

MORMON INQUISITION?

LDS LEADERS MOVE TO REPRESS REBELLION

While the Mormon Church continues to grow at a rapid rate (it now has close to 9,000,000 members [1993]), it is obvious that internal problems are also beginning to mount. Consequently, church leaders have decided to take an uncompromising stand against Mormon historians who wish to tell the unvarnished truth about church history and other dissenters within the church.

FIVE EXCOMMUNICATED

In an apparent show of strength just before the October, 1993, General Conference of the Mormon Church, six prominent church members were summoned to stand trial in church courts for apostasy. On October 2, 1993, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported concerning the results of those trials:

Three men and three women have been charged with apostasy for their writing and speaking about Mormon subjects. Paul Toscano, Avraham Gileadi, D. Michael Quinn, Maxine Hanks and Lavina Fielding Anderson were excommunicated. Lynne Kanavel Whitesides was disfellowshipped . . .

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Apostle Boyd K. Packer accused of directing purge.



During the council, Ms. Whitesides was accused of “creating friction” with her Mormon feminist statements on television. She also was charged with failure to support church leaders by saying, also on TV, she couldn’t “find any evidence of Christ in [Elder] Packer’s last speech.”

She was disfellowshipped . . . for “conduct contrary to the laws of the church.” . . .

Lavina Fielding Anderson was excommunicated for a single article in the independent Mormon journal, *Dialogue*. *The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership* chronicled episodes of intimidation against Mormon thinkers for the last 20 years. . . .

LDS historian D. Michael Quinn has had three such councils within the last four months. . . .

While he didn’t attend the council, he wrote a defense.

“I vowed I would never again participate in a process which was designed to punish me for being the messenger of unwanted historical evidence and to intimidate me from further work in Mormon history,” he wrote.

But he did reaffirm his faith that “Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith was God’s prophet of the Restoration and that Ezra Taft Benson is the prophet, seer and revelator on the Earth today.”

The council was kind. They put him on probation. But in July, the punishment was upgraded to disfellowshippment. This week, while he was in California, his stake leaders excommunicated him. . . . Avraham Gileadi, a conservative theologian and writer, was excommunicated for his writings about the Apocalypse and the Book of Isaiah. He . . . declined to talk with the press about his experience.

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Some of those who were excommunicated used to write articles for the church's official publication, *The Ensign*. D. Michael Quinn, for instance, has written at least six articles for *The Ensign*, and about the same number for *Brigham Young University Studies*. It seems ironic that this man, who was once held in high esteem within the church, is now considered to be an "**anti-Mormon**."

It was, in fact, D. Michael Quinn who lifted his pen in 1977 in an attempt to refute our work. Dr. Quinn wrote a pamphlet entitled, *Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism: A Response to Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* According to Richard Stephen Marshall, Mormon historian Reed Durham gave him the following information:

He also said that due to the large number of letters the Church Historian's Office is receiving asking for answers to the things the Tanners have published, a certain scholar (name deliberately withheld) was appointed to write a general answer to the Tanners . . . This unnamed person solicited the help of Reed Durham on the project. The work is finished but its publication is delayed, according to what Leonard Arrington told Durham, because they can not decide how or where to publish it. . . . it will probably be published anonymously, to avoid difficulties which could result were such an article connected with an official Church agency. ("The New Mormon History," by Richard Stephen Marshall, A Senior Honors Project Summary, University of Utah, May 1, 1977, page 62)

As Dr. Durham predicted, Michael Quinn's work was "published anonymously." The words, "By a Latter-day Saint Historian," appear where Quinn's name should be found on the front cover and the first page of the book. The coming forth of the anonymous rebuttal was shrouded in secrecy. While we knew Zion Bookstore was the distributor of the response, we were unable to find out where the booklets were printed. In almost all books the name of the publisher is listed at the beginning of the book. When we asked Sam Weller, the owner of the bookstore, where he had obtained them, he replied that **he did not know!** and that it was all a very secret operation. He claimed that he received a letter giving details of how he could handle the pamphlet, but that the writer was not identified. He maintained that he received **1,800 free** copies of the pamphlet and was told that he could use any money he made to reprint the booklet.

We talked with Wilfrid Clark, who works for Mr. Weller. Clark claimed that all he knew about the matter was that Zion Bookstore received **an anonymous letter containing a key to room in a self storage company** on Redwood Road. He said that he personally went to the company and picked up the books.

In our book, *Answering Dr. Cladestine: A Response to the Anonymous LDS Historian*, pages 1-6, we show how we broke through the maze to learn that D. Michael Quinn was the author of the rebuttal. This identification was confirmed by David Mayfield, who worked for the Historical Department of the church at the time the rebuttal was being prepared.

Those who were in authority over Quinn must have had a great deal of trust in him; otherwise, they would not have allowed him to work on such a secret project which could

cause the church great embarrassment if the details of it became known.

An organization known as Mormon Miscellaneous, located at 8912 South 700 East, Sandy, UT 84070, still reprints and sells Dr. Quinn's rebuttal to us. Now that Quinn has been excommunicated from the Mormon Church, it will be interesting to see if this organization will continue to sell the pamphlet. It would seem that there should at least be some attempt to clarify what has taken place. Instead of the words, "By a Latter-day Saint Historian" appearing at the front of the booklet, it should read something like, "By an **Ex-Latter-day** Saint Historian."

While D. Michael Quinn still maintains his belief that Joseph Smith was a prophet, he has obviously become more critical of the church leaders suppressing important documents. In the booklet he prepared in 1977, he criticized us for being upset that the General Authorities of the church were suppressing important documents from their people:

An extension of the Tanners' selective use of evidence is the fact that they often make assertions and draw conclusions without referring to evidence that qualifies, challenges, or refutes their argument. For example, they berate the LDS Church for "Suppression of Records." . . . the Tanners cast the LDS Archives in a sinister light because it was closed to the public for many decades, but fail to comment that this closed-archive practice is not only consistent with the policy of most businesses (including the richly historical Hudson's Bay Company), but also with that of most religious and charitable organizations. (*Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism: A Response to Mormonism —Shadow or Reality?* pages 13-14)

Not long after Dr. Quinn wrote the statement cited above, he had his own first-hand encounter with the suppressive policies of the church and did not like what he experienced. In his research Quinn discovered that for a number of years after the 1890 Manifesto, which was supposed to stop the practice of polygamy, a number of prominent church leaders and others were secretly given permission to take plural wives. Quinn pursued information concerning this subject but found that church leaders would not allow him to examine some important documents in the First Presidency's vault. In his article, "On Being a Mormon Historian (and its Aftermath)," D. Michael Quinn wrote the following:

President Hinckley telephoned in June 1982 to say that he was sympathetic about a request I had written to obtain access to documents in the First Presidency's vault but that my request could not be granted . . .

In May 1984 my college dean told me he had been **instructed by "higher authority" to ask me not to publish a paper** I had just presented to the Mormon History Association. It was a historical survey of the public activity of general authorities in business corporations. The dean apologized for having to make this request. I agreed not to publish my presentation and told no one about the incident.

In 1985, after *Dialogue* published my article "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904," **three apostles** gave orders for my stake president to **confiscate my temple recommend**. . . . I was told that three apostles believed

I was guilty of “speaking evil of the Lord’s anointed.” The stake president was also instructed “to take further action” against me if this did not “remedy the situation” of my writing controversial Mormon history. . . . I told the stake president that this was an obvious effort to intimidate me from doing history that might “offend the Brethren” [i.e., the highest leaders of the church] . . . The stake president also saw this as a back-door effort to have me fired from BYU. . . .

I find it one of the fundamental ironies of modern Mormonism that the general authorities who praise free agency, also **do their best to limit free agency’s prerequisites**—access to information, uninhibited inquiry, and freedom of expression. (*Faithful History: Essays on Writing Mormon History*, edited by George D. Smith, 1992, pages 90-93, 95)

D. Michael Quinn finally found the church leaders’ attempt to control their history so repressive that he felt he could no longer do research at the church archives:

In June 1986 the staff of the church historical department announced it was necessary to sign a form which Elder Packer declared gave the right of pre-publication censorship for any archival research completed before signing the form. I and several others refused to sign the form and have not returned to do research at LDS church archives since 1986. (*Ibid.*, page109, footnote 52)

D. Michael Quinn has shown a great deal of courage throughout his ordeal with church leaders and officials at Brigham Young University. In 1981, he did something that very few Mormon scholars dared to do: he publicly took issue with Apostles Ezra Taft Benson and Boyd K. Packer, two of the most powerful leaders of the Mormon Church. To make things even worse for Quinn, Benson became president of the church in 1985.

It was on November 4, 1981, that Quinn delivered a monumental address before a student history association at Brigham Young University. In the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, March 1982, we called it “One of the best speeches ever given by a Mormon historian.” *Newsweek* referred to it as a “stirring defense of intellectual integrity.” In this speech, Dr. Quinn revealed that church officials “viewed with understandable misgiving this burgeoning exploration of Mormonism’s fluid past,” and then went on to make these significant comments:

The concern of these Church leaders has not been assuaged by the fact that contemporary with the proliferation of Mormon historians and histories there has been a shift in anti-Mormon propaganda from doctrinal diatribe to the polemical use of elements from the Mormon past to discredit the LDS Church today. In reaction to this confluence of developments, two members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (Ezra Taft Benson and Boyd K. Packer) have specifically identified Latter-day Saint historians as the source of difficulty. . . . General authorities in recent years have criticized Mormon historians for republishing in part or whole out-of-print Church publications such as **the 1830 Book of Mormon**, the *Journal of Discourses* (edited and published for thirty-two years under the auspices of the First Presidency), and statements taken from former Church magazines published for the children, youth, and general membership of the Church. It is an odd situation when present general authorities criticize historians for

reprinting what previous general authorities regarded not only as faith-promoting but as appropriate for Mormon youth and the newest converts.

Elder Packer specifically warns against historians using “the unworthy, the unsavory, or the sensational,” from the Mormon past, merely because it has been previously published somewhere else, and he berates historians for their “exaggerated loyalty to the theory that everything must be told.” But this raises the question of personal honesty and professional integrity. If a historian writes about any subject unrelated to religion, and he purposely fails to make reference to pertinent information of which he has knowledge, he is justifiably liable to be criticized for dishonesty. . . .

In connection with Elder Packer’s counsel to avoid reference to previously published sensitivities, Elder Benson warns historians against environmental explanations of the background of revelations and developments in LDS history . . .

Like the questions of previously published items, a historian writing about a non-religious subject would be considered inept at best and dishonest at worst if he described someone’s innovation or contribution without discussing the significance of previously existing, similar contributions and ideas of which the historical person was undoubtedly aware. If a Latter-day Saint historian discusses the revelation to Joseph Smith about abstinence from tobacco, strong drinks, and hot drinks, and then fails to note that during the 1830s religious reformers and social reformers were involved nationally in urging abstinence from these identical things, any reader has cause to criticize the historian’s accuracy, to question his motives, and to doubt any affirmation the historian might give to the revelation’s truth. . . . If we write Mormon history as though its revelations and developments occurred without any reference to surrounding circumstances, we undermine the claims for the Restoration of living prophets . . . Boyd K. Packer demands that Mormon historians demonstrate and affirm that “the hand of the Lord [has been] in every hour and every moment of the Church from its beginning till now.” . . . Mormon historians may share the convictions of the Nephite prophets and Boyd K. Packer that the “hand of the lord” operates throughout history and that “His purposes fail not,” but they also have an obligation to examine the evidence, reflect upon it, and offer the best interpretations they can for what has occurred in Mormon history. . . .

A more serious problem of Mormon history is involved in the implications of Boyd K. Packer’s demand that historians demonstrate that “the hand of the Lord [has been] in every hour and every moment of the church from its beginning till now.” Every Mormon historian agrees with Ezra Taft Benson that “we must never forget that ours is a prophetic history,” but there are serious problems in the assertion or implication that this prophetic history of Mormonism requires “the hand of the Lord” in every decision, statement, and action of the prophets. . . . Central to the apparent demands of Elders Benson and Packer is the view that the official acts and pronouncements of the prophets are always the express will of God. **This is the Mormon equivalent of the Roman Catholic doctrine of papal infallibility.** . . .

Mormon historians would be false to their understanding of LDS doctrines, the Sacred History of the Scriptures, the realities of human conduct, and the documentary evidence

of Mormonism if they sought to defend the proposition that LDS prophets were infallible in their decisions and statements. . . . the Mormon historian has both a religious and professional obligation not to conceal the ambivalence, debate, give-and-take, uncertainty, and simple pragmatism that often attend decisions of the prophet and First Presidency, and not to conceal the limitations, errors, and negative consequences of some significant statements of the prophet and First Presidency. In like manner, however, the Mormon historian would be equally false if he failed to report the inspiration, visions, revelations, and solemn testimonies that have also attended prophetic decisions and statements throughout Mormon history.

A few critics have been more specific in their criticism of Mormon historians who portray the human frailties of LDS leaders. Ezra Taft Benson observes that Mormon historians tend “to inordinately humanize the prophets of God so that their human frailties become more evident than their spiritual qualities,” and Boyd K. Packer has recently made the following comments about a Mormon historian’s talk: “What that historian did with the reputation of the President of the Church was not worth doing. He seemed determined to convince everyone that the *prophet* was a *man*. We knew that already. All of the prophets and all of the Apostles have been men. It would have been much more worthwhile for him to have convinced us that the *man* was a *prophet*; a fact quite as true as the fact that he was a man. He has taken something away from the memory of a prophet. He has destroyed faith.”

This is, in part, related to the infallibility question. Elder Packer criticizes historians for eliminating the spiritual dimension from their studies of prophets, and he accuses such historians of distortion for failing to deal with such a fundamental characteristic. Yet Elders **Benson and Packer** also demand that historians **omit any reference to human frailty** (aside from physical problems, I suppose) in studies of LDS leaders, and emphasize only the spiritual dimension. Elder Packer quite rightly observes that omitting the spiritual, revelatory dimension from the life of a Church leader would also deny the existence of the spiritual and revelatory, but it is equally true that omitting reference to human weaknesses, faults and limitations from the life of a prophet is also a virtual denial of the existence of human weaknesses and fallibility in the prophet. Must Church history writing portray LDS leaders as infallible, both as leaders and as men? This is not the Sacred History we know.

Sacred History (which is contained in the Bible, Book of Mormon, *Doctrine and Covenants*, and *Pearl of Great Price*) is **an absolute refutation of the kind of history Elders Benson and Packer seem to be advocating**. Sacred History presents the prophets and apostles as the most human of men who have been called by God to prophetic responsibility. Sacred History portrays the spiritual dimensions and achievements of God’s leaders as facts, but Sacred History also matter-of-factly demonstrates the weaknesses of God’s leaders. Examples are the scriptural accounts of Abraham’s abandonment of his wife Hagar and son Ishmael, Noah’s drunkenness, Lot’s incest, Moses’ arrogance, Jonah’s vacillation, Peter’s impetuosity and cowardice. . . . Moreover, the *Doctrine and Covenants* contains frequent condemnations of Joseph Smith by the Lord. Sacred History affirms the reality of divine revelation and inspiration, but also matter-of-factly demonstrates that God’s leaders often disagree and do not always follow His revelations consistently. . . .

According to the standards of history apparently required by Ezra Taft Benson and Boyd K. Packer, such a writer of Scriptural Sacred History is suspect at best and faith-destroying at worst. . . . The recent biography of Spencer W. Kimball is virtually Sacred History in its presentation of a loveably human prophet of God, whereas the Mormon history of **benignly angelic Church leaders** apparently advocated by Elder Benson and Packer would **border on idolatry**.

Ezra Taft Benson, Boyd K. Packer, and Professor Midgley accuse Mormon historians of writing Church history to accommodate non-Mormon scholarship, but Elder Packer, in particular, advocates another type of Accommodation History. He assaults the philosophy and conduct of Mormon historians because their objective Church history “may unwittingly be giving ‘equal time’ to the adversary,” and because such history “may be read by those not mature enough for ‘advanced history’ and a testimony in seedling stage may be crushed.”. . . Boyd K. Packer is not advocating the gradual exposure of the Saints to historical truth. He excludes that possibility by warning historians against publishing objective history even in professional journals that “go far beyond the audience that they have intended, and destroy faith,” and he assails Mormon historians who “want to tell everything whether it is worthy or faith promoting or not.” Elder Packer is not advocating Paul’s dictum of milk before meat, but he demands that Mormon historians provide **only a church history diet of milk** to Latter-day Saints of whatever experience. . . . a diet of milk alone will **stunt the growth of, if not kill, any child**.

Aside from urging the kind of Church history that would not surprise or offend even the newest convert, Boyd K. Packer urges that historians write Church history from a siege mentality to deny any information that enemies of the Church could possibly use to criticize the Church. By this standard, most of the Old Testament, the Gospel of John, many of Paul’s epistles, and the Book of Revelation would never be approved for inclusion in the Bible. . . . Why does the well-established and generally respected Mormon Church today need a protective, defensive, paranoid approach to its history that the actually embattled earlier Saints did not employ?

Ezra Taft Benson and Boyd K. Packer want Church history to be as elementary as possible and as defensive as possible. This is Accommodation History for consumption by the weakest of the conceivably weak Saints, for the vilest of the conceivably vile anti-Mormons, and for the most impressionable of the world’s sycophants. . . .

The Accommodation History advocated by Elders Benson and Packer and actually practiced by some LDS writers is intended to protect the Saints, but actually disillusioned them and makes them vulnerable. . . . The tragic reality is that there have been occasions when **Church leaders, teachers, and writers have not told the truth they knew about difficulties of the Mormon past**, but have offered to the Saints instead a mixture of platitudes, half-truths, omissions, and plausible denials. Elder Packer and others would justify this because “we are at war with the adversary” and must also protect any Latter-day Saint whose “testimony [is] in seedling stage.” But such a public-relations defense of the Church is actually a Maginot Line of sandy fortifications which ‘the enemy’ can easily breach and which has been built up by digging lethal pits

into which the Saints will stumble. A so-called “faith-promoting” Church history which conceals controversies and difficulties of the Mormon past actually undermines the faith of Latter-day Saints who eventually learn about the problem from other sources... In warning Mormon historians against objective history and against telling too much truth about the Mormon past, Boyd K. Packer says, “Do not spread disease germs!” To adopt the symbolism of Elder Packer, I suggest that it is apostates and anti-Mormons who seek to infect the Saints with disease germs of doubt, disloyalty, disaffection, and rebellion. These typhoid Marys of spiritual contagion obtain the materials of their assaults primarily from the readily available documents and publications created by former LDS leaders and members themselves. Historians have not created the problem areas of the Mormon past; they are trying to respond to them. Believing Mormon historians like myself seek to write candid Church history in a context of perspective in order to inoculate the Saints against the historical disease germs that apostates and anti-Mormons may thrust upon them. The criticism we have received in our efforts would be similar to leaders of eighteenth century towns trying to combat smallpox contagion by **locking up Dr. Edward Jenner** who tried to inoculate the people, and **killing the cows he wanted to use for his vaccine**.

The central argument of the enemies of the LDS Church is historical, and if we seek to build the Kingdom of God by ignoring or denying the problem areas of our past, we are leaving the Saints unprotected. (*On Being A Mormon Historian*, by D. Michael Quinn, 1982, pages 2, 8-10, 13-14, 16-22; revised and reprinted in 1992 in *Faithful History: Essays On Writing Mormon History*, pages 69-111)

In the “Aftermath” which appears in *Faithful History*, Michael Quinn stated that after he gave this talk, he was warned by “active and inactive Mormons, and even non-Mormons” not to publish this essay. Nevertheless, he gave *Sunstone* permission to publish it. The “publicity resulted in meetings with my college dean and with a member of the First Presidency. . . . Neither Dean Hickman nor President Hinckley gave direct instructions, but **both advised against publication** of ‘On Being a Mormon Historian.’ A few days later, I asked *Sunstone’s* editors **not to print** the already-typeset essay.” (*Faithful History*, page 89)

When we discovered that *Sunstone* was not going forward with the publication of this important speech, we suspected that a great deal of pressure was being exerted to suppress Dr. Quinn’s essay. Since we felt that no publisher connected with Mormonism would dare print the speech, we published it ourselves in early 1982. Quinn did not ask us to do it, and we had no communication with him—either directly or indirectly—regarding the subject. We published it because we believed the Mormon people had a right to know what was going on in their church.

Church leaders were distressed with Quinn when *Newsweek* ran a story entitled, “Apostles vs. Historians,” on February 15, 1982. Quinn reported that one of the church leaders warned him that **Apostle Boyd K. Packer**, whom he had criticized in his speech, could remain vengeful long after having a disagreement: “A few days later, a general authority

invited me to his office. He warned me that he found Elder Packer to be **easily offended and vindictive** years afterwards” (*Faithful History*, pages 89-90).

On page 103 of the same book, footnote 22, Michael Quinn told of an experience he had with Apostle Boyd K. Packer:

When Elder Packer interviewed me as a prospective member of Brigham Young University’s faculty in 1976, he explained: “I have a hard time with historians because they idolize the truth. The truth is not uplifting; it destroys. I could tell most of the secretaries in the church office building that they are ugly and fat. That would be the truth, but it would hurt and destroy them. Historians should tell only that part of the truth that is inspiring and uplifting.”

Although he did not use the same graphic example, in a speech given in 1981, Apostle Boyd K. Packer made these comments:

There is a temptation for the writer or the teacher of Church history to want to tell everything, whether it is worthy or faith promoting or not. Some things that are true are not very useful.

Historians seem to take great pride in publishing something new, particularly if it illustrates a weakness or mistake of a prominent historical figure. . . .

The writer or the teacher who has an exaggerated loyalty to the theory that everything must be told is laying a foundation **for his own judgment**. . . .

That historian or scholar who delights in pointing out the weaknesses and frailties of present or past leaders destroys faith. A destroyer of faith . . . places himself in **great spiritual jeopardy**. He is serving the wrong master, and unless he repents, he **will not be** among the faithful in the eternities . . .

In the Church we are not neutral. **We are one-sided**. There **is a war going on** and we are engaged in it. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1981, pages 263-264, 266-267)

Interestingly, many Mormon intellectuals feel that Apostle Boyd K. Packer is the moving force behind the present purge going on in the church. An Associated Press article mentioned that, “The actions came just months after Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles identified feminists, homosexuals and **intellectuals** as the three dangers facing The Mormon Church” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, September 20, 1993).

Church officials, however, have denied that the excommunications have been directed from the highest levels of the church and claim that it is local leaders who have instigated the trials. It seems highly unlikely, however, that so many prominent people would be called in by local leaders in such a short period of time. The whole thing seems to be orchestrated from above. As indicated above, it appears that the timing of the purge was related to the General Conference of the Mormon Church. Church leaders seem to be making a statement that those who continue to question the authority and policies of church will be cut off.

Some important information regarding Apostle Packer’s involvement in the purge came to light on October 10, 1993, when the *Arizona Republic* printed the following:

. . . a small but influential number of “saints” claim their leaders are silencing legitimate internal debate in the name of maintaining doctrinal purity, conformity, obedience and faith. . . .

The situation is complicated by the fact that the church’s president and prophet, 94-year-old Ezra Taft Benson, is silenced by infirmity.

Benson’s counselors and quorums run church affairs. Critics claim that the void has robbed the church of direction and perhaps even of divine inspiration, and that ambitious elders may be leading the Brethren astray. . . .

Dallin Oaks, 61, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles . . . said the sanctions **were not part of an orchestrated effort to silence critics.**

“**There is no purge,**” said the former BYU president, who has dismissed critics as “publicity hounds” and “**wolves.**”

However, Oaks **did not deny that Boyd K. Packer,** a senior apostle may have **improperly** met with the leader of a church court hearing excommunication proceedings against author and lawyer Paul Toscano.

Toscano, 48, an outspoken women’s rights supporter, was “ex’d,” as church members call excommunication, on Sept. 19.

In addition, Oaks acknowledged that the Strengthening the Members Committee, which some members liken to an intelligence agency but which Oaks calls a “clipping service,” may have monitored speeches, writings and activities of those suspected of apostasy and passed on material to church officials.

“**Elder Packer does not have the authority to make church policy,**” Oaks said of the man many dissidents believe plays a key role in the crackdown. . . .

Oaks said that “if Elder Packer is having any conversations with” the court, “it is **outside the normal channels** and . . . if he gave a directed verdict (against Toscano), that is contrary to policy and irregular, and it is contrary to what I know about Elder Packer and the way he operates.”

Packer acknowledged Thursday that he met in July with fellow church leader **Loren Dunn** and Toscano’s stake president, **Kerry Heinz, to discuss Toscano.** He said Heinz requested the meeting.

“We talked doctrine and philosophy,” Packer said. “I did not instruct him to hold a disciplinary council and absolutely did not direct a verdict. That is against church policy. When he (Heinz) left, I did not know what he would do.” . . .

Last month, John Beck, 33, of Provo, resigned the church and quit his job as a BYU business professor.

“My problems had to do with the ethics of the university,” he said, “which comes down to **their not telling the truth.** They are firing people not for the reasons they say.”

His wife, Martha Nibley Beck, 30, daughter of famed pro-church scholar Hugh Nibley, said she left her job as a BYU sociology professor in July after the school removed Carol Lee Hawkins as leader of the Women’s Symposium. . . .

“The church is moving toward social isolation,” Martha Beck said. . . .

BYU spokeswoman Margaret Smoot said that the removal of Hawkins was routine . . .

However, Smoot’s predecessor, Paul Richards, 57, who left BYU last year, ridiculed that notion . . . “The church

wants to portray this image of being unified in all it does. . . . It wants Mormons to be unquestioning—something I believe goes against church teachings and portrays a great insecurity.

“I worked in public affairs for the church for 13 years, and I had to lie all the time, and this has really battered my faith.” (*Arizona Republic*, Oct. 10, 1993)

The same issue of the *Arizona Republic* revealed that the Mormon prophet’s grandson had decided to leave the church because of the church’s misrepresentation of the facts:

Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist Steve Benson—first grandchild of Ezra Taft Benson, the ailing head and prophet of the Mormon Church—has resigned from the church. . . . His wife of 16 years, Mary Ann Benson, 36, also resigned. . . . The Bensons said they resigned to protest what they believe is an increasingly intolerant church leadership. . . .

He said the example set by his conservative, outspoken 94-year-old grandfather . . . gave him the fortitude to make an emotionally wrenching split from the church.

“There is an old Mormon hymn,” he said in explaining his resignation, “Do what is right, let the consequence follow, battle for freedom in spirit and might.”

“In order to be truly obedient, one must be allowed the right to think, question, doubt, and search for truth. The modern church is intolerant of these God-given rights. . . . I didn’t leave the church. The church left me.”

Mary Ann Benson said leaving the church was “painful, yet exhilarating.”

“Since I’ve left, I feel very empowered and free, free to define my relationship with God, follow my purpose in life and free to finally find peace,” she said.

Steve Benson said he believes one sign of the church’s “dysfunctionality” was reaction to his statements in July on his grandfather’s infirmity.

At that time, Benson said he believed that due to his failing health, his grandfather was incapable of exerting any true leadership.

“I hated to see the church manipulate him and . . . use him to falsely prop up the notion that he is actively leading the church,” he said.

“Local church leaders called me in to explain my actions. I received anonymous letters, some hateful, from church members—in essence damning me to hell and telling me I was possessed by the devil.” (*Arizona Republic*, Oct 10, 1993)

The following day, October 11, 1993, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported some other statements made by Steve Benson:

“I could not, in good conscience, be in an organization that was destroying the spirituality of the very souls of its members,” Mr. Benson said Sunday. “In the name of freedom of religion, the church has turned freedom of speech on its head.”

“[I left] because of the current atmosphere of fear, intolerance and intimidation in this dark period of the church we’re groping through now,” he said. . . .

“I felt the church had put a theological plastic bag over my head that was spiritually and intellectually suffocating me,” he said. . . .

Be [by?] refusing to be silenced, and by leaving a church he believes to be run by a “corrupt” leadership, he said he has lived up to his grandfather’s expectations.

The next day an article written by Vern Anderson of The Associated Press reported a new development. The article was captioned, “Oaks Lied To Protect Fellow Apostle”:

The grandson of Mormon Church President Ezra Taft Benson contends that a church apostle **lied** in order to **cover up** a more senior apostle’s role in the excommunication of a Mormon dissident.

Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist Steve Benson said Monday his decision last week to resign from the church was based in part on Elder Dallin H. Oaks’ statements to a reporter about Elder Boyd K. Packer.

Elder Oaks admitted late Monday he “**could not defend the truthfulness of one of the statements**” about Packer, who is considered by many to be behind the church’s recent crackdown on dissidents. . . .

Oaks told *Arizona Republic* reporter Paul Brinkley-Rogers on Oct. 1 that he had “**no knowledge**” of whether Packer had met with Kerry Heinz, the local ecclesiastical leader for . . . Paul Tascano, before Heinz excommunicated Tascano on Sept. 19. . . .

However, in a “personal and confidential” letter to Oaks on Oct. 6, Benson reminded the apostle that in a private meeting Sept. 24, Oaks had told Benson he was “distressed and astonished” that Packer had met with Heinz.

He quoted Oaks as saying of Packer, “**You can’t stage manage a grizzly bear,**” and added that “it was a mistake for Packer to meet with Heinz and a mistake for Heinz to ask for the meeting.” . . .

Benson said he was making his letter to Oaks public because he was **fed up with church leaders shading the truth**. . . .

In an interview Monday evening, Oaks declined to confirm or deny most of Benson’s assertions about a pair of private interviews the church prophet’s grandson had in September with Oaks and Elder Neal A. Maxwell, another member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. . . .

However, Oaks, a former Utah Supreme Court justice, acknowledged that his single statement to reporter Brinkley-Rogers about having no knowledge of the Packer-Heinz meeting was one “**I could not defend.**”

“**It was not a truthful statement,**” Oaks said.

Benson’s letter to Oaks had warned the apostle that unless he set the record straight, Benson would feel no obligation to honor the promise of confidentiality he had earlier given Oaks and Maxwell.

Oaks called *The Republic’s* reporter that night and retracted the “**I have no knowledge of whether he [Packer] did**” statement. . . .

Oaks did not retract other statements in the interview. . . . that Benson had alleged—and Oaks denies—were false or deliberately misleading. . . .

Oaks . . . stressed that Benson at least three times had assured him and Maxwell that their meetings . . . were confidential and would never be publicly discussed.

“I think that Steve Benson is just going to have to carry the responsibility for whatever he relates about a confidential meeting,” Oaks said.

Benson said he felt acutely the moral dilemma of having promised confidentiality, but then having seen deliberate efforts to mislead the public about Packer’s role in the Toscano affair.

“I had to decide to be a party to the cover up or be faithful to my own convictions,” Benson said. “I had to let Elder Oaks walk a plank of his own making.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, October 12, 1993)

The more church leaders said on the subject, the worse it began to look for Oaks, Packer and other church leaders. Apostle Packer eventually revealed that he had the approval of the Council of the Twelve Apostles to meet with Heinz. On October 17, 1993, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

Mormon Church Apostle Boyd K. Packer said **he had the endorsement of the Council of the Twelve Apostles** when he met with an ecclesiastical leader who later excommunicated a member of the church.

Packer told the church-owned *Deseret News* Friday that when stake president Kerry Heinz asked through a midlevel church official to meet with Packer, Packer asked his fellow apostles in a meeting whether he should.

“...I felt there may be some sensitivity about his request,” Packer said.

Since Apostle Oaks is a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, he must have known about this meeting even before it occurred. The fact that he told Steve Benson about the meeting after it took place, shows that it was on his mind and that he was deeply concerned about the matter. In light of the above, the fact that Oaks was not forthright about the matter casts a very bad light on the whole affair.

Apostle Dallin Oaks allowed his own church’s newspaper to interview him about the matter. Notwithstanding the fact that Oaks had shot himself in the foot, he proceeded to attack the Associated Press:

“Life isn’t fair,” Elder Oaks said. “Somebody said that time heals all wounds. But it’s also true that time wounds all heels,” he added in jest. But in a serious tone, Elder Oaks . . . said he feels “wounded” by an Associated Press story that he said dwelled on his admission that he made a statement he couldn’t defend, and downplayed his efforts to promptly correct his **unintentional error**.

“It impugned my integrity and seriously distorted the account of the facts as it was presented,” Oaks said in an interview this week.

The apostle said he didn’t willfully mislead a news reporter. He explained that he had **misspoken** during an hour-long interview and when he was notified of that, he called the reporter to retract a “statement I could not defend.” . . .

In his interview with the *Deseret News*, [Steve] Benson said what Elder Oaks told him didn’t square with what was said to the reporter. . . . he transmitted a confidential letter to Elder Oaks pointing that out. Benson said he also warned that if the apostle did not “set the record straight” he would no longer feel obligated to keep their discussion confidential. . . . Elder Oaks said, he reviewed the transcript of his interview with the

reporter and found he couldn't defend his comment about having no knowledge of Packer meeting with Heinz.

"How do you make a statement like that? I can't give any better explanation than the fact that I was talking a mile a minute and I just said something that on mature reflection I (concluded), '**I can't defend the truthfulness of that.**'" Elder Oaks said. . . . after later learning that Elder Oaks left intact the other comments that troubled Benson, Benson said he followed through on his threat to go public. (*Deseret News*, October 16, 1993)

Apostle Oaks would apparently like people to believe that he merely made a mistake when he said he did not know Apostle Packer met with Heinz. This, of course, is very difficult to believe. Ironically, Oaks himself has released a partial transcript of his interview with *The Arizona Republic* which establishes beyond all doubt that he was not forthright about the matter:

Oaks: "As for Elder Packer, Elder Packer does not have a specific responsibility for any area in the church. . . . So, **if Elder Packer is having any conversations with Kerry Heinz, it is outside the normal channel.** That's all I can say. **I have no knowledge of whether he did.** But **if he did** and if he gave a directed verdict or anything like that, that is contrary to policy. It is irregular and it's contrary to what I know of Elder Packer and the way he operates." (*Salt Lake Tribune*, October 17, 1993)

As we have shown, Apostle Oaks tried to divert attention away from his fallacious statement by attacking the Associated Press. Oaks claimed the story "impugned my integrity and seriously distorted the account of the facts . . ." The Associated Press responded as follows:

Bill Beech, bureau chief for The Associated Press in Salt Lake City said the AP story was based on a tape-recorded interview with Oaks, was accurate and made no distortions.

Though Packer said Friday that he had the support of the Council of the Twelve in meeting with Heinz, Benson wrote in an Oct. 6 letter to Oaks that Oaks had told him "**it was a mistake** for Packer to meet with Heinz and a mistake for Heinz to ask for the meeting." . . . in another letter Friday to Oaks, Benson appealed to the apostle to correct what Benson believes are other conflicts between Oak's private version and the public statements about Packer's involvement.

"You were provided an opportunity to set the record straight completely," he wrote. "You chose only to correct one of three falsehoods." (*Salt Lake Tribune*, October 17, 1993)

Apostle Dallin Oaks finally became so upset over the charge that he had lied that he did something very few General Authorities have done in recent years: he wrote an article regarding the matter which was published in the *Salt Lake Tribune* on October 21, 1993. In this article Apostle Oaks said, "I did **not** 'lie' to the reporter," and went on to declare: "My perception of this matter is simple. I have been the **victim of double-decker deceit**: 1, betrayal of promises of confidentiality, and 2, **false accusations of lying.**"

While Apostle Oaks maintained that there is no orchestrated effort to silence critics in the church and that,

"**There is no purge,**" the evidence all seems to point in the opposite direction. Allen Roberts, coeditor of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, commented as follows:

Elder Dallin Oaks has attempted to persuade the public that "there is no purge" on the reasoning that six lost people are of no numerical consequence given the church's membership of 8.5 million. Recently excommunicated historian Michael Quinn had this to say about Elder Oaks' notion that it takes more than six people to constitute a purge: "That is like saying there wasn't a purge at Tiananmen Square because only 200 people were killed out of one billion Chinese." . . . The purge is more widespread and far greater in scale than any have heretofore reported. (*Private Eye Weekly*, October 20, 1993)

The Religion Section of the *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 16, 1993, contained an article entitled, "More Stories Point to LDS Leaders As Source of Dissident Crackdown." In this article Peggy Fletcher Stack presented some important information which seems to establish that there is indeed a "purge" going on and that it is being directed from the highest levels of the church. In our new book, *The Mormon Purge*, we have more information regarding this important subject.

While we believe that the Mormon Church and other organizations have every right to excommunicate those who will not conform to its teachings, it is extremely disturbing that the Mormon leaders would work in a clandestine manner to accomplish their purpose. As one of the dissidents has pointed out, the top officials have tried to shield themselves, giving the appearance that they are benign, good-natured individuals, while those on the lower levels have to take all the blame for the excommunications. It may be true that the top leaders of the church felt that it is necessary to remove some members to preserve the church, but they should have had the courage to stand up and accept responsibility for their actions.

Now that the cover-up seems to be unraveling, the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have issued a statement which seems to indicate that the excommunications will continue. In this statement we find the following:

We have the responsibility to preserve the doctrinal purity of the church. We **are united** in this objective. . . .

The longstanding policy of church discipline is outlined in the *Doctrine and Covenants*: "We believe that all religious societies have a right to deal with their members . . . according to the rules and regulations of such societies. . . . They can only **excommunicate** them from their society, and withdraw from them their fellowship." (*Doctrine and Covenants* 134:10.) . . .

The **general** and local officers of the church **will continue** to do their duty and **faithful church members will understand.** (*Salt Lake Tribune*, October 17, 1993)

Although a statement like this coming at a time of tenseness in the LDS Church is likely to silence many church members, it could also cause further dissension. In view of the backlash which has already occurred because of the excommunications, it remains to be seen whether church leaders will continue with the purge.

One thing that is obvious about the whole affair is that many members of the church are becoming polarized over the issues and the rhetoric is becoming louder. For example, Allen Roberts wrote the following:

All fingers seem to point to Elder Boyd Packer, acting president of the twelve apostles, as the prime force behind what has been called the “Mormon Inquisition.” While Elder Packer, nicknamed “**Darth Packer**” by the irreverent because of his cold and detached personal style, is a far cry from Torquemada (the 15th century Inquisitor General of the Spanish Inquisition), his speeches, instructions to lower ranking authorities, and direct contacts with local leaders have shown him to be the prime orchestrator of top-level-organized punishment. . . . Raised by an authoritarian German father, Packer and his brothers entered the military during World War II instead of serving missions. This military influence had an indelible impact on Packer’s view of the church, according to a close family acquaintance, “He sees the church as an army. He is one of its generals and the members are privates who should march in step and do what they are told without question.” (*Private Eye Weekly*, October 20, 1993)

On October 18, 1993, the *Salt Lake Tribune* revealed the following:

A threat apparently intended for excommunicated LDS historian D. Michael Quinn was delivered by phone Saturday night to the home of the wrong Michael Quinn.

The baby sitter of Michael D. Quinn answered the phone call . . . Michael D. Quinn, who is a member of the Elders Quorum in his ward in Bountiful, explained:

“The 15 year-old baby sitter answered the phone and a male voice asked for Michael Quinn. She said he could not come to the phone. . . .

“The man told her to give me this message, ‘I’m tired of the statements he’s making about the LDS Church. I’m tired of hearing him criticize the church. He’d better start keeping to himself if he doesn’t, I have his phone number and I know where he lives. I’ll come get him. I hate him. He stinks.’ Then he hung up. . . .

Angered by the threat after he spoke to the nonhistorian, Mr. Quinn, the historian, said Sunday:

“Threatening phone calls are a new low in the current **atmosphere of repression** in the LDS Church. I hold Apostle [Dallin H.] Oaks personally responsible for inciting such sick-minded Mormons. Apostle Oaks publicly stated that the feminists and scholars excommunicated in September were actually **wolves**. Utah shepherders kill wolves rather than allow them to wander around and kill sheep. Elder Oaks has increased the paranoia of Mormons toward differences of opinion and dissent. I refuse to remain quiet while... Oaks and [Apostle] Boyd K. Packer demonize anyone they don’t agree with. It would have been more Christian of Apostle Oaks to describe excommunicated persons as ‘lost sheep.’ That might have avoided giving encouragement to the self-appointed vigilantes in the Mormon community.”

THE THINKING HAS BEEN DONE

In our book, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* pages 183-84, we present a number of statements from Mormon leaders

which clearly teach blind obedience to the authorities of the church. One of the most controversial is a Ward Teachers’ Message which appeared in the official organ of the church, *The Improvement Era*, in 1945:

Any Latter-day Saint who denounces or opposes, whether actively or otherwise, **any plan or doctrine** advocated by the “prophets, seer, and revelators” of the Church is cultivating **the spirit of apostasy**. Lucifer...wins a great victory when he can get members of the Church to speak against their leaders and to “**do their own thinking**” . . .

When our leaders speak, the thinking has been done. When they propose a plan—it is God’s plan. When they point the way, there is no other which is safe. When they give direction, it should mark **the end of controversy**. (*The Improvement Era*, June 1945, page 354)

Mormon apologists, who do not want to face the fact that their leaders require very strict obedience to their counsel, have found a letter written by the eighth president of the church, George Albert Smith, which they feel invalidates the quotation cited above. It was published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1986, pages 38-39. President Smith was responding to a question by a Unitarian minister who was upset by the article which appeared in the Mormon Church’s official organ.

In response, President Smith wrote: “I am pleased to assure you that you are right in your attitude that the passage quoted does not express the true position of the Church.”

President Smith’s letter raises a very serious question: why did Smith write this letter to a private individual, who was not a member of the church instead of making a public correction in the church’s *Improvement Era*? If the article did not really represent the position of the church, Smith should have demanded a retraction. Mormon apologists have been **unable to point to any public statement by Smith repudiating the article**.

It should be noted also that this notorious Ward Teachers’ Message was also printed in the church’s newspaper, *Deseret News*, Church Section, on May 26, 1945. It is clear, then, that the Latter-day Saints read this message in both the *Deseret News* and *The Improvement Era*. Moreover, the ward teachers presented this lesson in the homes of the Mormon people.

Unfortunately, the Mormon Church has a history of giving out false statements to those who are not members of the church when embarrassing information comes to light. Moreover, there have been times when even members of the church have been deliberately deceived about what was going on by church leaders to protect the image of the church. It was Joseph Smith himself who set the example in this regard.

Mormon Church records clearly show that Joseph Smith was deeply involved in the secret practice of polygamy while he was in Nauvoo, Illinois, yet on May 26, 1844, just a month before he was murdered, he absolutely denied any connection with the practice:

What a thing it is for a man to be accused of committing adultery, and **having seven wives**, when **I can only find one**. I am the same man, and **as innocent** as I was fourteen years ago; and I can prove them all perjurers. (*History of Church*, vol. 6, page 411)

Joseph Smith actually had far more than seven wives when he made this statement. Those who will take the time to examine the church's own *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 132, will find that Smith had already received plural wives when he gave the revelation on the subject in 1843. In that revelation we find the following:

And let mine handmaid, Emma Smith [Joseph's wife], **receive all those that have been given unto my servant Joseph**, and who are virtuous and pure before me . . .

And again, as pertaining to the law of the priesthood if any man . . . have **ten virgins given unto him** by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him; therefore is he justified. (*Doctrine and Covenants* 132:52, 61-62)

For more information on the false statements regarding polygamy by Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders see *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* pages 245-248. After the Manifesto, almost fifty years later, the top Mormon leaders publicly proclaimed that they were not allowing any more polygamous marriages. These statements, however, were absolutely false (see pages 231-244b of the book cited above). As noted above, D. Michael Quinn found himself in serious trouble with church leaders for revealing the truth about this matter.

The belief that the interests of the Mormon Church are sometimes more important than the truth has continued right up until the present time. We have already shown that Apostle Dallin Oaks told Steve Benson in private that he knew Apostle Packer met with Kerry Heinz, but when Oaks was asked about the matter by the press, he claimed he had no knowledge about such a meeting.

While we may never know exactly what was on President George Albert Smith's mind when he wrote the letter to the minister, it is obvious that his public silence concerning this serious matter left the Mormon people with the strong impression that they should never question the decisions of the leaders of the church.

The purge which is now going on in the Mormon Church tends to demonstrate that the present leaders of the church want their people to believe that, **"When our leaders speak, the thinking has been done. When they propose a plan—it is God's plan. . . . When they give direction, it should mark the end of controversy."**

The statement made in *The Improvement Era* in 1945 appears to be the basis for a statement which appeared in the church's publication, *The Ensign*, some thirty-three years later. In an address given by Young Women General President Elaine Cannon in 1978 we find the same type of reasoning:

Tonight President Kimball extends an invitation . . . for all of us as women to follow him as he follows the Savior. . . . He is our leader, in all the world of would-be leaders, who can guide us back to the presence of God. . . . Personal opinions may vary. Eternal principles never do. **When the prophet speaks, sisters, the debate is over.** . . . we emphatically and happily declare, "I will be obedient! I will help strengthen others that they may be so too!" (*The Ensign*, November 1978, page 108)

The following year, 1979, the First Presidency Message, written by President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency, endorsed Elaine Cannon's statement as an important truth regarding Mormonism:

Recently . . . Young Women President Elaine Cannon made the following statement: **"When the Prophet speaks . . . the debate is over."** (*The Ensign*, November 1978, p. 108)

I was impressed by that simple statement, which carries such **deep spiritual meaning for all of us**. Wherever I go, my message to the people is: **Follow the prophet . . .**

It is difficult to understand why there are so many people who fight against the counsel of the prophet . . .

Latter-day Saints should be able to accept the words of the prophets without having to wait for science to prove the validity of their words. We are most fortunate to have a living prophet at the head of the Church to guide us . . .

True Latter-day Saints . . . know that the messages of the prophet have come from the Lord and have the concurrence of all the General Authorities . . . Whose side are we on? **When the prophet speaks the debate is over.** (*The Ensign*, August 1979, pages 2-3)

The reader will notice the close agreement between the statement made in 1945 and the one which appeared in 1979. The 1945 Ward Teachers' Message contained this statement: **"When our leaders speak, the thinking has been done. . . . When they give direction, it should mark the end of controversy."**

The 1979 First Presidency Message reads: **"When the prophet speaks the debate is over."** As far as we can determine, the same basic message—that church members are to give unquestioned obedience to the pronouncements of the church—appears in both statements.

NON-FUNCTIONAL PROPHETS

Mormon leaders maintain that the LDS Church is "the only true church" upon the face of the earth. Moreover, it is claimed that the church is led by direct revelation from God through the "living prophet," who is also the president of the church. No one else can give revelations to the church.

In our book, *The Changing World of Mormonism*, published by Moody Press in 1980, page 439, we pointed out that the Mormon Church had been confronted with some serious problems and that the ability to deal with these issues was complicated by the fact that some of the Mormon leaders were very old. David O. McKay, the ninth prophet, lived to be ninety-six years old. He was in very poor health toward the end of his life and was hardly in any condition to function as prophet, seer and revelator for the church.

Instead of appointing a younger man after McKay's death, church leaders chose Joseph Fielding Smith who was ninety-three years old. Smith lived to be ninety-five, and the leadership of the church passed to Harold B. Lee who was seventy-three years old. Lee lived less than two years and Spencer W. Kimball became president. Kimball lived to be ninety years old, but was in very poor health toward the end of his life and could not really lead the church. Ezra Taft Benson became president of the church in 1985. Although he is now ninety-four he is still sustained as the living prophet.

The way the Mormon hierarchy is structured there seems to be little hope of younger leadership, and even less hope for any new revelations from the “living prophet.” The problem is that the president of the Council of the Twelve Apostles always becomes prophet of the church. Since this system is based on seniority, it is almost impossible for younger men to move to the top.

Interestingly, the average age of the last five prophets of the church was **eighty-one years** when they attained that position. This should be contrasted with the fact that Joseph Smith was only in his twenties when he assumed the role of prophet of the Mormon Church. The present system, therefore, seems to insure that only a man who is already old can become prophet. The effect of this policy is that those who are appointed prophets are very likely to become senile or in bad health during their presidency.

The Mormon system works in such a way as to bring a man into the highest office in the church at the very time when he is **least competent** to adequately perform his duties. While the highest leaders of the church have forced many of those on lower levels to retire (i.e., go on emeritus status), they will not retire themselves and the “living prophet” is never removed no matter how incompetent he becomes.

It has become very obvious that at the present time the Mormon Church does not really have a functioning prophet. The whole claim that the church is superior to all others because it has a “living prophet” now seems to be in jeopardy. Although church leaders have tried very hard to cover up the seriousness of the situation, the truth is becoming widely known to the Mormon people.

As we have shown above, when Steve Benson publicly questioned the fact that his grandfather was capable of leading the church, he was called in to explain his actions. On July 10, 1993, three months before Steve Benson left the church, Vern Anderson of the Associated Press reported that President Ezra Taft Benson’s grandson was deeply concerned regarding his grandfather’s growing problem of senility:

As Mormon Church President Ezra Taft Benson approaches his 94th birthday, the years have stilled his voice, clouded his mind and raised questions about the faith’s rigid order of succession.

Attired in a sweatsuit and fed by others, Benson spends his days in supervised seclusion in an apartment overlooking Temple Square. He is an infirm retiree in a church that doesn’t officially retire its “prophet, seer and revelator.”

The incongruity struck a 13-year-old Benson great-grandson the other day as he poured his breakfast cereal: “Dad, **why do they call him prophet when he can’t do anything?**”

The boy’s father is Steve Benson, a practicing Mormon who won a Pulitzer Prize this year for the political cartoons he draws . . .

His son’s question is one reason Benson decided to speak openly for the first time about his grandfather’s decline. . . .

A more compelling motivator, however, is what he believes are misleading efforts by the church’s hierarchy to preserve an image of a more vibrant Ezra Taft Benson, an image less problematic for the core Mormon belief in a literal prophet of God.

“I believe the church strives mightily to **perpetuate the myth, the fable, the fantasy** that President Benson, if not operating on all cylinders, at least is functioning effectively enough, even with just a nod of the head, to be regarded by the saints as a living, functioning prophet,” he said.

That is not the grandfather Benson saw when he visited in March from Arizona, or whom he has seen **struggle with encroaching senility** during much of his 7-year administration.

“The last time I saw him he said virtually nothing to me,” said Benson . . . “He looked at me almost quizzically, as if he were examining me.”

In earlier visits, the former U.S. agriculture secretary . . . could manage at least a word or two. . . .

Benson, who has not spoken in public for more than three years, was already suffering memory loss when he assumed the presidency in 1985 at age 86. His grandson said facing church audiences became a frightening experience for a man who once had relished the pulpit.

While some church “general authorities” are retired at 65, the granting of emeritus status does not extend to the faith’s 12 apostles or three-member First Presidency, the belief being God will choose his leaders and the length of their service.

Steve Benson sees the practice as needlessly impractical.

“I don’t think God would expect us to be bound legalistically or structurally to a system that obviously isn’t working,” he said.

Gordon B. Hinckley, Benson’s first counselor, has taken pains in recent sermons to stress the church does not face a leadership crisis. . . .

A request to interview Hinckley or an apostle about the church’s pattern of succession was declined through spokesman LeFevre . . . Steve Benson, 39, said it has been some time since his grandfather has been capable of participating in any way in the administration of the church’s affairs, although that is “an image that people deeply, almost desperately want to believe.”

“And I’m not demeaning or ridiculing that desire to believe. I’m just saying that what the church is presenting to the members to believe **is not factual**,” he said. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, July 10, 1993)

The *Arizona Republic*, July 13, 1993, published an article containing the following:

The grandson of the Mormon Church’s president is being battered and praised by Mormons for revealing last week that the aged Ezra Taft Benson cannot physically or mentally lead the Church . . . The *Arizona Republic’s* political cartoonist, has received numerous telephone calls from Mormons, who clearly are split on the issue. . . .

One woman left a message for Benson saying that although he spoke the truth, he never should have made his opinions public.

Some members in wards . . . prayed Sunday for their church leader, affirming their faith in his leadership despite Benson’s statements that his grandfather, at 93, is “**not in the loop**” and cannot attend to church affairs. . . .

Don LeFevre, spokesman for the 9 million-member church, said . . . that Benson’s counselors review major church decisions with the prophet at his home, where he must be tended with round-the-clock care.

Steven Benson said the notion that the president's two counselors, Gordon Hinckley and Thomas Monson, could review anything with his grandfather is nonsense.

"The debate is so emotional because it is a matter of trust," Benson said. "If the church hides the truth about nonfunctional prophets, members then may ask, 'What else is the church hiding?'"

In an article appearing in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 21, 1993, Steve Benson was quoted as saying: "The point I was trying to make is that President Benson is **the prophet in title only, not in role**. President Benson is not carrying out his role. "He can't," the grandson, an active Mormon, said Tuesday."

The fact that President Benson's counselors did not have a great deal of confidence in his ability to function became evident when documents filed with the state of Utah were examined by the *Salt Lake Tribune*:

Documents on file with the state of Utah are strong evidence that the parent corporation of the Mormon Church no longer is being directed by its president, Ezra Taft Benson.

It is the first time since the corporation was founded 70 years ago that anyone other than the church president has obtained total authority over Utah's most powerful corporation.

The documents, at the Utah Department of Commerce, were signed with a machine that duplicates the signature of 94-year-old President Benson. They were filed six months before President Benson . . . made his last public speech.

Church leaders said this week the filings and the use of a signature machine were routine, and done with President Benson's approval. . . . Today, the corporation owns all church assets—including a multibillion-dollar portfolio of financial and property holdings. . . .

Entitled "Certificates of Authority" and dated May 23, 1989, the documents say Presidents Hinckley and Monson can keep those complete powers—even if President Benson becomes disabled or is determined by a court to be incompetent. . . . the church made no announcement of the change. It has continued to portray President Benson as the ultimate power behind church affairs. . . .

Fran Fish, notary public administrator for the state Department of Commerce, said signatures written by machine are legal . . .

Still, Ms. Fish . . . said use of a signature machine on state corporate filings "is certainly out of the norm." . . . Steve Benson . . . has said that his aging grandfather no longer possesses the mental faculties to handle church affairs.

"The church has misrepresented the condition of President Benson and stated flatly that his role as prophet has in no way been impeded," Steve Benson said this week. "My grandfather has become a **storefront mannequin** while the business of the store is conducted behind closed doors."

He said a signature machine has replaced his grandfather's hand on all personal and family correspondence. "Evidently," Steve Benson said, "the signature machine had not been programmed to sign, 'Grandpa.'" (*Salt Lake Tribune*, August 15, 1993)

Mormon Church leaders appear to be on the horns of a dilemma with regard to their non-functional prophet, Ezra Taft Benson. On the one hand, it is maintained that only a revelation given to the prophet could change this extraordinary policy of

the church. On the other hand, however, President Benson is obviously incapable of giving such a revelation. Vern Anderson observed: "The strict apostolic succession—which church spokesman Don LeFevre said **would require a revelation from 'the Lord to his prophet'** to change—has fostered a gerontocracy" *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 10, 1993).

While the present situation with regard to President Benson must be very perplexing to the General Authorities of the Mormon Church, a worse scenario might be if the apostle with the most seniority were already mentally incompetent when installed as prophet. In view of the way medical advancements are lengthening people's lives, it is even conceivable that a "prophet" might live for a quarter of a century without contributing anything to the church.

It is apparent that the Mormon Church's claim to be led by a "Prophet, Seer, and Revelator," is not substantiated by the facts. The Bible relates that the prophet Moses lived to be extremely old, but it goes on to say that "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated" (Deuteronomy 34:7). We certainly cannot say this of most of the recent prophets of the Mormon Church. While it is claimed that these men are "living prophets," they seem to become mere figureheads as they advance in age.

The Mormon forger Mark Hofmann put the "living prophet," President Spencer W. Kimball, to the acid test and demonstrated that the so-called "*living oracles*" are just as fallible as other men. At a time when revelation was really needed in the church, Kimball seemed to be completely oblivious to what was really going on. President Kimball was unable to detect that the documents Hofmann was selling to the church were forgeries.

Two of the documents even contained revelations purportedly written by Joseph Smith himself, yet Kimball had no knowledge that they were spurious. After President Kimball died, the prophet Ezra Taft Benson had no spiritual insight regarding the matter. He failed to realize that the documents were forgeries, and church officials made it very difficult for investigators to examine the documents.

Moreover, during the criminal investigation that followed after Hofmann killed two people, the Mormon Church discovered that it had the real McLellin Collection in its vault. This would have provided very important evidence of fraud on Mark Hofmann's part because he was trying to sell them items they already had in their own vault. Instead of coming forth with information regarding the collection, church leaders decided to suppress this evidence from investigators. Mormon Church official Richard Turley has acknowledged that this matter was brought to the attention of the First Presidency, and Apostles Boyd K. Packer and Dallin H. Oaks. While one would assume that only the "living prophet" could make such an important decision, we do not have any hard evidence that Benson made the decision to cover up the existence of the collection. If Ezra Taft Benson was responsible for the cover-up, it was a terrible decision which caused embarrassment to the church. On the other hand, if his counselors in the First Presidency and Apostles Oaks and Packer did not consult him, it would tend to provide further evidence that the "living prophet" is only a figurehead. For much more information regarding this matter see our book, *The Mormon Church and the McLellin Collection*, pages 1-16.

As we have shown, Mormon leaders tell their people that **“When the prophet speaks the debate is over.”** We feel that this type of absolute obedience can be very dangerous. In Jeremiah 17:5 we find this admonition: **“Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, whose heart departeth from the Lord.”**

As we were preparing this newsletter, it became more obvious all the time that we would not have the room to include many significant items concerning the purge that is going on in the Mormon Church. It seems that new developments are occurring almost every day. Consequently, we decided to do a book on the subject which should be of great interest to our readers. A very important part of this book will deal with the suppression of the 16-volume sesquicentennial history of the Mormon Church. Extremely important church documents including a secret memorandum to President Gordon B. Hinckley—have been turned over to us detailing the duplicity Mormon officials used when they squelched the history which many trusting Mormon historians had spent untold hours preparing.

Our new book regarding the Mormon Church’s attempt to silence its historians and other dissidents is entitled, *The Mormon Purge*. We are offering a special price on this book. It will normally sell for \$3.00, but if it is ordered before December 31, 1993, the price will be **only \$2.00!** On the first page of this newsletter the reader will find an extra special offer if this book is ordered in conjunction with the book, *The Godmakers II*. (Mail orders please add \$1.50 minimum postage.)

GOD MAKERS II LAWYER THREATENS TANNERS WITH SUIT

Unfortunately, our last newsletter regarding the video *The God Makers II*, has stirred up a real hornet’s nest. While we tried to be very accurate and tactful in our presentation, in an article entitled, “The Tanners Strike Again,” J. Edward Decker exclaimed:

One would think that I’d have developed some sort of immunity by now. Truth is, having felt the prick of both, I’d rather take my poison in a coke glass than from the pen of a some **so-called** brother and sister in Christ. I’m just about fed up with them. Arsenic is a whole lot easier to swallow. . . . they are out to rip the God Makers movie to shreds . . . It’s these constant two-by-fours across the back of my head that are starting **to got me mad** . . . the Tanners state with a straight face, “Nevertheless, we feel that it is our duty to present our readers with well-balanced research on this issue.” I’m sorry but **that is just plain Hogwash!** Either **the Tanners are the greatest dupes in the business or bald faced liars. I’m weary of giving them the benefit of the doubt.** (Saints Alive in Jesus newsletter, March-April, 1993)

Ed Decker sent a copy of his newsletter to a lawyer named Douglas A. Wallace. Wallace, in turn, wrote us a threatening letter in which he stated:

As you may already know, **I represent Ed Decker,** Bill Claudin, Patrick and Caryl Matriscianna [*sic*] as well as Jeremiah Films in connection with “God Makers II.” . .

As attorney for “God Makers II,” et al, I can say that the most disappointing thing that could happen with regard to the film is the failure of the “CHURCH”. . . to actually file a lawsuit for slander. . . . It would be the epitome of my life to defend such a lawsuit for **I have lived these past 58 years for no reason other than to expose the Mormon Menace.**

If the “CHURCH” fails to bring such action, then I will be looking elsewhere to expose the fraud by **seizing opportunity to file a lawsuit against slanderous, spurious articles such as you have written.** (Letter from Douglas A. Wallace, dated April 10, 1993)

In spite of the threat of a lawsuit we completed a 94-page book concerning the video entitled, *Problems In The Godmakers II*. While we do not wish to argue with the accusations made by Ed Decker and Douglas Wallace in this newsletter, those who read the book will find our side of the story.

Since our last newsletter we made two extremely important discoveries which throw important light on the validity of the video:

One, while the video charges that Gordon B. Hinckley, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, was involved with prostitutes and had a homosexual affair with a man named Charles VanDam in the 1960s, we have had contact with a man who was closely associated with VanDam during the “mid 1970’s.” This man says that VanDam was not telling the same story at that time. He maintains that although VanDam told him about his wild parties with a Mr. Hinckley, it was not President Gordon B. Hinckley!

In a letter, dated May 10, 1993, VanDam’s former associate affirmed: “He [VanDam] was **not a stable person.** . . . He lived in **extreme exaggeration of lies - fantasy & a violent temper** . . . He **boasted & bragged to me that it was** . . . [another Hinckley] **not the Gen[eral] Authority** that he partied with!!!” We have verified the fact that this man was closely associated with Mr. VanDam. It would appear, then, that the chief witness against Gordon B. Hinckley changed his story sometime after the mid 1970’s. We found numerous other problems with VanDam’s statements.

Two, one of the most moving and important portions of the video involves the death of a woman named Lillian Chynoweth. While the video leads the viewer to believe that she was murdered, the truth of the matter—verified by the Houston Police Department—is that **Lillian committed suicide!**

Since we completed the book we have become aware of the fact that lawyers for both Jeremiah Films and the Mormon Church have been making some **very serious charges.** For example, in a letter to Patrick A. Shea, the lawyer representing the Mormon Church, Douglas Wallace charged:

There are issues relating to regular **prostitutional sexual servicing of Mr. Hinckley** at the Hotel Utah along with **other Authorities** on the day of their regular weekly meetings in the Salt Lake Temple, and there are issues relating to assault and **attempted murder** of the prostitute and the **murder of a young male** following a verbal confrontation with Mr. Hinckley over the severity of **his abuse of the young boy.** (Letter from Jeremiah Films’ lawyer Douglas Wallace, dated March 5, 1993)

It is interesting to note that William Claudin, who spearheaded the investigation directed at Gordon B. Hinckley, was very forthright with us concerning what he learned about the charges of church leaders being furnished with prostitutes in the Hotel Utah. On May 7, 1993, he frankly admitted that when further investigation was done, it became apparent that the prostitute who related the story was not telling the truth about certain things. Although he still believed there could be some truth to the accusations, he felt that it was best to withdraw her testimony about Hinckley and other church leaders. For more information on this matter see *Problems in the Godmakers II*, page 34. We have no further information regarding the charge that a young man was murdered.

On March 18, 1993, the lawyer representing the church, responded to Wallace, Claudin, Decker and the Matriscianas. In this two-page letter he seems to assert that Patrick Matrisciana, of Jeremiah Films, tried to blackmail the church:

I understand that Mr. Matrisciana is a "businessman" to quote his own words. His offer for me to simply **buy the raw tape of "God Makers II,"** and thus solve the problem of any distribution of the false information was, and is, clearly unacceptable. I **rejected the first offer** and would not accept **this type of extortion** as a means of resolving this dispute. . . .

Mr. Claudin has not responded directly but in his wanderings in Southern Utah continues to promote the video and makes representations regarding an "X-rated God Makers II" video which will be coming out shortly. (Letter from Patrick A. Shea, dated March 18, 1993)

It is unlikely that any deal was struck between the church and Jeremiah Films because the film company later produced a 27-minute video entitled, *The Truth About Mormon President Gordon B. Hinckley*, which was taken from the 6 to 8 hours of "raw tape" which Jeremiah Films had in its possession. (V. Leah Walker has informed us that when she called Jeremiah Films on May 5, 1993, she was told that all of the footage except for the 27 minutes used in the video mentioned above, **was destroyed**. See her letter in *Problems in the Godmakers II*, pages 21-22.) In any case, in our opinion the 27-minute video really adds nothing to what appeared in the video, *The God Makers II*. Instead, it demonstrates Charles VanDam's tendency to exaggerate.

It is certainly obvious that some very serious charges involving criminal behavior have been made by lawyers on both sides of the controversy.

Even though we have been threatened with a lawsuit for expressing our opinion on *The God Makers II*, we do not feel that we can remain silent about problems in the video. since we are convinced that it is a very important matter, we are offering a special price on our book, *Problems in the Godmakers II*. Although this book normally sells for \$4.00, if it is ordered before December 31, 1993, the price will be **only \$3.00**. On the first page of this newsletter the reader will find an extra special offer if this book is ordered in conjunction with the book, *The Mormon Purge*. (Mail orders please add \$1.50 minimum postage.)

WHY WE LEFT THE CHURCH

Like Steve and Mary Ann Benson, over thirty years ago we found it necessary to ask Mormon officials to strike our names from the roles of the Mormon Church. Our research revealed that there have been many serious changes made in Joseph Smith's revelations and other material printed by the church. In addition, we found many other serious problems. Below is a condensed version of our statements as they appear in our book, *The Changing World of Mormonism*.

Statement by Sandra Tanner. Since I was born and raised in the Mormon Church, and am a great-great-grandchild of Brigham Young, I had very strong ties to the Mormon faith. . . . As a teenager my life centered around the Mormon church. Because I was active and paying my tithing I thought I was in pretty good standing with God. I knew I sinned but I felt my activity in church would somehow outweigh what I did wrong. I believed (as the Mormons teach) that I was inherently good. I had no fear of God's judgment. Besides the things that were wrong in my own life, I began to have doubts about my church. . . .

When I started college I enrolled in the Mormon Institute of Religion class. I started asking questions in class, trying to find answers to my doubts. But one day my institute teacher took me aside and told me to *please stop* asking questions in class. There was a girl attending the class who was thinking of joining the church and I was disturbing her with my questions. What a surprise! I had hoped to find answers to the many things that were bothering me and now I had been silenced.

Shortly after this I met Jerald and we began studying the Bible and Mormonism together. As we studied I began to see the contradictions between the Bible and the teachings of the Mormon church.

I had grown up thinking that Brigham Young was one of the greatest men that ever lived. . . . Then Jerald had me read some of Brigham Young's sermons in the *Journal of Discourses* on blood atonement. I was shocked! I knew what Brigham Young was saying was wrong but I couldn't reconcile these sermons with the things I had always been taught concerning him. . . .

Jerald also showed me the changes that had been made in Joseph Smith's revelations. The thought kept coming to me that if God had actually given those revelations to Joseph Smith why would they need rewriting? Surely the Creator of the universe could say it right the first time!

As I studied I not only found errors in Mormonism, I also began to comprehend there was something wrong in my own life. As I studied God's Word I realized I was a sinful hypocrite. In spite of my sins I had thought I was right with God. Yet the Bible says: "*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord*" (Rom. 6:23).

God reaches out to man, not because he deserves it, but because God loves him. John wrote: "*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*" (1 John 4:10). Paul wrote: "*But God, who is rich in mercy. . . . even when we were dead in sins, hath*

quicken us together with Christ . . . For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:4,5,8,9).

I now want to share with you the particular events of the day I surrendered my heart and life to Jesus Christ:

Early one morning (October 24, 1959) I decided to listen to the radio for a while. I turned to the Christian radio station and listened to a sermon. The minister was preaching on the great love of God and the mercy offered to us through Jesus Christ. Nothing ever struck me with such force. I opened my heart to God and accepted Christ as my own personal Saviour. The Holy Spirit flooded my soul with such joy that I wept for over an hour. . . . How glorious to know Christ died for my sins so I could have a new life in Him.

Our lives testify to all we meet whether or not we are truly Christians. Paul wrote: "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law*" (Gal. 5:22-23).

Sandra Tanner

Statement by Jerald Tanner. I was born and raised in the Mormon church, and before I was eight years old I felt that it was the only true church. . . . My conviction was so strong that I was shocked to hear a boy in Sunday school say that he didn't know for certain that the church was true. I felt that it was strange indeed for a person to be a member of the Mormon church and yet not know it was the only true church.

I believed very strongly that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God and that I belonged to the only true church. When I was about eighteen years old I had to face reality. I can remember that the first time I saw David Whitmer's pamphlet, *An Address to All Believers in Christ*, I threw it down in disgust. After throwing it down, however, I began to think that perhaps this was not the right way to face the problem. If David Whitmer was wrong in his criticism of Joseph Smith, surely I could prove him wrong. So I picked up the pamphlet and read it through. I found that I could not prove David Whitmer wrong, and that the revelations Joseph Smith gave had been changed. . . .

Since that time I have found more and more proof that the church in which I was raised is in error. The most important thing that I found, however, was not that the church was in error, but that I myself was in error. I found that I was a sinner in need of a Saviour. The Mormon church had taught me good morals, but they had not taught me much concerning the power of Christ that could change my life. There was much talk about Joseph Smith, but very little talk about Christ. Consequently, I began to think I had the power within myself to overcome sin, I didn't see how much I needed the help of God to overcome it. So I turned from one sin to another until I was deeply in bondage to sin. I found no help in the Mormon church; they were too busy preaching about the glory of the church, Joseph Smith, etc. They were too busy singing "praise to the man who communed with Jehovah" and "We thank thee O God for a prophet" to tell me about the Saviour

I needed so badly. . . . there was almost nothing in the services that could give life and peace to my dying soul. . . . if Christ had been preached instead of Joseph Smith, I would, perhaps, have received Christ into my life in the Mormon Church. As it was, however, I was nineteen years old before I heard the true message of Christ preached, and that was in another church. A short time later I received Christ into my life and found peace, joy, and deliverance from sin. As the Apostle Paul expressed it: "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*" (2 Cor. 5:17).

Jerald Tanner

After we left the LDS Church we published a great deal of material concerning Mormonism and eventually set up Utah Lighthouse Ministry. Many Mormons have come to know the Lord in a personal way through this material.

KEEP THE LIGHT ON!

Besides the work on Mormonism, Utah Lighthouse Ministry provides support for **forty-four children** through the World Vision relief program. As we indicated in our last newsletter, the money we receive from our books and tapes only covers about half the cost of operating Utah Lighthouse. If it were not for the donations to our ministry, we would be in serious financial trouble. We consider those who help us with our expenses to be **a vital part of our team**. Even more important, however, are the prayers of those who support this ministry. Please pray that God will open the eyes of those we minister to and that he would give the encouragement and strength we need to continue in this difficult work.

Utah Lighthouse is a non-profit organization. Those who are interested in helping our ministry can send their **tax-deductible** contributions to **Utah Lighthouse Ministry**, PO Box 1884, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110. Both contributions and order can now be made over the phone (801) 485-8894 with Visa, MasterCard or Discover Card.

BOOKS AND TAPES

(Mail orders add 10% - Minimum postage \$1.50)

Sandra Tanner Tape No. 3. Two radio interviews with Sandra. The first deals with the 1990 changes in the LDS temple ceremony. The second discusses problems in the translation of the Book of Abraham. **Price: \$3.00**

Mormonism: The Christian View. A video narrated by Wesley P. Walters. Deals with Mormon history, doctrines, claim to authority, changes in doctrine and witnessing suggestion. **Price: \$24.00**

By His Own Hand Upon Papyrus: A New Look at the Joseph Smith Papyri, by Charles Larson. Demonstrates conclusively that Joseph Smith did not translate the Book of Abraham from the Egyptian papyrus. **Price: \$11.95**

BOOKS AND TAPES

(Continued from page 15)

(Mail orders add 10% — Minimum postage \$1.50)

Faithful History, edited by George D. Smith. This book contains D. Michael Quinn's speech which infuriated Mormon officials. **Price: \$18.95**

The New Mormon History, edited by D. Michael Quinn. Mormon leaders are very distressed with historians who write "New Mormon History." Contains 15 essays. **Price: \$18.95**

What Hast Thou Dunn? by Jerald and Sandra Tanner. The story of how Paul Dunn, an Emeritus General Authority of the Mormon Church, deceived church members with false tales about his baseball career and war record. **Price: \$2.00**

Christian Institute for Mormon Studies. Eight papers from 1991 conference. **Price: \$6.95**

Divergent Paths of the Restoration, by Steven Shields. Brief history of over 100 churches and organizations claiming Joseph Smith as their founder. **Price: \$14.00**

Mormon Polygamy: A History, by Richard Van Wagoner. Paperback (with index). **Price: \$12.95**

Why We Left Mormonism, edited by Latayne Scott. Personal testimonies of eight ex-Mormons, including Sandra Tanner. **Price: \$8.00**

Basic Christianity, by John R. Stott. A brief examination of the claims of Christ and our response to His call. **Price: \$5.00**

Mormons Answered Verse by Verse, by David Reed and John Farkas. **Price: \$7.00**

Answering Mormons' Questions, by Bill McKeever. **Price: \$5.95**

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 N.T. **Price: \$5.95**

Mere Christianity, by C. S. Lewis. Good defense and explanation of Christianity. **Price: \$8.00**

Speaking the Truth in Love to Mormons, by Pastor Mark Cares. Good introduction to Mormon culture and beliefs, with helpful insights on witnessing. **Price: \$11.00**

Know What You Believe—A Practical Discussion of the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith, by Paul E. Little. **Price: \$8.00**

Know Why You Believe—A Clear Affirmation of the Reasonableness of the Christian Faith, by Paul E. Little. **Price: \$9.00**

Joseph Smith's Response to Skepticism, by Robert Hullinger. Shows that Joseph Smith himself authored the Book of Mormon to settle the theological arguments of his time. **Price: \$18.95**

Theological Foundation of the Mormon Religion, by Dr. Sterling McMurrin. **Price: \$9.00**

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

The 1838 Mormon war in Missouri, by Stephen C. LeSueur. Paperback. **Price: \$14.95**

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