

The  
**PROPER  
ROLE**  
of  
Government

(EZRA TAFT BENSON)

**THE IMPROPER  
ROLE OF GOVERNMENT**

(ELDER H. VERLAN ANDERSEN)



This Work  
Compiled and Presented by  
Hans V. Andersen, Jr.

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[www.itsnet.com/~elecons](http://www.itsnet.com/~elecons)

ISBN: 0-9644552-7-7

Production by:  
Brian Carter / SunRise Publishing  
PO Box 1001  
Orem, UT 84059  
[www.SunriseBooks.com](http://www.SunriseBooks.com)

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# INTRODUCTION

*by Hans V. Andersen, Jr.*



This booklet is one of the best known talks by Ezra Taft Benson. For members who have not studied the positions of the prophets on political and economic questions this will appear unique. Those who have studied know LDS prophets from Joseph Smith on down have expressed their political and economic opinions. The Prophets have also issued statements on the Church's effort to maintain the strictest possible neutrality. How do we members reconcile these two seemingly conflicting facts? Have our prophets crossed themselves?

President James E. Faust, in his LDS General Conference address October 5, 1997 quoted in part a 1953 conference address by Marion G. Romney and condemned the apostate spirit of those who would limit the prophets right to speak up on political issues.

Then came the "sixty-four dollar question." "Do you believe that Heber J. Grant is a prophet of God?" His answer: "I think he ought to keep his mouth shut about old age assistance." (*Ensign*, November, 1997, p. 54.)

Is Elder Faust out of step with the Church's policy of maintaining *the strictest possible neutrality* on political and economic issues? Whose going to write him a letter and straighten him out?

Was Harold B. Lee out of line with the policy when he said government subsidies and socialism are threats to the church:

Now, keep in mind with all the crowding in of the socialistic reform programs that are threatening the very foundation of the Church... Whenever we allow ourselves to become entangled and have to be subsidized from government sources—and we think that it's the expedient way to do business in this day—or when we yield to such pressures, I warn you that government subsidies are not the Lord's way;..." (Harold B. Lee, *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, [1996], pp. 314-15)

In the back of this booklet are statements by all the prophets. Can we reconcile their very political statements with the Church's policy of *strictest possible neutrality*? We can if we realize: 1) the Church does not endorse political candidates, parties, or their platforms, but 2) the Church does endorse moral political and moral economic principles.

Those who favor socialism, government controls, government schools, licensing, etc. hope to convince the vast majority of the membership of the Church that *neutrality* means the prophets have no political principles. They hope to convince you that *neutrality* means your political principles are a separate part of your life and there is no need to turn to the prophets or their scriptures to obtain your political principles. Only if they can pull us away from our prophets and have us turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the prophets can they hope to get us to reject the prophets. These people hope to seduce us to believe in their works and to partake of their spoils and hence pull us away from our prophets. Unity with the Lord's prophets by the membership of the Church is possible only if we unite with them and choose the prophets' views.

### ***MEMBERS URGED TO BE 'FULL PARTICIPANTS IN COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS'***

In a letter to General Authorities and local leaders in the United States, the First Presidency encouraged members of the Church to be "full participants in political, governmental and community affairs." The letter, dated Jan. 15, was to be read in sacrament meetings.

The full text of the letter follows:

We wish to reiterate the divine counsel that members "should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness," while using gospel principles as a guide and while cooperating with other like-minded individuals. (D&C 58:27.)

Through such wise participation as citizens, we are then in better compliance with this scripture:

"Governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man; and that he holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them." (D&C 134:1.)

Therefore, as in the past, we urge members of the Church to be full participants in political, governmental, and community affairs. Members of the Church are under special obligations to seek out and then uphold those leaders who are "wise," "good," and "honest." (See D&C 98:10.)

Thus, we strongly urge men and women to be willing to serve on school boards, city and county councils and commissions, state legislatures, and other high offices of either election or appointment, including involvement in the political party of their choice.

While the Church does not endorse political candidates, platforms, or parties, members are counseled to study the candidates carefully and vote for those individuals they believe will act with integrity and in ways conducive to good communities and good government. Hence, political candidates are asked not to imply that their candidacy is endorsed by the Church or its leaders.

As always, Church facilities may not be used for political purposes, nor Church directories or mailing lists.

Sincerely yours,  
The First Presidency

(*Deseret News*, Saturday, February 7, 1998)

*And that law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, belongs to all mankind, and is justifiable before me.*

*Therefore, I, the Lord, justify you, and your brethren of my church, in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land;*

*And as pertaining to law of man, whatsoever is more or less than this, cometh of evil.  
I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law also maketh you free.*

*Nevertheless, when the wicked rule the people mourn.*

*(D&C 98:5-9)*

*We believe that no government can exist in peace, except such laws are framed and held inviolate as will secure to each individual the free exercise of conscience, the right and control of property, and the protection of life.*

*(D&C 134:2)*

# THE PROPER ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

*by Ezra Taft Benson*

Men in the public spotlight constantly are asked to express an opinion on a myriad of government proposals and projects. “What do you think of TVA?” “What is your opinion of Medicare?” “How do you feel about Urban Renewal?” The list is endless. All too often, answers to these questions seem to be based, not upon any solid principle, but upon the popularity of the specific government program in question. Seldom are men willing to oppose a popular program if they, themselves, wish to be popular—especially if they seek public office.

## *GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE BASED UPON SOUND PRINCIPLES*

Such an approach to vital political questions of the day can only lead to public confusion and legislative chaos. Decisions of this nature should be based upon and measured against certain basic *principles* regarding the proper role of government. If principles are correct, then they can be applied to any specific proposal with confidence.

Are there not, in reality, underlying, universal principles with reference in which all issues must be resolved whether the society be simple or complex in its mechanical organization? It seems to me we could relieve ourselves of most of the bewilderment which so unsettles and distracts us by subjecting each situation to the simple test of right and wrong. Right and wrong as moral principles do not change. They are applicable and reliable determinants whether the situations with which we deal are simple or complicated. *There is always a right and wrong to every question which requires our solution.* (Albert E. Bowen, *Prophets, Principles and National Survival*, p. 21-2)

Unlike the political opportunist, the true statesman values principle above popularity, and works to create popularity for those political principles which are wise and just.

## *THE CORRECT ROLE OF GOVERNMENT*

I should like to outline in clear, concise, and straight-forward terms the political principles to which I subscribe. These are the guidelines which determine, now and in the future, my attitudes and actions toward all domestic proposals and projects of government. These are the principles which, in my opinion, proclaim the proper role of government in the domestic affairs of the nation:

[I] believe that governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man; and that he holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them, both in making laws and administering them, for the good and safety of society.

[I] believe that no government can exist in peace, except such laws are framed and held inviolate as will secure to each individual the free exercise of conscience, the right and control of property, and the protection of life...

[I] believe that all men are bound to sustain and uphold the respective governments in which they reside, while protected in their inherent and inalienable rights by the laws of such governments; and that sedition and rebellion are unbecoming every citizen thus protected, and should be punished accordingly; and that all governments have a right to enact such laws as in their own judgments are best calculated to

secure the public interest; at the same time, however, holding sacred the freedom of conscience. (D&C 134:1-2, 5)

### *THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF GOVERNMENT*

It is generally agreed that the most important single function of government is to secure the rights and freedoms of individual citizens. But, what are those rights? And what is their source? Until these questions are answered there is little likelihood that we can correctly determine *how* government can best secure them. Thomas Paine, back in the days of the American Revolution, explained that:

Rights are not gifts from one man to another, nor from one class of men to another. . . . It is impossible to discover any origin of rights otherwise than in the origin of man; it consequently follows that rights appertain to man in right of his existence, and must therefore be equal to every man. (*P.P.N.S.*, p. 141)

The great Thomas Jefferson asked:

Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? (*Works*, 8:404; *P.P.N.S.*, p. 141)

Starting at the foundation of the pyramid, let us first consider the origin of those freedoms we have come to know as human rights. There are only two possible sources. Rights are either *God-given* as part of the Divine Plan, or they are *granted by government* as part of the political plan. Reason, necessity, tradition and religious convictions all lead me to accept the divine origin of these rights. If we accept the premise that human rights are granted by government, then we must be willing to accept the corollary that they can be denied by government. I, for one, shall never accept that premise. As the French political economist Frederick Bastiat, phrased it so succinctly, “Life, liberty, and property do not exist because men have made laws. On the contrary, it was the fact that life, liberty, and property existed beforehand that caused men to make laws in the first place.” (*The Law*, p. 6)

### *THE REAL MEANING OF THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE*

I support the doctrine of separation of church and state as traditionally interpreted to prohibit the establishment of an official national religion. But I am opposed to the doctrine of separation of church and state as currently interpreted to divorce government from any formal recognition of God. The current trend strikes a potentially fatal blow at the concept of the divine origin of our rights, and unlocks the door for an easy entry of future tyranny. If Americans should ever come to believe that their rights and freedoms are instituted among men by politicians and bureaucrats, then they will no longer carry the proud inheritance of their forefathers, but will grovel before their masters seeking favors and dispensations—a throwback to the Feudal Systems of the Dark Ages. We must ever keep in mind the inspired words of Thomas Jefferson, as found in the Declaration of Independence:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. (*P.P.N.S.*, p. 519)



Since God created men with certain unalienable rights, and man, in turn, created government to help secure and safeguard those rights, it follows that man is superior to the creature which he created. Man is superior to government and should remain master over it, not the other way around. Even the non-believer can appreciate the logic of this relationship.

### *THE SOURCE OF GOVERNMENT POWER*

Leaving aside, for a moment, the question of the divine origin of rights, it is obvious that a government is nothing more or less than a relatively small group of citizens who have been hired, in a sense, by the rest of us to perform certain functions and discharge certain responsibilities which have been authorized. It stands to reason that the government itself has no innate power or privilege to do anything. Its only source of authority and power is from the people who have created it. This is made clear in the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States, which reads: “WE THE PEOPLE” do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

The important thing to keep in mind is that the people who have created their government can give to that government only such powers as they, themselves, have in the first place. Obviously, they cannot give that which they do not possess. So, the question boils down to this. What powers properly belong to each and every person in the absence of and prior to the establishment of any organized governmental form? A hypothetical question? Yes, indeed! But, it is a question which is vital to an understanding of the principles which underlie the proper function of government.

Of course, as James Madison, sometimes called the Father of the Constitution, said, “If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary.” (*The Federalist*, No. 51)

### *NATURAL RIGHTS*

In a primitive state, there is no doubt that each man would be justified in using force, if necessary, to defend himself against physical harm, against theft of the fruits of his labor, and against enslavement of another. This principle was clearly explained by Bastiat:

Each of us has a natural right—from God—to defend his person, his liberty, and his property. These are the three basic requirements of life, and the preservation of any one of them is completely dependent upon the preservation of the other two. For what are our faculties but the extension of our individuality? And what is property but an extension of our faculties? (*The Law*, p. 6)

Indeed, the early pioneers found that a great deal of their time and energy was being spent doing all three—defending themselves, their property and their liberty—in what properly was called the “Lawless West.” In order for man to prosper, he cannot afford to spend his time constantly guarding his family, his fields, and his property against attack and theft, so he joins together with his neighbors and hires a sheriff. At this precise moment, government is born. The individual citizens delegate to their sheriff their unquestionable right to protect themselves. The sheriff now does for them only what they had a right to do for themselves—nothing more. Quoting again from Bastiat:

If every person has the right to defend—even by force—his person, his liberty, and his property, then it follows that a group of men have the right to organize and support a common force to protect these rights constantly. Thus the principle of collective right—its reason for existing, its lawfulness—is based on individual right. (*The Law*, p. 6)

So far so good. But now we come to the moment of truth. Suppose pioneer “A” wants another horse for his wagon. He doesn’t have the money to buy one, but since pioneer “B” has an extra horse, he decides that he is entitled to share in his neighbor’s good fortune. Is he entitled to take his neighbor’s horse? Obviously not! If his neighbor wishes to give it or lend it, that is another question. But so long as pioneer “B” wishes to keep his property, pioneer “A” has no just claim to it.

If “A” has no proper power to take “B’s” property, can he delegate any such power to the sheriff? No. Even if everyone in the community desires that “B” give his extra horse to “A” they have no right individually or *collectively* to force him to do it. They cannot delegate a power they themselves do not have. This important principle was clearly understood and explained by John Locke nearly 300 years ago:

For nobody can transfer to another more power than he has in himself, and nobody has an absolute arbitrary power over himself, or over any other, to destroy his own life, or take away the life or property of another. (*Two Treatises of Civil Government*, 2, 135; *P.P.N.S.*, p. 93)

### *THE PROPER FUNCTION OF GOVERNMENT*

This means, then, that the proper function of government is limited only to those spheres of activity within which the individual citizen has the right to act. By deriving its just powers from the governed, government becomes primarily a mechanism for defense against bodily harm, theft and involuntary servitude. It cannot claim the power to redistribute the wealth or force reluctant citizens to perform acts of charity against their will. Government is created by man. No man possesses such power to delegate. The creature cannot exceed the creator.

In general terms, therefore, the proper role of government includes such defensive activities, as maintaining national military and local police force for protection against loss of life, loss of property, and loss of liberty at the hands of either foreign despots or domestic criminals.

### *THE POWERS OF A PROPER GOVERNMENT*

It also includes those powers necessarily incidental to the protective function such as:

1. The maintenance of courts where those charged with crimes may be tried and where disputes between citizens may be impartially settled.
2. The establishment of a monetary system and a standard of weights and measures so that courts may render money judgements, taxing authorities may levy taxes, and citizens may have a uniform standard to use in their business dealings.

My attitude toward government is succinctly expressed by the following provisions taken from the Alabama Constitution:

That the sole object and only legitimate end of government is to protect the citizen in the enjoyment of life, liberty, and property, and when the government assumes other functions it is usurpation and oppression. (Art. 1, Sec. 35)

An important test I use in passing judgement upon an act of government is this: If it were up to me as an individual to punish my neighbor for violating a given law, would it offend my conscience to do so? Since my conscience will never permit me to physically punish my fellow man unless he has done something evil, or unless he has failed to do something which I have a moral right to

require of him to do, I will never knowingly authorize my agent, the government, to do this on my behalf.

I realize that when I give my consent to the adoption of a law, I specifically instruct the police—the government—to take either the life, liberty, or property of anyone who disobeys that law. Furthermore, I tell them that if anyone resists the enforcement of the law, they are to use any means necessary—yes, even putting the lawbreaker to death or putting him in jail—to overcome such resistance. These are extreme measures but unless laws are enforced, anarchy results.

As John Locke explained many years ago:

The end of law is not to abolish or restrain, but to preserve and enlarge freedom. For in all the states of created beings, capable of laws, *where there is no law there is no freedom*. For liberty is to be free from restraint and violence from others, which cannot be where there is no law; and is not, as we are told, “a liberty for every man to do what he lists.” For who could be free, when every other man’s humor might domineer over him? But a liberty to dispose and order freely as he lists his person, actions, possessions, and his whole property within the allowance of those laws under which he is, and therein not to be subject to the arbitrary will of another, but freely follow his own. (*Two Treatises of Civil Government*, 2, 57; *P.P.N.S.*, p. 101)

I believe we Americans should use extreme care before lending our support to any proposed government program. We should fully recognize that government is no plaything. As George Washington warned, “Government is not reason, it is not eloquence—it is force! Like fire, it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master!” (*The Red Carpet*, p. 142). It is an instrument of force and unless our conscience is clear that we would not hesitate to put a man to death, put him in jail or forcibly deprive him of his property for failing to obey a given law, we should oppose it.

## *THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES*

Another standard I use in determining what law is good and what is bad is the Constitution of the United States. I regard this inspired document as a solemn agreement between the citizens of this nation which every officer of government is under a sacred duty to obey. As Washington stated so clearly in his immortal Farewell Address:

The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government—But the constitution which at any time exists, until changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government. (*P.P.N.S.*, p. 128)

I am especially mindful that the Constitution provides that the great bulk of the legitimate activities of government are to be carried out at the state or local level. This is the only way in which the principle of “self-government” can be made effective. As James Madison said before the adoption of the Constitution, “[We] rest all our political experiments on the capacity of mankind for self-government.” (*Federalist*, No. 39; *P.P.N.S.*, p. 128). Thomas Jefferson made this interesting observation: “Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he, then, be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the forms of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question. (*Works*, 8:3; *P.P.N.S.*, p. 128)

## *THE VALUE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT*

It is a firm principle that the smallest or lowest level that can possibly undertake the task is the one that should do so. First, the community or the city. If the city cannot handle it, then the county. Next, the state; and only if no smaller unit can possibly do the job should the federal government be considered. This is merely the application to the field of politics of that wise and time-tested principle of *never asking a larger group to do that which can be done by a smaller group*. And so far as government is concerned, the smaller the unit and the closer it is to the people, the easier it is to guide it, to keep it solvent and to keep our freedom. Thomas Jefferson understood this principle very well and explained it this way:

The way to have good and safe government, is not to trust it all to one, but to divide it among the many, distributing to every one exactly the functions he is competent to. Let the national government be entrusted with the defense of the nation, and its foreign and federal relations; the State governments with the civil rights, law, police, and administration of what concerns the State generally; the counties with the local concerns of the counties, and each ward direct the interests within itself. It is by dividing and subdividing these republics from the great national one down through all its subordinations, until it ends in the administration of every man's farm by himself; by placing under every one what his own eye may superintend, that all will be done for the best. *What has destroyed liberty and the rights of man in every government which has ever existed under the sun? The generalizing and concentrating all cares and powers into one body.* (Works, 6:543; P.P.N.S., p. 125)

It is well to remember that the states of this republic created the Federal Government. The Federal Government did not create the states.

### *THINGS THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT DO*

A category of government activity which, today, not only requires the closest scrutiny, but which also poses a grave danger to our continued freedom, is the activity *not* within the proper sphere of government. No one has the authority to grant such powers, as welfare programs, schemes for redistributing the wealth, and activities which coerce people into acting in accordance with a prescribed code of social planning. There is one simple test. Do I as an individual have a right to use force upon my neighbor to accomplish this goal? If I do have such a right, then I may delegate that power to my government to exercise on my behalf. If I do not have that right as an individual, then I cannot delegate it to government, and I cannot ask my government to perform the act for me.

To be sure, there are times when this principle of the proper role of government is most annoying and inconvenient. If I could only *force* the ignorant to provide for themselves, or the selfish to be generous with their wealth! But if we permit government to manufacture its own authority out of thin air, and to create self-proclaimed powers not delegated to it by the people, then the creature exceeds the creator and becomes master. Beyond that point, where shall the line be drawn? Who is to say "this far, but no farther?" What clear *principle* will stay the hand of government from reaching farther and yet farther into our daily lives? We shouldn't forget the wise words of President Grover Cleveland that "...*though the people support the Government, the Government should not support the people.*" (P.P.N.S., p. 345). We should also remember, as Frederick Bastiat reminded us, that "Nothing can enter the public treasury for the benefit of one citizen or one class unless other citizens and other classes have been forced to send it in." (*The Law*, p. 30; P.P.N.S., p. 350)

### *THE DIVIDING LINE BETWEEN PROPER AND IMPROPER GOVERNMENT*

As Bastiat pointed out over a hundred years ago, once government steps over this clear line between the protective or negative role into the aggressive role of redistributing the wealth and providing so-called “benefits” for some of its citizens, it then becomes a means for what he accurately described as legalized plunder. It becomes a lever of unlimited power which is the sought after prize of unscrupulous individuals and pressure groups, each seeking to control the machine to fatten his own pockets or to benefit its favorite charities—all with the other fellow’s money, of course. (*The Law*, 1850, reprinted by the Foundation for Economic Education, Irvington-On-Hudson, N.Y.)

### *THE NATURE OF LEGAL PLUNDER*

Listen to Bastiat’s explanation of this legal plunder:

When a portion of wealth is transferred from the person who owns it—without his consent and without compensation, and whether by force or by fraud—to anyone who does not own it, then I say that property is violated; that an act of plunder is committed. . . .

How is this legal plunder to be identified? Quite simply. See if the law takes from some persons what belongs to them, and gives it to other persons to whom it does not belong. See if the law benefits one citizen at the expense of another by doing what the citizen himself cannot do without committing a crime. . . . (*The Law*, p. 21, 26; *P.P.N.S.*, p. 377)

As Bastiat observed, and as history has proven, each class or special interest group competes with the others to throw the lever of governmental power in their favor, or at least to immunize itself against the effects of a previous thrust. Labor gets a minimum wage, so agriculture seeks a price support. Consumers demand price controls, and industry gets protective tariffs. In the end, no one is much further ahead, and everyone suffers the burdens of a gigantic bureaucracy and a loss of personal freedom. With each group out to get its share of the spoils, such governments historically have mushroomed into total welfare states. Once the process begins, once the principle of the protective function of government gives way to the aggressive or redistributive function, then forces are set in motion that drive the nation toward totalitarianism. “It is impossible,” Bastiat correctly observed, “to introduce into society... a greater evil than this: the conversion of the law into an instrument of plunder.” (*The Law*, Ép. 12)

### *GOVERNMENT CANNOT CREATE WEALTH*

Students of history know that no government in history of mankind has ever created any wealth. *People who work create wealth.* James R. Evans, in his inspiring book, *The Glorious Quest*, gives this simple illustration of legalized plunder:

Assume, for example, that we were farmers, and that we received a letter from the government telling us that we were going to get a thousand dollars this year for ploughed up acreage. But rather than the normal method of collection, we were to take this letter and collect \$69.71 from Bill Brown, at such an address, and \$82.47 from Henry Jones, \$59.80 from a Bill Smith, and so on down the line; that these men would make up our farm subsidy.

Neither you nor I, Nor would 99 percent of the farmers, walk up and ring a man’s doorbell, hold out a hand and say, “Give me what You’ve earned even though I have not.” We simply wouldn’t do it because we would be facing directly the violation of moral law, “Thou shalt not steal.” In short, we would be held accountable for our actions.

The free creative energy of this choice nation “created more than 50 percent of all the world’s products and possessions in the short span of 160 years. The only imperfection in the system is the imperfection of man himself.”

The last paragraph in this remarkable Evans book—which I commend to all—reads:

No historian of the future will ever be able to prove that the ideas of individual liberty practiced in the United States of America were a failure. He may be able to prove that we were not yet worthy of them. The choice is ours. (Charles Hallberg and Co., 116 West Grand Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60610)

### *THE BASIC ERROR OF MARXISM*

According to Marxist doctrine, a human being is primarily an economic creature. In other words, his material well being is all important; his privacy and his freedom are strictly secondary. The Soviet constitution reflects this philosophy in its emphasis on security: food, clothing, housing, medical care—the same things that might be considered in a jail. The basic concept is that the government has full responsibility for the welfare of the people and, in order to discharge that responsibility, must assume control of all their activities. It is significant that in actuality the Russian people have few of the rights supposedly “guaranteed” to them in their constitution, while the American people have them in abundance even though they are not guaranteed. The reason, of course, is that material gain and economic security simply cannot be guaranteed by any government. They are the result of hard work and industrious production. Unless the people bake one loaf of bread for each citizen, the government cannot guarantee that each will have one loaf to eat. Constitutions can be written, laws can be passed and imperial decrees can be issued, but unless the bread is produced, it can never be distributed.

### *THE REAL CAUSE OF AMERICAN PROSPERITY*

Why, then, do Americans bake more bread, manufacture more shoes and assemble more TV sets than Russians do? They do so precisely because our government does *not* guarantee these things. If it did, there would be so many accompanying taxes, controls, regulations, and political manipulations that the productive genius that is America’s would soon be reduced to the floundering level of waste and inefficiency now found behind the Iron Curtain. As Henry D. Thoreau explained:

This government never of itself furthered any enterprise, but by the alacrity with which it got out of its way. *It does not keep the country free. It does not settle the West. It does not educate. The character inherent in the American people has done all that has been accomplished; and it would have done somewhat more, if the government had not sometimes got in its way.* For government is an expedient by which men would fain succeed in letting one another alone; and, as has been said, when it is most expedient, the governed are most let alone by it. (Quoted by Clarence B. Carson, *The American Tradition*, p. 100; *P.P.N.S.*, p. 171)

In 1801 Thomas Jefferson, in his First Inaugural Address, said:

With all these blessings, what more is necessary to make us a happy and prosperous people? Still one thing more, fellow citizens—a wise and frugal government which shall restrain men from injuring one another, which shall leave them otherwise to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it had earned. (*Works*, 8:3)

### *A FORMULA FOR ECONOMIC PROSPERITY*

The principle behind this American philosophy can be reduced to a rather simple formula:

1. Economic security for all is impossible without widespread abundance.
2. Abundance is impossible without industrious and efficient production.
3. Such production is impossible without energetic, willing and eager labor.
4. This is not possible without incentive.
5. Of all forms of incentive—the freedom to attain a reward for one's labors is the most sustaining for most people. Sometimes called *the profit motive*, it is simply the right to plan and to earn and to enjoy the fruits of your labor.
6. This profit motive *diminishes* as government controls, regulation and taxes *increase* to deny the fruits of excess to those who produce.
7. Therefore, any attempt *through governmental intervention* to redistribute the material rewards of labor can only result in the eventual destruction of the productive base of society, without which real abundance and security for more than the ruling elite is quite impossible.

### *AN EXAMPLE OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF DISREGARDING THESE PRINCIPLES*

We have before us currently a sad example of what happens to a nation which ignores these principles. Former FBI agent, Dan Smoot, succinctly pointed this out on his broadcast number 649, dated January 29, 1968 as follows:

England was killed by an idea: the idea that the weak, indolent and profligate must be supported by the strong, industrious, and the frugal—to the degree that tax consumers will have a living standard comparable to that of taxpayers; the idea that government exists for the purpose of plundering those who work to give the product of their labor to those who do not work.

The economic and social cannibalism produced by this communist-socialist idea will destroy any society which adopts it and clings to it as a basic principle—*any* society.

### *THE POWER OF TRUE LIBERTY FROM IMPROPER GOVERNMENTAL INTERFERENCE*

Nearly two hundred years ago, Adam Smith, the Englishman, who understood these principles very well, published his great book, *The Wealth of Nations*, which contains this statement:

The natural effort of every individual to better his own condition, when suffered to exert itself with freedom and security, is so powerful a principle, that it is alone, and without any assistance, not only capable of carrying on the society to wealth and prosperity, but of surmounting a hundred impertinent obstructions with which the folly of human laws too often encumbers its operations; though the effect of these obstructions is always more or less either to encroach upon its freedom, or to diminish its security. (vol. 2, Book 4, p.126)

### *BUT WHAT ABOUT THE NEEDY?*

On the surface this may sound heartless and insensitive to the needs of those less fortunate individuals who are found in any society, no matter how affluent. “What about the lame, the sick and the destitute?” is an often voiced question. Most other countries in the world have attempted to use the power of government to meet this need. Yet, in every case, the improvement has been marginal at best and has resulted in the long run creating more misery, more poverty, and certainly less freedom than when government first stepped in. As Henry Grady Weaver wrote, in his excellent book, *The Mainspring of Human Progress*:

Most of the major ills of the world have been caused by well-meaning people who ignored the principle of individual freedom, except as applied to themselves, and who were obsessed with fanatical zeal to improve the lot of mankind-in-the-mass through some pet formula of their own...*The harm done by ordinary criminals, murderers, gangsters, and thieves is negligible in comparison with the agony inflicted upon human beings by the professional “do-gooders”*, who attempt to set themselves up as gods on earth and who would ruthlessly force their views on all others with the abiding assurance that the end justifies the means. (p. 40-1; *P.P.N.S.*, p. 313)

## *THE BETTER WAY*

By comparison, America traditionally has followed Jefferson’s advice of relying on individual action and charity. The result is that the United States has fewer cases of genuine hardship per capita than any other country in the entire world or throughout history. Even during the depression of the 1930’s, Americans ate and lived better than most people in other countries do today.

## *WHAT IS WRONG WITH A “LITTLE” SOCIALISM?*

In reply to the argument that a little bit of socialism is good so long as it doesn’t go too far, it is tempting to say that, in like fashion, just a little bit of theft or a little bit of cancer is all right, too! History proves that the growth of the welfare state is difficult to check before it comes to its full flower of dictatorship. But let us hope that this time around, the trend can be reversed. If not, then we will see the inevitability of complete socialism, probably within our lifetime.

## *THREE REASONS AMERICA NEED NOT FALL FOR SOCIALIST DECEPTIONS*

Three factors may make a difference. First, there is sufficient historical knowledge of the failures of socialism and of the past mistakes of previous civilizations. Secondly, there are modern means of rapid communications to transmit these lessons of history to a large literate population. And thirdly, there is a growing number of dedicated men and women who, at great personal sacrifice, are actively working to promote a wider appreciation of these concepts. The timely joining together of these three factors may make it entirely possible for us to reverse the trend.

## *HOW CAN PRESENT SOCIALISTIC TRENDS BE REVERSED?*

This brings up the next question: How is it possible to cut out the various welfare-state features of our government which have already fastened themselves like cancer cells onto the body politic? Isn’t drastic surgery already necessary, and can it be performed without endangering the patient? In answer, it is obvious that drastic measures *are* called for. No half-way or compromise actions will suffice. Like all surgery, it will not be without discomforts and perhaps even some scar tissue for a long time to come. But it must be done if the patient is to be saved, and it can be done without undue risk.

Obviously, not all welfare-state programs currently in force can be dropped simultaneously without causing tremendous economic and social upheaval. To try to do so would be like finding oneself at the controls of a hijacked airplane and attempting to return it by simply cutting off the engines in flight. It must be flown back, lowered in altitude, gradually reduced in speed and brought in for a smooth landing. Translated into practical terms, this means that the first step toward restoring the limited concept of government should be to freeze all welfare-state programs



at their present level, making sure that no new ones are added. The next step would be to allow all present programs to run out their term with absolutely no renewal. The third step would involve the gradual phasing out of those programs which are indefinite in their term. In my opinion, the bulk of the transition could be accomplished within a ten-year period and virtually completed within twenty years. Congress would serve as the initiator of this phase-out program, and the President would act as the executive in accordance with traditional constitutional procedures.

### *SUMMARY THUS FAR*

As I summarize what I have attempted to cover, try to visualize the structural relationship between the six vital concepts that have made America the envy of the world. I have reference to the foundation of the Divine Origin of Rights; Limited Government; the pillars of Economic Freedom and Personal Freedom, which result in Abundance; followed by Security and the Pursuit of Happiness.

America was built upon a firm foundation and created over many years from the bottom up. Other nations, impatient to acquire equal abundance, security and pursuit of happiness, rush headlong into that final phase of construction without building adequate foundations or supporting pillars. Their efforts are futile. And, even in our country, there are those who think that, because we now have the good things in life, we can afford to dispense with the foundations which have made them possible. They want to remove any recognition of God from governmental institutions. They want to expand the scope and reach of government which will undermine and erode our economic and personal freedoms. The abundance which is ours, the carefree existence which we have come to accept as a matter of course, *can be toppled by these foolish experimenters and power seekers*. By the grace of God, and with His help, we shall fence them off from the foundations of our liberty, and then begin our task of repair and construction.

As a conclusion to this discussion, I present a declaration of principles which have recently been prepared by a few American patriots, and to which I wholeheartedly subscribe.

### *FIFTEEN PRINCIPLES WHICH MAKE FOR GOOD AND PROPER GOVERNMENT*

As an Independent American for constitutional government I declare that:

1. I believe that no people can maintain freedom unless their political institutions are founded upon faith in God and belief in the existence of moral law.

2. I believe that God has endowed men with certain unalienable rights as set forth in the Declaration of Independence and that no legislature and no majority, however great, may morally limit or destroy these; that the sole function of government is to protect life, liberty, and property and anything more than this is usurpation and oppression.

3. I believe that the Constitution of the United States was prepared and adopted by men acting under inspiration from Almighty God; that it is a solemn compact between the peoples of the States of this nation which all officers of government are under duty to obey; that the eternal moral laws expressed therein must be adhered to or individual liberty will perish.

4. I believe it a violation of the Constitution for government to deprive the individual of either life, liberty, or property except for these purposes:

- a. Punish crime and provide administration of justice;
- b. Protect the right and control of private property;
- c. Wage defensive war and provide for the nation's defense;

d. Compel each one who enjoys the protection of government to bear his fair share of the burden of performing the above functions.

5. I hold that the Constitution denies government the power to take from the individual either his life, liberty, or property except in accordance with moral law; that the same moral law which governs the actions of men when acting alone is also applicable when they act in concert with others; that no citizen or group of citizens has any right to direct their agent, the government to perform any act which would be evil or offensive to the conscience if that citizen were performing the act himself outside the framework of government.

6. I am hereby resolved that under no circumstances shall the freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights be infringed. In particular I am opposed to any attempt on the part of the Federal Government to deny the people their right to bear arms, to worship and pray when and where they choose, or to own and control property.

7. I consider ourselves at war with international Communism which is committed to the destruction of our government, our right of property, and our freedom; that it is treason as defined by the Constitution to give aid and comfort to this implacable enemy.

8. I am unalterably opposed to Socialism, either in whole or in part, and regard it as an unconstitutional usurpation of power and a denial of the right of private property for government to own or operate the means of producing and distributing goods and services in competition with private enterprise, or to regiment owners in the legitimate use of private property.

9. I maintain that every person who enjoys the protection of his life, liberty, and property should bear his fair share of the cost of government in providing that protection; that the elementary principles of justice set forth in the Constitution demand that all taxes imposed be uniform and that each person's property or income be taxed at the same rate.

10. I believe in honest money, the gold and silver coinage of the Constitution, and a circulating medium convertible into such money without loss. I regard it as a flagrant violation of the explicit provisions of the Constitution for the Federal Government to make it a criminal offense to use gold or silver coin as legal tender or to issue irredeemable paper money.

11. I believe that each state is sovereign in performing those functions reserved to it by the Constitution and it is destructive of our federal system and the right of self-government guaranteed under the Constitution for the Federal Government to regulate or control the States in performing their functions or to engage in performing such functions itself.

12. I consider it a violation of the Constitution for the Federal Government to levy taxes for the support of state or local government; that no state or local government can accept funds from the Federal and remain independent in performing its functions, nor can the citizens exercise their rights of self-government under such conditions.

13. I deem it a violation of the right of private property guaranteed under the Constitution for the Federal Government to forcibly deprive the citizens of this nation of their property through taxation or otherwise, and make a gift thereof to foreign governments or their citizens.

14. I believe that no treaty or agreement with other countries should deprive our citizens of rights guaranteed them by the Constitution.

15. I consider it a direct violation of the obligation imposed upon it by the Constitution for the Federal Government to dismantle or weaken our military establishment below that point required for the protection of the States against invasion, or to surrender or commit our men, arms, or money to the control of foreign or world organizations or governments.

These things I believe to be the proper role of government.

We have strayed far afield. We must return to basic concepts and principles—to eternal verities. There is no other way. The storm signals are up. They are clear and ominous.

As Americans—citizens of the greatest nation under Heaven—we face difficult days. Never since the days of the Civil War—100 years ago—has this choice nation faced such a crisis.

In closing I wish to refer you to the words of the patriot Thomas Paine, whose writings helped so much to stir into a flaming spirit the smoldering embers of patriotism during the days of the American Revolution:

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will in this crises, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it NOW, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; 'tis dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated. (*The Political Works of Thomas Paine*, p. 55)

I intend to keep fighting. My personal attitude is one of resolution—not resignation.

I have faith in the American people. I pray that we will never do anything that will jeopardize in any manner our priceless heritage. If we live and work so as to enjoy the approbation of a Divine Providence, we cannot fail. Without that help we cannot long endure.

### *ALL RIGHT-THINKING AMERICANS SHOULD NOW TAKE THEIR STAND*

So I urge all Americans to put their courage to the test. Be firm in our conviction that our cause is just. Reaffirm our faith in all things for which true Americans have always stood.

I urge all Americans to arouse themselves and stay aroused. We must not make any further concessions to communism at home or abroad. We do not need to. We should oppose communism from our position of strength for we are not weak.

There is much to be done. The time is short. Let us begin—in earnest—now, and may God bless our efforts I humbly pray.

—EZRA TAFT BENSON

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
47 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE STREET  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150

EZRA TAFT BENSON

July 28, 1976

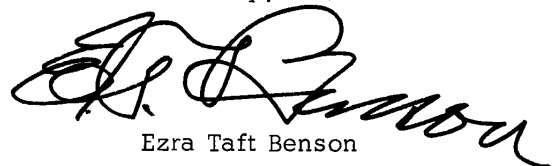
Dear Verlan,

I acknowledge with appreciation your letter of July 24 regarding the two pieces of legislation which you and your associates are supporting. I am very pleased to note that you feel that what you are proposing is supported strongly by the Book of Mormon. I am a great believer in the Book of Mormon and feel strongly that it was written for our day and time. I have said to many people that a person will come to be better informed regarding what's happening in the world today by reading the Book of Mormon than all the magazines and newspapers combined. My great concern is whether we have time enough through the legislative route and the great lack of support for sound principles to get the job done, because of the rate at which the subversive program is closing in on us.

I have just listened to two tapes of the Alan Stang Report. I don't know if you've heard of these, Verlan. This is a new service of the JBS and I understand some 150 stations are carrying the program now. It runs 5 minutes per day for five days of the week, all of which are on one cassette tape. The program is sponsored and purchased by business firms. KSL is running it on time purchased and the service purchased by Larson Ford and I understand it plays every day at 1:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. You may want to write to Alan Stang, Belmont, Mass., 02178 and ask them to send you a sample copy or their promotion tape. It may be you could get it on a Provo station or it may be that a group of you could join together and get it for your own personal use. I believe Reid Bankhead and some of the others might join with you, including Cleon Skousen, with whom I discussed the matter in the hope that he might find use for it. They are sending a copy to me weekly complimentary. It's really news behind the news and is a job well done and most timely.

With warm regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. T. Benson', written in a cursive style.

Ezra Taft Benson

H. Verlan Andersen  
1155 East 930 North  
Provo, Utah 84601

# THE IMPROPER ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

by Elder H. Verlan Andersen

## *COLLECTIVISM, THE DANGER FROM WITHIN*

To me, the most basic and important differences which exist between living conditions in one nation and another are largely accounted for by the differences in the laws of those nations and how such laws are executed. I assume that it is the moral, religious, and ethical beliefs of the people which largely determine what the laws of a republic or a democracy shall be; nevertheless it is the law of the land which guarantees the individual his liberty or makes of him a slave.

We usually explain the differences between life in one country and another by saying the governments are different. In the last analysis, however, it is the law which either puts restraints upon the law enforcement agencies on the one hand, or gives them unbridled power to deal arbitrarily with the citizen's life, liberty, and property on the other.

Governments are established primarily for the purpose of enforcing a code of moral behavior called criminal law. Man has felt the need to have an agency which is at the same time powerful enough and impartial enough to seek out and punish those who intentionally injure or destroy the life, liberty, or property, of another.

Agreement about what the law should be ceases when we get into the area of administrative law. When the state, instead of merely protecting property rights, adopts measures which are in effect a denial of the right of private property—when the state under the sanction of the law, takes by force the property of one person and gives it to another—when it establishes monopolies, by giving some citizens the privilege of entering into certain economic activities but denies all others this privilege—when the state denies its citizens the freedom to enter business contracts of their own choosing—in short when the state becomes an instrument of plunder and benefits one citizen or group of citizens at the expense of others by doing that which the criminal law forbids the individual to do when acting alone—there is bound to be strong opposition to such measures.

This type of law has become completely acceptable in the United States both on the state and federal level during the last fifty years of our history. It is this fact, together with the continuing growth of such administrative laws, which in my mind represents the real threat of communism.

I have for some time been impressed with the fact that the founders of *scientific socialism* proposed that their system of government be established in a capitalist nation by means of the ballot box—by the peaceful process of voting into effect those laws which they believed would eventuate in the establishment of communism. Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* proposed the use of the democratic process to adopt a system of laws which would bring about the form of government which they proposed. Let us listen to a few excerpts from the *Manifesto*:

We have seen above that the first step in the revolution of the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to establish democracy.

The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest by degrees all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the state....

The *Manifesto* goes on to say—and again I quote:

Of course, in the beginning this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property and on the conditions of bourgeois production;...

Clearly Marx and Engels felt it necessary to prepare for the communist coup by first securing the adoption of laws which diminish and destroy the right of private property—laws which I call administrative laws. Let us next examine exactly what their legislative platform consisted of, because they had one. They listed ten separate measures which they considered applicable in the most advanced capitalistic countries. These famous ten points are as follows:

1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.
2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.
3. Abolition of all rights of inheritance.
4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.
5. Centralization of credit in the hands of the state by means of a national bank with state capital and an exclusive monopoly.
6. Centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the state.
7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the state; the bringing into cultivation of waste lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.
8. Equal obligation of all to work. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.
9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country by a more equable distribution of the population over the country.
10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of child factory labor in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, etc.

Except for the last measure proposed, which deals with state control of education, each of these ten proposals recommends a law aimed at the destruction of the right of private property. Marx and Engels freely admitted their purpose. At one place in this same document we find this statement: “The communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations.”

And still another indication of their purpose is found in these words: “In this sense the theory of the communists may be summed up in the single sentence: ‘Abolition of Private Property.’”

Just as Marx and Engels and their successors have proposed the adoptions of laws designed to destroy private property as the means of creating a communist slave state, so those who have been advocates of individual freedom have proposed laws which would protect this right.

Those who framed the U.S. Constitution for the purpose of securing the blessings of liberty to themselves and their posterity included therein a provision that no person should be deprived of his life, liberty, or property without due process of law and that private property could not be taken for public purposes without just compensation.

Why is it that the communists place so much importance upon the abolition of the right of private property in order to effectuate their slave state and why is it that the founding fathers regarded it with equal importance in preserving freedom? I would like to explain my own position, which is that the right of private property is the *sine qua non* of individual freedom.

I ask you to make a plan to achieve any noteworthy goal and then envision how you would succeed if you were denied the right to own and/or control property. The right of private property is the means to all of our ends; it is the limiting factor in our dreams and ambitions; it is the extension of our faculties and may raise them to the *n*th power. Without the right of private property, the individual is harmless, helpless, and hopeless.

As one might suspect, because of my feeling that the right of private property lies at the basis of all real freedom, the changes which have occurred during the past fifty years in our American form of government concern me greatly. As I have studied the situation which exists in our country I have reached a conclusion similar to that arrived at by Ben Moreel in a speech in Chicago nearly ten years ago. Mr. Moreel, chairman of the Board of Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation, delivered a speech entitled, *To Communism: Via Majority Vote*. After reviewing the ten points of the *Manifesto* he concluded thus: *But this startling fact cannot be denied: since Marx enunciated his doctrine slightly more than one hundred years ago, we Americans have adopted in varying degrees...practically his entire program.*

Aside from the possibility that we might be destroyed in the process, there is nothing which can stop us from becoming a completely socialized or communized nation if the majority of the people desire this to happen. If it is brought about it will be because, on the one hand, the majority do not want the responsibility of caring for their own economic needs, and on the other hand, the politicians readily and willingly accept this responsibility and the power which goes with it.

The Book of Mormon is a unique witness and warning to America about other civilizations who went down this path. J. Reuben Clark wrote about the *fulness of iniquity* of the Jareditic civilization and what they did to their government.

We are not given the step-by-step backsliding of this Jareditic civilization till it reached the social and governmental chaos the record sets out, but those steps seem wholly clear from the results. Put into modern terms, we can understand them. First there was a forsaking of the righteous life, and the working of wickedness; then must have come the extortion and oppression of the poor by the rich; then retaliation and reprisal by the poor against the rich; then would come a cry to share the wealth which should belong to all; then the easy belief that society owed every man a living whether he worked or not; then the keeping of a great body of idlers; then when community revenues failed to do this, as they always have failed and always will fail, a self-helping by one to the goods of his neighbor; and finally when the neighbor resisted, as resist he must, or starve with his family, then death to the neighbor and all that belonged to him. This was the decreed “fulness of iniquity.” (*Stand Fast by our Constitution*, p. 177, J. Reuben Clark)

President Clark went on to discuss this same *fulness of iniquity* which overcame the Nephites. He went on to warn us (p.183) that we Gentiles may have a similar *fulness of iniquity* if we are not righteous. President McKay explained the source this system of government which would lead to this destruction when he said:

...Even in man's pre-existent state, Satan sought power to compel the human family to do his will by suggesting that the free agency of man be inoperative. If his plan had been accepted, human beings would have become mere puppets in the hands of a dictator, and the purpose of man's coming to earth would have been frustrated. Satan's proposed system of government, therefore, was rejected, and the principle of free agency established in its place.... Any form of government that destroys or undermines the free exercise of free agency is wrong. (*The Improvement Era*, Feb. 1962, p. 87, President David O. McKay)

President McKay further clarified the system he was describing when he said in 1966,

The position of this Church on the subject of Communism has never changed. We consider it the greatest satanical threat to peace, prosperity, and the spread of God's work among men that exists on the face of the earth. (*Conference Report*, April, 1966. pp. 109-110, David O. McKay)

Was he opposed only to Communism? Referring to the economic system of Communism he stated, when talking about the direction of America:

During the first half of the twentieth century we have traveled far into the soul-destroying land of socialism... (*Gospel Ideals*, p. 273, David O. McKay)

The following graphs display what can only be referred to as America approaching its own *fulness of iniquity* as we reject the warnings of our prophets in our day.

## APPENDIX I GRAPHS OF AMERICA'S DECLINE

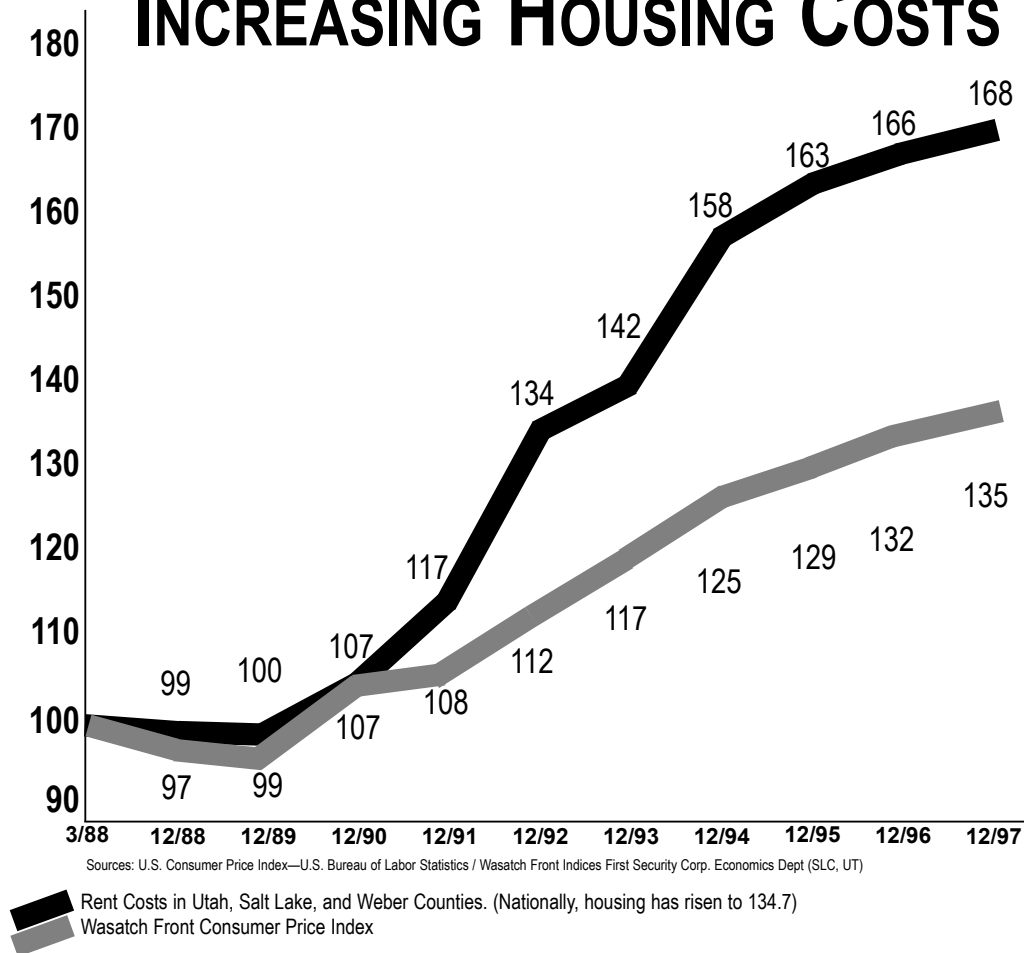
### *INCREASING HOUSING COSTS*

This graph reflects rising rental rates along the Wasatch front, compared to the Consumer Price Index along the Wasatch Front. While rent rates have grown tremendously, buying a home has also sky rocketed. For instance, the 1998 Economic Report to the Governor of Utah, prepared by the University of Utah Bureau of Economic Research states that:

The average price of the same group of existing houses in Utah increased 74.4% in the 5-year period ending September 30, 1997 (the largest 5 year increase in the nation), according to the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight's (OFHEO) Housing Price Index. The OFHEO price index measures the average price in repeat sales of the same houses.



# INCREASING HOUSING COSTS

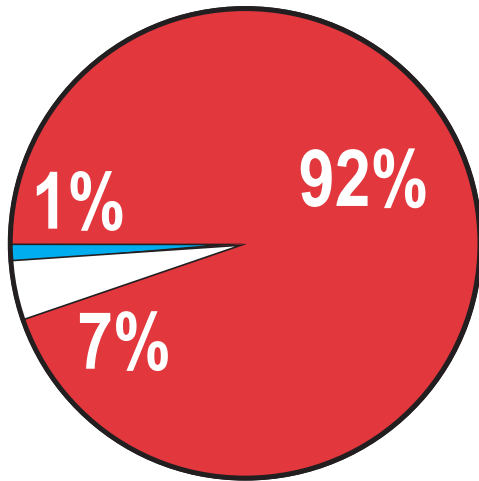


One of the “economic advantages” of having more of our Utah wives in the work force than the national average is that while our per capita income in Utah is 44th (we were 49th nationally in 1992) our median household income ranks Utah 17th highest in the nation. The Bureau of the Census estimates that there were 3.08 persons per household in Utah in 1996 compared to 2.62 persons in national households. Most recent Bureau of the Census data shows that Utah’s median age was the youngest in the nation at 26.8 as of July 1, 1996. This compares to a median age of 34.6 for the nation.

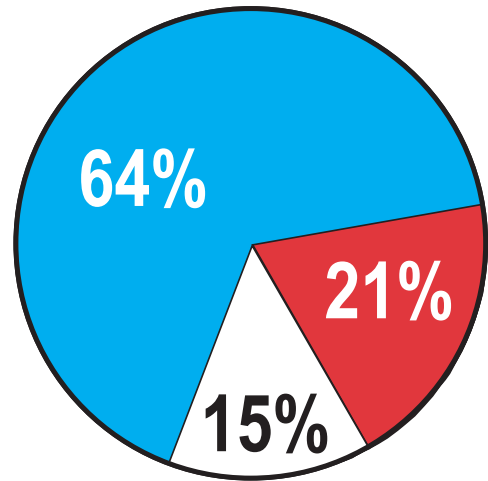
Many factors go into the rising cost of housing. One of the major factors is the rising cost of land. Because County Commissioners have ignored Joseph Smith’s recommendations for new communities, building lot sizes, etc., people can’t afford homes. They are being forced into high density housing units. Fewer people will own homes. This will weaken community ties, increase juvenile crime, etc.

# FEDERAL SPENDING

1900



1998



- Interior, Defense, Justice Dept., Etc. (Proper Federal Spending)
- Social Security, Medicare, Welfare, Education, Etc. (Socialism)
- Interest on National Debt

Sources: "Statistical Abstract of the U.S. Pgs. 25-26 and "Tax Foundation Report," March 1997 OMB Projections

## *SOCIALISM AND FEDERAL SPENDING 1900-1998*

Over the years government has changed its purpose from protecting and preserving people and property rights to redistributing wealth. This is socialism. Has any prophet ever approved of, condoned or encouraged socialism and the expansion of these welfare state principles? In 1967 David O. McKay wrote a letter to the faculty of BYU, encouraging them to teach the gospel in every class. He placed special emphasis on the need to teach the correct principles of the gospel when it comes to government. He said in part,

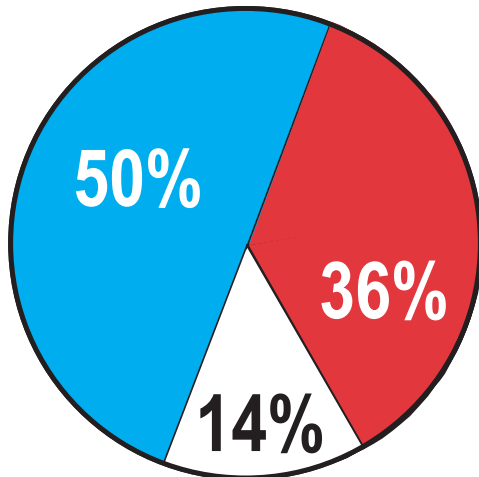
I cannot help but think that there is a direct relationship between the present trends which I have above indicated, and the very marked tendency of the people of our country to pass on to the state the responsibility for their moral and economic welfare. This trend to a welfare state in which people look to and worship government more than their God, is certain to sap the individual ambitions and moral fiber of our youth unless they are warned and rewarned . . .

I hope that no one on the faculty of Brigham Young University will advocate positions which cannot be harmonized with the views of every prophet of the church, from the Prophet Joseph Smith on down, concerning our belief that we should be strong and self-reliant individuals, not dependent upon the largess or benefactions of government. None of the doctrines of our Church give any sanction to the concept of a socialistic state. . . .

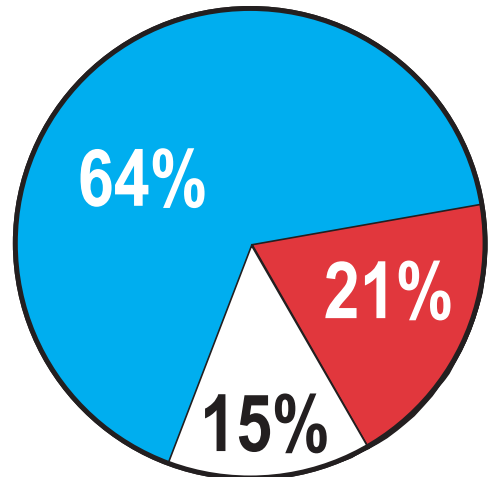
If you believe President McKay, not one single prophet from Joseph Smith on down ever crossed the line and advocated welfare state (socialistic) beliefs. He sees “harmonized” teachings of the prophets being violated. Let’s assume President McKay is correct. The promoters of socialism will have zero scriptural and zero prophet support when it comes time for them to justify their rejection of their own prophets on these principles.

# FEDERAL SPENDING

1988



1998



- Interior, Defense, Justice Dept., Etc. (Proper Federal Spending)
- Social Security, Medicare, Welfare, Education, Etc. (Socialism)
- Interest on National Debt

Sources: "Statistical Abstract of the U.S. Pgs. 25-26 and "Tax Foundation Report," March 1997 OMB Projections

## *SOCIALISM AND FEDERAL SPENDING 1988-1998*

Throughout our history, the amount of the federal budget spent on defense has risen and fallen, depending on wars, post war and pre-war situations in our country.

In 1988 27% of the federal budget was for defense. For 1998, OMB projected defense costs drop to 15%. When Reagan was president he wanted to spend money on defense and congress wanted to spend money on socialism. They borrowed huge sums of money to expand socialism and defense spending.

Our current president (Clinton) wants to continue to expand socialism and our congress wants to balance the budget. Socialism continues to expand, and by rapidly cutting defense they appear to be making progress on balancing the budget. Americans, and particularly Utahns, enjoy being seduced by the spoils of socialism. "Of the eleven Western States, Utah recorded the heaviest tax burden, and fifth highest in the entire United States, . . ." (*The Utah Taxpayer*, August 1997) Because of this seduction, the principles of the prophets are not viable campaign speeches, even in Utah.

This brings up the next question: How is it possible to cut out the various welfare-state features of our government which have already fastened themselves like cancer cells onto the body politic? Isn't drastic surgery already necessary, and can it be performed without endangering the patient? In answer, it is obvious that drastic measures are called for. No half-way or compromise actions will suffice. Like all surgery, it will not be without discomforts and perhaps even some scar tissue for a long time to come. But it must be done if the patient is to be saved, and it can be done without undue risk.

Obviously, not all welfare-state programs currently in force can be dropped simultaneously without causing tremendous economic and social upheaval. . . . In my opinion, the bulk of the transition could be accomplished within a ten-year period . . . (Ezra Taft Benson, *The Proper Role of Government*, p. 16, 17)

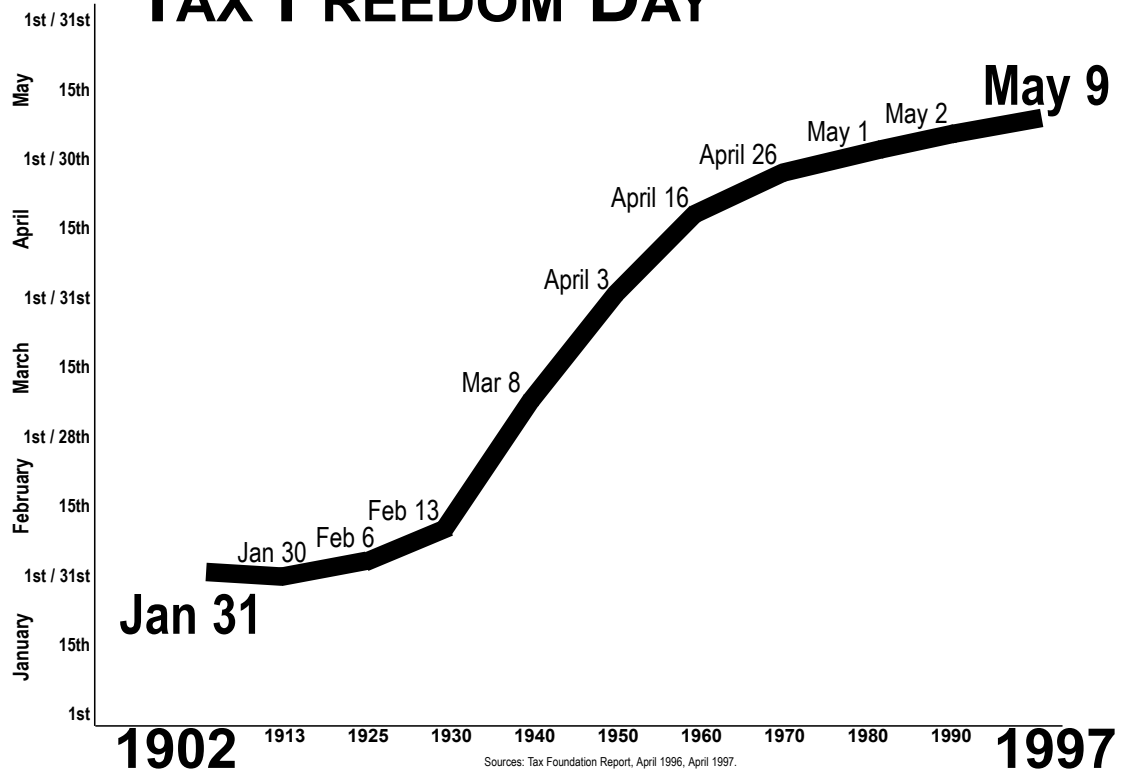


## *INFLATION*

### *1800-1995*

The Constitutional Convention specifically rejected a proposal to give the Federal government the power to issue “paper money.” (*Elliot’s Debates*, Vol. V, pp. 434-435) The men who attended that Convention were painfully aware of the great dangers of paper money. Governments with the power to print paper money have always abused this power. Many of the Convention attendees had participated in, and saw the great damage to the nation the paper “Continental Dollar” caused. Those men voted on and struck down the emission of paper money. They further limited the government’s power over money. The Federal government was limited to coining money and regulating its value. They also provided that no state shall *make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts*. (Art. 1, Sec. 10)

# TAX FREEDOM DAY





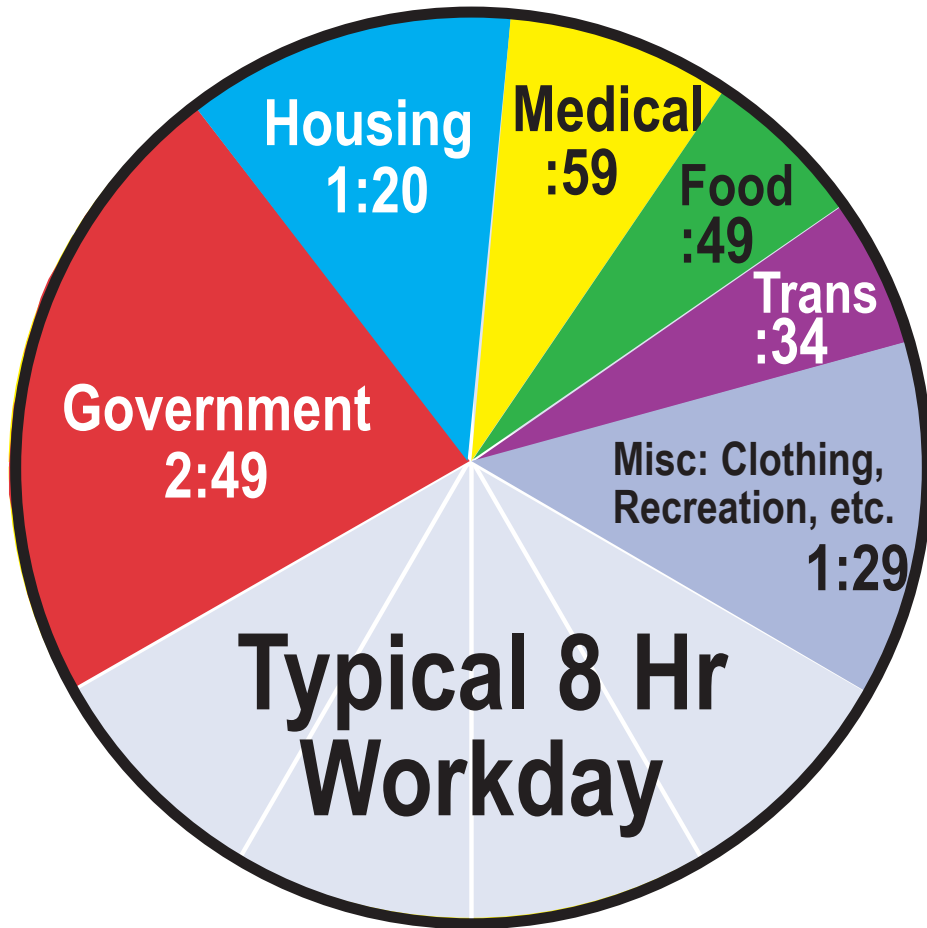
## *TAX FREEDOM DAY LOSES, SOCIALISM GAINS*

A good measure of how much freedom the citizens of a nation have lost is the amount of their income taken by their government. Redistribution of wealth (socialism) has become the primary purpose of government. Since 1930, city, county, state and federal taxes have averaged taking an additional 1.27 days per year of the American citizens income. We now work until May 9, 1997 to pay our taxes. Is this evil? Is it threatening to America?

Few Americans understand or agree with Ezra Taft Benson's assessment that "Communism is essentially socialism." (*This Nation Shall Endure*, p. 90)

While many Americans would fight to stop communism being imposed from abroad, they vote to implement its economic programs piece meal in the U.S. Marx would be pleased to note that the typical American has voted to give up his personal income through May 9, for socialist expansion in the U.S.

Marx, in his Communist Manifesto stated, ". . .the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: abolition of private property." Individual stewardship would be destroyed. Socialism, as it spreads over a country, destroys personal initiative, personal responsibility and family ties. It is not merely an economic program to destroy capitalism. Marx, again in the Manifesto proposed, "abolition of the family." He also stated therein, ". . ." "Communism abolishes eternal truths, it abolishes all religion, and all morality, . . ." President McKay saw socialism as more than just economics. He stated, "During the first half of the twentieth century we have traveled far into the soul-destroying land of socialism. . ." (*Gospel Ideals*, p. 273)



## *SOCIALISM AND YOUR EIGHT-HOUR WORK DAY*

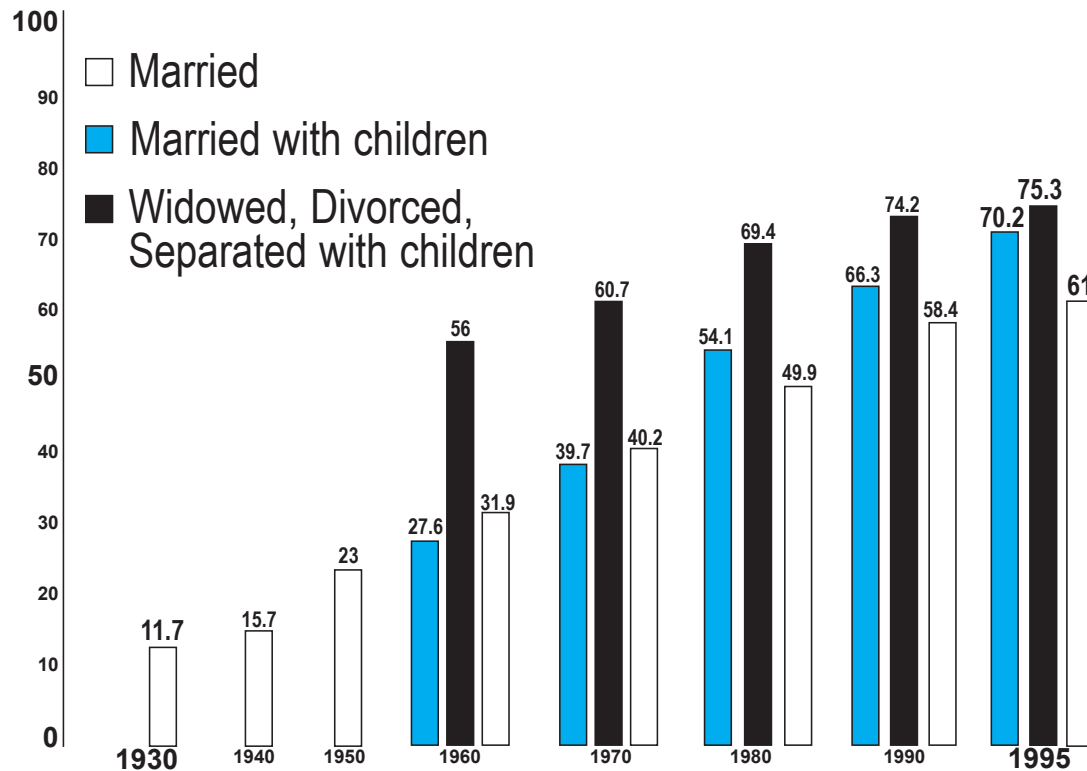
In spite of the typical americans annual pay increases, a better educated work force and the constantly improving ratios of capital to labor, the amount of time we spend paying our taxes each year expands.

The pie graph divides up your eight hour work day into the amount of time you spend working for your primary expenditures. As socialism expands, the government decides how much you will spend on old age assistance of currently retired people. It decides how much you will spend on the medical bills of current retirees. It decides how much of your income will go for education of the masses, whether you have children or not. It decides how much you will spend on the welfare needs of others. It decides how much of your income will go for licensing and regulating your fellow man. It decides how much of your income is going to be spent to clothe, feed and house the less fortunate. Your personal stewardship shrinks as the government expands.

Of course, there are always those who will do extremely well financially. Those will be held up as proof of the ability to break out of the pack. However, the vast majority, to even survive will find themselves trying to get back in the form of government subsidies, some of the money the government has taken from them.

Government loans for homes will be pursued. Government loans for businesses will be pursued. Government grants and loans for children's college educations will be pursued. Government subsidized medical assistance, school lunch, agriculture subsidies, retirement and government guaranteed pricing and protection will be sought after. When they are finished they will have “. . . seduced the more part of the righteous until they had come down to believe in their works and partake of their spoils.” (Helaman 6:38) When the socialist is finished he can truly say he has caused almost all mormons to look the other way and try to forget Harold B. Lee's statement, “I warn you that government subsidies are not the Lord's way.” (Harold B. Lee, *The Teachings of*, p. 315)

# Work Force Mothers in the U.S.



## *WORK FORCE MOTHERS: A CONSEQUENCE OF SOCIALISM*

In light of the statements of the prophets over the years regarding mothers working, these national statistics on work force mothers should concern all LDS. Utah's figures are slightly worse than these national averages.

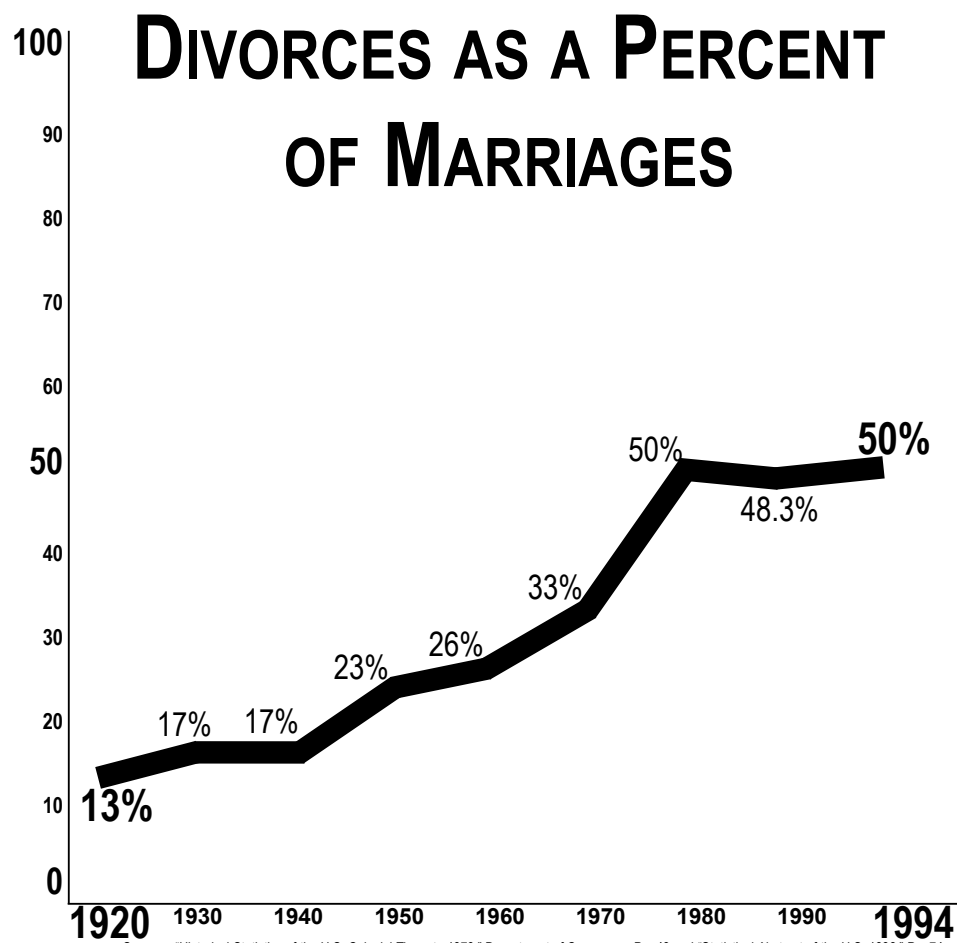
Speaking at the dedicatory services of the monuments to women in Nauvoo in June 1978 Ezra Taft Benson warned,

We hear much talk—even among some of our own sisters—about so-called ‘alternative life-styles’ for women. . . . Some have even been so bold as to suggest that the Church move away from the ‘Mormon woman stereotype’ of homemaking and rearing children. God grant that that dangerous philosophy will never take root among our Latter-day Saint Women! (*Ezra Taft Benson, A Biography*, p. 472)

Based on statistics, that “dangerous philosophy” appears to have taken root. Assuming the vast majority of Utah women would prefer to heed the brethren’s counsel, what driving force leads the vast majority to not heed their counsel? Economic necessity is one driving force. While economic necessity to one is high living to another, economic necessity is the primary factor in the minds of many mothers who work outside the home.

With socialism increasing its take of the average workers annual income, more and more women have entered the work force to make up the difference, and pay the taxes.

The promoters of socialism are primarily responsible for the number of mothers in the U.S. and Utah coming into the work force, against the unanimous counsel of the prophets.



## *DIVORCE: A CONSEQUENCE OF SOCIALISM*

Many factors come together to destroy a marriage. What is the primary factor? President Hinckley wrote, "I am satisfied that money is the root of more trouble in marriage than all other causes combined." (*Cornerstones of a Happy Marriage*, 1985, p. 8)

Socialism is the primary consumer of a man's earnings. As a man's income annually shrinks to fund expanding socialism, his ability to fulfill his primary economic stewardship, the support of his family, declines. It is not just a coincidence that expanding socialism, expanding mothers in the workforce, and increasing divorce are parallel occurrences.

Our Prophets and Apostles have addressed the need for men to support their families and for wives to let them. The fact that it is harder and harder each year has not changed the message. Paul must have sensed this same need of men in his day to support, protect and provide for their families when he wrote,

But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. (1st Timothy, 5:8)

. . .when the wicked rule the people mourn. (D&C 98:9)

Each year socialism grows. Each year fewer men fill the requirement of their stewardship. Each year more wives experience economic necessities their husbands don't fill. Each year more wives leave their homes to enter the work force. Each year more marriages fail because of money troubles. These unhappy wives never know their husband is just another drowning victim of the consequences of socialism. His stewardship shrinks as socialism expands.

If you refer back to the graph on the eight hour work day you will note that you spend more time on a daily basis working to pay your taxes than you do to pay for your housing, food and transportation combined.

## APPENDIX II

# PROPHETS OPPOSING SOCIALISM

### JOSEPH SMITH

*Wednesday, 13. I attended a lecture at the Grove, by Mr. John Finch, a Socialist, from England, and said a few words in reply...*

*Thursday, 14. I attended a second lecture on Socialism, by Mr. Finch; and after he got through, I made a few remarks, alluding to Sidney Rigdon and Alexander Campbell getting up a community at Kirkland, and of the big fish there eating up all the little fish. I said I did not believe the doctrine. (Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 33)*

### BRIGHAM YOUNG

*We heard Brother Taylor's exposition of what is called Socialism this morning. What can they do?*

*Live on each other and beg. It is a poor, unwise and very imbecile people who cannot take care of themselves. (Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 14, p. 21)*

### JOHN TAYLOR

*...the world have generally made great mistakes upon these points. They have started various projects to try to unite and cement the people together without God; but they could not do it. Fourierism (author's note: Francois Fourier was a French socialist and writer), Communism—another branch of the same thing—and many other principles of the same kind have been introduced to try and cement the human family together. And then we have had peace societies, based upon the same principles; but all these things have failed, and they will fail, because, however philanthropic, humanitarian, benevolent, or cosmopolitan our ideas, it is impossible to produce a true and correct union without the Spirit of the living God,... (John Taylor, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 18, p. 137)*

*I was speaking, a while ago, about the people there being divided into three classes. One of them you may call infidel, under the head of Socialism, fourierism, and several other isms. Communism is a specimen of the same thing,... (John Taylor, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1, p. 23, August 22, 1852)*

### WILFORD WOODRUFF

*You may wish to know why I make these remarks. I will tell you. Because God himself grants this right to every human being upon the earth irrespective of race or color; it is part of the divine economy not to force any man to heaven, not to coerce the mind but to leave it free to act for itself.*

*He lays before His creature man the everlasting Gospel, the principles of life and salvation, and then leaves him to choose for himself or to reject for himself, with the definite understanding that he becomes responsible to Him for the results of his acts. (Wilford Woodruff, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 23, p. 77)*



## LORENZO SNOW

*In things that pertain to celestial glory there can be no forced operations. We must do according as the Spirit of the Lord operates upon our understandings and feelings. We cannot be crowded into matters, however great might be the blessing attending such procedure. We cannot be forced into living a celestial law; we must do this ourselves, of our own free will. And whatever we do in regard to the principle of the United Order, we must do it because we desire to do it...*

*The United Order is not French Communism.* (Lorenzo Snow, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 19, p. 346, 349-350)

## JOSEPH F. SMITH

*...We must choose righteous men, good men to fill these positions. Hence if you will only get good men to fill these offices no one should care who they are, so that you have agreed upon them, and were one. We want you to be one both in temporal, political and religious things, in fact, in everything you put your hands to in righteousness. We want you to be one, one as God and Christ are one, seeing eye to eye. Do not try to crush anybody, or build yourselves up at the expense of your neighbor. Do not do it; it is a custom of the world, and it is a wrong principle.* (Joseph F. Smith, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 25, p. 251)

## HEBER J. GRANT

*...Among the Latter-day Saints they speak of their philosophy and their plans under it, as an ushering in of the United Order. Communism and all other similar "isms" bear no relationship whatever to the United Order. They are merely the clumsy counterfeits which Satan always devises of the gospel plan.*

*Communism debases the individual and makes him the enslaved tool of the state to whom he must look for sustenance and religion; the United Order exalts the individual, leaves him his property, "according to his family, according to his circumstances and his wants and needs." (D&C 51:3) and provides a system by which he helps care for his less fortunate brethren; the United Order leaves every man free to choose his own religion as his conscience directs. Communism destroys man's God-given free agency; the United Order glorifies it. Latter-day Saints cannot be true to their faith and lend aid, encouragement, or sympathy to any of these false philosophies. They will prove snares to their feet.* (Heber J. Grant, J. Reuben Clark Jr., David O. McKay, *The First Presidency*, CR, April, 1942, p. 90)

## GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

*Consider the condition in the world, the number who are determined to take from the rich man not what belongs to themselves, but that which belongs to the others. God has permitted men to get wealth, and if they obtain it properly, it is theirs, and he will bless them in its use if they will use it properly....*

*We must not fall into the bad habits of other people. We must not get into the frame of mind that we will take what the other man has. Refer back to the ten commandments, and you will find one short paragraph, "Thou shalt not covet." That is what is the matter with a good many people today.*

*They are coveting what somebody else has, when as a matter of fact, many of them have been cared for and provided with means to live by those very ones from whom they would take*

property. (President George Albert Smith, *Prophets, Principles and National Survival*, p. 343 [compiled by Jay Newquist], CR 10/49: 171-72)

*God gave this nation the Constitution. No nation in the world has a constitution that was given to it by our Heavenly Father except the United States of America. I wonder if we appreciate that. The Lord gave us a rule of life for this great nation, and as far as we have lived up to it and taken advantage of it, the nation has grown, and the people have been blessed. But there are many people who prefer, or at least they seem to prefer something else.*

*As one man said to me, "Why not try what Russia has tried and what Germany has tried?" And my answer to him was, "Why try something that has already failed? Why not hold on to what the Lord has given?" (The Teachings of George Albert Smith, Bookcraft, Salt Lake City, [1996], p. 171)*

### DAVID O. MCKAY

*We are placed on this earth to work, to live; and the earth will give us a living. It is our duty to strive to make a success of what we possess—to till the earth, subdue matter, conquer the glebe, take care of cattle, the flocks and the herds. It is the Government's duty to see that you are protected in these efforts, and no other man has the right to deprive you of any of your privileges. But it is not the Government's duty to support you. That is one reason why I shall raise my voice as long as God gives me sound or ability, against this Communistic idea that the Government will take care of us all, and everything belongs to the Government. It is wrong! No wonder, in trying to perpetuate that idea, they become anti-Christ, because that doctrine strikes directly against the doctrine of the Savior...*

*No government owes you a living. You get it yourself by your own acts! —never by trespassing upon the rights of a neighbor; never by cheating him. You put a blemish upon you character the moment you do. (David O. McKay, *Statements on Communism and the Constitution of the United States*, p. 23)*

*During the first half of the twentieth century we have traveled far into the soul-destroying land of socialism... (David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals*, p. 273)*

### JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

*We have all been taught the doctrine of personal free agency and that no individual is ever compelled by force or other means to comply with divine edicts and philosophy. We have been informed that a long time ago in the pre-existence there was a rebellion in heaven, and because one notable character, who had been entrusted with great authority, rebelled and led many away with him, he had to be cast out of the kingdom. However we should remember that every principle and law existing in the celestial kingdom has been proved to be perfect through the eternities through which they have come. If any individual proves himself worthy for the exaltation in that kingdom, it will be by strict obedience to every principle and covenant here existing. Therefore we may be assured that every law and principle thereunto pertaining is perfect and cannot be amended or discarded because of its perfection. (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, Vol. 4, p. 69)*

*The modern trend of the nations is towards dictatorship. It is taking form in two great camps, but, nevertheless, the direction is the same, although it is being reached by different routes. On the one side the direction to make an end of all nations, is through communism;... (Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Progress of Man*, p. 397)*

### HAROLD B. LEE

*There are some things of which I am sure, and that is that contrary to the belief and mistaken ideas of some people, the United Order will not be a socialistic or communistic setup;... (Harold B. Lee, Stand Ye in Holy Places, p. 280)*

*Now, keep in mind with all the crowding in of the socialistic reform programs that are threatening the very foundation of the Church, we must never forget what the Lord has said, "that the church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world" (D&C 78:14). Whenever we allow ourselves to become entangled and have to be subsidized from government sources—and we think that it's the expedient way to do business in this day—or when we yield to such pressures, I warn you that government subsidies are not the Lord's way; and if we begin to accept, we are on our way to becoming subsidized politically as well as financially. (Harold B. Lee, The Teachings of Harold B. Lee, [1996], p. 314-15)*

### **SPENCER W. KIMBALL**

*...Assume that you become the world leader of Socialism and in it have marked success, but through your devotion to it you fail to live the gospel. Where are you then? Is anything worthwhile which will estrange you from your friends, your Church membership, your family, your eternal promises, your faith? You might say that such estrangement is not necessarily a result of your political views, but truthfully hasn't your overpowering interest in your present views already started driving a wedge? (0/0/45) (Spencer W. Kimball, Teachings, pp. 408-409)*

### **EZRA TAFT BENSON**

*The fifth and final principle that is basic to our understanding of the Constitution is that governments should have only limited powers. The important thing to keep in mind is that the people who have created their government can give to that government only such powers as they, themselves, have in the first place. Obviously, they cannot give that which they do not possess.*

*By deriving its just powers from the governed, government becomes primarily a mechanism for defense against bodily harm, theft, and involuntary servitude. It cannot claim the power to redistribute money or property nor force reluctant citizens to perform acts of charity against their will. Government is created by the people. The creature cannot exceed the creator. (Ezra Taft Benson, Ensign, Sept. 1987, p. 8)*

*No true Latter-day Saint and no true American can be a socialist or a communist or support programs leading in that direction. (Ezra Taft Benson, Title of Liberty, p. 190)*

*Our nation will continue to degenerate unless we read and heed the words of the God of this land, Jesus Christ, and quit building up and upholding secret combinations,... (Ezra Taft Benson, Ensign, July 1988, p. 80)*

*We must keep the people informed that collectivism, another word for socialism, is a part of the communist strategy. Communism is essentially socialism. (Ezra Taft Benson, This Nation Shall Endure, p. 90)*

### **HOWARD W. HUNTER**

*...we know from both ancient and modern revelation that Satan wished to deny us our independence and agency in that now forgotten moment long ago, even as he wishes to deny them this very hour. Indeed, Satan violently opposed the freedom of choice offered by Father, so violently that John in the Revelation described "war in heaven" over the matter. (Rev. 12:7) Satan would have coerced us, and he would have robbed us of that most precious of gifts if he could: our freedom to choose a divine future and the exaltation we all hope to obtain....*

*To fully understand this gift of agency and its inestimable worth, it is imperative that we understand that God's chief way of acting is by persuasion and patience and long-suffering, not by coercion and stark confrontation... (Howard W. Hunter, *That We Might Have Joy*, pp. 77-78)*

**GORDON B. HINCKLEY**

*I am confident that it was out of what he saw, the bitter fruit of dictatorship that he developed his strong feelings, almost hatred for communism and socialism. That distaste grew through the years as he witnessed the heavy handed oppression and suffering of the peoples of eastern Europe under what he repeatedly described as a godless communism. These experiences further strengthened his love for the land of his birth....*

*He never got over his boyhood love for freedom. Rather, it grew within him, nurtured by what he saw of oppression in other lands, and by what he observed first hand of a growing dominance of government in this land over the lives of the people. (Gordon B. Hinckley, Talk given at the funeral of Ezra Taft Benson, June 4, 1994)*