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## Minutes of the Afternoon Meeting of the Council of Fifty, April 11, 1844

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# Minutes of the Afternoon Meeting of the Council of Fifty, April 11, 1844

DOCUMENT

*Matthew J. Grow, Ronald K. Esplin, Mark Ashurst-McGee, Gerrit J. Dirkmaat, and Jeffrey D. Mahas*

In his essay “Understanding the Council of Fifty and Its Minutes,” on the previous pages in this issue, Ronald K. Esplin overviews the history of the Council of Fifty and the three books in which William Clayton recorded its minutes. He tells what these minutes add to our understanding of Church leaders’ concerns about outreach to American Indians, Joseph Smith’s presidential campaign, and the desire to claim religious liberty. The text presented and annotated below is excerpted from *The Joseph Smith Papers, Administrative Records: Council of Fifty, Minutes, March 1844–January 1846*.

## Document Transcript

Thursday April 11<sup>th</sup>. 1844 2 o clock P.M. Council met pursuant to adjournment and opened by singing two Hymns

The chairman made some remarks on the absence of brother Edward Bonney the cause of absence, and his good feelings towards the council &c<sup>1</sup>

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1. Bonney left his home in Indiana in February 1844 to journey west to find a new place to live somewhere along the Mississippi River. While visiting Nauvoo, he was made a member of the Council of Fifty. Excited by its commercial prospects, Bonney decided to move his family to Nauvoo. He later recorded, “I accordingly returned home to Indiana about the first of april and in the month of may 1844 Returned to Nauvoo with my family,” a return apparently referenced in the May 19, 1844, entry in Joseph Smith’s journal: “Bonney returnd from the east.” Edward Bonney, “Banditti of the Prairies,” microfilm of handwritten original, 4–5, Church History Library. The original manuscript is in the Ellison Manuscripts, 1790–1949, Lilly Library, Indiana University,

He then went on to say that for the benefit of mankind and succeeding generations he wished it to be recorded that there are men admitted members of this honorable council, who are not members of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, neither profess any creed or religious sentiment whatever,<sup>2</sup> to show that in the organization of this [p. [116]] kingdom men are not consulted as to their religious opinions or notions in any shape or form whatever and that we act upon the broad and liberal principal that all men have equal rights, and ought to be respected, and that every man has a privilege in this organization of choosing for himself voluntarily his God, and what he pleases for his religion, inasmuch as there is no danger but that every man will embrace the greatest light. God cannot save or damn a man only on the principle that every man acts, chooses and worships for himself; hence the importance of thrusting from us every spirit of bigotry and intollerance towards [p. [117]] a mans religious sentiments,<sup>3</sup> that spirit which has drenched the earth with blood—When a man feels the least temptation to such intollerance he ought to spurn it from him. It becomes our duty on account of this intollerance and corruption—the inalienable right of man being to think as he pleases—worship as he pleases &c being the first law of every thing that is sacred—to guard every ground all the days of our lives.<sup>4</sup> I will appeal to every man in this council beginning at

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Bloomington. See also Andrew H. Hedges, Alex D. Smith, and Brent M. Rogers, eds., *Journals, Volume 3: May 1843–June 1844*, vol. 3 of the Journals series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2015), 254 (May 19, 1844).

2. Following Joseph Smith's address to the council, Uriah Brown confirmed that he was not a member of any "religious body." In his account of his experiences along the Mississippi River, Edward Bonney recounted that he was not "much of a religionist." Nothing is known of Merinus G. Eaton's religious affiliation. Bonney, "Banditti of the Prairies," 5.

3. Owenite socialist John Finch visited Nauvoo in September 1843 and commented on the tolerance Joseph Smith showed toward other religions. Finch wrote that Joseph Smith was "liberal and charitable, in speaking of other sects, said he considered that the great principle of christianity was love, and affirmed that there was more of this love-spirit among his followers than is to be found in any other sect." Finch was impressed that Joseph requested him to stay in Nauvoo and deliver lectures on his beliefs to his people. He stated, "Joe Smith was in the practice of inviting strangers, who visited Nauvoo, of every shade of politics or religion, to lecture to his people. An Unitarian minister, from Boston, was to lecture to them the following Sunday. He said that he allowed liberty of conscience to all, and was not afraid of any party drawing his people away from him." John Finch, "Notes of Travel in the United States," *New Moral World and Gazette of the Rational Society* (October 5, 1844): 113.

4. In a letter to James Arlington Bennet in 1842, Joseph Smith similarly wrote of tolerance, "This is a good principle; for when we see virtuous qualities in

the youngest that when he arrives to the years of Hoary age he will have to say that the principles of intollerance and bigotry never had a place in this [p. [118]] kingdom, nor in my breast, and that he is even then ready to die rather than yeild to such things. Nothing can reclaim the human mind from its ignorance, bigotry, superstition &c but those grand and sublime principles of equal rights and universal freedom to all men. We must not despise a man on account of infirmity. We ought to love a man more for his infirmity. Nothing is more congenial to my feelings and principles, than the principles of universal freedom and has been from the beginning.<sup>5</sup> If I can know that a man is susceptible of good feelings & integrity and will stand by his friends, he is my friend. The only thing I am afraid of is, that I will not live long [p. [119]] enough to enjoy the society of these my friends as long as I want to.<sup>6</sup> Let us from henceforth drive from us every species of intoll-erance. When a man is free from it he is capable of being a critic. When I have used every means in my power to exalt a mans mind, and have taught him righteous principles to no effect—he is still inclined in his darkness, yet the same principles of liberty and charity would ever be manifested by me as though he embraced it. Hence in all governments or political trans-actions a mans religious opinions should never be called in question. A man should be judged by the law independant of religious prejudice, hence we want in our [p. [120]] constitution those laws which would require all

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men, we should always acknowledge them, let their understanding be what it may in relation to creeds and doctrine; for all men are, or ought to be free; pos- sessing unalienable rights, and the high, and noble qualifications of the laws of nature and of self-preservation; to think, and act, and say as they please; while they maintain a due respect to the rights and privileges of all other creatures; infringing upon none. This doctrine I do most heartily subscribe to, and prac- tice.” Joseph Smith to James Arlington Bennet, September 8, 1842, in Andrew H. Hedges, Alex D. Smith, and Richard Lloyd Anderson, eds., *Journals, Volume 3: December 1841–April 1843*, vol. 3 of the Journals series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2011), 138.

5. Taking notes of a Joseph Smith sermon in July 1843, Joseph’s scribe Wil- lard Richards reported him saying, “Civil and religious liberty—were diffused into my soul by my grandfathers. while they dandld me on their knees.” Hedges, Smith, and Rogers, *Journals, Volume 3*, 55 (July 9, 1843).

6. Joseph Smith’s journal entry of August 16, 1842, records his reflections on his friends: “They shall not want a friend while I live. My heart shall love those; and my hands shall toil for those, who love and toil for me, and shall ever be found faith- ful to my friends.” A year later he stated, “Frie[n]dship is the grand fundamental prin[c]iple of Mormonism.” Hedges, Smith, and Anderson, *Journals, Volume 2*, 95 (August 16, 1842); Hedges, Smith, and Rogers, *Journals, Volume 3*, 66 (July 23, 1843).

its officers to administer justice without any regard to his religious opinions, or thrust him from his office. There is only two or three things lacking in the constitution of the United States. If they had said all men all born equal, and not only that but they shall have their rights, they shall be free, or the armies of the government should be compelled to enforce those principles of liberty. And the President or Governor who does not do this, and who does not enforce those principles he shall lose his head. When a man is thus bound by a constitution he cannot refuse to protect his subjects, he dare not do it. And when a Governor [p. [121]] or president will not protect his subjects he ought to be put away from his office.

I can cloth the old skeleton (referring to a figure used by Er [Reynolds] Cahoon to shew his views of the present constitution)<sup>7</sup> although it was an old dead horses head, but it is not necessary for it only requires two or three sentences in a constitution to govern the world. Only cloth the officers of government with the power of free tolerance and compel them to exercise and enforce those principles and we have what we want. Give our Marshal the power of free tolerance and see if he would not exercise it.<sup>8</sup> Only think! When a man can enjoy his liberties and has the power of [p. [122]] civil officers to protect him, how happy he is”.

While the president was speaking on these subjects he felt animated and used a 24 inch gauge or rule<sup>9</sup> pretty freely till finally he broke it in two in the middle.

Er B. Young said, that as the rule was broken in the hands of our chairman so might every tyrannical government be broken before us.

Mr Uriah Brown arose to thank the chair for the explanation given concerning himself and the two other gentlemen, who are admitted members of this council and are not members of the Church. He is not connected with any religious body. He has sought after [p. [123]] virtue and truth, but has seen mens practices so contrary to their preaching that he had turned his attention another way. He is most happy to day to see the liberality displayed by this body. He related an anecdote of an old Indian who visited Washington, when at supper the landlord had nothing

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7. Cahoon made this comparison in the April 5, 1844 meeting. Council of Fifty, “Record,” April 5, 1844, Church History Library.

8. John P. Greene, a member of the council, served as Nauvoo city marshal between December 21, 1843, and September 10, 1844. “Nauvoo City Officers,” in Hedges, Smith, and Rogers, *Journals, Volume 3*, 471.

9. The “24 inch gauge” (two-foot ruler) was one of the implements of an entered apprentice (new initiate) in Freemasonry and symbolized the twenty-four hours of the day. Thomas Smith Webb, *The Freemason’s Monitor* (Cincinnati: Moore, Wilstach, Keys, and Co., 1859), 46.

but skunk to eat—it was skunk upon skunk and nothing but skunk—and he considered it was just so with the sectarian religion it was skunk upon skunk & nothing else. He concluded by illustrating his views of the situation of our government by relating an anecdote of a sick woman.

Er A[masa] Lyman said, “whilst he had been listening to the remarks made [p. [124]] he had been led to reflect whether he had ever heard of any thing in religion that was calculated to make a man happy except the principles enjoyed here. This is the happiest time he ever saw. He never has been very unhappy. At this time there are those things that create in him feelings of which he has only enjoyed a very small taste, and he now begins to feel the inconvenience of not having capacity to enjoy more. There is a spirit in it which demonstrates an eternal progress. It is like a fire in his bones,<sup>10</sup> and he feels full and ~~wants~~ to enjoy more. he must know more. If he were to go according to his feelings he should be perfectly ridiculous. The feelings originate in his being pleased. [p. [125]] and as this thing pleases him better than anything else he ever knew before he feels more happy. He looks for a full and perfect emancipation of the whole human race, that the sound of oppression should be buried in eternal oblivion. The paltry considerations of earthly gain and glory falls into insignificance before the glories we now realize. The object we have in view is not to save a man alone or a nation, but to call down the power of God and let all be blessed, protected, saved and made happy—burst of the chains of oppression. This is a kingdom worth having. The political principals of this kingdom comes down from heaven and reaches down to the prisons of the dead.<sup>11</sup> What we want of it is just [p. [126]] enough to protect a man in his rights. but we never read of a government that would do that. Reference had been made to the government of Enock, but it went away.<sup>12</sup> It was so like God and so unlike man that they could not bear it. He referred to the kingdom spoken of by Daniel as a stone cut out of the mountain without hands which rolled untill it filled the whole earth.<sup>13</sup> A stone does not roll up hill, but down. This stone was to roll, and

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10. See Jeremiah 20:9; and Lamentations 1:13.

11. See 1 Peter 3:19–20.

12. An 1830 Joseph Smith revelation expanded on the biblical description of the prophet Enoch and described his establishment of a city that was “called the City of holyness even Zion.” According to the revelation, “Enoch and all his people walked with God and he dwelt in the midst of Zion and it came to pass that Zion was not for God received it up into his own bosom and from thence went forth the saying Zion is fled.” Old Testament Revision 1, pp. 16, 19 (Moses 7:19, 69), Church History Library.

13. See Daniel 2:34–35; and Revelation, October 30, 1831, in Matthew C. Godfrey, Mark Ashurst-McGee, Grant Underwood, Robert J. Woodford, and

expand, gather strength and gather force all the while, so the kingdom of God will begin to roll and continue to roll, and attract to itself all the purity, virtue and goodness out of every nation and kingdom wherever it exists. It is like the magnet, it will [p. [127]] attract every thing of similar properties to itself. This is the kind of a kingdom that pleases him. He is glad to live in this age, and is glad that he did not live sooner. He wants to live to see the rolling of the kingdom. The assurance of the everlasting and eternal duration of the kingdom will cap the climax of our happiness and joy. If God has appointed a man to rise to immortal glory he will rise with him, for he will hold on to the skirts of his garments. He has not reflected on the sacrifice we may have to make, for he does not think any sacrifice to great to make for the glories of this kingdom, even if it requires us to leave father, mother, wives & children. He that will not leave ~~that~~ these, cannot enjoy the kingdom, because he cannot [p. [128]] attend to it.<sup>14</sup> He referred to the excuses made at the marriage supper spoken of in a parable by the Saviour.<sup>15</sup> It proves to us, that there is nothing so dear, no ties so great that we cannot part with for the kingdom even if the ties be as strong as existed in the bosom of Abraham towards Isaac. If a man will not sacrifice, the principle of a God is not in him. When a man is tried in every point, then nothing is left but the will of God, and he will then be clothed with the power of God, and it brings him peace and eternal happiness.<sup>16</sup>

Er Rigdon arose to give some reasons for the course he had taken [p. [129]] in relation to this last kingdom—this last order of Heaven—this last order of Government &c that will ever take place. He is well aware that there are some things necessary to enable any man, however competent, to realize the importance of this subject. There are certain things necessary to be observed to uphold any reflecting mind in this thing. He can see that according to the highest light and evidence that we have, one question is settled, that is, that the earth is fast approaching its dissolution. There were things in relation to this world that must approximate to the crisis now approaching. There never has been an

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William G. Hartley, *Documents, Volume 2: July 1831–January 1833*, vol. 2 of the Documents series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, Richard Lyman Bushman, and Matthew J. Grow (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2013), 93 [D&C 65:2].

14. See Matthew 19:29; Mark 10:29–30; and Luke 18:29–30.

15. See Matthew 22:1–14; and Luke 14:15–24.

16. On August 27, 1843, Joseph Smith cited Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac as an example of the principle that a man must be willing to "sacrific[e] all to attain, to the keys of the kingdom of an endless life." Hedges, Smith, and Rogers, *Journals, Volume 3*, 86 (August 27, 1843); see also Genesis 22:1–18.

organization, no odds by whom or [p. [130]]ganized, of a government whether monarchical, aristocratic or Republic that was adapted to the wants of the community at large. If there ever had been such it would have been on the earth at this day. The organization of this government is an anomaly, brought into existence to accomplish a something which no other government ever did. He understood the great Jehovah to be the God of the whole earth,<sup>17</sup> its founder & author &c, and he never would rest until he had accomplished his purposes in relation to it. God looked down upon the nations of the earth as a father looks upon his children. He saw one of his children trying to rule another, [p. [131]] inventing systems of religious government &c., trying to gain power and ascendancy over one another, but he had decreed that he would put an end to such an order, because he loved them, and establish a government so exalted in its principles as not to permit of corruption. However the world may have looked upon us, they will view us in a very different light. They will view us as the only persons in possession of the pure principles of wisdom and intelligence God designed that we should give our assent to the appointment of a King in the last days; and our religious, civil and political salvation depends on that thing. [p. [132]]

The nations of the are earth are very fast approximating to an utter ruin and overthrow. All the efforts the nations are making will only tend to hasten on the final doom of the world and bring it to its final issue. All the various inventions and specimens of the ingenuity of man, although calculated to increase the happiness of man, will tend to hasten on the approaching dissolution of the earth.

God looked through the vista of unborn time, and saw the history of unborn nations from the beginning” The speaker then glanced at the character of the various nations and kingdoms of the earth from Moses to Nebuchadnezar.<sup>18</sup> He said “It is arts and sciences [p. [133]] that makes a nation terrible in war, Antiquity shows us that those nations never ceased their civilizations and overthrows of each other. Civilization was a curse, and the efforts men made was only preparing them for destruction. The nations now have no better understanding, nor are they better calculated to govern than they were then. Death and desolation will

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17. See Book of Mormon, 1830 ed., 477, 501–2 [3 Nephi 11:14; 22:5]; and Isaiah 54:5.

18. At the March 19, 1844, council meeting, Rigdon had similarly “followed the course of the history of the several kingdoms down to the days of Nebuchadnezar and then to the present day in which we live.” Council of Fifty, “Record,” 19 Mar. 1844.

come next. Wars the most terrible. The destruction of Jerusalem was but a small circumstance compared to that which will follow the work of the last days.<sup>19</sup> Well might the great father say, that he will cut the work short in righteousness.<sup>20</sup> He looks at the present state of things. He contemplates [p. [134]] the approaching dissolution when men will be ruined by their own inventions He referred to the blessings God would bestow upon his people when he had established his kingdom. The toil of man and the sweat of his brow would cease. Every thing would be fruitful and happy.—<sup>21</sup>

Er Orson Spencer said he felt like a person who enters a vineyard where there is an abundance of every good thing but is careful which to touch. He referred to the glorious instructions and intelligence which had dropped from the lips of the preceding speakers. He said the principle of free toleration is noble and endearing. It is only the guilty mind that is intolerant: they are afraid of Exposure. [p. [135]] He felt that we are certain of success in the accomplishment of our purposes, viewing the union which exists in our midst. He referred to the contrast between this council and the situations of the nations of the earth. He concluded his remarks by expressing his grateful feelings for the principles inculcated by the members of this council.

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19. See Matthew 24:3–22; compare New Testament Revision 1, pp. 56–57 [Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:4–20].

20. See Romans 9:28; Revelation, June 6, 1831, in Michael Hubbard MacKay and others, eds., *Documents, Volume 1: July 1828–June 1831*, vol. 1 of the Documents series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, Richard Lyman Bushman, and Matthew J. Grow (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2013), 328 (D&C 52:11); Revelation, September 22–23, 1832, in Godfrey and others, *Documents, Volume 2*, 301 (D&C 84:97); and Prayer, March 27, 1836, in *Prayer, at the Dedication of the Lord's House*, [2], Church History Library (D&C 109:59).

21. Genesis presents the Garden of Eden as a garden of fruitful trees from which Adam and Eve could freely eat. Isaiah and other Old Testament prophets predicted a redemption of Israel to an Edenic state. The Book of Mormon incorporated Isaiah's prophecy. Millenarian groups like the Latter-day Saints often used primeval Eden as a representation of the peace and plenty of the anticipated Millennium. A hymn by council member William W. Phelps stated that in the millennium of peace the "earth will appear as the garden of Eden." Genesis 1:29; 2:9, 16; Isaiah 51:3; Ezekiel 36:35; Joel 2:3; Book of Mormon, 1830 ed., 75 (2 Nephi 8:3); [William W. Phelps], "Home," *The Evening and the Morning Star* (March 1833): [8]; Hymn 18, *Collection of Sacred Hymns* [1835], 24, Church History Library; see also Richard T. Hughes and Leonard Allen, *Illusions of Innocence: Protestant Primitivism in America, 1630–1875* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 133, 147–48.

Er G. J. Adams spoke of some things he had thought of during the day. He would like to have a king to reign in righteousness, and inasmuch as our president is proclaimed prophet, priest and king. He is ready when the time comes to go and tell the news to 10000 people. The people will be for war when [p. [136]] we have grown, yet they will say let us not go to war against Zion for the inhabitants thereof are terrible.<sup>22</sup> He referred to the remarks made by Catlin [Catiline] to the Roman Senate and compared them to our governors and statesmen.<sup>23</sup>

Er D[avid] D. Yearsley expressed his satisfaction for the principles of liberality so nobly displayed during the day. He then referred to the principles afloat in the world, especially those of infidelity. He spoke<sup>24</sup> on the constitution of the U.S. its liberality &c He referred especially to the liberal (Ironical) principle which requires a foreigner to serve seven years before he can become a government officer.<sup>25</sup> He also referred to the situation [p. [137]] of the sectarian world, showing that their progress had been by bloodshed and oppression, and to the principle of slavery being cherished in the United States. He hinted at an expression in Volneys ruins of Empires.<sup>26</sup> He thought if Volney had lived he would have been a Mormon. He wished the day would soon come when he could have the privilege of proclaiming to the heads at Washington that the kingdom of God was set up.

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22. See Revelation, c. March 7, 1831, in MacKay and others, *Documents, Volume 1*, 280 (D&C 45:70).

23. Catiline was a Roman senator who tried to overthrow the Roman Republic in 63 B.C. When his conspiracy was exposed and denounced by Cicero, Catiline reportedly warned the Senate, "Since, then, . . . I am circumvented and driven headlong by my enemies, I will quench the flame raised about me by the common ruin." Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae*, chap. 31.

24. Text: Possibly "spoke".

25. The U.S. Constitution requires an individual to be a citizen for seven years before being elected to the House of Representatives and nine years before being elected to the Senate. U.S. Constitution, art. 1, secs. 2-3.

26. In 1791, Comte de Volney published *Les Ruines, ou Méditations sur les révolutions des empires*, a historical and philosophical treatise on the nature of government and religion, in which he decried tyrannical governments and the practice of slavery. In the book's conclusion, Volney pictured a world where all religions would put aside their differences and unite behind a common search for truth. The book was immensely popular in Europe and the United States, with at least twenty editions of the English translation by the 1830s. In 1844, both Jeremiah Hatch Jr. and Heber C. Kimball presented a copy of *Les Ruines* to the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute. Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute Record, 1844, [29], [32], Church History Library.

Er R. Cahoon thinks that although much has been said there are many things which have not been hinted at. He was comforted at the sound of the word liberty, but never felt as though he fully realised it. He expressed his gratification for the privilege of being [p. [138]] a member of this council, and his delight at the displays of the principles of freedom and liberality as they exist amongst us. He looked back to the expressions of his father, and related a dream which his father dreamed before he died.<sup>27</sup> He considered that whatever we can get that is good and beneficial for ourselves, it is good for our neighbors. He spake of the kingdom of God in the last days, and did not expect that it would ever be thrown down, but that the standard would be exalted and all nations flow unto it. He considers that his life is but a trifle compared with the glory which surrounds us. He feels much interested for the salvation of his family. He feels grateful for the power [p. [139]] and blessings which God has poured on him. He realizes the glory of it. He referred to the persecution in Missouri. that there was no patriot to take their part. Also that they had appealed to Congress for redress but they would do nothing for us.<sup>28</sup> He signified his determination to use his endeavors

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27. William Cahoon Jr., the father of Reynolds Cahoon, died in October 1828 at Kirtland, Ohio. Geauga Co., OH, Probate Court, Probate Records, 1806–1941, vol. B, p. 350, microfilm 877,782, U.S. and Canada Record Collection, Family History Library.

28. Since their expulsion from Jackson County, Missouri, in 1833, and from the state of Missouri in 1838–39, Church members had sought in vain for redress from local, state, and federal government officials and bodies, including the U.S. Congress. The most recent attempt to appeal to the U.S. Congress began in November 1843, when John Frierson, a surveyor from Quincy, Illinois, wrote a memorial on behalf of the Latter-day Saints to Congress. Frierson recounted the robbery, destruction of property, and murder that Church members suffered at the hands of the Missourians. The memorial asked Congress to consider the crimes committed against the Mormons, “receive testimony in the case, and grant such relief as by the Constitution and Laws you may have power to give.” Joseph Smith and the city council signed the memorial on December 16, 1843. The memorial was ultimately signed by 3,419 inhabitants of Hancock and Adams Counties and was carried to Washington, D.C., by Orson Pratt, who left Nauvoo in March 1844. On April 5, 1844, James Semple, U.S. senator from Illinois, presented this memorial to the U.S. Senate, and it was referred to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. Shortly thereafter, Orson Hyde and Orson Pratt drafted a bill that they presented to the same committee asking that \$2 million be appropriated for the Mormons’ relief. The committee took no action on either the memorial or the draft bill. Joseph Smith and others, Memorial to U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, January 27, 1840, in

to carry on this work if it took all he had. He referred to the time when every man would sit under his own vine and fig tree and there would be none to make them afraid<sup>29</sup>

A motion to adjourn was heard from several members.

Er John M. Bernhisel wished before adjournment to make a few remarks on the present<sup>30</sup> prospects of Texas being annexed as stated in the public papers. [p. [140]] He thinks there is no doubt but it will be annexed if it is not already done.<sup>31</sup>

The chairman said we need have no apprehensions on the subject inasmuch as God has the matter in his own hands.

The motion to adjourn was renewed whereupon the council adjourned till next thursday at 9 o clock to meet in the council Room.—  
[6 lines blank] [p. [141]]

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Record Group 46, Records of the U.S. Senate, National Archives, Washington, D.C.; Elias Higbee and others, Memorial to U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, January 10, 1842, photocopy, Material relating to Mormon Expulsion from Missouri, Church History Library; Hedges, Smith, and Rogers, *Journals, Volume 3*, 134–35, 145, 149 (November 25–26 and 28–29, 1843; December 16 and 21, 1843); Joseph Smith and others, Memorial to U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, November 28, 1843, Record Group 46, Records of the U.S. Senate, National Archives, Washington, D.C.; Letter of Recommendation for Orson Pratt, March 12, 1844, draft, Joseph Smith Collection, Church History Library; *Congressional Globe*, 28th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 482 [1844]; Letters from Orson Hyde, April 25 and 26, 1844, *Council of Fifty, Minutes, March 1844–January 1846*, 171.

29. See Micah 4:4.

30. Text: Possibly “presents”.

31. The United States and Texas conducted secret negotiations over the terms of a treaty of annexation for several months in early 1844. By March leaked reports were circulating, especially in the Southern press, of an impending treaty, though these reports were dismissed by many Northern publications as exaggeration and rumor. On March 16, the *Daily National Intelligencer*, a Washington, D.C., publication opposed to the annexation of Texas, mournfully passed along to its readers information about the “unauthorized and almost clandestine” treaty negotiations. The editor concluded that “so far as the President of the United States and the President of Texas are concerned, the Treaty is all but made.” These rumors were proven true. On April 12, the day after this meeting of the council, an annexation treaty was secretly signed between Texas and U.S. officials. “The Texas Question,” *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington, D.C.), March 16, 1844, [3]; “Treaty of Annexation,” April 12, 1844, in Proceedings of the Senate and Documents relative to Texas, from Which the Injunction of Secrecy Has Been Removed, S. Doc. no. 341, 28th Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 10–13 [1844].