wait To Deceive*, vol. 3). This is the publishing company that markets the Browns’ books. The name “Brownsworth” may be a combination of the name Brown with the last six letters of the name of the editor of *They Lie In Wait To Deceive* volumes. Her name is Barbara Ellsworth. In any case, the phone number listed in the *Proposal* is the same number listed on the back cover of volumes two and three of the Browns’ books, *They Lie In Wait To Deceive*: “INQUIRES: (602) 834-5676.” This certainly seems to make it clear that Darrick Evenson was planning on working hand-in-hand with the Browns in this project. What the Browns thought about the matter might be another story.

In a footnote on page 15 of the document, we read that “many people have contributed to this effort under its former name—the Religious Research Association.” This was an organization which was set up by the Browns (see *They Lie In Wait To Deceive*, vol. 2, page 457). The *Proposal* also suggested that the Browns’ books would be an important part of the plan: “The LATTER-DAY RESEARCH ASSOCIATES are responsible for the VOLUME SERIES entitled *They Lie in Wait To Deceive*.” It would appear, however, that the Browns and Darrick Evenson did not reach an agreement on setting up the organization set forth in the *Proposal*. It probably would have been very difficult to organize and maintain such a vast organization without the help of the Mormon Church itself.

In November, 1990, Darrick Evenson was in Arizona working on setting up an organization to counter Mormon critics. He no longer used the name “Watchman Committee” — this time it was to be called “Zion’s Camp Committee” or “ZCC.” On November 5, 1990, *The Arizona Latter-Day Sun*, a newspaper printed for Mormon people, devoted a good deal of space concerning his attempt to organize the committee. We find the following in that article:

Arizona Latter-day Saints are invited to participate in a new organization for the defense of the Faith. The new group is called Zion’s Camp Committee. . . .

Many Arizona Latter-day Saints will remember the work of Robert and Rosemary Brown of Mesa. They have been writing “defense of the Faith” books since 1980. They literally put one well-known anti-Mormon permanently out-of-business . . .

The Browns will soon have volume four of their “They Lie In Wait to Deceive” series. Volume Four will be an expose of J. Edward Decker and The God Makers film. . . . Dr. Gilbert Scharffs, an Institute instructor at the University of Utah, wrote an exhaustive work entitled “The Truth About The God Makers.” . . . Dr. Scharffs is also now working on the Zion’s Camp Committee.

In 1985 Darrick Evenson, a former anti-Mormon, but now a returned missionary, wrote *The Gainsayers*. This book too, has proved to be very useful in helping people respond to the anti-LDS movement and messages.

“But haven’t the Brethren warned us not to debate with the anti-Mormons?”

“Yes, indeed, the purpose of Zion’s Camp Committee is not to debate anti-Mormons, but to provide missionaries and members with materials that will help them with investigators and new converts who, inevitably, come into contact with anti-Mormon writings or individuals,” says Evenson.

“The Brethren have stated that we should reply ‘positively’ to our critics. This can only be done if people have the right information, and know how to use it rightly as well. Zion’s Camp Committee has, collectively, hundreds of years of experience in this field.” . . .

A publication is now being prepared for LDS “defenders of the Faith” and their supporters. The newsletter is called “The Latter-day Saints’ Messenger & Advocate.” The Zion’s Camp Committee invites those interested to contact them.

The group is looking for LDS “defenders of the Faith,” and those who wish to support their effort in defending the Faith.

The article went on to refer the reader to “P.O. Box 1186, Provo, Utah 84603.” In addition, it gave a phone number in Arizona where Darrick Evenson could be contacted. The reader will notice that the article mentions a newsletter called “The Latter-day Saints’ Messenger & Advocate.” The *Proposal* that Mr. Evenson sent to us in 1988 also stated: “THE MESSENGER & ADVOCATE is the Committee NEWSLETTER.”

It is interesting to note that the newspaper article cited above mentioned that Dr. Gilbert Scharffs was “working on the Zion’s Camp Committee.” When we contacted Dr. Scharffs, he seemed to have no recollection of working on this particular committee. He did say, however, that Darrick Evenson had invited him to some of the meetings regarding a new organization he was trying to set up. Out of curiosity Scharffs attended “two or three meetings.” While he told Mr. Evenson that he “would help” him with questions that might arise, he did not want to be an official member of the organization. Later, however, when he read the first issue of *The Messenger & Advocate*, he was surprised to find his name listed on the “Advisory Board” of the organization.

At any rate, some time after sending us the *Proposal*, Mr. Evenson came to our bookstore. At that time he had a revised plan for the organization. He made a sketch on a small piece of paper which we still have in our possession. The words, “Watchtower Committee,” which were in the original *Proposal*, still appeared but they were no longer the name of the organization itself. The name “Zion’s Camp Committee” did not appear on this paper. The name of the organization was to be “S.P.R.G.” The reader will remember that Darrick Evenson later used this abbreviation when appealing for funds in his book, *New Age Messiah Identified*: “Address all correspondence to: S.P.R.G. Inc., P.O.

Box 9535, Tacoma, WA 98409.” On the sheet of paper Evenson left with us he did not specify what the letters “S.P.R.G.” stood for. We have already noted that in the book written for orthodox Christians, Evenson said the letters stood for “The Society for the Propagation & Revival of the Gospel.” Since the organization he informed us about was supposed to be for the purpose of countering Mormon critics and since the LDS Church claims to have the “restored gospel” of Jesus Christ, we speculated that the letters could have stood for something like the following: The Society for the Propagation of the **Restored Gospel**. An associate of Darrick Evenson confirmed that this was correct.

While we knew that Mr. Evenson wanted to set up such an organization to counter the work of Mormon critics, we had no reason to believe that he had actually set up a corporation. The reader will remember that the records for both Washington and Arizona revealed nothing about Darrick forming a corporation. On July 21, 1991, however, we received a very important phone call from an individual who informed us that he believed that Darrick Evenson did form a corporation in Utah. We found that this information was correct and obtained photocopies of the “Articles of Incorporation.” Mr. Evenson did indeed set up such an organization. Article I of this document reads as follows: “The name of the corporation shall be the following: THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE RESTORED GOSPEL, INC.” This corporation was “approved on the 5th day of July 1990.”

It is obvious that Darrick Evenson could not reveal to the publishers of his book, *New Age Messiah Identified*, that he had set up this organization in Utah because its name would clearly show that it was to promote Mormonism, not to fight the New Age movement and other cults! In any event, Utah law requires that there should be three trustees. Mr. Evenson, who was one of the trustees, gave his address as 340 East 600 North, No. 5 in Provo, Utah. Two other men are listed as trustees; one lives in Salt Lake City and the other in Mt. Vernon, Washington. We were particularly interested in the man who lives in Washington. His name is given as “Corbin Volluz.”

When we called Mr. Volluz, who is a lawyer, we found that he was very open and friendly. He said that he was interested in seeing some type of organization being set up to counter Mormon critics and had some interest in what Darrick Evenson proposed to him. He stated, however, that the appearance of his name on the Articles of Incorporation “was not with my consent.” He claimed he had never given Mr. Evenson permission to use his name and was surprised when he got a document from Evenson stating that he was treasurer of the organization! He later sent Darrick a letter asking that he refrain from using his name with regard to the organization.

The Articles of Incorporation are notarized by Martin S. Tanner, a lawyer who has a radio program on religion on KTKK in Salt Lake City. Mr. Tanner also seemed cordial and open about the matter. He said that he prepared the incorporation papers for Darrick Evenson. Although Evenson had to pay the filing fee charged by the state, Mr. Tanner did not charge him for his work on the papers. He did not believe that the organization ever got off the ground. He told Darrick Evenson that he could not claim that donations to the organization were tax deductible until he received approval from the Internal Revenue Service. He had no knowledge as to whether Mr. Evenson ever requested tax exempt status from the IRS.

On July 26, 1991, we checked with the IRS to see if Darrick Evenson had filed a request for a non-profit organization under the name he was using in Utah, “The Society for the Propagation

of the **Restored Gospel**.” The result was the same as before: no organization using that name has applied for tax-exempt status. It would appear, therefore, that unless Mr. Evenson can come forth with some evidence that there has been a mistake, he is involved in a fraudulent operation which is against the law.

We have recently been given a copy of a “Proposal” drawn up by Darrick Evenson for an organization known as “Zion’s Watchmen Committee.” It is dated “April 1990,” and is similar in many respects to the document we received in 1988. The Zion’s Watchmen Committee is put forth in this proposal as “A Division of The Society for the Propagation of the Restored Gospel. Darrick Evenson is listed on page 11 of this document as the “Director” of the organization. Like the first organization Mr. Evenson tried to set up, the purpose of Zion’s Watchmen Committee was “to counter the campaign of misinformation promulgated by the wealthy and powerful anti-LDS Movement.” This document has a great deal of information on the work of the Browns and indicates that the Browns’ “Religious Research Association was the forerunner of the Zion’s Watchmen Committee of The Society for the Propagation of the Restored Gospel.”

Death Threats

In the *Salt Lake City Messenger* for July 1990, we reported that Ed Decker claimed he had received a “call from a man who told him he was part of an assassination team that received directions from a member of the First Presidency in the Mormon Church. According to Decker, the man said that three people had been marked for death. One of the authors (Jerald Tanner) was among that number and was to be killed with a bomb.” We found it very hard to believe that a member of the First Presidency would be involved with an assassination team. That they would use a bomb to commit a murder seemed even more unlikely. The Hofmann scandal clearly demonstrated how much publicity the use of bombs can generate. Would the Mormon leaders be so foolish as to bring national attention to the problems they have with us by using a bomb?

We had almost forgotten about this supposed threat to our lives when Darrick Evenson came into our bookstore on April 22, 1991. After the confrontation which ensued and Mr. Evenson was asked to leave the premises, he made a very strange statement; he referred to the murderous plan mentioned above and suggested that there may really be something to it and that we should take it as being a serious threat. While we still could not believe that a member of the First Presidency [Gordon B. Hinckley] would be involved in such a project, we began to wonder what Evenson knew about the phone call. Could it be possible that he or one of his associates made such a call in an attempt to cause fear and dissension among the ministries? He, in fact, knew that Ed Decker had been leveling serious charges against Hinckley for some time and seemed to be very angry about the matter. Perhaps he wanted Decker to make some foolish move against Hinckley. While we may never know whether Darrick Evenson knew anything about the origin of the mysterious phone call, it seems obvious that he was so upset about being asked to leave our bookstore that he used the incident in an attempt to strike terror into our hearts.

From all that we can learn, Darrick Evenson has a reputation for being very combative. In the interview on Mike Mistretta’s radio program on KHEP, Ed Decker suggested that Darrick Evenson may be a dangerous man:

... every single person I’ve talked to, Mormons included, have just said to me in the final analysis because of his extreme hatred toward me ... they’ve said, “Ed, this man is dangerous. He scares me.” ... just about every single person I’ve spoken to

[have said], “he scares me.” ... one man said, “you know I’m a married man with four kids, I’m a Mormon but you know my wife gets real nervous around him ... he scares us.”

Darrick Evenson, however, claims that it is the other way around—he is the one who is being persecuted and “assaulted” by over zealous Mormon critics and people involved in the New Age movement. In his letter to the Browns, *They Lie In Wait To Deceive*, vol. 1, 2nd edition, page 280, Mr. Evenson claims that some Mormon critics have cursed him “to the eternal flames of Hell to be tortured continually forever. I have even been assaulted on several occasions.”

On the back cover of *New Age Messiah Identified*, we read:

After years of undercover investigation, late night clandestine meetings and disguised rendezvous with New Age elite, Troy Lawrence unveils the secret plans spawned by the occult hierarchy. Placing his life on the line, this former disciple of Benjamin Creme ... provides photos of the New Age Messiah ... “I’ve placed my life in danger to get this information out,” says Lawrence, “we all know what has happened to some who have come out of the New Age movement ...”

On page 3 of his book, Darrick Evenson related:

But the paper trail ... led me from California to Karachi ... from the Ahmadiyya movement to a small but powerful group called the “Hassasines.” A group so dangerous we derive the term “assassins” from them.

My life has been threatened many times, I have been physically attacked, and I’ve even been the victim of a high-speed chase—all in the hope of silencing me. I have, however, never regretted my decision to go public (not even after I learned that fellow laborer Randall Baer had been mysteriously killed).

Darrick Evenson would have us believe that it was necessary for him to use the alias “Troy Lawrence” because he feared assassination. We, of course, believe that the real reason was that he wished to hide his real identity from Mormons and those who criticized the LDS Church.

In 1990, Mr. Evenson came to the Salt Lake Alliance Church to hear a presentation on Mormonism by Dick Baer. He took offense over what was said and began to interrupt the meeting. The situation became so serious that Pastor Gary Atwood finally had to ask him to leave. Evenson left the building but before doing so threatened that he would “get” the pastor! For some time he paced back and forth on the sidewalk in front of the church as though he were stalking the pastor. Although those who were present feared for Pastor Atwood’s safety, Mr. Evenson finally left the area. Fortunately, he has never returned to the church.

Some of the Latter-day Saints we talked to about Darrick Evenson were concerned about his violent outbursts and even apologized for his behavior. At least two Mormons felt that he could be dangerous to others. One, in fact, suggested that he was like a “keg of dynamite ready to go off.”

Because of Darrick Evenson’s contentious attitude and unpredictable behavior, we have been somewhat concerned about reporting this story. We felt, however, that it was very important for people to have this information. We would ask those who have an interest in our ministry to hold us up in prayer. In addition, the reader should remember Mr. Evenson in prayer. After all, he has probably experienced a great deal of emotional distress in his long and unsuccessful battle to counter critics of the Mormon Church. He put a great deal of effort into trying to set up a large and powerful organization that would silence the “gainsayers,” and must have been very disappointed when he was unable to rally the support he envisioned. Moreover,

his attempt to establish himself as an important writer on the occult has been brought to a screeching halt by the exposure of his dual identity. Darrick's greatest need is to find peace with God through submission to Jesus Christ.

Serious Questions

Darrick Evenson's deceitful actions have placed a number of publishers in an embarrassing position. In his article in *Cornerstone* magazine, page 24, Eric Pement informs us that Here's Life Publishers "has ceased publication" of Evenson's book, *The Secret Message of the Zodiac*, and that "full credit will be given for returns of Zodiac." On July 16, 1991, we contacted Huntington House Publishers and were told that *The New Age Messiah Identified*, was "indefinitely" out of stock and that there were no plans to republish it at the present time.

Mormon publisher Duane Crowther, owner of Horizon Publishers, finds himself in a very awkward position. He himself has played an important role in defending the church against its critics. Mr. Crowther, for example, has produced a cassette tape entitled, *Recognizing Techniques of Deception in Anti-Mormon Literature*. In a printed summary of his tape, Mr. Crowther has "Ten Questions to Ask About the Critic." In this list we find the following:

3. Do I perceive him to be trustworthy, and a person of integrity?
4. Is he a seeker after truth, who refrains from misrepresenting my church's doctrines and history? . . .
9. Do I feel the Holy Spirit in him, and in me, when he talks to me, or when I read his writings?

Duane Crowther also recommends that when "a critic attacks the Church, evaluate the integrity of both his literature and the critic himself . . ." Mr. Crowther appeals to Christians to be honest about what they promote: "Christians are faced with a growing problem of ethics. Should Christian bookstores stock religious literature which attacks various denominations when those books are shown to rely heavily on yellow journalism techniques? Should individuals read them or quote from them?"

After making these solemn warnings concerning responsibility, Duane Crowther finds himself in the position of being the publisher of a book written by a man who seems to be without principle. One would think that Mr. Crowther would be so convicted by his own statements that he would immediately cease selling the book. Unfortunately, however, this has not been the case. Eric Pement says that "Evenson's Mormon publisher, Duane Crowther, is uncertain whether he will continue printing *The Gainsayers*. He is aware Evenson is trying to play both sides of the fence, but told one of our researchers he is inclined to reprint the book anyway. He believes many of the arguments defending Mormonism are valid, since he rewrote much of the original manuscript himself to make it suitable for publication. *Gainsayers* is also one of their better-selling books" (*Cornerstone*, page 24).

On July 15, 1991, we called Duane Crowther's Horizon Publishers and found that his company was still selling copies of Evenson's book. Moreover, on July, 21, 1991, we went to the Mormon Church's own bookstore, Deseret Book, and found that it was also still selling *The Gainsayers*! The church seems to be very unpredictable with regard to what it will sell or ban. On July 11, 1991, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

A fast-selling book . . . was pulled off the shelves at Deseret Book and, according to the author, threatened with shredding this week.

"The Last Days: Types and Shadows from the Bible and Book of Mormon" by Avraham Gileadi was published in early June by Deseret Book, the publishing arm of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It quickly sold most of the 8,649 copies.

The debate over Mr. Gileadi's book has split Brigham Young University's department of religious education. . . .

The controversy surrounds a few obscure points of Mormon theology.

The remaining copies of Gileadi's book were not actually shredded, but the ban against its sale at Deseret Bookstore remains in effect. It is certainly strange that the Mormon Church leaders would allow the church's bookstore to pull Mr. Gileadi's book off the shelves and yet they allow the bookstore to continue selling Darrick Evenson's book. In May, 1991, Mike Mistretta sent thirteen of the top Mormon leaders copies of tapes which clearly reveal Darrick Evenson's duplicity. That the church leaders would allow their bookstore to continue selling Evenson's book after having this devastating evidence presented to them seems inexcusable. Moreover, Deseret Book continues to sell Paul Dunn's books and tapes even though Mr. Dunn has admitted that he made up his war and baseball stories (see the last issue of our newsletter). To the outsider, it would almost appear that squabbles over minor doctrinal points have become more important to church leaders than the veracity of the people who write the books they sell.

The Darrick Evenson affair also has some important implications for Christian publishers. It is clear that publishers must be more careful about rushing into print with sensational stories. When a person professing to be a Christian writer comes forth with a sensational story but desires to use an alias this should throw up a red flag. In the case of Mr. Evenson, he claimed to his publisher, Huntington House, that he was converted to Christianity and then went back into the Tara Center to find out the identity of "Lord Maitreya." The question naturally arises as to how he could do this and not use deception. According to the story, there were "years of undercover investigation, late night clandestine meetings and disguised rendezvous with New Age elite . . ." In his article in *Cornerstone* magazine, page 24, Eric Pement observed:

We think his excuse for these "Trojan horse" methods falls flat for several reasons: First and foremost, it's unbiblical. . . . God's people have "renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness," [2 Cor. 4:2] but have laid aside "all guile [and] hypocrisy" [1 Peter 2:1]. . . . if Evenson is doing "undercover" work in Mormonism, Masonry, the Watchtower, etc., he is making false professions and giving false testimony in the process.

We feel that there are still many missing pieces to the Darrick Evenson puzzle. For example, he claimed that "a number of individuals" were involved with him in his "Trojan horse" activities. (We have become aware of another man who professes to be a critic of the Mormon Church but is using an alias. Furthermore, in his writings this man sometimes refers to himself as "The Trojan Warrior." We have reason to believe that "The Trojan Warrior" is in contact with another man who has used an alias in the past.) Darrick Evenson has stated that he had "a number" of aliases (we only know of "Troy Lawrence") and that he wrote "under a few different names." While one of Darrick Evenson's associates would only confirm what we already knew about Mr. Evenson, he did state that he felt we only knew part of the tale. He claimed that it was an incredible story of intrigue. He frankly admitted that Evenson had infiltrated numerous Christian organizations which we do not know about.

When we printed the fact that Steven Mayfield was spying on Mormon critics, many people contacted us with information concerning him. If any of our readers recognize Darrick Evenson's picture as someone they know under another name or if they have any letters from him or any additional material concerning him we would appreciate knowing about it. Send any information to Utah Lighthouse Ministry, PO Box 1884, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110 or call us at 801-485-8894.

Besides the people we have mentioned earlier, we also want to thank a number of Mormons who have helped us by providing information concerning Darrick Evenson. Only one of them tried to talk us out of doing the story. Most of them felt that the story needed to be told to the public, and some even came to us with very important information. Three of the LDS people we talked to made it clear that they did not want their names to appear in the newsletter.

Mormon Scholars Scolded

As we indicated earlier, the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (F.A.R.M.S.) has made a vicious attack on some of the liberal Mormon scholars who are expressing doubts about the historicity of the Book of Mormon. These scholars are accused of being wolves in sheep's clothing, and one writer even refers to them as offering "a Trojan horse" to an unsuspecting Mormon audience. Although the controversy has been simmering for a number of years, it boiled over after Signature Books published a book edited by Dan Vogel entitled, *The Word of God: Essays on Mormon Scripture*. This book, which contains contributions from a number of Mormon scholars, did not set well with some of the Mormon professors at the church's Brigham Young University and others who are involved with F.A.R.M.S. Stephen E. Robinson, chairman of the Department of Ancient Scripture at BYU, was incensed with the book. He compared the views expressed in the work to those of Korihor, the notorious "Anti-Christ" who was "struck dumb" because of his unbelief (see Book of Mormon, Alma, chapter 30). Professor Robinson wrote:

Korihor's back, and this time **he's got a printing press**. Korihor, the infamous "alternate voice" in the Book of Mormon, insisted that "no man can know of anything which is to come" . . . In its continuing assault upon traditional Mormonism, Signature Books promotes with its recent and dubiously titled work, *The Word of God*, precisely these same naturalistic assumptions of the Korihor agenda in dealing with current Latter-day Saint beliefs. . . . this is a propaganda piece . . .

Variations on a single theme recur, offered like a Trojan horse, in most of the essays in *The Word of God* . . .

For years anti-Mormons have hammered the Church from the outside, insisting that Joseph Smith and the Latter-day Saint scriptures he produced were not what they claimed to be. By and large the Latter-day Saints simply ignored these attacks. Whether Signature Books and its authors will convince the Saints of the same hostile propositions by **attacking from the inside** remains to be seen. . . . What the anti-Mormons couldn't do with a frontal assault of contradiction, Signature and Vogel would now accomplish with a flanking maneuver of redefinition. . . .

The uniformity of perspective among the essays, the pervasive use of the straw man, and the absence of any opposing viewpoint identify *The Word of God* as a work of propaganda. . . .

I suppose by now it is clear that I did not like this book.

. . . Give me a Walter Martin anytime, a good stout wolf with his own fur on, instead of those more timid or sly parading around in their ridiculous fleeces with their teeth and tails hanging out. Give me "Ex-Mormons for Jesus" or the Moody Bible Tract Society, who are at least honest about their anti-Mormon agenda, instead of Signature Books camouflaged as a "Latter-day Saint" press. I prefer my anti-Mormons straight up. (*Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 3, 1991, pages 312, 314, 317-318)

Brigham Young University professor Louis Midgley also leveled his sights at Dan Vogel and Signature Books. He asserted that Vogel has not demonstrated "that his stance involves more than a murky sentimentalism or a confidence game aimed at accomplishing covertly what has not been done directly—namely, eradicating by radical transformation the faith resting on Joseph Smith's prophetic claims" (page 296). On page 299, he charged that Dan Vogel "found a new patron in George D. Smith, owner of Signature Books . . . part of Smith's effort involves showing that the Book of Mormon is not an authentic ancient history, that is, not simply true."

Professor Midgley felt that Vogel's book "leaves the restoration exactly where the enemies of the Church have always wanted it—repudiated" (page 305). Midgley also launched into an attack on *Joseph Smith's New York Reputation Reexamined*, published by Signature Books, and called the author, Roger I. Anderson, "a career apostate" (page 306).

These articles, printed by F.A.R.M.S., set off a train of events which eventually led to the possibility of a law suit in which Mormon scholars on both sides of the question might have to face each other in court. Finally, however, F.A.R.M.S. decided to back down and issue a carefully worded "Correction or Clarification" in its newsletter:

In the May 1991 issue of *Insights*, reference was made to *Joseph Smith's New York Reputation Re-examined* as "expressly anti-Mormon." Whereas affidavits reprinted and analyzed in this book may be considered "anti-Mormon," F.A.R.M.S. expresses no position about the book.

Also, in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, volume 3, statements are made that could be construed as calling unspecified contributors to *The Word of God: Essays on Mormon Scripture* and Signature Books, Inc., "dishonest" and "hard-core anti-Latter-day Saints." These statements were the reviewer's interpretation of portions of the book, and no personal connotation was intended.

The opinions expressed in the reviews are those of the reviewers alone and do not necessarily represent the position of F.A.R.M.S. (*Insights: An Ancient Window*, July 1991, page 6)

In an Associated Press story, Vern Anderson reported that F.A.R.M.S. claimed it was not really worried about a suit for libel but issued the statement in "a spirit of reconciliation":

To his critics, George D. Smith is a shadowy figure of considerable wealth bent on reshaping Mormonism by digging through its past. To colleagues, he's a shy man of principle in pursuit of truth.

As president of Signature Books, an independent publisher of Mormon-related history and literature, Smith is committed to unfettered historical inquiry. . . .

Mormon Church-owned Deseret Book this month **pulled two of Signature's titles from its shelves**. One of them, "Joseph Smith's New York Reputation Reexamined," by Rodger Anderson, had been named the Mormon History

Association's best first book. The other was "The Word of God: Essays on Mormon Scripture."

At the same time, F.A.R.M.S. at Brigham Young University issued a "correction or clarification" . . .

The clarification in the F.A.R.M.S. newsletter came after a call from Signature's attorney. Foundation founder John W. Welch said it was issued in a spirit of reconciliation, not worry that anyone had been libeled.

Indeed, Welch personally believes the Anderson book to be "expressly anti-Mormon" and its publisher as prone as anyone to the bias he claims to abhor.

Signature's founding in 1981 grew out of the church's decision to cancel a planned 16-volume history of the faith and to muzzle its own historical department. Smith . . . and his Mormon wife jumped at the chance to publish some of the rejected work. . . .

But if the so-called "apologists" and "revisionists" are merely at odds on the field of Mormon history, they are locked in a relative death grip over what most church members see as the cornerstones of Mormon doctrine. . . . (*Salt Lake Tribune*, July 22, 1991)

Signature Books has printed some very important works on Mormon history. Those who are interested in receiving a catalogue can write to them at 564 W. 400 N., Salt Lake City, UT 84116. Their phone number is: (801) 531-1483.

Tiff Over a Black Hole

Since we began publishing material on Mormonism in 1959, we have waited in vain for the church to make a response. Although a large number of people have left the Mormon Church because of our publications, church leaders seem to feel that their best policy is silence. Since they apparently cannot find a way to refute our allegations, they believe that the less people know about our publications the better. In an article written in *Utah Holiday*, February 1978, David Merrill observed: "The official attitude of the Mormon hierarchy toward the Tanners has been one of silence and apparent unconcern. They have, however, **actively discouraged LDS scholars and intellectuals from jousting with the Tanners . . .**"

Prior to the publication of our book, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, in 1990, church scholars at Brigham Young University and F.A.R.M.S. followed the church leaders' advice and studiously avoided locking horns with us. With the publication of our work on the "black hole," however, they apparently realized that it was time to speak up. After remaining virtually silent for over thirty years, Mormon scholars have suddenly come out like an army to attack us. They have recently published three reviews, containing seventy-five pages, castigating our work on the theory of a black hole in the Book of Mormon! These reviews appear in F.A.R.M.S.' publication, *Reviews of Books on The Book of Mormon*, vol. 3.

While the Mormon apologists who wrote these articles against us are not as vicious in their attack as those who took on the Mormon scholars who they consider to be "disaffected Latter-day Saints," they are rather condescending in their approach. Furthermore, one of the authors, John A. Tvedtnes, directly accuses us of dishonesty:

Jerald and Sandra Tanner are two of the best known critics of the Latter-day Saint Church, its doctrines, history, and scriptures. As such, it is strange to see them come out with a book in which they profess themselves to be the "good guys"

(my wording) in the anti-Mormon debate. They claim, for example, to have believed in the divine origin of the Book of Mormon as late as 1960, and that they began a sincere search to prove that the book was true, but found more and more evidence that it was not. This, they write, was painful to them (pp. 1, 7). (*Reviews of Books on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 3, page 188)

In a footnote at the bottom of the same page, John Tvedtnes argues that our account of how we came to disbelieve the Book of Mormon is simply not true:

These statements are at variance with what Sandra Tanner once told me about how she came to lose her faith as a teenager, and make me wonder how they can criticize Joseph Smith for making similar "changes" in his story.

This is certainly a very serious charge to make against our integrity, and we assure the reader that it is without foundation in fact. What we wrote in our book, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, concerning our early belief in the Book of Mormon is absolutely correct. We not only believed in the authenticity of the Book of Mormon in 1960, but we continued to believe in it until 1962. While Mr. Tvedtnes cannot find a scintilla of evidence to support his charge, we have abundant proof that we were supporting the Book of Mormon until near the end of 1962. We have, for example, a book which was given to us by the noted Mormon scholar Francis W. Kirkham. In this book Dr. Kirkham made the following inscription: "To newly found friends and believers in the Book of Mormon. Mr & Mrs Jerald Tanner. Frances W. Kirkham[,] Salt Lake City, Utah[,] **July 22, 1960.**" Furthermore, in a book "Copyright 1962," Mormon writer Kate B. Carter wrote the following:

. . . Jerald Tanner . . . when asked what he and his followers believed, wrote: "We believe the Bible and the Book of Mormon to be the word of God. . . ."

Mr. Tanner has written a number of tracts which he distributes freely on such subjects as the Book of Mormon, Priesthood, Marriage, proof that the Book of Mormon and the Bible agree . . . (*Denominations that Base Their Beliefs on the teachings of Joseph Smith*, 1962, page 51)

Prior to our marriage in 1959, we had read a tract by David Whitmer entitled *An Address to All Believers in Christ*. Whitmer, of course, was one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon. We were impressed with his message that the Book of Mormon was authentic but that the church had fallen into some serious errors such as polygamy (see *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* page 568, for a statement concerning this matter). Like David Whitmer, who separated himself from the Mormon Church, we continued to believe in the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon and promoted belief in it until 1962. John Tvedtnes seems to feel that there is a contradiction because "Sandra Tanner once told me about how she came to lose her faith as a teenager . . ." There is no misrepresentation here. Sandra was eighteen years old at the time we were married. She was still a teenager until January 1961. She lost faith in the teachings of the Mormon leaders while "a teenager," but did not lose faith in the Book of Mormon until late in 1962 when she read *The Golden Bible*, by M. T. Lamb.

It is interesting to note that Darrick Evenson was promoting the same theory as John Tvedtnes—i. e., that we were not really believers in the Book of Mormon in the early 1960's. While we cannot determine whether Mr. Tvedtnes got the idea from Mr. Evenson or vice versa, we do know that Evenson visited F.A.R.M.S. and that a representative from that organization

attended one of his meetings. In any case, we feel that Mr. Tvedtnes and F.A.R.M.S. should publish a retraction concerning this erroneous charge.

Although three Mormon apologists have devoted seventy-five pages to our book, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, we cannot see that they have made a dent in the theory. Moreover, some major errors appear in the reviews. We have been working on a detailed response to the allegations found in these reviews. In preparing this response we have discovered a great deal of new evidence to show that the Book of Mormon is not taken from ancient gold plates, but is in reality a 19th-century production. We plan to publish our response to the critics within the next few months.

We feel that *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon* is one of the most important studies that we have published and that all our readers should be aware of its contents.

Walters' Last Sermon

As the reader may know, Pastor Wesley P. Walters had a great deal to do with bringing to light the true history of Mormonism. He was a man who loved the Mormon people and labored very hard to bring them the truth. The following extracts are taken from his last sermon, "For All The Saints." It was delivered on October 21, 1990, at the church in Marissa, Illinois, where Walters served as pastor for 33 years:

WHAT IS A SAINT? Ephesians 1: 1, 2

1 Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. . . .

God had already told us in the Old Testament—centuries before Paul ever addressed his letter "To the Saints in Ephesus."

Psalm 50:5: *Gather to me my saints—those who have made a covenant to me by sacrifice.*

So a saint is one who has entered into relationship with God by means of a blood sacrifice... It takes on a special meaning of a blood sacrifice for sin—and points to that one perfect bold sacrifice for sin—the Lord Jesus our Messiah.

Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

So a Saint is one who looks exclusively to the Son of God and the pouring out of his life's blood as his only hope for forgiveness.

Now in Ephesians, Chapter 1:4-5, Paul elaborates more fully upon what it means to be one of God's Saints:

For he chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will.

Consider how infinitely small a cosmic speck this earth of ours is—

We are but a blip amidst our galaxy of billions of stars—
And our galaxy is but one of thousands upon thousands of

galaxies in the universe that extends beyond where the most powerful of our telescopes can see.

And upon this microscopic speck we call the earth, our world, are some 5 billion of us crawling around—so minute that we can not even be seen from a weather satellite a few thousand miles from our earth. In our vast universe we are by comparison a million times smaller than the smallest electron in an atom.

Yet the mind-boggling thing is that we—who are totally imperceptible in the vastness of space—are not only known to God, but even loved by him from the distant ages of eternity.

That the Mighty God who framed the vastness of the universe should fix his love upon us who are less than a whisper, who are but as a vapor that quickly vanishes—is indeed the enigma of the ages.

Yet he did more than love us in eternity. . . .

We have redemption through his blood—the forgiveness of sins. Can you imagine such a cosmic figure as the Son of God—by whom this vast universe was called into existence—becoming one of us, just so he could pay the price of sin!

This is almost beyond belief. So highly exalted and valued was this person, the Son of God, that (as one theologian expressed it) . . . *it would have been a lesser crime to have crucified every man, woman and child who ever lived, or would live, than to have killed the Lord of Glory.*

Can you imagine any person of such exaltation and dignity doing this? Let alone the God who made us and against whom we rebelled.

An English poet pictured God as having forgotten this rebelling world . . . But far from forgetting the world, He was redeeming it. *"He loved me, and gave Himself for me."* . . .

Archeologists are always on the lookout for seals, —"le Meleck" — "Belonging to the King" — stamped in the soft clay and fired.

It identifies that vessel as forever belonging to the King—15 centuries later it still bears witness of this.

God has set His seal upon us—He has given His children His stamp of ownership—the Holy Spirit. The Spirit marks us as belonging to God forever.

"They shall never perish!"

What can we say to all this? *Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! Glory to God! Amen and Amen!* . . .

It should break our hearts for gratitude. It should bring tears of devotion to our eyes. It should make our souls sing for joy and leap with praises.

Did you see the Cincinnati Reds when they won the Series? They came out of the dugout, leaping and shouting . . . and the World Series is nothing compared to what God has won for us in His own Son.

Paul said it so well. *"We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."* If you are a saint, rejoice! If you are not, then hurry to make a covenant with God through his Son Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. *Amen.*

An Important Book!

Evolution of the Mormon Temple Ceremony: 1842-1990, by Jerald and Sandra Tanner. contains the actual text of the 1990 version of the highly secret ritual and other accounts of the endowment ritual dating back to 1848. Also shows all of the changes recently made in the ceremony. **Price: \$5.00**

OTHER BOOKS

(Mail orders add 10% — Minimum postage \$1.00)

Flaws in the Pearl of Great Price, by Jerald and Sandra Tanner. This book details many serious problems in Joseph Smith's *Pearl of Great Price*. It shows that a great deal of material has been plagiarized from the King James Version of the Bible and that much of this material came from the New Testament. It also has a photo reprint of the first edition of the *Pearl of Great Price* and shows the changes that have been made in the text. **Price: \$6.00**

Serious Charges Against the Tanners, by Jerald and Sandra Tanner. **Price: \$1.00**

History of Utah: 1540-1886, by Hubert Howe Bancroft. **Price: \$25.00**

The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri, by Stephen C. LeSueur. Now in paperback. **Price: \$14.95**

Mormon Enigma: Emma (Prophet's Wife, "Elect Lady," Polygamy's Foe, 1804-1879), by Linda King Newell & Valeen Tippetts Avery. **Price: \$19.95**

Mormon Polygamy: A History, by Richard Van Wagoner. Paperback. **Price: \$12.95** Smaller paperback **\$6.95**

Ex-Mormons: Why We Left, edited by Latayne Scott. Personal testimonies of eight ex-Mormons. **Price: \$7.00**

Salamander: The Story of the Mormon Forgery Murders, by Linda Sillitoe and Allen Roberts. An excellent book of Mark Hofmann and his dealings with the church. **Price: \$5.95**

Are Mormon Scriptures Reliable? by Harry L. Ropp (with revision by Wesley P. Walters). **Price: \$7.00**

Joseph Smith's New York Reputation Re-Examined, by Rodger I. Anderson. Good response to LDS authors Hugh Nibley & Richard L. Anderson on early statements by Joseph Smith's neighbors. **Price: \$9.95**

Quest for Refuge: The Mormon Flight From American Pluralism, by Marvin S. Hill. A surprisingly frank study to come from the pen of a BYU professor. **Price: \$19.95**

Religious Seekers and the Advent of Mormonism, by Dan Vogel. **Price: \$9.95**

Line Upon Line: Essays on Mormon Doctrine, edited by Gary James Bergera. A selection of 16 different essays which shows "the evolution of ideas many Mormons today take for granted. **Price: \$10.95**

"Wild Bill" Hickman and the Mormon Frontier, by Hope A. Hilton. **Price: \$9.95**

New Testament Documents—Are They Reliable? by F. F. Bruce. A well-researched book by a Greek scholar showing the reliability of the translation of the New Testament. **Price: \$3.95**

Mere Christianity, by C. S. Lewis. Good defense and explanation of Christianity. **Price: \$3.95**

Know Why You Believe—A Clear Affirmation of the Reasonableness of the Christian Faith, by Paul E. Little. **Price: \$7.00**

Know What You Believe—A Practical Discussion of the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith, by Paul E. Little. **Price: \$7.00**

Basic Christianity, by John R. Stott. A brief examination of the claims of Christ and our response to his call. **Price: \$3.95**

UTAH LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRY
PO BOX 1884
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84110