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Modern-Language Editions of the Book of Mormon Discouraged

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Title Modern-Language Editions of the Book of Mormon Discouraged

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Abstract In this statement, the First Presidency requests that the Book of Mormon not be rewritten into familiar or modern English because of “risks that this process may introduce doctrinal errors or obscure evidence of its ancient origin.”

Modern-Language Editions of the Book of Mormon Discouraged

First Presidency Statement¹

We are pleased to announce that 4,855,167 copies of the Book of Mormon were sold during 1992. Of this number, 1,994,312 were in English, followed by 1,209,734 in Spanish. The remainder included translations in 36 other languages.

It is gratifying to note the ever-increasing distribution of this sacred scripture which has come to us as a voice speaking "out of the dust" declaring the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Isa. 29:4.) The power of its testimony and the persuasive beauty of its language have touched the hearts of millions around the world.

From time to time there are those who wish to rewrite the Book of Mormon into familiar or modern English. We discourage this type of publication and call attention to the fact that the Book of Mormon was translated "by the gift and power of God," who has declared that "it is true." (Book of Mormon title page; D&C 17:6.) The Prophet Joseph Smith said that the Book of Mormon was "the most correct of any book on earth." (*History of the Church*, 4:461.) It contains "the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ." (D&C 20:9.)

When a sacred text is translated into another language or rewritten into more familiar language, there are substantial risks that this process may introduce doctrinal errors or obscure evidence of its ancient origin. To guard against these risks, the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve give close personal supervision to the translation of scriptures from English into other languages and have not authorized efforts to express the doctrinal

¹ This statement appeared in the *Ensign* (April 1993): 74.

content of the Book of Mormon in familiar or modern English. (These concerns do not pertain to publications by the Church for children, such as the *Book of Mormon Reader*.)

We counsel everyone to cultivate the influence of the scriptures by personal study of the word of the Lord contained therein. When this is done prayerfully, each who reads may know the truth of these sacred words by the power of the Holy Ghost. (Moro. 10:5.)

Ezra Taft Benson
Gordon B. Hinckley
Thomas S. Monson