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The Political Thought and Activity of Heber J. Grant, Seventh President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

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THE POLITICAL THOUGHT AND ACTIVITY
OF HEBER J. GRANT
SEVENTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of History
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Loman Franklin Aydelotte

April 15, 1965
This thesis, by Loman Franklin Aydelotte, is accepted in its present form by the Department of History of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

April 15, 1965

[Signatures]

Typed by Nola B. Aydelotte
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PREFACE

Thomas Carlyle urged the biographer "to find out the great men, clean the dirt from them and place them on their proper pedestals." Heber J. Grant, seventh President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, does not require rescue from complete oblivion; yet the steady encroachment of time has clouded the significance of his role in one era of Utah's history.

That Grant was the presiding leader of so influential an institution as the Mormon Church for such an extended period of time (27 years) suggests that historians studying Utah ought to take note of his life. Furthermore, the fact that Grant's life stretches back in time to the last years of Brigham Young and forward to include the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt and World War II suggests to the historian that here is a life meriting critical study. How would a man raised under the intimate influence of Brigham Young in a frontier environment react to the political issues of the nation as it became increasingly industrialized and internationally influential?

The answer to this question is the thesis of this study which is a political biography attempting to determine the philosophy of Grant toward state, national, and international political issues. More
specifically, this thesis attempts to determine what factor or factors in Grant's life and experience molded that philosophy. By finding these factors, perhaps the philosophy of Grant can be understood. The word philosophy as used here is synonymous with attitude or viewpoint rather than meaning a system of beliefs.

The scope of the thesis encompasses as exhaustive a treatment of Grant's politics as sources will permit. However, to realize the desired answers will require attention to factors of his life beyond the narrow scope of things political. Literary critic Samuel Johnson foretold the task when he said that biographers must attend to the "little circumstances" of a man's life. He had in mind education, travel, profession, associates, heritage, convictions, and environment. These are the "little circumstances" that, when known, aid the biographer in interpreting the motives and actions of his subject. Although aspects of Grant's life other than politics will be taken into consideration, the treatment will not be all inclusive. Limitations of the thesis, then, will be the deliberate exclusion of life incidents which lack relevance to the author's political theme.

Brief reference ought to be made at the outset to source materials and their use. The thesis is interpretive in nature and not a detailed narrative; and the primary materials--letters, journals, and public speeches--are used to that end. Primary materials have been sufficient in number to permit the testing of the hypothesis with some
CHAPTER I

CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY

To appreciate the attitude Heber J. Grant assumed toward politics, it is first necessary to consider more broadly his whole life and to determine those forces motivating him politically.¹ By ignoring the confining limits of chronological order and ranging over his long eighty-nine years, it becomes apparent that a variety of influences contributed to his political philosophy. Grant reflected both consciously and unconsciously a Mormon agrarian background and ideology, business affluence, a youth of struggle and near poverty, and an aggressive personality. These factors largely explain and account for his reaction to political issues.

Family

B. H. Roberts ascribes Grant's compelling personality to his father, Jedediah Morgan Grant who was the leading figure of the 1856

¹ The sources found to be the most reliable for biographical material on Grant are as follows: L. D. S. Biographical Encyclopedia, comp. Andrew Jenson (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1901), I; Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah, ed. Frank Esshom (Salt Lake City: Utah Pioneers Book Publishing Co., 1913); Bryant S. Hinckley, Heber J. Grant: Highlights in the Life of a Great Leader (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1951); Noble Warrum, Utah Since Statehood (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1919), II.
"Mormon Reformation."² Heber J. 's father was a counselor to Brigham Young and was Salt Lake City's first mayor. He had faithfully suffered through the L.D.S. persecutions in Missouri and Illinois and then participated in the 1846-47 exodus to the Great Basin. But the event which best testifies to his personality and devotion and foretold his son's own personality was the "Reformation" he inspired to cleanse the Church. Roberts saw in the son the same force and fervor for moral causes which motivated his father in 1856.³

Heber J. Grant was born to Rachel Ridgway Ivins Grant on November 22, 1856. The reformation movement had hardly begun, but his father pursued the crusade so strenuously that exhaustion brought his demise on December 1, 1856. Thus, the boy never knew his father.

Although Grant came to enjoy wealth, his early life was marked by poverty and the necessity of contributing to the family's support. His mother, because of her husband's death, was left to care for the family with little means. And although he had to work from an early age, poor health forced him to rely more on ingenuity than stamina. He became familiar with the insurance and banking businesses through

²The "Reformation," which began in September, 1856, had as its purpose the re-ordering of the Church's members to a stricter standard of righteousness. See B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), IV, 119.

³Ibid., VI, 480-90.
confidence. By far the most valuable source has been the personal papers of Heber J. Grant, housed in the Historian's Office of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah. Although family permission made access to the papers possible, their use was still subject to the stringent rules of the Church's private library. It should also be noted that Grant's papers are not catalogued or boxed in any order. Reference is solely by the year to carbon copy letterbooks which have been indiscriminately enclosed in boxes.

The writer encountered reports that Grant had kept a journal, supposedly in the possession of Mrs. Phillip A. Bullen of Salt Lake City. However, she and Grant's eldest living daughter, Mrs. Lucy Grant Cannon deny any knowledge of a journal. Portions of a journal, however, are to be found among the private papers already noted.

According to a letter written in December, 1937, Grant had intended to write an autobiography but was such a procrastinator that it was never accomplished. One of his daughters, Mary Grant Judd, had started to write her father's history but that, too, remained unfinished. Grant wrote that an autobiography should be written for the benefit of his children and grandchildren.

Although acknowledgements draw little attention, their ever predictable appearance is good evidence that authors appreciate the help they receive. Dr. Richard D. Poll has provided the assistance
and criticism as well as the encouragement necessary and has set the example, not only in research and writing, but in the study of history generally. Dr. Louis Midgley's direction and counsel have been readily accepted, improving the quality of this work. Lucy Grant Cannon, daughter of the Apostle, made it possible to read her father's correspondence. And equally appreciated is my wife, Nola Barrus Aydelotte, who served as the typist for many hours.

For the sake of brevity, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly referred to as the Mormon Church, will be identified as such or simply as "the Church."

April 15, 1965

Loman Franklin Aydelotte
clerking; and by the time he was twenty he had organized his own insurance agency. Family circumstances were stringent enough and Grant's contribution important enough to keep him from an early Church mission. ⁴

**Frontier Individualist**

The success Grant displayed at overcoming hardships and in establishing a name for himself in business circles as possessing drive and ability recalls the tradition of rugged individualism of the Gilded Age and later of Herbert Hoover. The talent for making money was there, his friends conceded, and Grant probably would have gone far financially had he not sacrificed this ambition to Church service. The business world had its influence on him politically, however, even after he departed financial circles. He had experienced free enterprise in its first great age and would remain a defender of the laissez faire way.

A factor equally as significant for Grant as the necessity of providing for himself was the frontier influence. He was born early enough to appreciate the value of home industry to Utah's economy. He was thirteen years of age when the transcontinental railroad linked Utah

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⁴Letter of Heber J. Grant to Cecil G. Tilton, September 21, 1938, in Heber J. Grant Personal Papers (Historian's Office, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah). Cited hereafter as Grant Papers.
with the East thus ending that State's isolation; thirty-one when the 
Edmunds-Tucker Bill was passed by Congress; and thirty-four when 
Wilford Woodruff issued the Manifesto ending polygamy. One-half of 
his life was spent in an environment oriented to the goal of economic 
self-sufficiency. 5

His intimate acquaintance and respect for Brigham Young, 
the Mormon prophet of economic independence, probably made Grant a 
greater supporter of self-sufficiency than otherwise he might have been. 
Surely the experience strengthened his convictions--convictions which 
grew from his frontier life and his early pioneering interest in the 
beet sugar industry. In biographical sketches written of Grant before 
and after he became President of the Mormon Church, two facts are 
emphasized--his ability as a businessman and his belief in home 
industry. 6 His own Church conference addresses attest to the same 
interests. He made a reputation as an advocate of the home industry 
and practiced his beliefs. In an address delivered in Dearborn, 
Michigan, in 1936, defending a national domestic sugar supply, Grant 
recounted just how faithful he was to home-produced goods. Until the 
Provo Woolen Mills closed down, he always wore suits made by the 

5 Leonard J. Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom (Cambridge: 
Harvard University Press, 1958), pp. 195-231. This chapter is 
devoted specifically to post-Civil War Mormon goals and policies 
directed toward economic self-sufficiency.

6 Heber M. Wells, "President Grant, the Business Man," 
Improvement Era, XXXIX (November, 1936), 686-89.
mill. On one occasion, however, a territorial ball in honor of a delegation from Wyoming made it necessary to buy a Prince Albert suit of clothes. He made the purchase, wore it to the formal occasion, and on the following day gave it to a poor relative, saying he (Grant) could not wear this suit and preach home industry, too. The years never mellowed that youthful enthusiasm for self-sufficiency. In 1930 the magazine, Utah Payroll Building, published an article entitled "Heber J. Grant Pledges for Homemade Goods."

With such convictions, Grant could not be expected to endorse import trade with foreign countries. Reciprocal trade agreements such as those sponsored by Cordell Hull in 1934 seemed to Grant to be destructive to native American concerns and dangerous to national security because of dependence on foreign goods. In contrast, the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930 had his approval because it was advantageous to national security and equally important favored the beet sugar industry by protecting it against Cuban and Philippine imports.

Businessman

Grant is remembered now as the seventh President of the Mormon Church; but before and after his call as an Apostle of that Church, he was equally well known as a businessman of ability. His early biographers always paid homage to his success in the business

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7Heber J. Grant, "A Domestic Sugar Supply," Improvement Era, XXXIX (September, 1936), 524.
world, and his personal letters attest to an acquaintance with influential
businessmen of the East and West Coasts.

Grant's aggressiveness in the insurance world earned him the
offer of a vice presidency in the New York Life Insurance Company at
$40,000 a year. In relating the experience to President Franklin S.
Harris of Brigham Young University, he said,

I preferred to stay and magnify my office as an Apostle for less
than $4,000 a year. The man who got the place finally went to
the firm of J. Pierpont Morgan at $250,000 a year and had a
small interest in the business which netted him over a million
dollars a year. 8

Counted among the achievements for which Grant gained
business recognition were co-operation in building the first successful
beet sugar factory in America at Lehi, Utah; and success in raising
loans during the financial panics of 1891, 1892, and 1893 which saved
the State Bank of Utah and other local business enterprises. In 1893
he made four successful fund-raising trips to Eastern banks for the
Church and for local businesses. 9 Brigadier General Richard W.
Young, who enjoyed an intimate friendship with Grant, said, "His
ability to grasp all the factors of a problem is quite extraordinary as

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8 Letter of Heber J. Grant to Franklin S. Harris, June 17,
1942, in Franklin S. Harris Papers (J. Reuben Clark, Jr. Library
Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah), Box 90. Cited hereafter as
Harris Papers.

9 Beneficial Life Insurance Company, "A Tribute to President
Heber J. Grant on His Eighty-fifth Anniversary, 1856-1941" (Salt Lake
City, Utah, 1941), p. 7.
is his resourcefulness." Young went on to say that his friend had a "clearness of vision, almost unique among our own financiers . . . . 10

At the time Grant succeeded Joseph F. Smith as President of the Church on November 23, 1918, the Deseret News in taking account of his life listed a multiplicity of business interests which included the following: first president of the State Bank of Utah at its organization in 1890; and director at various times of the Provo Woolen Mills, Deseret National Bank, Oregon Lumber Co., Salt Lake Herald, and Zion's Co-operative Mercantile Institution.

Business was one element in Grant's politics. Professor Frank Jonas agrees that the key to his political personality was business, just as it was to Utah Senator and Mormon Apostle, Reed Smoot. "Grant sought and enjoyed the company of bankers, financiers, and industrialists." 11 Jonas further suggests that business-oriented Church leaders because of their affiliation with business ideals were emphasizing Republican principles as opposed to those of the Democratic Party. 12

Apostleship

Grant instructed President Harris of Brigham Young

10 Warrum, II, 14.


12 Ibid.
University, after relating his rejection of a vice presidency in an insurance company, that "to labor for the salvation of souls is more important than any other labor in which we can engage." In this statement is demonstrated the most significant force in Grant's life.

The calling of Apostle was bestowed upon Grant in October, 1882, at the age of twenty-six, whereupon he became the first native son of Utah to assume that high ecclesiastical position. Then on November 23, 1916, he became president of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. Two years later, to the day, he followed Joseph F. Smith as President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. For some years following his ordination, business interests continued to compete for his attention, but eventually serving God came to be his main goal in life. In 1900 he confided to his friend, Richard W. Young, an army officer, that he no longer had the interest in finances he once had but rather desired to devote his full attention to magnifying the office of Apostle. He explained to Young how the panic of 1893 had put him heavily in debt and how he was resolved to pay off these obligations rather than claim bankruptcy and that from then on private investment would come second and the Lord's work first. Grant had

13 Grant to Harris, June 17, 1942, Harris Papers, Box 90.

14 In the L. D. S. or Mormon Church, the office of Apostle is both spiritual and administrative. The person is a disciple and special witness of Jesus Christ. See James E. Talmage, Articles of Faith (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1955), p. 209.
learned his lesson from the panic, he told Young--he felt he should have pursued finances less after his call to the Apostleship.  

The next year, 1901, President Lorenzo Snow called upon Grant to open a Church mission in Japan. Years later, as President of the Church, Grant told another mission president how the Lord had blessed him with the ability to make money to pay off debts still outstanding since the '93 panic. In four months' time he had enough money to meet those debts and honor his mission call.  

By September, 1903, Grant was home from Japan; but before he was even settled, a new call came for a mission to Europe for three years. He responded to the request and served honorably. Reflecting upon the experience in 1941 Grant said, 'I look upon my experience of three years in Europe when I was presiding over the European Mission as the three most delightful years of my life since I became a grown man.'  

Singling out this service to his Church as the most rewarding of many experiences which occurred in his life was perfectly in character. As this thesis will demonstrate in numerous cases, religion was the dominant force in his life.

Personality

Biographers speak of Grant's outspoken and straightforward

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15 Grant to Richard W. Young, July 19, 1900, Grant Papers.

16 Grant to Leo J. Muir, July 30, 1942, Grant Papers.

17 Ibid., September 22, 1941.
manner. He himself conceded that he was too outspoken to make
friends readily. Throughout his life his friends inevitably felt that out-
spokenness together with persistence were outstanding traits of his
personality. Orson F. Whitney, who knew Grant from boyhood, recalled,

> For sometime after the beginning of my acquaintance with
> Heber J. Grant I did not understand him, nor do I think he under-
> stood me. Exceedingly sensitive, both of us quick to feel, easily
> hurt and perhaps over-ready to resent a slight, real or fancied,
> we sometimes misinterpreted each other and spoke and acted
> accordingly . . . . I soon found that my blunt outspoken school-
> mate was a genial, kind-hearted friend, anxious to help me. ¹⁸

That was the estimation of a boyhood friend. Grant remained outspoken
throughout life but matured emotionally, concluded Professor Milton R.
Merrill. After studying the correspondence between Reed Smoot and
Grant, Merrill said, "Grant was the kind of man with whom one could
differ, even rather violently, without disrupting personal relations."¹⁹

This assumption is substantiated, at least in one instance, when Smoot
in 1920 successfully secured President Grant's permission to run for
re-election only shortly after the two had warmly disagreed over the
League of Nations question. Grant, as President of the Church, could
have demurred and kept Smoot at home. ²⁰

S. A. Kenner, in a biographical sketch written while his

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¹⁸Warrum, II, 14.

¹⁹Milton R. Merrill, Reed Smoot, Apostle in Politics (unpub-
lished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Political Science, Columbia
University, 1951), p. 323.

²⁰Ibid., p. 161.
subject was in his late forties, wrote, "Personally he is tall and erect in figure, with prominent features which indicate energy and push. He is naturally affectionate, easily moved to tears and is quite emotional . . . ."\(^{21}\) Those outward manifestations of his personality were easier to observe than appreciate. John A. Widtsoe indicated such an appreciation of Grant, however, when he wrote of the President's fearlessness and outspokenness. "There is no masking meaning when the battle is on! He cannot understand why truth should be hidden by idle words. Traditional diplomacy is foreign to him."

The "battle" was on for Grant any time circumstances required speaking out for Mormon principles or defining unrighteousness. Yet Widtsoe claimed, "The outspoken opinions of President Grant carry no rancour with them."\(^{23}\)

He may occasionally have been "blunt" as Orson F. Whitney remembered; nevertheless, Orson's brother, Horace G., affirmed "I can say unreservedly that the big reason for President Grant's success has been his observance of the rule of the square deal and his fair and generous treatment of friend and opponent alike."\(^{24}\) And he

\(^{21}\) S. A. Kenner, Utah as It Is (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1904), p. 373.

\(^{22}\) John A. Widtsoe, "President Grant: The Man," Improvement Era, XXXIX (November, 1936), 663.

\(^{23}\) Ibid.

\(^{24}\) Warrum, II, 13.
was generous with his means. When President Harris reported
donations to Brigham Young University, Grant replied, "I wish we
could educate our people of wealth to do things of this kind." He
frequently did that sort of thing himself. Library books for the uni-
versity at Provo, for example, are provided for in part by income
from 220 shares of Amalgamated Sugar stock donated by Grant. And
a further example in kind, one of many from his personal letters, is
the fact that he supported five missionaries at one time.

John A. Widtsoe, commemorating the President's eightieth
birthday, wrote in the November, 1936, Improvement Era,

President Grant is really a modest man. He places no undue
value on himself . . . . Those who know him are not deceived
by his occasional references to himself as a man with the "cheek
of an insurance agent." That statement is usually the protective
covering of his innate modesty.

His outspoken manner seems to have been balanced by restraint and
modesty--at least his friends thought so. They were equally in agree-
ment on his persistence in pursuing a chosen labor, and Grant was
never known to mar that reputation. A good example of that retentive,
even obstinate, trait of character occurred in 1922 at the October
General Conference of the Church. Before a Tabernacle assembly at

25 Grant to Harris, February 5, 1938, Harris Papers, Box 68.
26 Ibid., March 7, 1938.
27 Grant to Joseph J. Daynes, November 9, 1939, Grant
Papers.
a podium towering above the floor, Grant said,

I have been criticized, time and time again, by friends and others, and have had much splendid advice given to me to not read so much in public because nothing could be more tiresome to an audience than reading; but I am not here for the purpose of saying something to tickle your ears or to please you.

And with that defense and warning, he then proceeded to read an entire section of the Doctrine and Covenants to the congregation. Those who remember the long years of President Grant's administration will perhaps retain a vivid memoray of the tenacious way he preached the Word of Wisdom and the cause of prohibition. His indomitable will is a part of Mormon folklore. Grant himself penned the best monument to his persistent ways with the lines, "That which we persist in doing becomes easier for us to do; not that the nature of the thing itself is changed, but that our power to do is increased."30

In reflection, Grant's personality was characterized by a forthright and determined, though kindly, approach to subjects which held his interest. These traits are reflected in his political behavior,

28 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Conference Report (October 6, 1922), p. 3.

29 One well-known story of Grant's persistence involved the interest he had in baseball as a young man. To improve his ability he spent an astonishing amount of time practicing and eventually became first baseman on the Utah championship team, the "Red Stockings." See Warrum, II, 13.

30 Heber J. Grant, Gospel Standards, comp. G. Homer Durham (Salt Lake City: Improvement Era Publication, 1944), p. 355. For many years all L. D. S. missionaries were given copies of this statement prior to their departure for their fields of labor.
examples of which are his frank political opinions and his faithful support of the prohibition movement. The emotion and bluntness of his early years gradually gave way to a thoughtful or cautious matter-of-factness. B. H. Roberts and John A. Widtsoe have suggested that Grant's unceremonious ways stemmed from his inability to understand how others could not so clearly see their duty to God as he did. Coining the phrase "practical temperament," Roberts observed that "it is no disparagement to say that President Grant is not a highly imaginative person; intellectually speculative, or a constructive theorist, or largely a doctrinaire." What Roberts, one of the Church's intellectuals, did conclude was that Grant's great qualities were simplicity and perseverance.

The significance of these four factors--frontier, business interests, Church beliefs and service, and personality--to this study is their influence on Grant's politics. Briefly stated, that influence was this: The frontier and the emphasis on economic independence assured his belief in protective tariffs; his business experience made the Republican Party, with its pro-capitalistic principles, attractive to him; and his deep abiding religious convictions compelled him to be a prohibitionist and enemy of the New Deal dole system. An understanding of these factors is important in order to appreciate his public political conduct.

\[\text{\footnotesize\textsuperscript{31}}\text{Roberts, VI, 485.}\]
CHAPTER II

POLITICAL ACTIVITY FROM 1882 TO 1901

The years from 1882 to 1901 were Grant's formative years, politically speaking, and the period in which he most actively participated in political affairs with two exceptions to be noted hereafter. The period closed in 1901 when he was called upon to open an L. D. S. mission in Japan. Political events treated here are only those in which he figured.

This chapter attempts to make three contributions: (1) to reveal that Grant was interested in and participated in politics; (2) to provide a clearer understanding of the political issues with which he was concerned; and (3) to emphasize that he was already a respected figure in the State.

Political Positions Occupied

It was as a businessman of prominence that Grant gained a voice in political affairs—his interest being that of a concerned citizen as compared with his contemporary, Reed Smoot, who took his politics seriously and professionally. Smoot, according to his biographer, Milton R. Merrill, considered his long-term service in the United States Senate and the Republican Party in Utah to be a Church duty and
service as have James H. Moyle and Ezra Taft Benson. Grant considered himself forestalled from holding public office by Church responsibilities. Nevertheless, his involvement in State politics, such as his keen interest in prohibition, suggests civic concern and responsibility. More interesting still was his attitude that politics or political office might be beneficial to the Mormon Church and people. Consider also a favorite saying of Grant's which is indicative of his political attitude. In homely analogy he compared politics with the measles, suggesting:

The measles don't hurt much if you will take a little saffron tea or something else to keep them on the surface, but if they once set in on you, they turn your hide yellow and sometimes make you crossed-eyed. So do not let politics set in on you.

Grant was actually elected to two public offices during the territorial period, but the experiences seem to have been of no subsequent consequence. Although the Apostleship was principally the reason he never held other political offices, two other reasons also merit consideration.

The first was his health. Hubert Howe Bancroft, in his History of Utah written in 1890, described Grant as in "feeble health"; though he was over six feet in height, he averaged only 145 pounds in weight. The source from which Bancroft drew his information was a ____________

1Merrill, p. 178.

2Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Conference Report (October, 1922), p. 5.
biographical manuscript written by Grant himself. 3

The same year Grant was ordained an Apostle he was also elected to a term in the Territorial Legislature, 1882-84. Evidence suggests, however, that ill health interfered and kept him inactive most of the term. George Q. Cannon in writing to John T. Caine of developments in the State said, "Heber J. Grant's health still continues very poor, though he is improving. The weather is so wretched that it is very trying to him. He has been at the gates of death." 4 Grant did not return to the legislature for a second term.

The other office which Grant held was that of City Councilman in Salt Lake City from 1882-89. For the first two years, both offices were held simultaneously. With respect to this office also ill health and Church duties made him an inconspicuous member. The years Grant held these offices were considered by him as the most trying because of his health. 5 That Grant never attached great importance to his service in these two offices is suggested by the fact that his reminiscing letters in later life make nothing of it. 6

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3 Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of Utah (San Francisco: History Company, 1890), p. 682.


5 Grant to Julian M. Thomas, July 13, 1940, Grant Papers.

6 The numerous Grant letters examined by the author made no mention of it.
The second possible reason for Grant's having never held a major political office is a subtle one and not easily documented. In the 1890's when Grant figured most prominently as a political possibility, he might easily have been elected governor or United States Senator had it not been for the fact that these prime years coincided with the Mormon Church's overt withdrawal from politics. With statehood in 1896 and thereafter the Church made an apparent effort to refrain from political interference or participation. Contradictory evidence can be cited; yet it seems the Church did move to keep its Apostles from governorship and the senatorship. For example, it was thought unwise for Smoot to be a candidate for the United States Senate in 1901.7

**Proffered Gubernatorial Nomination, 1895**

In piecing together a picture of Grant's political activities during this period, it is significant to note that he could possibly have been Utah's first state governor. In 1938 Grant related the incident to his niece, Katharine Ivins. According to the report, the Democrats wired Grant from Ogden asking Grant where Anthony W. Ivins could be located, saying they would nominate Ivins to be the first state governor or the first representative to Congress. Grant acknowledged the inquiry, stating that Ivins had been called on a mission to Mexico and was not available. A second telegram arrived offering

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7Merrill, p. 11.
the nomination to Grant, stating that there was a majority of votes already pledged. 8

When retelling the story in later years to family and even in General Conference of the Church, Grant did not deny that the offer appealed to him. "Do you think I would not like to have been the first governor of the State of Utah, where I was born? If you do, you are mistaken. I do not know of anything that I should have liked better than that at that particular time." 9

Although Grant desired the nomination, he alone was not to decide. Because of his position as one of the Church's general authorites, he was required to defer to a very recent political manifesto. Wilford Woodruff, the President of the Church, had to be consulted. 10 And President Woodruff let it be understood that he was hardly favorable to such a proposition. 11 The Church had only recently pledged itself to a role of noninvolvement in Utah politics, and to make

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8 Grant to Katharine Ivins, March 11, 1938, Grant Papers.

9 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Conference Report (October, 1934), p. 126.

10 The First Presidency of the Mormon Church formulated a political policy in 1895 which was adopted in April Conference, 1896, which required approval from the Church's President before anyone of the general authorities could seek public office. See Deseret News, April 6, 1896, p. 4.

11 G. Homer Durham, "A Political Interpretation of Mormon History," Pacific Historical Review, XXIII (June, 1944), 147.
a Mormon Apostle Utah's first governor would be taken as a breach of good faith. President Woodruff's position was predictable, for he had announced the Manifesto of 1890 on polygamy and was working to achieve better relations between Mormons and non-Mormons. Woodruff also implied that Grant ought to honor his Apostolic calling and let others, not vested with such a sacred obligation, mind the political arena.12

Grant followed President Woodruff's counsel and wired the Democratic convention that he would appreciate it if his name never came before the convention. And it never did. Heber M. Wells, a cousin by marriage to Grant, won the election on the Republican ticket.

The Apostle's opportunity was not public knowledge at the time; nevertheless, according to Grant's later recollection, Wells believed his cousin was so much the stronger candidate that his success was assured. Although Wells was already a candidate at the time Grant informed him of the proffered nomination, Wells said he would withdraw from the campaign and work for Grant's election. Apparently Wells was reluctant to run due to a personal indebtedness to Grant for his financial support of a successful business venture.13

In later life Grant was grateful he had honored President Woodruff's counsel. "I had been very successful financially, but I had never studied along statecraft lines and I would have made anything but

12 Ibid.
13 Grant to Tom_________, April 27, 1935, Grant Papers.
a good governor." To this confession to his niece, he added the questionable wisdom of neglecting his duty as a Church officer. 14

Just what Grant meant by "statecraft" and being uneducated along those lines is uncertain. But from other letters he seems to have had in mind a knowledge of law. He surely did not mean to imply an ignorance of political "know-how," for his activities on the prohibition campaign reveal an astuteness in political management. One can speculate, however, that had he taken the office he, like Woodrow Wilson, would have had difficulty in making necessary political compromises. As John Widtsoe said, "traditional diplomacy" could be foreign to Grant when his mind was resolved. 15

Grant's refusing this nomination does not warrant the reaction that Grant was an unfavorable candidate. It is not likely that Grant would have been given the party's consideration had he not been considered to have "availability," that magic political quality. Though the future was to see him becoming more and more involved in Church affairs and less and less involved in politics, there was a time when the road to politics was open to the Apostle. There were to be future opportunities, also, but it will be shown that they were not seriously considered.

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14 Grant to Ivins, March 11, 1938, Grant Papers.
15 Supra, p. 11.
Senatorial Politics, 1899

The Democratic State Legislature of 1899 had the responsibility of choosing a new senator or re-electing Frank J. Cannon, incumbent since 1896. Cannon, though Republican, fully expected the Democrats to return him to office because of his stand on the silver issue during the Bryan campaign. Opposing the incumbent was Alfred W. McCune, a wealthy mining figure of Utah and other western states.

Grant, popular with both Mormons and non-Mormons, was prominent enough at this time to be an asset to any candidate of his choice. He chose to back McCune. Grant admired the man and thoroughly favored his election. At the same time, there was a degree of hostility between Grant and Cannon, a feeling intensified by the election. According to Cannon, ill feelings existed in part because Grant disapproved and denounced him for his part as an insurgent Republican in bolting the 1896 National Republican Convention when the party adopted the single gold platform. Cannon thought the State party should defend its silver interests. Grant and other of the Church authorities said loyalty to newly made friends prominent in the Republican Party should come first and that these friends ought not to be angered for economic reasons. 16

16 Cannon, p. 183.
Loyalty for reasons already stated made Grant a Democrat, but the tie was one more of sentiment than conviction. If anything, being a Democrat had meaning for him in State politics only, for in national politics Grant sounded more like a McKinley Republican. McCune was a Democrat; but more important, he was a good candidate for the Church's interests.

Grant was also irritated at Cannon's being the only Republican in Congress to vote against a protective tariff on sugar, (the so-called Dingley Bill). This was too much for Grant, one of the State's leading advocates for the beet sugar industry; and he denounced the act in no uncertain terms. He appears to have been a better Republican than Cannon himself.

Just ten days before the legislature began balloting for a senator, the Salt Lake Tribune published on January 7 what it hoped was evidence sensational enough to ruin McCune's chances for election. By unknown means the Tribune had obtained two letters which Grant had written to J. Golden Kimball the previous December explaining why he had endorsed McCune for the Senate. The letters were printed as Grant had worded them; however, an introductory statement by the Tribune attempted to distort their meaning by inaccurately interpreting the letters. As the Tribune interpreted them, Grant was guilty of applauding McCune's use of wealth to buy the senatorship and of

unloading ownership of the bankrupt Salt Lake Herald on McCune. According to the Tribune, the Herald had been ruined by Grant running it as the Democratic organ. Furthermore, the churchman was charged with illegally using funds from another company to manage the Herald.\footnote{Salt Lake Tribune, January 7, 1889, p. 1. (Cited hereafter as Tribune.)}

At one time Grant had controlled ninety per cent of the Herald's stock; and according to Horace G. Whitney, who managed the paper under Grant, the Apostle occasionally wrote editorials. However, control of the paper had passed to Alfred W. McCune, Simon Bamberger, R. C. Chambers, Joseph L. Rawlins, and Judge Judd who wanted a Democratic organ. The date is uncertain, but according to Heber M. Wells, it was after statehood.\footnote{Wells, Improvement Era, XXXIX (November, 1936), 688.}

Regardless of the true state of the Herald, the Tribune's interpretation was a distortion of the quoted letters. What Grant did say was that he saw no inconsistency in McCune's using his money to advance the Democratic Party's cause when candidate William H. King was using his oratorical powers and personal contacts to achieve the same purposes.\footnote{King later served in the House of Representatives from 1897 to 1901 and in the Senate from 1917 to 1941.} Furthermore, Grant thought it time a man such as McCune, who could ably represent the business interests of the
community, was elected. McCune had unselfishly invested his wealth made in other states in Utah and encouraged other out-of-state entre-
preneurs to do the same. He had worked tirelessly at no small expense to himself for the party and had proven himself a friend of the Church through numerous substantial donations.21

What did Grant think of the Tribune's attack? That same evening the Deseret News published an interview with him in which he stated that he thought there was no need for alarm and continued that since there was nothing in the letters to be ashamed of, the free publicity was greatly appreciated. It was well known that he was working for McCune for the "Tribune has announced this fact time and time again, . . . It is somewhat amusing that it should attempt to create a sensation . . . ."22 As for the rumor of Church influence, Grant's support of McCune was not as an Apostle "with the desire of using Church influence."

What the Tribune did not accurately perceive or reflect was Grant's philosophy of politics. To Grant politics carried moral over-
tones that simply could not be divorced from his religiously-oriented outlook which was reflected in all of his interests. That Grant chose to gain President Lorenzo Snow's "full, free and frank consent to

campaign for McCune'' meant only that he was honoring the political manifesto applicable to all general authorities of the Church. \(^{23}\) There is no evidence from Grant's correspondence that the Church had an "official" candidate. Frank J. Cannon was simply inaccurately informed on the nature of Grant's conduct. Cannon wrote, "Apostle Heber J. Grant, a Republican by sentiment but a Democrat by pretention, was selected by President Snow to barter the Senatorship to McCune." \(^{24}\) And Cannon regarded the letters printed in the Tribune as confirming evidence. His criterion of what constituted "Church influence" was the involvement of any Mormon leader in the State's politics.

The election went on to reach new heights in sensation. The Legislature had balloted more than 133 futile times when on February 18 a committee was authorized to investigate charges of bribery. State Representative Albert A. Law accused McCune of trying to buy his vote. The committee took testimony, heard arguments, and reported back to the joint assembly on March 6. The majority report cleared McCune but took a backhanded slap at him by denouncing his lavish use of campaign money. A minority report all but pointedly declared McCune guilty. \(^{25}\) According to Merrill, some legislators believed that King would have been elected had certain Apostles (presumably Grant) more

\(^{23}\) Lorenzo Snow succeeded Wilford Woodruff as President of the Mormon Church on September 13, 1898. Roberts, VI, 356.

\(^{24}\) Cannon, p. 221. \(^{25}\) Deseret News, March 6, 1899, p. 1.
strictly attended to their ecclesiastical duties. \(^{26}\) However, the majority report made some sound criticisms and deplored the way candidates set up office, hustled legislators, and spent money on lavish entertainment. \(^{27}\) Many must have found it annoying that Utah, so long in desiring representation on the basis of statehood, could not now elect a senator. The "fiasco" was responsible for the Republicans' introducing the caucus in 1901 when they assembled to complete the Democrats' unfinished business.

While the bribery investigation was in process Grant was called out of town. His daughter's fiance in Chicago had appendicitis and he took her to him. Grant was in a dilemma--he wanted to stay if his presence would aid McCune, yet there was comfort in going, too. To a friend he confessed, "I would just as soon be away, for no matter what I would say the Tribune would make me out a fraud, if I were called a witness." \(^{28}\) But when someone pointed out that Grant was running away, he explained to McCune that he had contacted McCune's attorney to determine if he would be needed. \(^{29}\)

After the legislative session concluded, Grant wrote McCune

\(^{26}\) Merrill, p. 7.

\(^{27}\) Deseret News, March 6, 1899, p. 1.

\(^{28}\) Grant to Byron Groo, February 21, 1899, Grant Papers.

\(^{29}\) Grant to Alfred W. McCune, February 21, 1899, Grant Papers.
a lengthy letter lamenting the unrealized victory. The Apostle had no doubt of his friend's integrity and maintained that the majority report should have vindicated McCune. Concluding, Grant assured his friend that although their association had injured his reputation their friendship was firm. A year later, however, Grant felt that McCune had lost confidence in him and did not appreciate what he had done. McCune seemed to have believed that Grant possessed power which had not been exerted in his behalf. Similarly, Smoot, after his defeat in 1932, believed Grant had not supported him as was expected. Smoot never doubted that Grant wanted him re-elected but wondered why the then President of the Church pursued a live-and-let-live attitude. In both cases there were valuable public gestures, but Grant by simply stating his opinion and voicing his hopes had never applied pressure to secure unanimity.  

The Tribune's publication of Grant's letters to Kimball, the McCune investigation, and the rumors of his interference in politics made the election a memorable one for him.

Mission Call

President Lorenzo Snow called Grant on a Church mission to Japan in February, 1901, for a period of three years. He was, therefore, out of the State and its politics for that period; and hardly

Merrill, p. 168.
had he returned in September, 1903, when he again was called on a mission to Europe which kept him out of the State from November, 1903, to December, 1906.

However, Grant was still in Utah during the senatorial election in February, 1901, in which a Republican State Legislature filled the unoccupied seat by choosing Thomas F. Kearns in a caucus session. Grant's position during the election is difficult to ascertain as the newspapers made no mention of interest and nothing is mentioned in his personal letters of that time. He had written to a friend in July, 1900, that McCune had been cool since the election and that as a result Grant had felt slighted because McCune had never thanked him for campaigning in his behalf. However, the letter did not indicate an out-and-out break and it is probable that Grant would have supported his old friend before he would have supported Kearns.

During the time that Grant was in Japan, Reed Smoot was elected Senator as a Republican with the warm approval of President Joseph F. Smith. Grant returned from Japan in September, 1903, after Smoot's election and was en route to England in a few weeks. He was not involved personally in the official investigation of Smoot by the Senate, but did add, unintentionally, to the Apostle-Senator's

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31 Grant to Young, July 19, 1900, Grant Papers.

32 Joseph F. Smith replaced Lorenzo Snow as President of the Mormon Church on October 17, 1901. See Roberts, VI, 386.
troubles.

In the weeks of interim between missions in which Grant was in Salt Lake City, the protest against Smoot was crescendoing in Utah and in the nation. On November 4, 1903, Grant made a speech to the student body at the University of Utah which had unfortunate repercussions for Smoot. When declaring a gift to the alumni fund, Grant stated that he would give $150, which was $50 for himself and $50 for each of his two wives. This jest was received with applause and laughter. Warming to his subject and stimulated by the audience, he continued, "Yes, I have two wives and the only reason I haven't got another is because the government won't let me." which was followed by more applause and laughter. This performance received national attention. The Tribune and nation press played up the incident as testimony of the practice of polygamy. Smoot's enemies used the incident against him during the official investigation. Merrill writes that whenever the speech was cited, the embarrassed defense remained quiet or evaded the matter. And as for the new Senator, "there were many Mormons who agreed with Smoot that two or three more months in Japan for the loquacious brother would have been

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33 Tribune, November 5, 1903, p. 1. Grant married his first wife, Lucy Stringham, on November 1, 1877. After her death he married Augusta Winters and Emily Harris Wells on May 26 and May 27, 1884, just one day apart. Ten daughters and two sons were born to him, both sons dying before the turn of the century.
helpful." President Theodore Roosevelt wondered the same thing aloud to Smoot.

The humor, even for Grant, must have faded as he prepared to leave on his mission to Europe. Charles Mostyn Owen, official detective for the Protestant's Committee and the Ministerial Association, which were responsible for the cohabitation charge against Smoot, was in the audience when Grant played the jest. A similar charge against Grant was made out by Owen and a warrant for Grant's arrest was issued; but before it could be served, Grant was en route to Boston for passage to England.

In concluding this review of Grant's political activities, evidence exists that Grant was considered on two different occasions for the United States Senatorship after his return from Europe. In the letter to Katharine Ivins which has been previously cited, he briefly mentioned how on two separate occasions he had rejected drafts. "I was offered the senatorship at the time when they nominated the senators in the Legislature, but I had no ambition for that . . . ." Moreover, he told his niece that more good could be accomplished among his people were he to stay where he was. In addition, he

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34 Merrill, p. 44.
35 Ibid., p. 106.
36 Ibid., p. 42.
37 Grant to Ivins, March 11, 1938, Grant Papers.
doubted his campaigning ability, candidly admitting, "I am naturally rather a forceful speaker. I fear I might offend many of my own people who were in the Republican party." As mentioned previously, during this time he was a Democrat, although he did believe in tariffs.

These last two political opportunities would have occurred between 1906, the year he returned from the European mission, and 1913, the year the Seventeenth Amendment authorized the popular election of senators. They would appear to have been related to the prominent role Grant played in the fight for State-wide prohibition.

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38 Ibid.
CHAPTER III

CHAMPION OF PROHIBITION

Heber J. Grant championed two causes with special fervor—home industry for Utah and the Word of Wisdom. This chapter deals with the Word of Wisdom and how Grant associated it with prohibition, that facet of the Progressive Movement which most thoroughly touched Utah. His zeal for prohibition can be accounted for by the synonymous meaning he applied to the seemingly different ideas.

Orson F. Whitney, intimate and business associate of Grant thought his friend "in his glory when heading or helping forward a movement for the moral uplift and regeneration of his fellows." He manifested the reformer's zeal—and if Utah were ever to "go dry," it would be in large part due to Grant, that "oft-defeated but never discouraged champion of prohibition."  

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1In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, this is the doctrine of voluntary abstinence from wine, strong drink, tobacco and hot drinks. The doctrine dates back to February 27, 1833, when Joseph Smith received it in a revelation as a word of counsel but it later became a commandment at the time of Brigham Young. It was Heber J. Grant, however, who ascribed to it the character of a law.

2Warrum, II, 15.

3Ibid.
Apostle Grant was a part of the prohibition movement from its inception and was a voice for it until Utah adopted a State-wide law in March, 1917, all of which was prior to Grant's call as President of the Church. Even after the victory was won, he continued to defend prohibition in the face of widespread dissatisfaction and eventual repeal of prohibition laws. "Grant was unequivocally for prohibition," one friend recalled, "and cared not for who knew it."  

To Apostle Grant, Utah and the Word of Wisdom created an unusually favorable set of circumstances for the adoption of State-wide prohibition and not just local option. Grant felt that if any state would adopt prohibition, it ought to be the Beehive state because of the predominant number of Mormons and their belief in abstinence. In 1916, eight years after the movement's inception with the goal yet to be realized, Grant said Utah should have been the first for prohibition "because the Lord has given to us a prohibition law . . . ."  

In attitude, the churchman was symbolic of the strongest and most determined position on liquor. Voluntary temperance, local

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5For historical accuracy, note should be made of the distinction between temperance and prohibition. Temperance implied liquor control in a variety of ways. Prohibition, less popular in appeal, meant the prevention of both the manufacture and the sale of beer and liquor.

6Heber J. Grant, "Prohibition" (Address for Joint Mutual Improvement Ass'n Officers Meeting, June 9, 1916), p. 1
option, or prohibition were possible choices. It was his belief in State-wide prohibition and insistence in using the Word of Wisdom as a basis for prohibition that made him outstanding in this cause. In all three reasons can be stated for his position: (1) the Word of Wisdom; (2) a belief that liquor resulted in too much of evil consequence not to be a crime; and (3) a personal vow to prevent the sale of liquor.

Grant believed voluntary temperance was fine; but more stringent control of the liquor traffic was too important to ignore and should be enforced even though a minority opinion. Liquor and its train of evil, crime, squandered income, immorality, and broken homes constituted a crime against society to say nothing of the individual addicted to it. Control was beyond the pale of individual discretion. Grant acknowledged that many considered this approach an infringement of individual liberty but, convinced of his reasoning, he remained adamant.

The third reason stated above stemmed from a personal experience. In a public address he once referred to the death of two of

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7Ibid.

8Ibid., p. 1. In contrast to Grant's position was that of another Church authority, Brigham H. Roberts who maintained that there was no connection between state prohibition and the Word of Wisdom. He felt that state prohibition was based upon compulsion as all human laws must be, while the Word of Wisdom was merely a word of counsel from the Lord. See letter of Brigham H. Roberts to Rudger Clawson, September 16, 1933 (Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah).
Brigham Young's sons. "God never made finer boys and whiskey destroyed them. . . . I solemnly pledged that all that was within me should be used to stamp out the sale of liquor."\(^9\)

The following pages are an account of Apostle Grant's role in Utah's temperance movement. The tone of correspondence he wrote, of things others wrote of him, and of what newspapers said impresses one with the idea that he was audacious and determined.\(^{10}\) Add to this a naturally ardent demeanor, and it is not hard to imagine his public image. During the years of the movement, 1908-17, the Salt Lake Tribune took keen delight in caricaturing the loquacious reformer in language sometimes bordering on libel but sometimes jesting.

**Prohibition Beginnings**

Utah was late in joining the temperance movement although by 1908 it was apparent it would do so. On March 27, the *Deseret News* identified a "swelling dry movement," and editorially wished it success. Protestant ministers, adding their voices, had letters published in the *Deseret News* and the *Intermountain Republican* calling for a temperance

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\(^{10}\)Although one of Grant's main qualities was tenacity if his interest was aroused, he was equally prone to losing interest if the excitement was not sustained. See "Heber J. Grant," *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, comp. Andrew Jenson (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1901), I, 147.
movement. Then in April at the opening session of General Conference President Joseph F. Smith added his influence to the movement with "I hope that every Latter-day Saint will co-operate with the temperance movement spreading in the land." The year 1908 was principally spent in organizing and marshalling support. Citizens sympathetic to temperance could count on the Anti-Saloon League, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Relief Society organization of the L. D. S. Church, and most of the Protestant denominations of the State.

Opposing the reformers and very active in Utah were the National Brewers Association and the Chicago-based Saloon Keepers Association. Anti-prohibition press releases and other literature came mainly from the latter organization.

The temperance movement was hindered at first by the political parties, mainly because they had not yet found it to their advantage to be anything other than cautious. The State Democratic Party was generally in favor of prohibition, a reflection of the national party, but it was the weaker of the two State parties. The Republican Party, controlled by Reed Smoot, blew hot and cold, mostly for local option. Not until 1916 did both the State and national parties come

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12 No attempt is made in this thesis, an interpretive study, to write a history of the prohibition movement. This has already been done and is used for background in this thesis. See Bruce T. Dyer, A Study of Forces Leading to the Adoption of Prohibition in Utah in 1917 (unpublished master's thesis, Dept. of History, Brigham Young University, 1958).
out for prohibition; however, neither party offered much in the way of leadership.

The official position of the Mormon Church on prohibition was mild from first to last, for reasons which will be examined hereafter. President Smith said that the Church was not in the fight for prohibition and that the several interested Apostles were acting on their own.¹³ Thus, Grant was in favor of prohibition while fellow Apostle Reed Smoot favored local option.¹⁴

The statement that the Church was not taking sides was part of a letter to Smoot, who had complained of one of the Apostles being very outspoken for prohibition. Such outspokenness was putting the Senator in a bad light, since he was for local option. President Smith told Smoot to be patient; some were unduly zealous but that was a matter of individual temperament.¹⁵

The zealous brother both seem to have had in mind was Heber J. Grant. Smoot, who apparently had to worry about not appearing to be the Church's senator to the alienation of non-Mormons

¹³ Dyer, p. 39.

¹⁴ Reed Smoot endorsed local option because that was the position of the National Republican Committee and also because he believed prohibition could not be enforced at that time. And it appears President Smith favored this position because a prohibition stand would destroy Smoot's non-Mormon votes. See Dyer, p. 16.

¹⁵ Dyer, p. 39.
of the State, compromised with local option. But Grant did not have any such worry and resented a fellow Apostle opposing him, especially since prohibition was in his view obviously right.

In January, 1909, the campaign began officially with Grant's appointment as National Trustee for Utah of the Anti-Saloon League. At the same time the Reverend Louis S. Fuller, from the national office, assumed the position of superintendent. In reporting the event, the Deseret News assured its readers that Grant "has entered upon the function . . . with vim and enthusiasm so characteristic of the man." 16

The story continued that the subject was a familiar one to the Apostle because for years "he has advocated, not moderation in the matter of strong drink, but absolute abstinence . . . ." In an opening speech of the Anti-Saloon League Conference, Grant said, "We are not content to secure local option as we believe that such would be less than half-way measures . . . ." 17 He continued, the League "is working for prohibition for the state, and will be satisfied with nothing short of it."

Actually, no obscurity surrounded his position--it was clear enough from speeches made the previous year when he asserted that the State was dominated by the liquor interests and was one of the six remaining states without laws to control the sale of liquor. 18

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17 Ibid.
18 Tribune, March 16, 1908, p. 10.
Springville, Utah, the Apostle charged Church members with spending as much money in breaking the Word of Wisdom as they spent in tithe payments. If only they would faithfully observe the law of abstinence, the prohibition issue in Utah would be solved.  

For the prohibitionists the most important event of 1908 was the temperance resolution adopted at the October conference of the Mormon Church, and Grant was the principal figure identified with it. He introduced the resolution with a short speech and the resolution read:

Believing in the word and teaching of President Joseph F. Smith, as set forth this morning, on the subject of temperance, it is proposed that all the officers and members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will do all in their power that can properly be done with law makers generally, to have such laws enacted by our legislature soon to be elected as may be necessary to close saloons and otherwise decrease the sale of liquor and to enact the Sunday law.

At the time it was adopted, the resolution attracted very little attention, and it was not treated as an absolute prohibition statement. It was almost forgotten until the Anti-Saloon League announced it would work for prohibition and not just local option. Grant's speech of January 6, 1909, was that declaration. It immediately provoked rumors that an ex post facto meaning was being applied to the resolution for advantage. Grant immediately responded, "There exists in the mind of some persons a doubt as to the exact meaning of the resolution..."

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19 Intermountain Republican, April 6, 1908, p. 6. The official organ for the Utah Republican Party.

20 Deseret News, October 5, 1908, p. 4.
Identifying himself as its author, he said, "I intended it for nothing short of prohibition." He advised all to reread it; the intent was clear enough. But since it was silent on any particular method of control, many remained unconvinced it was a prohibition resolution.

The Tribune tried to keep the controversy alive, perhaps in the hope of keeping the temperance house divided. In March it printed a speech of State Senator Carl A. Badger, a Mormon and former secretary to Reed Smoot. Badger stated that Grant was hypocritically using the resolution to his own end and that he and the League were responsible for the ex post facto interpretation. In addition, Badger ridiculed the Apostle for his earlier boast or threat to politically kill any legislator failing to support prohibition. About two months previously Grant, "waxing eloquent" before an assembly of L. D. S. youth, threatened to dig the political graves of the faithless state legislators "so deep that they would never again see the light of day." Senator Badger thought such a threat out of line and expressed this opinion:

The church has the right, a sacred duty, to declare itself on moral questions, and it is instinctively and unalterably the deadly foe of the saloon; but the church is the church and not the state, and before the wisdom of the church becomes the law of the state, it must be filtered through the political process which a free people have devised and ordained as the means of expressing their opinions.

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21 Deseret News, January 7, 1909, p. 1
22 Tribune, March 10, 1909, p. 4.
None of this, of course, moved Grant. And indeed he seems to have been guilty of nothing more than an excess of zeal. In all probability prohibition was on his mind when he introduced the resolution, and anyone prone to local option was probably just as pleased that the resolution was vague. There is ample evidence that the Anti-Saloon League had geared itself for prohibition from the start regardless of the Church and its position on the question.25

The smell of success was in the air for prohibition. J. J. Cannon introduced a bill in the House for State-wide prohibition almost before the House was organized but encountered opposition from local option Republicans. A contest ensued between Smoot's forces and Grant's. Smoot's lieutenants would elicit pledges on one day only to have Grant change them the next day. He was as good as his earlier declaration to wage a hard fight. "Every fair and honorable influence that we can command will be brought to bear upon the members of the incoming legislature . . . ."26 At any rate Grant was threatening enough for Smoot to write him suggesting he quit meddling in politics.27


27 Dyer, p. 40.
In the end, however, opposition was too strong for prohibition. On February 20, 1909, the measure was defeated by a twelve to six vote. Just prior to adjournment, however, the legislature, perhaps mindful of the folks at home, approved a local option law which was vetoed by the Mormon Republican Governor William Spry who claimed that communities already had ample power to regulate liquor.

The cause which had such a promising beginning ended dismally. A short time later the Anti-Saloon League met, elected new officers, and pledged itself to pick up the fight in 1911 when the legislature next met. Heber J. Grant was elected to membership on the headquarters committee.

The Tribune, feigning sympathy for the prohibition movement, took a jab at Grant in an editorial in which he was compared to the Biblical Jonah who must be thrown overboard if the temperance ship was to be saved from disaster. His "bull-headed stubbornness" was to blame. And the article continued that by meddling in the movement Grant had brought its defeat, just as by his meddling in the senatorial election of 1899 had been the ruin of the Democratic Party at that time.

31 Ibid., March 26, 1909, p. 4.
Calm Before the Storm

The movement abated after the disillusionment of 1909, and no further concerted effort was made until 1915. These were the quiet years. The period was characterized by efforts to establish a State-wide local option program. And a few counties did go dry, in spite of the fact that the liquor interests were active attempting to control the local political machinery. Also conspicuous was the quiescence of the Mormon Church on the prohibition issue.

The year 1910 marked the nadir of the prohibition movement. The most significant event was Grant's July stake conference address at Logan, Utah, held just prior to the State political conventions in which the Apostle appealed to Church members to forgo party affiliations and to vote for men inclined toward prohibition. The fact that Grant insisted that President Smith was wholeheartedly in favor of prohibition made the sermon memorable, although why President Smith remained so quiet was not explained. The temperance sentiment was strong enough in 1911 to have the legislature pass a local option law. This time Spry signed it. By the bill's terms, June 27 was designated a day for each community to

32See Dyer, pp. 47-68.

33Ibid.
vote itself "wet" or "dry."\(^{34}\) At the L.D.S. April conference and in the following days such authorities of the Church as Grant, Francis M. Lyman, David O. McKay and Anthon H. Lund appealed to their brethren to vote "dry."\(^{35}\)

The election was a qualified success. Of 71,000 registered voters, 39,766 voted "dry." Salt Lake City and Ogden, with one-third of the State's population, voted to keep the saloons open. Out of the 366 saloons in the State, 101 were closed.\(^{36}\) Speaking sometime later of that election, Grant rather bitterly concluded that Utah would have had prohibition then but for those two cities.\(^{37}\)

The next two years, 1912-13, were disappointing to the prohibition cause, for Governor Spry was renominated and elected on a local option platform in contrast to the 1908 defeat of Governor John C. Cutler, in whom local option was thought a liability. Grant was not very active for the cause himself although as a member of the Council of One Hundred of the American Anti-Saloon League he did state that he would attend a convention in Columbus, Ohio, in November 1913.\(^{38}\)

\(^{34}\)Deseret News, February 4, 1911, p. 1.

\(^{35}\)Dyer, p. 49.


\(^{37}\)Grant, Proceedings . . . , p. 119.

\(^{38}\)George A. Startup to Heber J. Grant, October 11, 1913, in George A. Startup Papers (J. Reuben Clark, Jr.: Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah).
The interest in prohibition picked up in 1914 and ended on a promising note. A key incident occurred during Grant's address in April General Conference of the Mormon Church. At one point, commenting on the belief of some Latter-day Saints that Utah needed the saloons to help pay taxes, Grant said, "God pity them for having their consciences so badly seared," whereupon President Joseph F. Smith arose to say that such people were not Latter-day Saints, only Mormons.  

On June 6, the Deseret News reprinted an article written by Grant for the American Patriot. Grant therein quoted President Smith as being "unalterably in favor of State-wide prohibition and temperance."  

Grant had been accused of losing interest in the movement---of talking a lot but doing little. He defended himself, stating that he was as interested as ever to bring about State-wide prohibition but had little time because of his Church responsibilities, his wife's illness, and his private business. Grant had even turned down the position of Superintendent of the Anti-Saloon League for Utah because of his Church position as he felt the respect for the Church would be damaged had he

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39Deseret News, April 4, 1914, p. 1. This was a strong statement and difficult to reconcile with the fact that a bar was maintained by the Church at its Hotel Utah. See Dyer, p. 59.

40Deseret News, June 6, 1914, p. 3.
accepted the job and failed to actively fill it. 41

The most important event of 1914 was the prohibitionists' consolidating their forces in the Utah Federation of Prohibition and Betterment Leagues which had its own team of lawyers to draft legislation and act as a lobby to secure passage. The organization's objectives were to obtain State-wide prohibition and adequate enforcement measures. The campaign was to be a moral issue and non-partisan since Democrats, Republicans, Progressives, and Socialists were participating. Grant was elected second vice president during the first meeting. 42

**Another Veto, Then Success**

The renewed interest in prohibition characterized by the Utah Federation of Prohibition and Betterment League's organization made 1915 a year of great expectations. It was the opinion stated by the *Deseret News* that the people of Utah wanted a referendum on a prohibition law and wished the issue to be free of partisan controversy. 43

According to their platforms, neither political party had any intent in making prohibition an issue in the 1915 legislature; nevertheless,

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41 Grant to Startup, September 3, 1914, Startup Papers.

42 *Deseret News*, October 6, 1914, p. 1.

43 See Dyer thesis for detailed study.
prohibition was the chief feature. The Federation had promised the people a law on the terms they desired; and a carefully drafted bill, without a popular referendum provision, for outright prohibition was introduced into the Senate in January by John H. Wootton. The balance of the term witnessed an extremely bitter controversy over this bill's fate, centered in the legislature. The Mormon Church leaders were thus relegated to the role of lobbying for the bill's passage, and Grant was not particularly conspicuous in the affair.

To the satisfaction of the officers of the Federation, the Wootton Bill was approved by both houses of the legislature and sent to the Governor, after which the legislature adjourned. Six days later, promises to the contrary notwithstanding, Governor Spry vetoed the measure. Widespread opinion was that the liquor interests' pressure had been too great for him. The Governor by now was certainly unpopular with the prohibitionists, as he now had the questionable credit of having vetoed the 1909 and the 1915 bills. The next year when Spry's nomination was still a possibility, Grant wrote a friend, "If Spry is re-nominated, I believe I shall personally take the stump against him; and I certainly want to be in a position to hit and hit hard."  

44 *Deseret News*, January 20, 1915, p. 3.  
46 Grant to William E. Johnson, May 4, 1916, Grant Papers.
This defeat seemed to intensify interest in prohibition. Dyer maintains that sentiment was so strong the only question unanswered was which party would have the honor of fathering the legislation.\(^47\) Grant himself thought both parties would declare themselves for prohibition.\(^48\) Research and publications current to the time make it clear that prohibition was practically inevitable, and the movement for a national constitutional amendment doubtless contributed to this trend.

Although the Church officially remained silent on the matter of prohibition, in other respects the years 1916-17 did fulfill all expectations, for both political parties declared themselves in favor of prohibition and Democrat Simon Bamberger, a Salt Lake City businessman was elected governor. Grant, probably having secured President Smith's permission, was elected president of the Utah Federation of Prohibition and Betterment Leagues in April, 1916, and worked vigorously in this position, reading widely in the area of prohibition, and writing letters to every stake president and bishop in Utah requesting their support.\(^49\)

On January 9 Richard W. Young, an intimate friend of Grant's and former Federation lawyer, introduced a bill; and on February 8

\(^{47}\)Dyer, p. 108.

\(^{48}\)Grant to Don Colton, August 9, 1916, Grant Papers.

\(^{49}\)Grant to Howard Russell, July 10, 1916, Grant Papers.
after receiving Senate approval, the Young Bill was signed by the new Governor to take effect August 1, 1917. As finally approved, this bill forbade sale of any beverage containing more than 0.5% alcohol.

Subsequent acts strengthened the law. On March 12, 1917, the State constitution was amended to include a prohibition article, and in January, 1919, both houses of the legislature unanimously voted to ratify the Eighteenth Amendment to the national constitution. When this amendment took effect on January 16, 1920, Utah had been "dry" for nearly three years.

As the day of their closing approached, the Deseret News observed that the saloons had never enjoyed better business. There was standing room only, and the people were laying in supplies of liquor for the dry times ahead. Some carried it home by the arm load while others had it delivered by the car load. Not everyone was happy with the new morality.

Lawlessness and Repeal

Apostle Grant must have been disappointed if he thought prohibition would mean a demonstrable difference in public morality. Lawlessness in the 1920's did not subside--it merely took new forms--and whereas Grant had preached the virtues of prohibition, he now preached

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the virtues of law observance.

Grant had nothing but contempt for those who argued that corruption and drinking had actually increased under prohibition and that such laws ought to be repealed. He insisted that respecting the law was the solution and stated that next to spiritual growth, nothing was of greater importance for Latter-day Saints than obeying the law. This was the theme of conference addresses in 1922, 1925, 1926, 1927, and 1929. Typical of these messages was that given in 1928:

Prohibition has been enacted as a constitutional law, and we find recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants the statement that we are to choose wise men and good and true men to occupy offices. We are also told to obey constitutional law, and any man or woman in the Church of Christ that is breaking the prohibition law is also breaking the laws of God.

Still, what seemed right for Mormons was resented by a good many Americans. Sensitive to public opinion, the Democrats included a wet plank in their 1932 platform. And then victorious, they repealed the Volstead Act as part of the famous One Hundred Days. In Utah it was necessary for the constitution to be amended and any "dry" laws to be repealed before beer or liquor could be manufactured or sold. The course of prohibition in Utah was mirrored in its vote on

52 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Conference Report (October, 1922), p. 190.
53 Ibid., (April, 1925), p. 4.
54 Heber J. Grant, "The Upholding of Constitutional Law and Order" (Printed address, J. Reuben Clark Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah), p. 10.
the Twenty-first Amendment. State prohibition was not likely to remain if the State approved the national repeal of prohibition.

Anticipating the possible repeal, President Grant denounced the idea as early as April, 1932. Then again a year later he delivered a strong sermon on the Word of Wisdom in an address which set the theme of spring conference. In June he told graduating seniors of Brigham Young University, "If every other state in the union repeals the 18th amendment, I hope Utah is the one bright star that remains true to prohibition." 57

The fall conference of 1933 provided Grant with a last opportunity to defend prohibition. The conference sessions always drew crowds and were now broadcast over the State, and to this large listening audience Grant promised increased drunkenness and grievous hardships among Latter-day Saints if the Eighteenth Amendment was repealed. Although Grant was a Democrat and loyal to the party, he opposed the repeal of prohibition because it was a moral and not a political issue; and he resented President Franklin D. Roosevelt's remark that Democrats who opposed the repeal movement

55 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Conference Report (April, 1932), p. 117.

56 Deseret News, April 6, 1933, p. 7.


58 Deseret News, October 7, 1933, p. 5.
were traitors to the party. The Church leader concluded the sermon by saying that no earthly law could change the fact that the Lord had said that liquor was not good for humans. 59

President Grant's appeals had been frequent and strong; but the Eighteenth Amendment was repealed, and the thirty-sixth vote was cast by Utah on December 5, 1933. The State which Grant always thought should most readily adopt prohibition had rejected it. 60

59 Deseret News, October 9, 1933, p. 3.

60 Ibid., December 5, 1933, p. 1.
CHAPTER IV

HEBER J. GRANT AND REED SMOOT

The emphasis in this chapter is on Heber J. Grant and his relationship with Apostle Reed Smoot. The political career of Senator Smoot and to some extent their association has been adequately dealt with by Milton R. Merrill. The material presented here casts a new light on the story and provides continuity to the thesis. The common denominator is their politics—their differences and agreement.

The substance of Merrill's research emphasizes Grant's wholehearted support of the Senator, a conclusion which is confirmed in Grant's personal papers and public performance after Grant became President of the Church. ¹ However, prior to that time, frequent friction marked their relationship. On several issues Grant opposed the conservative Senator in demonstrable ways. If it is true, as Merrill suggests that Mormonism, Republicanism, and conservatism all became one with Reed Smoot, then the validity of the statement dates from President Grant's endorsement of Smoot.

¹Merrill, pp. 164-168.
Grant and the New Senator

When Smoot was sustained an Apostle in April, 1900, Grant, who had known Smoot from their business association with the Provo Woolen Mills, seems to have been pleased. In a letter to a friend, Grant confided, "Personally I am very much delighted with the choice. Reed is a man who has grown wonderfully in the faith of the Gospel in the past few years." Three years later Smoot had the additional honor of being elected United States Senator. For thirty years he was the "Apostle-Senator." Then finally, as an Old Guard Republican, he was turned out of office in November, 1932, when the Beehive State went Democratic, seeking more promising times with the New Deal.

An important issue which brought Grant and Smoot to opposition was their differing feelings on the liquor issue, treated in Chapter III. Again, Grant's zeal for prohibition seems to have embarrassed Senator Smoot, also an Apostle, making Smoot appear lukewarm on what Grant persistently referred to as a moral issue. Because prohibition remained an issue for so many years, the discord between the two also remained. Smoot was still complaining in 1914 that Grant was yet embarrassing him--in fact, calling him names in public such as "his royal nibs."³

² Grant to Richard W. Young, July 19, 1900, Grant Papers.
³ Merrill, p. 240.
A second clash of opinion occurred over the merit of the League of Nations. President Grant was strongly pro-League and typically thought of it as a moral question, much too important to be a partisan issue. Smoot entertained an equally strong opinion as a reservationist. Smoot's position was publicized and commanded some following. Furthermore, he cited The Book of Mormon in his defense. However, Grant refused to commit the Church officially and disapproved Smoot's use of The Book of Mormon, and took this position in Church conference—to the Senator's embarrassment. It was not Grant's intention to embarrass Smoot—he was merely defending the League and did not appreciate scripture being invoked against it. 4

This incident proved to be their last significant difference of opinion. Grant was now President of the Church and before long their association was one of harmony.

**Smoot and the New President**

President Joseph F. Smith, who preceded Grant, supported Senator Smoot with enthusiasm, and in fact considered Smoot's senatorship to be the Lord's will. According to Charles W. Nibley, counselor to President Smith:

I ventured to suggest to him [Smith] that it would be a wise and prudent thing for Senator Smoot to stay home... I could see he was listening but with some impatience. Finally, bringing his fist down on the railing between us he stated in these emphatic

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4Ibid., p. 319.
terms: "If I have ever had the inspiration of the spirit of the Lord
given to me forcefully and clearly it has been on this one point
concerning Reed Smoot, and that is, instead of his being
retired, he should continue in the United States Senate." 5

Smoot was always defended by President Smith against all who did not
appreciate him, and Merrill's study shows there were many. However,
Nibley also eventually became a solid Smoot man. 6

Smith's loyalty to Smoot had not been shared by Apostle
Grant. He once said that he thought Anthony W. Ivins, a respected
Church leader had "a greater statesman's head on him than Reed Smoot
or anybody else I know of in the State of Utah." 7 Considering Grant and
Smoot's past relationship and the possibilities of reconciliation, Merrill
wrote:

He [Grant] had never been considered an enthusiastic Smoot
supporter. Grant was a forthright and outspoken man, and one
who usually coupled actions with words. His political and reli-
gious activities had more than once threatened the entire
structure created by Smoot and Smith, aided recently by Nibley. 8

The one bright spot, Merrill continued, was that Grant was just as
conservative in his economic opinions as Smith and was equally devoted
to the protective tariff. There was little doubt Smoot would ever annoy

5Charles W. Nibley, Reminiscences, 1849-1931 (Salt Lake
City: Published by the family, 1934), p. 125.

6Ibid.

7Grant to Heber M. Wells, October 19, 1934, Grant Papers.

8Merrill, p. 160.
Grant by his position on economic questions. Still, as Grant became President of the Church in November, 1918, Smoot had cause to wonder just where he stood with Smith's successor. As President, Grant had the authority to ask Smoot to retire from politics at any time; and, of course, the Senator would have complied.

One of the last acts of President Smith was to send word to the assembled Church authorities favoring the re-election of Smoot, an event still two years in the future. Grant, who was spokesman during Smith's illness, promised the President that action would be taken. Upon becoming President of the Church, Grant was prevailed upon by Charles Nibley to promise he would do everything "in his power to support Reed." And Grant was informed by Nibley that he was working in a quiet way for Smoot's re-election in 1920. Nibley, in fact, now became Smoot's official contact with the First Presidency and took Smith's place in Smoot's confidence. From Nibley's journal and correspondence with Smoot, it appears that he lost no time in convincing Grant of the Senator's virtues; and it soon became apparent that Smoot would continue to serve Utah

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9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., p. 159.
11 Nibley, p. 137
12 Ibid.
and the Church with the new President's approval. Even on the
League of Nations question Grant made no effort to dictate to Smoot;
nor, as it turned out, was Smoot's re-election jeopardized by their
differences of opinion. Furthermore, Grant's action was entirely
compatible with his political philosophy--state his own position and
then allow others to choose for themselves.

Grant's political philosophy meant the end of using Church
dollars to finance Smoot's political career. In a letter dated
February 1, 1919, Nibley informed Smoot he had told Grant that Presi-
dent Smith had contributed money to the support of the Herald-Republican,
a paper which was the Senator's political spokesman. That intelligence
was a complete surprise to Grant, and, according to Nibley, Grant was
not favorably impressed. After thinking the matter over and at Nibley's
urging, Grant agreed to contribute fifty per cent of the needed assistance.
Apparently President Smith had been more generous--at least this was
suggested by the closing lines which Nibley wrote to Smoot: "So I
believe we will let it go at that and do the best we can."\(^{13}\) However,
using the Church's funds to support a politician--even Reed Smoot--was
a situation Grant seemed to find uncomfortable; so he informed Nibley

\(^{13}\)Ibid., p. 171.
no more Church money would be given to the Herald. 14 Aside from the
light shed by the incident on Utah's politics, Grant's decision not to
continue a practice common to the Smith-Smoot alliance is a strong
testimony for the man that he practiced what he preached--that he
had his personal political opinions and others were allowed theirs.
Nevertheless, Grant told Smoot and his friends that Smoot was very
valuable to Utah, and the President was always pleased the way Smoot
defended the domestic sugar industry. Grant was particularly
impressed by the way Presidents Roosevelt, Taft, Harding, and
Coolidge had become friends of Utah through Smoot's influence. 15

Beet Sugar and Protective Tariffs

The major national political issue of significance in Utah
between the adoption of prohibition and the advent of the New Deal was
the protective tariff as a safeguard for the beet sugar industry. The
Mormons had invested heavily in this industry and had been pioneers
in the process. In his many sermons and letters Grant, who was one
of the financiers of the Lehi beet sugar factory at Lehi, stated that the
intended purpose of developing the beet sugar industry was to give the
farmers a cash crop and locally centered refinery while having an
industry contributing to the intermountain region's self-sufficiency.

14 Ibid., p. 172.
15 Ibid., p. 163.
Naturally, the beet sugar promoters sought protective tariffs for their industry against sugar cane imports from other countries. Although the beet sugar farmers and businessmen expected favored treatment because they were Americans contributing to the nation's self-sufficiency, other Americans saw this industry as a very small industry which had to contend with cane sugar refiners, consumers, and advocates of international trade.

The protection of the beet sugar industry through tariffs became a common interest between Grant and Smoot. The Senator became the great front fighter for a high tariff policy when he was finally allowed to retain his seat in the Senate. Grant's convictions on this subject were stated in an address in 1936:

I am in favor of our producing all the sugar from cane and beets in the United States that we possibly can consume. To my mind it is a poor financial policy to buy from any foreign country anything we can profitably produce by the tiller of the soil in the United States, and especially is this the case with something as profitable as sugar. I believe absolutely in the purported statement of Abraham Lincoln: "I do not discuss the tariff. I know that if we buy goods made in America we have the goods and we have the money, and if we buy goods not made in America someone else has our money." 16

Grant apparently had complete confidence in Smoot's handling of this issue and deferred to his opinions, as is demonstrated in the following letter to Smoot dated March 15, 1922:

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I read with interest your account of the sugar situation and discussed the conditions in your letter with Bishop Nibley. We have perfect confidence that you will do everything in your power for the protection of the beet sugar industry in the intermountain region. Beyond that we have no advice to give.  

In 1921-22 the beet sugar industry in Utah and surrounding area suffered one of its worst depressions. The importation of sugar from other countries caused a severe decline in beet sugar prices. The United States Agriculture Department's records show raw sugar bringing $12.03 a ton in 1920, dropping to $5.47 in 1921.  

From the foregoing, it is easy to surmise the financial problem the industry was having at this time. President Grant secured a loan for the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company in the amount of $9,500,000 through Senator Smoot, who arranged for Grant to meet President Woodrow Wilson and borrow the money through the War Finance Corporation. Grant testified that the industry could not have survived without federal aid. This may seem a contradiction in Grant's political life, since he generally assailed government spending, to seek both federal protection and financial aid for an industry which was thought of as contributing to Utah's self-sufficiency. For that loan,  

17Ibid.  
18Ernest M. Morrison, United States Agriculture Commission, Bulletin No. 329, p. 23.  
20Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Conference Report (April, 1922), p. 8.
however, Grant was highly pleased, as he publicly acknowledged:

I am delighted that we are a great and powerful nation; I am delighted that the men who stand at the head of this nation are anxious for the welfare of the farmer, the stockgrower, the beet industry, and other great industries in our country. 21

During the crisis as Smoot worked to have sugar imports from Cuba limited, he kept Grant informed; and Grant always answered Smoot with a vote of "unqualified confidence." 22 This crisis for the beet sugar industry temporarily passed in 1922-23 as prices rose again, but this was short lived and thereafter a steady decline continued to the depression years.

In 1930 Smoot made his bid for fame and attempted to boost the domestic sugar industry by co-authoring the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of June 17, 1930, which established the highest protective rates in American tariff history. Grant was highly pleased. While the bill was still under consideration in the Senate, Smoot, concerned for its passage, asked Grant if he would pressure Utah's junior Senator, Democrat William H. King, to support the bill. Smoot wrote, "The passage of the tariff bill may be decided by one vote. Do you feel justified in asking Senator King to vote for the bill or pair off in favor of its passage?" 23

Complying with the request, Grant wired King and forwarded Smoot

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21 Ibid.
22 Merrill, pp. 399-400.
23 Ibid. p. 184.
a copy of the wire which read:

You are well aware that there is no industry in the State of Utah that is so important for the welfare of the farmers as the sugar industry. If we do not get some slight increase in the tariff judging from our experience since 1921, the industry is almost doomed to fail. I have a rule ever since I became President of the Church to make no suggestions of appointments to any of the governors, or to any congressman or senator as to how he should vote. But I cannot refrain under the existing circumstances, knowing that the sugar industry in Utah was established for no other purpose than to benefit the farmers, not with any desire for personal gain, from expressing the hope you will either see your way clear to vote for the bill or pair with some senator in favor of its passing.24

King paired against the bill, although he was a Mormon. In the 1934 election, he was re-elected, while the bill's author was defeated in 1932. Grant considered it an outrage the way sugar companies in America had been treated as far as the tariff was concerned and said:

Figuratively speaking, if the government was anxious to kill the beet sugar industry I don't think they could do it very much better than they are doing. I shall never be satisfied until I see the day that we can make all the sugar that we consume in our own country. Cane and beet sugar business ought to be protected by tariffs to that extent that we are not bringing in foreign sugar, in my judgment, but then my judgment does not amount to very much nowadays, especially since the New Deal got in full swing.25

The farmers, who Grant wanted to listen to him and elect willing men, were not happy either; but they found other acts to their liking in the New Deal administration--the administration's farm supports.

24 Ibid.

25 Grant to W. H. Hulsizer, August 8, 1939, Grant Papers.
The League, prohibition, and the protective tariffs for sugar were political issues Grant refused to hold his peace on, even after he became President; and all three had an unhappy ending for him, although he enjoyed a temporary satisfaction in the Eighteenth Amendment and the Smoot-Hawley Tariff.

The Election of 1932

Smoot was nearing his thirtieth year in the Senate and now faced a most serious challenge. If Utah went Democratic then in all likelihood he would be turned out with President Herbert Hoover and the rest of the Republican Party. Opposing Smoot was Democrat Elbert D. Thomas, a newcomer and professor of political science at the University of Utah; however, Smoot was considered by many to be unbeatable.  

The opposition did its best to defeat Smoot by undermining his following in the Church. The Democrats broadcast the rumor that Smoot was being considered for the First Presidency and for that reason Grant did not want him re-elected. The Senator's secretary found evidence of mailing lists from various Church organizations being used to disseminate the rumor.  


26 Merrill, p. 167.
James H. Anderson, Smoot's secretary, sent a wire to President Grant, who was ill and hospitalized in Chicago, informing him of the rumors, whereupon Grant authorized Smoot to quote him as follows:

I have never told any person how to vote, but by reason of persistent rumors that have reached me to the effect that I do not want Reed Smoot re-elected, I wish to say that is not true and that so far as I am concerned I shall vote for Reed Smoot's re-election.27

Actually Grant had publicly stated as early as Thanksgiving of 1931 that he wished to see Smoot re-elected.28 Nevertheless, as with other political hopes, he was disappointed with the outcome and expressed his regret later to a long-time friend, saying:

I do not think I have ever in my life been so disappointed in political matters as when the people of Utah turned down Reed Smoot by about 30,000 more votes for his opponent than they gave him, if I remember right. Victor Hugo is reported to have said, "Gratitude is a lively sense of favors to come." I think this was one of the most ungrateful things a people ever did in any state of the Union, and I am free to confess that I doubt that there is another State in the United States, notwithstanding the great political landslide, that would not have returned him to Washington.29

Professor Frank H. Jonas wrote that this vote was a demonstration of Mormon independence in defiance of President Grant's

27Ibid., p. 162.
28Ibid., p. 168.
29Grant to Heber M. Wells, November 12, 1932, Grant Papers.
attempted influence over them. However, Smoot attributed his defeat to the fact that no such demand was made.

There is no doubt that Grant wanted Smoot re-elected and allowed this opinion to become public knowledge. After reading Grant's correspondence, however, the author concurs with Milton R. Merrill's conclusion that Grant frankly voiced his opinion in behalf of Smoot's re-election but did not pursue his desires to the point of securing the Church membership's support for Smoot. One might also speculate that had not Grant been ill and bedridden he might have more actively supported Smoot.

30 Jonas, p. 276.

31 Merrill, p. 167.
CHAPTER V

THE NEW DEAL

Criticism of President Heber J. Grant and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, during the last years of Grant's administration and since, has been most severe with respect to the New Deal. The Church's conservatism has been criticized, and it has even been charged with a lack of sympathy for those in distress during the Depression. The anti-New Deal reaction of Mormon leadership has been ascribed to the "Republican predilections" of some of those in leadership positions. ¹ This chapter treats Grant's reaction solely and will attempt to determine the nature of the reaction. The study is not of the Church officially; nevertheless, as President of the Church during the New Deal, much of what he said may also apply to the Church.

The Pioneer Spirit and the New Deal

Thomas O'Dea's The Mormons characterized the conflict between the New Deal and the Mormons in this language: "The Mormon

leadership saw in the program of government controls a threat to the values of individual initiative and hard work." 2

This was the challenge. It is basic to Mormon philosophy that Church members are their own agents and are to make their own way in this life. One respected Church leader has written:

The Church teaches as a strictly scriptural doctrine, that man has inherited among the inalienable rights conferred upon him by his divine Father freedom to choose the good or evil in life, to obey or disobey the Lord's commands, as he may elect. 3

This concept of individual choice and initiative is applicable to life in all its ramifications; and when the individual Church member cannot stand alone, the Mormons labor collectively. This attitude is patently a reflection of the pioneer heritage. One writer, familiar with the Mormons during the Roosevelt years, concluded, "In brief, New Deal philosophy stands in contrast to the pioneer spirit." 4 In a private letter President Grant, the embodiment of this pioneer spirit, expressed this attitude even more strongly:

I have been ashamed and humiliated to think that many of our people are drawing support from the government, when I am sure they could get along if they had one-half or one-quarter of the determination of the early pioneers who settled Utah, northern Arizona, and southern Idaho. 5

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2Ibid., p. 173.

3Talmage, p. 52.


5Grant to Harris, October 26, 1934, Harris Papers, Box 49.
The Church Security Program

At the October, 1936, General Conference of the Church, President Grant announced the adoption and initiation of a relief program for needy Church members which was called the Church Security Plan and was placed on a permanent basis the following April. This plan was supposed to replace the evils of the dole and idleness with the attributes of independence, integrity, industry, and self-respect. Some program was necessary as was shown by the following appraisal of unemployment and relief as given by President Grant in the April, 1936, General Conference.

A survey had revealed that 88,460 had received relief. Of this number 8,213 had received aid from Church funds and the balance of 80,247 had been aided by county funds which, of course, had been supported by state and federal money. It was further stated that of the 88,460, those who were receiving relief due to unemployment numbered 13,455—but even more important were the 11,500-16,500 who were on relief who did not need it—that is, their circumstances were open to question. It was said that some of these Church members had farms which, if farmed, would keep them off relief.\(^6\) This statement was cause for alarm. The need for action was intensified by a

\(^6\)Deseret News, April 7, 1936, p. 1.
possible curtailment of federal aid. Thus, it was announced that a Church program was to be inaugurated so that the relief emergency could be met and the Church membership cared for.\(^7\) The object of the system, which would function through existing Church machinery, was outlined in these words:

A wholly voluntary system of gifts in cash or in kind, sufficient for food, fuel, clothing, and bedding to supply through the coming winter every needy and worthy Church family unable to furnish these for itself, in order that no member of the Church should suffer in these times of stress and emergency.\(^8\)

Ultimately, according to President Grant, the Church would be able to care for all its members who were on federal, state, or county relief, a number estimated at 15,000. He further stated that those who had farms should turn to them for their livelihood and not depend on the government; that those on government work projects should continue at their jobs, making sure to render an honest day's labor; and that an effort should be made to place the unemployed in private industry.\(^9\)

The principle behind the Mormon Church's desire to take care of its own, or more basically, to have them take care of themselves, is embodied in a statement made by Brigham Young and read to the assembled conference by President Grant when the Security

\(^7\)Ibid.

\(^8\)Deseret News, October 3, 1936. p. 6.

\(^9\)Ibid.
Plan was announced. Drawing from his own experience of dealing with people in hard times, Brigham Young had said:

My experience has taught me, and it has become a principle with me, that it is never any benefit to give out and out to man or woman money, food, clothing, or anything else, if they are able-bodied and can work and earn what they need, when there is anything on earth for them to do. This is my principle and I try to act upon it. To pursue a contrary course would ruin any community in the world and make them idlers. 10

President Grant, presiding over the Church also in hard times, fully believed in the wisdom of this advice.

Part of the criticism directed at the Church for its anti-New Deal attitude has been the complaint that it pretentiously claimed unqualified success in taking care of its own people. However, such boasting cannot be accurately attributed to President Grant as his natural enthusiasm did not keep him from realistically evaluating the plan's success. In a public address in September, 1937, he explained the purpose of the program and what it was intended to accomplish and added the following admission:

Now the Church is receiving world-wide publicity. This has not only been complimentary and laudatory, but to tell you the truth it has been far, far overdone. We have been given more credit than we deserve. 11

10Ibid.

Objections to the New Deal

In addition to the questions of the dole or relief and the tariff which have been treated above or in previous chapters, Grant objected to the New Deal on two points.

The first objection was the Democratic proposal to repeal prohibition. Although this was treated in an earlier chapter, reference must again be made because throughout the Roosevelt years Grant reiterated his disappointment over repeal. Hardly a General Conference went by, until foreign affairs became the dominant domestic concern and ill health restricted his attendance, that objection in some way was not expressed. Grant was usually careful not to mention the President or his party by name, but it was clearly understood that both were a source of extreme dissatisfaction. However, in the General Conference held in October, 1934, the Democratic Party was attacked by name for its repeal cry, "We want beer."12 Grant was not so guarded when mentioning Mormon co-operation in that endeavor--he thought the Latter-day Saints should have remained true to principle.13

The second principle involved in Grant's New Deal views was the virtue of solvency. Not only did he caution against debt but also warned the Saints of the follies of extravagance. He confided to one audience that business failures had left him with debts that took


thirty-two years to pay off. 14 And always in the back of his mind, if frequent reference is any indication, was the teaching of Brigham Young: "Do not run into debt, pay as you go; . . ." "I am a firm believer in this good advice," Grant would say, quoting Brigham Young, "to the individual and to the inhabitants of a city, a county, or a state, or I might add a nation." 15 This last remark was an obvious reference to the Roosevelt administration. In his private correspondence, Grant spoke plainly of his alarm at the administration's huge spending and apparent extravagance. He was harrassed with doubts for the New Deal's success.

A Threat to the Constitution

The strongest public objections to the New Deal were made in connection with the presidential election of 1936. Grant and other Church leaders were fearful and apprehensive that Roosevelt would be re-elected. The Eighteenth Amendment had been repealed, large numbers of the Church were on public relief, and there had been an unprecedented flood of social legislation, some regarded as unconstitutional. All of these factors produced a desire to see Alfred M. Landon, the Republican candidate, elected.

On the eve of the election, the Deseret News printed an

14 Deseret News, April 7, 1932, p. 1.

15 Heber J. Grant, "Second Response by President Grant at the Chemurgic Conference," Improvement Era, XXXIX (Sept., 1936), 524.
editorial which condemned President Roosevelt, picturing him as a threat to the Constitution. He was said to have made flippant remarks about the Constitution, referring to it as a document of the horse and buggy days. On the other hand, Landon's election was encouraged because he had promised to keep his sacred oath of office to defend and preserve the Constitution. 16

J. Reuben Clark, Jr., first counselor to President Clark and a Republican, was accused of having written the editorial, but Grant took full credit for the statement. 17 Roosevelt shortly gave Grant further cause for alarm after his re-election in his attempt to pack the Supreme Court. Grant, who wore his age with pride, ridiculed the attack on the supposedly incompetent old men. 18 He said later, "Speaking of the present conditions and the occupant of the White House, I was very grateful indeed this his program to pack the Supreme Court was defeated." 19 He also said he had to be careful about speaking out. "I almost wished that I were not at the head of the Church so that I could do some active work politically, . . . " 20

17 Frank H. Jonas, Western Politics, p. 278.
19 Grant to Dollie Huish, December 18, 1937, Grant Papers.
20 Ibid.
Grant's anti-New Deal attitude should have surprised no one. It is more a source of wonder that this opposition took as mild a form as it did publicly, but this was only that the cry "Church influence" might be averted. His principles were out of favor at the time, but that did not diminish his commitment to them.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The story as far as politics is concerned ends with the New Deal years. President Grant's active life was greatly curtailed by a severe stroke in early 1940, and his recovery was slow. As late as December, 1942, he was still in a state of recovery.\(^1\) After recovery and until his death in May, 1945, public appearances were few, addresses brief and political comments negligible. The nation's attention was focused on the war of which it had suddenly become a part, but public reference to it by the ailing octogenarian was restricted to lamenting the great loss of life and admonishing clean living for the Latter-day Saints under arms.

President Grant had more to say about the war in private letters. He was inclined to criticize the administration for getting the nation into war and the administration's conduct of the war.\(^2\) He had opened the Japanese Mission of the Church and had served also in Germany. But what he remembered of these countries and people in the light of the global war remained a secret.

\(^1\) Grant to Harris, December 2, 1942, Grant Papers.

\(^2\) Grant to Silas S. Smith, December 12, 1942, Grant Papers.
In contrast to the previous chapters and their reconstruction of President Grant's political interests, this final chapter is an analysis. The assertion was made in the Preface that a political biography would be valuable because Grant was an historical figure himself, an embodiment of territorial Utah in the twentieth century; that he could be better understood if this aspect of his life was known; and that an estimation of his religious devotion could be gained by an examination of his political views.

His political interests were secondary to his religious interests. Grant might have identified his philosophy of politics as being the principles of Mormonism, for his religion so permeated his life that it affected all aspects of his life; therefore, this philosophy of politics had moral rather than partisan overtones.

The following is an examination of Grant's philosophy on two points: (1) Grant's attitude on "Church influence," and (2) the moral limits he set on politics.

"Church Influence"

"Church influence," that is the Mormon Church meddling in an official capacity in Utah's political issues, has often been the indignant hue and cry since the non-Mormons in the State have been numerous enough to be a political challenge. Politically the non-Mormons were initially on the defensive because Utah was settled by
Mormons and they first controlled the territorial political machinery. Under such circumstances it was to the non-Mormon's advantage to distinguish between the Church membership and the Church itself because it was believed that the Mormons were politically assailable if they were allowed to react to issues uninfluenced by religious leaders. The nonmembers recognized the political strength of the Church if they voted as a block under the First Presidency's direction; thus, nonmembers have been prone to cry "Church influence" if one of the leaders publicly took a stand on an issue. The churchman, more often than not, was speaking out for his own religious and/or political convictions; nevertheless, these instances were usually interpreted as official action.

This simple dichotomy of Mormon-non-Mormon became more complicated after statehood with the adoption of the regular national party system. Now there were voices of both groups in the Democratic and Republican Parties. As Utah adjusted itself to settling its problems along regular party lines, the Church, representing the Mormon block, generally took a back seat. Indeed, in return for statehood, the Church pledged itself to honor the separation of church and state. The result was that Mormons also became accustomed to party politics and resented "Church influence."

Heber J. Grant was charged with exercising undue influence. However, it is interesting to note that he believed he always kept his
peace. The Deseret News' editorial of October 31, 1936, in behalf of Alfred Landon is a prime example of the Church's involvement. There were other cases involving Grant, but none seems to have fastened on the opposition's mind as that of 1936.

Although Grant did not believe in undue pressures being exerted by the Church leaders, he did want the Church membership to listen to his counsel. In a private letter he confessed:

But there is one thing for which I am very sorry, and that is their love does not extend far enough to pay any attention to my wishes politically speaking. Many of them have such a bad case of politics that they ought to have a provision attached to their singing of "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet"--provided he keeps his mouth shut politically speaking; otherwise, we don't pay any attention to what he says. 3

The source of irritation for those remarks was the widespread Church members' support for the New Deal. In addition, as he stated in the same letter, his plea for prohibition had also been rejected. 4

With genuine sorrow he wrote a friend on one occasion, "It seems to me that my opinions ought to be welcomed, but they give offense." 5 And it angered him that anyone could speak out on public issues except the President of the Church. The labor agitators had the

3 Letter of Heber J. Grant to Leo J. Muir, September 22, 1941, in Leo J. Muir Papers (J. Reuben Clark, Jr. Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah), Box 1.

4 Ibid.

5 Grant to George P. Edwards, February 9, 1938, Grant Papers.
right to talk, but not him, for:

... if a church man speaks it is church influence. I would thank the Lord if we had a lot more Church influence and could get more religion taught in our schools. What we need more than anything else is religion.\(^6\)

His belief in the need for religion is the key to his attitude. He believed that this need gave the Church the right to speak out on issues.

As far back as 1889 Apostle Grant had publicly stated his philosophy regarding the charge of interference. It was one of the few times he spoke at such length on the subject and deserves full citation here.

Many people say, "We have no objection to your religion. But it is the mixing of your civil government with your religious government that we are opposed to."

These claims are made against us because there are none of the Latter-day Saints who have arrived at manhood and have been married but who have received ... the higher priesthood. We are all members of the priesthood. And if you undertake to separate the priesthood, so called, from the people, you cast out the entire people from taking any interest whatever in politics.\(^7\)

From this quotation it is clear that Grant objected to the accusation "Church influence" because in one sense it meant that Mormons were denied the right to practice their religion or denied the right to have an interest in politics. This quotation was the basis of

\(^{6}\text{Ibid.}\)

\(^{7}\text{Deseret Weekly, July 13, 1889, p. 77.}\)
Grant's philosophy and it never changed. To these remarks he went on to state his own intentions:

While I deny emphatically that there is any mingling in the sense in which the world puts it of church and state among the Latter-day Saints, I do not deny for a moment that if I, as a member of this Church, have any power or influence which I can wield in the endeavor to get the best man to serve the people, I shall exercise it as long as I live. 8

At a later date, he termed this "power or influence" an appeal to the people:

It has been whispered around frequently, and I hear the murmur now that the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ, standing at the head and holding the priesthood, desire this or that man elected to office.

The Presidency of the Church, so far as they are concerned, allow every man, woman, and child who is old enough to vote, to vote according to his or her own conviction. But we do appeal to all men and women, realizing the responsibility resting on them to seek God our Heavenly Father to guide them politically as well as religiously. 9

Actually, Grant contradicted himself in his speeches. For instance, he would confess he thought the New Deal a failure, but add

I have not made any particular comments, especially in public because so many of our people are strong Democrats and would consider that I was trying to use Church influence. 10

This quotation shows that Grant was wary of the cry "Church influence." Thus, his silence apparently was not forebearance based

8 Ibid.

9 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Conference Report (October, 1928), p. 9.

10 Grant to Theodore Christiansen, January 19, 1935, Grant Papers.
on the principle of separation of church and state but rather from the fear of the cry of "Church influence." Furthermore, he seems to have believed more in the Church's right--his right as its President--to speak out on public issues than he did in the separation principle. He told his nephew,

My general principle of not participating in political matters has been departed from only when there was some moral issue at stake as in the case of the Prohibition Amendment, and like matters, or where it has seemed to me that the course of governmental administration was leading to the destruction of our divinely inspired political system.  

No doubt many will disagree that Grant refrained from speaking out whenever he wished; however, after studying his letters it is obvious that he refrained more than he wished to and would perhaps like to have assumed the position of political monitor for the Church. Separation of church and state was a surface commitment and second in importance to Grant's belief that Mormonism offered solutions to political problems. Ultimately, this is why Grant found it necessary to speak out when moral issues were at stake.

Several points on this subject stand out and are as follows:

(1) Grant's definition of "Church influence" would have been unrestricted partisanship; (2) The type of influence Grant had in mind was what he termed "appeal"--that is, it was appealing to the religious convictions of the Mormons; (3) This appeal was permissible because of the

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11 Grant to Grant Ivins, April 18, 1938, Grant Papers.
importance of the Mormon faith to the lives of the members, divinely inspired as it was said to be; (4) The Mormon faith should produce unanimity of opinion although choice was endorsed; and (5) Grant pictured himself exercising forebearance and honoring the separation of church and state. No doubt many will disagree with what Grant thought, but it is historically necessary to remember that what a man thinks is as important as what actually happened.

Political Morality

The second and final consideration in our analysis of Grant is the moral overtones of his politics. Here again, his yardstick of measurement was religion.

"I have never been counted as a good Democrat. I have always been an independent; I have voted for more Republican presidents since McKinley and [Theodore Roosevelt than I have Democratic presidents." Such was the evaluation of himself in 1935, and he added the very significant statement, "I try to vote for the best man."12 He went on to express his doubts about the New Deal, but added the qualification, "but I do not care to criticize seeing I have not the ability to present a better plan."13 He later did react negatively against the New Deal; nevertheless, this sentiment of moderation should be remembered.

12 Grant to Mabel Wright, January 19, 1935, Grant Papers.

13 Ibid.
What is termed here as "political morality" was Grant's conviction that Christian decency should prevail in politics. In the 1920 presidential campaign, he said:

I have never been so pained in my life as I have been during the past few months over the conditions--political, financial, and otherwise--that we find among the people. The spirit of bitterness that seems to exist in the hearts of some true, faithful, and honest Latter-day Saints, because of their difference of ideas and opinions on business matters and political matters is very painful to me.  

Although he was sometimes the object of insulting letters concerning political matters, he allowed people their opinions and desired others to follow his example.

We have on at the present time a great political campaign, and I want to say to the Saints that I hope they will not allow their political affiliations, their regard for political affairs, to cause feelings of ill will towards one another.  

President Grant believed that politics was no excuse for unseeming behavior. Perhaps it was because he cherished the right to speak out himself that he stressed the right to private opinion.

I regret exceedingly that in political controversies men seem to lack that courtesy and that respect for their opponents that I believe all Latter-day Saints ought to have. I have never yet heard a Democrat made a political speech that I felt was fair to the Republicans. Being a Democrat, I shall not say anything about what I think of the speeches of Republicans regarding Democrats. 

\[14\text{Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Conference Report (October, 1920), p. 4.}\]

\[15\text{Ibid., October, 1936, p. 13.}\]

\[16\text{Ibid. October, 1919, p. 19.}\]
His political morality was also evident in choosing men to hold office. He encouraged the Saints to vote for "humble, true, virtuous men, men worthy of the franchise of the citizens of the United States of America." He was constantly amazed how men least qualified to hold public office were elected while those best qualified were rejected.

Two additional features of political morality which Grant spoke and wrote about were the citizen's responsibility (1) to exercise his voting privilege and (2) to obey the law of the land.

Summary

From this analysis it may be seen that President Grant was an idealist. He anticipated no problems for politics in America functioning on the basis of his political morality. In some respects his idealism was within the realm of possibility. For instance, no one would argue with his teachings on voting and securing the best men for office. However, he failed to realize that the idealism of religion was one thing and man's capacity to act was another. Furthermore, he showed no understanding of the danger, for a democracy, of the uncompromising nature of totally morally-based politics. Democracy is based on compromise, and political compromise and moral

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17 Heber J. Grant, "The Upholding of Constitutional Law and Order" (Copy on file at J. Reuben Clark, Jr. Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah), February 12, 1928.
absolutism are not always compatible. The political issue Grant worked for hardest, prohibition, failed for the reason that total abstinence was unacceptable to too many. The prohibitionists were not willing to recognize this and the result was lawlessness.

Grant had the right and duty to declare himself on moral questions, which he did with zeal and conviction. But it is the author's conclusion that the traditional American concept of the separation of church and state was foreign to his thoughts. He did not fully appreciate the historical reason for such a separation in a democracy. In short, his religious convictions were too strong for this tradition—a tradition adopted out of necessity when Utah joined the Union as a State.
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THE POLITICAL THOUGHT AND ACTIVITY
OF HEBER J. GRANT
SEVENTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

An Abstract of
A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of History
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Loman Franklin Aydelotte
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ABSTRACT

Heber J. Grant reflected, both consciously and unconsciously, a Mormon agrarian background and ideology. His moral fervor and idealism was in the tradition of his father, Jedediah Morgan Grant, the leading figure of the 1856 "Mormon Reformation." Grant's belief in self-sufficiency, thrift, solvency, and laissez faire government reflected the frontier environment and his business training; however, the dominant force of his life was the principles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, especially after he was appointed an Apostle and later President of that organization. His outstanding traits were his straightforward outspokenness and his persistence which largely explain his political behavior.

The years 1882 to 1901 were Grant's most active political years with the exception of the prohibition movement which came at a later date. Although he held only two political offices--a term in the Utah Territorial Legislature and two terms as a Salt Lake City Councilman--he figured conspicuously in public affairs. In 1895 he had the opportunity, which he did not accept, of running in the first statehood election as Democratic candidate for governor of Utah. The Republican candidate for that position believed Grant would have won had he chosen to make himself available. However, Grant chose to
devote himself to his Church. He later turned down two nominations for United States Senator.

The prohibition movement in Utah from 1908 to 1917 witnessed Grant's active participation and represented his major excursion into political affairs. He stood for total abstinence as opposed to the local option laws and the unrestricted sale of liquor. Grant figured prominently in initiating the movement, remained interested in the movement during its nine year span—all though with varying degree of activity—and again was conspicuous in the triumphant conclusion for the prohibitionists. During these years he held several state posts in various temperance organizations; and the fact he held a prominent position in the Mormon Church made his prohibition stand an asset to the movement, although his position also kept him from being as active as he would have liked to have been. Because he was the most outspoken of the General Authorities, many times his opinions clashed with those of fellow Apostle, Senator Reed Smoot, a local optionist.

After Grant became President of the Church in November, 1918, the once strained relationship between him and Reed Smoot was replaced by one of co-operation as Grant became converted to Smoot's importance to the Church and to Utah; and Grant often voiced his support.

The New Deal met hostility from Grant because of the repeal
of prohibition, the liberal legislation enacted, and the careless and overly generous public relief measures which he saw as sapping the pioneer initiative from the Mormons. At this time Grant introduced the Church Welfare Program.

President Grant's political ideas were dominated by their moral overtones. Also reflected was the Mormon pioneer tradition of self-sufficiency. Grant's idea of "Church influence" was different from the views generally held, and he pictured himself a figure of forebearance. The restraint he did show was probably due in large measure to negative public reaction.

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