A Study of the Political Involvements in the Career of Joseph Smith

Edward G. Thompson


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A STUDY OF THE POLITICAL INVOLVEMENTS
IN THE CAREER OF JOSEPH SMITH

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of the
Department of Graduate Studies in
Religious Instruction, Brigham Young University

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

by

Edward G. Thompson

February 1966
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the history of the United States of America there have been various ethnic groups which have been harassed because of their beliefs. After some adjustments most of these groups have been accepted by the populace. The members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were one of the most severely persecuted of these minority groups. Wherever they went they were jeered, hated, and rebuked for their beliefs. During this time of conflict the Mormons were trying to demonstrate their loyalty to the United States government by sustaining the principles of freedom as contained in the Constitution. Many explanations have been put forth for their difficulties, but little has been written about the political factors involved.

Some of the most severe persecutions of the Mormons culminated with the violent death of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet, at Carthage, Illinois on June 27, 1844. At the time of his death he was the leader of the most powerful element in Illinois politics, mayor of the largest city in the state, the Lieutenant-General of the largest trained military unit in the United States outside of the federal army, and a candidate for the highest political office in the nation—that of the President of the United States.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem. It is the purpose of this study to examine the political elements and issues in the United States from
the latter part of 1838 to June 27, 1844, to determine their relationship to the death of Joseph Smith. This study includes an analysis of national, state and local issues and sentiment during that time, as they have a bearing upon the subject.

The primary period of study is the Illinois era of Latter-day Saint history, which includes the events that transpired from the winter of 1838-39 to June 27, 1844. A less intensive study includes events after June 1844, to determine the political situation and the consequences involved in the "martyrdom" of Joseph Smith. Personal diaries, journals, newspaper articles and books published around this period, as well as those published at later dates, were studied. The issues and problems of the Kirtland and Missouri periods were considered when they directly related to the Illinois period.

II. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This thesis is an attempt to collect, evaluate and present in an objective manner the major political issues and involvements based on the theory that the "rugged individualism" of the typical frontiersmen in contrast to the close-knit society of the Latter-day Saints was an important factor in the contention between the two groups which led to the "martyrdom" of Joseph Smith.

III. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Kingdom of God. According to the Latter-day Saints the Kingdom of God was the organization which was set up in modern times by Jesus Christ through the Prophet Joseph Smith. This system included not only an ecclesiastical organization, but social, economic and political
organizations as well. It was held that the political organization of the Kingdom of God would eventually become a separate and distinct organization from the ecclesiastical. This system would be the governmental arm in the preparation for the second coming of Christ. The Kingdom of God in all its parts would be governed and directed by the Priesthood.¹ The term Government of God was often used interchangeably with the Kingdom of God. The political portion of this Kingdom was studied in some detail to determine its relationship to the death of Joseph Smith.

The Church. The Church was considered to be the religious component of the Kingdom of God. As such it was the organization which administered the ordinances necessary for the spiritual salvation of man. These ordinances are referred to in this study as the saving ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ or the saving ordinances of the Church.

Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of Heaven as used in this thesis is that organization that Jesus Christ was expected to bring with Him when He returned the second time to the earth. It was considered to be the perfected heavenly prototype after which the Kingdom of God on earth was patterned with the necessary machinery to govern all the earth and everything connected with it.

Prophet. The term prophet as it was used to designate Joseph Smith was applied by the Latter-day Saints in the same manner as it is in the Bible. A prophet is one who communicates with God, receives God's

¹*History of the Church, V, ed. B. H. Roberts, Salt Lake City, Deseret Book Company, 1959, p. 256. Hereafter this work will be cited as DHC, with the appropriate volume and page number.*
will and delineates it to the people, testifies of Christ, and prophesies of future events.

**Saving Ordinances.** The saving ordinances of the Gospel were held to be those ordinances that were taught by Christ as being necessary for salvation. These ordinances include baptism and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

**IV. METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

In this study the standard sources of Mormon history were examined. These are the *Journal History of the Church*, located in the Latter-day Saint Church Historian's Library at Salt Lake City, Utah, the *Documentary History of the Church*, compiled and edited by B. H. Roberts, and the *Comprehensive History of the Church*, written by B. H. Roberts. The *Journal of History*, the history of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, was also examined along with personal diaries and journals of people who lived in and around Nauvoo. The *Times and Seasons*, the *Wasp* and the *Nauvoo Neighbor* were the newspapers published in Nauvoo during this time. These papers were studied and evaluated for their contribution to this study. Non-Mormon newspaper clippings were another significant source of information that registered the sentiment and feelings of those not connected with the Church and its teachings. In addition, theses and dissertations that have been written about this period were studied.

Distinctive Mormon terms and expressions are used throughout this study to preserve the view that the Mormons held of themselves as the recipients of a new revelation and as members of the restored Church of
Jesus Christ. These expressions include such statements as "the Lord
told Joseph Smith," "I inquired of the Lord and received the following,"
"Joseph Smith received a revelation," or "the Prophet Joseph Smith said."
CHAPTER II

THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL SETTING IN THE EARLY 1840'S

Middle nineteenth century America was characterized by unrest, uneasiness and a thirst for new ideas, for new ways of doing things and for news in general. All aspects of life were affected—the social, political, economical and spiritual. These included special problems of immigration, transportation, expansion and slavery. There were concepts of the "Ideal Society," the "Utopia," "the Millennial Reign," and the "Second Coming of Jesus Christ." All these and numerous other elements made the United States unique during the time of the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the propagation of the beliefs and teachings of Joseph Smith.

I. POLITICAL UNREST

First to be considered were the material and moral forces that were pulsating through the United States in this period. Statesmen and political parties did much to shape those forces. Without violence the statesmen and politicians had transferred power to a new social class of people and different sectional combinations had developed. The people had weathered the storm of nullification, and had evolved from the political anarchy of the twenties into two national parties, pledged to preserve the Union. But in spite of party efforts, social and economic forces were pulling the North and South apart. Both the North and the South were progressing, but divergently. Northern society was being transformed by the industrial revolution, cheap transportation, education,
and humanitarian and migratory movements that had little affect on the border slave states and even less affect on the lower Southern states. Southern society was readjusting itself to the cotton plantation tilled by slaves. By 1850 two distinct civilizations had evolved in the United States, different in both their material and moral ideas about life.

American legal and political thought in Joseph Smith's day was largely molded by the issue of slavery. These concepts were crystallized chiefly in the "compact" theory and the "nationalist" theory of the Constitution. The compact theory was a compact or "deal" between the States of the Union. It implied that the national government had no powers to act directly on the people except through the medium of the state governments or in those narrowly-limited areas consented to by the States in agreeing to the Constitution. The nationalists argued that the Constitution, hence the national government, derived its power, fundamentally, from the people and not from the states; that the national government had power independent of the States to act directly on the people, plus a reservoir of "implied" powers. While there was considerable legal and historical justification for the compact theory, the nationalist theory has predominated in America, largely through evolution, judicial interpretation, and the influence of the Civil War.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FRONTIER

It was not surprising that Americans were full of bounce and bluster, and were contemptuous of old-world monarchies. Even a frontier bully had some redeeming qualities, if only, as Emerson's grandfather remarked at the village reprobate's funeral, that he was "useful at
fires." The American had many unpleasant habits, particularly in connection with tobacco, and very few, if any, good manners. Respect and courtesy were seldom found in the middle-19th-century American; however, those who addressed him as an equal discovered a natural civility and spontaneous kindness that compensated somewhat for the lack of manners. Intercourse between man and man was easy and pleasant because there was no assumption of social superiority or inferiority.

Because Americans were becoming less dependent and more gregarious, they necessarily gave increasing deference to the opinion of others. Intolerance did exist, however. There was, in fact, considerable persecution of unpopular groups such as free Negroes, immigrants, abolitionists, Masons, Mormons, and Catholics.

America was unique in many ways, and in order for an individual of that day to enjoy and appreciate it he needed to understand the emerging society. Author Hugh Clough, after trying to live at Harvard like an Oxford don, wisely concluded that to enjoy America one had to live roughly and simply.

Of necessity almost every man worked in America. Many of the few who could afford to be idle returned to Europe where they swelled the chorus of complaint against democratic institutions. Nothing struck the English visitors to America more forcibly than the absence of public parks, pleasure resorts, games, and the leisurely pleasures of country walking. The Northern American had not yet learned how to employ leisure. The frontiersman's pleasures came from doing such things as hunting and fishing, while the English country boy played games such as hare and hounds, prisoner's base, and rounders. The average adult American regarded
games as a waste of time. It was interesting to note that baseball and intercollegiate rowing in America did not begin until just before the Civil War.

Yet with all these drawbacks the Northern and Western States were lands where dreams of youth often came true. The majority of men were doing what they wished to do, without restraint of class or administration. They were hardly conscious of the existence of a government. The fun of building, inventing, and creating in an atmosphere where one man's success did not mean another's failure gave American life that peculiar gusto that Walt Whitman caught in his poetry. Europeans often mistook this joyous activity for greediness—the incidental results for the object. The American delighted in this new found freedom of discovery, invention and advancement. Often times persons arriving from Europe and not understanding this new form of success thought the Americans were extremely greedy and that their only concern was "getting ahead" of their friends and neighbors.

Half of the members of the American population were engaged in realizing finally the ambition of their peasant ancestors who had futilely desired a farm of their very own, clear of rent and charges. The other half, having achieved the farm, had tired of it; and like the boy who had lost interest in his homemade radio, they had turned to other occupations or had taken up pioneering again.

Nineteenth-century America was receptive to "Utopian" ideas from home and abroad. The character of the New Englander was tending to move away from the Calvinistic, egoistic nature of man to a more tender social
conscience with sweeping programs of reform.\textsuperscript{1} The trend was from abolitionism to transcendentalism, with varied voices of social conscience mixed in to support the Utopian concepts then existent in America.

In the second quarter of the nineteenth century, America became an experimental laboratory for social reforms.\textsuperscript{2} These movements were expressed in the Shaker villages, the Owenite communities, the Fourierist phalanx and a score or more of lesser known experiments. Chronologically speaking, the New Harmony experiment was on one side of the birth of Mormonism and Brook Farm was on the other. Joseph Smith was aware that the reformist milieu was in the air throughout America and in most parts of Europe, and he felt the need to establish an ideal system. The groundwork had been laid for the "perfect society" to be established. Many of the leaders of the day were working for the ideal society and some even tried to base their ideas on Christian principles. Others held that equality was the key to the establishment of the ideal society.\textsuperscript{3}

\textbf{III. WESTWARD MOVEMENT}

The society in which the Mormons found themselves in Illinois was one of ardent and rugged individualism. It was one where a person established himself to strive diligently against the environment. Each family head had to succeed on the frontier or move to the city. Most


Americans were the sons of European political unrest which caused them, in general, to want to get away from organized government and governmental influences or anything else that might tend to take their individual freedom away from them.

The west was always open to these frontiersmen, providing they could move the Indian off the land. The west served as a "pressure-relief" area for those who felt "closed-in" by society. Sometimes these rugged westerners were actually escaping from the law as well as from the bulk of society. These individuals had a great distrust for the "foreigner." With their lack of education and lack of appreciation for the differences between peoples they would at times become hostile toward the "foreigners." Also with few exceptions, this frontiersman had little respect for, or a place in his life for, religion.

The westward movement which played a very important part in the character of Americans recovered its momentum after the depression of 1837-40. New Englanders, who a generation before had settled the interior of New York and Ohio, were pressing forward into the prairies of Indiana and Illinois. Here the tough sod taxed their strength, but they were repaid in the end with bountiful crops of grain. The shoulder-high prairie grass of the nearby areas afforded rich pasturage for cattle, and there were groves of buckeye, oak, walnut and hickory that furnished timber for buildings and wood for fuel.  

Into an individualistic type of society came the Mormons when they entered Illinois. They came as a close-knit group, wishing to

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4 Parrington, op. cit., p. 416.
establish the Kingdom of God on the earth. They would, with this union, and in justice, form an ideal society, one which would command the respect and attention of all people. Joseph Smith said on one occasion: "I intend to lay a foundation that will revolutionize the whole world." The Mormons were in Illinois to establish Zion and prepare for the millennial reign through love, union and social well-being.

IV. TRANSPORTATION

Improved transportation was the first condition of the quickening life emerging in America. Canals, roads and, later, railways took people west and connected them with a market when they got there. They increased the marketing radius of cities and factory towns and made it worthwhile to be industrious. Only the roughest and most primitive farmers cared to settle in a region where they could not send a cash crop to market.

Meanwhile, the Erie Canal, having brought the Great Lakes within reach of a metropolitan market, opened up the hitherto neglected northern regions of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. At the same time it made New York City the principal gateway to the West.

V. IMMIGRATION

Immigration became an important factor in the historical setting. Between 1830 and 1840 over half a million immigrants (of which 33 percent were Irish, 25 percent were German, and 15 percent were English) entered the United States; and in the forties another million and a half arrived,

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5 *History of the Church*, VI, ed. B. H. Roberts, Salt Lake City, Deseret Book Company, 1959, p. 365. Hereafter this work will be cited as DHC, with the appropriate volume and page numbers.
including 45 percent Irish. The other immigrants were in the same proportion as before mentioned. In 1850, the total population of the United States was 23 million. Included in this number were almost one million of Irish birth, three quarters of them living in the northern Atlantic states, and over half a million of German birth, living in the western and Atlantic states. Most of the immigrants to these areas prospered, and many sent back to Europe for their friends. However, those immigrants going to the South did not find sufficient work opportunities because of the slave trade, and immigration to this area soon dwindled.

Practically all the immigrants of the 1820-50 period came from Northern Europe. They quickly became citizens and Jacksonian Democrats, and they contributed greatly to the wealth and progress of their adopted country. Yet the immigrants of this era encountered bitter opposition, as much as Southern Europeans and Asiatrics were to receive in the late nineteenth century. Street fights between natives and foreigners were common occurrences. Catholic convents and churches and German Turnverein headquarters were sometimes attacked and destroyed. In part the antagonism was religious since practically all the Irish and many of the Germans were Roman Catholics. Also this opposition was due to emigration assisted by English and Irish authorities, who in order to relieve their taxpayers, encouraged thousands of paupers to come to the United States.  Most of

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them were paupers only in a technical sense. They wanted only an opportunity to work, but many became a public charge the moment they landed. For the most part, however, the hatred of immigrants was economic in motive. They competed with mechanics who were trying to protect their standard of living by labor unions. Natives refused to work with the newcomers, who were thus forced into manual labor, whatever their education. "No Irish need apply" was a common sign on workshops and counting-rooms, but not on army recruiting offices.8

It should be noted, however, that activity, growth, and expansion were only part of the social forces interacting in America during this era. Other forces such as the spiritual currents, the intellectual sparks and radicalism were painting their places on the scene of the Americas. Most of these forces came from Europe and later their repercussions were felt back in the "Mother Countries" from which they sprang.

VI. EDUCATION

The most tangible social gain during this period of ferment was in popular education. Since the Revolution, education had been left largely to private initiative and benevolence. Secondary academies and colleges had been founded, of which the South had more than the North.

John Morley wrote:

It was a day of ideas in every camp. The general restlessness was intense among reflecting conservatives and among reflecting liberals. A great wave of humanity, a great wave of social sentiment, poured itself among all who had the faculty of large and disinterested thinking.9

8 Ibid., p. 212.

9 William S. Jenkins, Pro-Slavery Thought in the Old South, Chapel Hill, 1935, p. 90.
The decades of the thirties and the forties were years of social unrest and intellectual ferment. The zeal for social and humanitarian reform left scarcely any phase of American life untouched.

VII. HUMANITARIANISM AND ABOLITION

The restless, prying, conscientious criticism led to a wide variety of reforms. Throughout the Northern States, as well as in Kentucky, imprisonment for debt was abolished and the rigors of prison life were softened. Whipping was outlawed in most of the states, although it was by no means stamped out. Flogging was abolished in the navy in 1850, owing largely to the influence of Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*.\(^\text{10}\)

Public and private charitable institutions multiplied. The untiring efforts of reformers like Dorothea Dix removed the insane from jails and outhouses and placed them in asylums. Samuel G. Howe, after fighting for Greek independence, returned to America with ambitious plans for the education of the blind, which were largely realized. Elihu Burritt tried to capitalize the aroused tenderness of the American people for his world peace movement, but without much success, while William Ladd projected a plan for an international court that anticipated by eighty years the Hague Tribunal.\(^\text{11}\) More popular was the brisk campaign against demon rum, undertaken by certain evangelical sects. The prohibitory laws that were passed proved premature, but their educational work modified the drinking habits of the people. Agitation for women's rights


\(^{11}\) *Parrington*, *op. cit.*, p. 375.
culminated in the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848, and a Declaration of Sentiments was there written and couched in the phraseology of the Declaration of Independence.

Of all these humanitarian and reform movements, the one that shook the Union to its foundation sought the abolition of slavery. An earlier anti-slavery movement, an offshoot of the American Revolution, won its last victory in 1807 when Congress passed an act against the slave trade. The Quakers kept up a mild and ineffectual protest against this practice while the cotton gin was creating a new vested interest in slavery. And in 1820, as has been seen, an effort to stay the westward advance of slavery was defeated by the admission of Missouri as a slave state to the Union.

VIII. SLAVERY

The majority of slaves were adequately fed and well cared for, and they were apparently happy. Competent observers reported that they performed less labor than the hired man of the Northern states. Their physical wants were better supplied than those of thousands of Northern laborers, English operatives, and Irish peasants. Their liberty was not much less than that enjoyed by the "hinds" of the North of England or the Finnish Torpare. Although brought to America by force, the incurably optimistic Negro soon became attached to the country, and devoted to the "White Folks." Slave insurrections were planned—usually by the free Negroes, but often betrayed by some faithful black. During the

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12 Morison, op. cit., p. 239.
13 Jenkins, op. cit., p. 97.
Civil War, Negro rebellions were few because of the obedient attitude to which they had become accustomed.

Occasionally, a humane owner would allow a Negro who had demonstrated his ability to think independently the opportunity to purchase his freedom out of his earnings; the laws, however, made this increasingly difficult. Slavery in America offered no legal escape to the talented or intellectual slave; it subjected a writer like Frederick Douglass or a born leader-of-men like Booker T. Washington to the caprice of a white owner who might be his inferior in every respect except status. A Virginia planter wrote in 1819 that overseers "in these days are little respected by their own intelligent Negroes, many of whom are far superior in mind, morals, and manners to those who are placed in authority over them."14 One drop of African blood made any person a Negro.

In every part of the South, a small slaveholder worked side by side with his men in the field and treated them like his own children, as indeed they sometimes were. But if the slaveholder prospered and rose to planter's estate, then working side by side became undignified.

Because of slavery and the cotton plantations, the South remained a rural and almost feudal society. The supply of slave-help kept the labor markets supplied, thus slowing down the progress in industrial and farm machinery. The large plantations kept the distinction of class levels, causing the little farmer to remain such; and the merchant did his part to keep the small farmer there through his control on spending.

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14Ibid.
All this caused plantation owners to get "richer" while the poor people (small businessmen) got "poorer."

IX. ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

Anglo-American relations had gone along on an uncertain course until during this period they came to a head. From Lake Champlain to the Rocky Mountains, the Canadian-United States boundary had been determined and fixed after the Peace of Ghent. But the peripheral areas were still hanging loose in need of definition or compromise when a fresh expansion movement of the American population threatened once more to involve the two countries in war. Although war was averted through diplomacy, there was a deeper reason why the two nations remained at peace during a period when at any moment the press might have provoked a conflict and when their expansive energies seemed certain to clash. Each country was bound to the other by economic ties the rupture of which would have been disastrous. In spite of tariff fluctuations, the United States remained Britain's best customer, taking on the average about fifteen percent of her total exports. At the same time, England was America's best customer for raw materials, especially cotton. The percentage of the American cotton crop taken by Great Britain varied from 67.3 in 1827 to 46.7 in 1847 (it was 54 percent in 1860),¹⁵ a fact which counteracted Southern hostility towards the foremost anti-slavery nation. American products supplanted only the coarser sort of British cottons and woolens in the United States, and competed very slightly with British manufacturers in South America and the Far East. At the same time the American textile

¹⁵Martin, op. cit., p. 251.
industry created a market for British machinery, the export of which had been permitted since 1825, and provided new employment for emigrating artisans. And although each country considered its own interest when framing tariff schedules, it could not ignore the other's purchasing power.

Against this confused background of commercial rivalry and financial irritation, several regrettable incidents occurred along the northern border. In the autumn of 1837, rebellion broke out in upper and lower Canada. The long constitutional controversy that preceded this outbreak bore such a marked resemblance to the history of the Thirteen Colonies that most Americans hailed the Canadian rebellion as a new American Revolution. Northern New York and Vermont, adjoining the centers of disturbance, harbored numerous smugglers and refugees from Canadian justice plus thousands of active, energetic young men who were ready for any sort of row. A network of secret societies called Hunters' Lodges, pledged to expel British dominion from Northern America, were formed along the border.

President Van Buren endeavored to maintain a strict neutrality, but on the long, unfortified boundary his means were few and feeble. The state governments would not help, as they were weak in will and not much stronger in means. Thus, for more than a year the Canadian rebel William L. Mackenzie and his followers were able to recruit money, supplies, and men in the United States, and return to loot and burn the borders and Great Lake parts of Canada.
X. OREGON TERRITORY

The Webster-Ashburton treaty left only one Anglo-American controversy unadjusted, and that, too, was a question of the northern border. Both countries claimed the whole of Oregon, while submitting to joint occupation under the treaty of 1818 until the question of sovereignty could be settled. The British Foreign Minister, Robert S. Castlereagh, in 1818 and George Canning, also British Foreign Minister, in 1824 and 1826, refused the offers of John Q. Adams to divide Oregon by latitude 49°. By the Florida Treaty of 1819, the United States inherited all the Spanish claims north of latitude 42°; and Russia, by later treaties with the United States and Great Britain, established the southern boundary of Alaska to latitude 54° 40'. But the rival pretensions of the Hudson's Bay Company and of American pioneers were to force an issue between England and the United States in the Oregon Territory.

Distance and the Indians were the principal obstacles to an American settlement of Oregon. After two centuries of colonization, the settled frontier of the United States in 1830 was only half-way across the continent. Independence, Missouri, was the furthest settled area west of the Atlantic. From this point the frontier line sloped away easterly, and the Pacific coast was fifteen hundred miles distant. Transplanted Indians occupied the area west where the prairies rise and merge into the great plains.

The Oregon Trail began to play an important part in the settling of the west by the United States. Proselyting among the Indian tribes of

16 Morison, op. cit., p. 264.
Oregon was not notably successful, but the missionaries in the Willamette Valley found more favorable circumstances. Western Oregon had a delightfully mild and equable climate. The country was a mixture of open prairie with magnificent pine woods, rich soil for tillage, and natural meadows for grazing cattle. The missionaries, in their widely-published letters, spread the notion that Oregon was an ideal place for a home while Washington Irving in his ASTORIA (1836) and ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE (1837) stressed the wilderness theme.\textsuperscript{17} Settlers began to arrive from New England, not many, but enough to give Oregon a Yankee flavor.

In 1842, "Oregon Fever" struck the frontier folk of Iowa and Missouri, and made them eager to renew their forest pioneering. Independence was the jumping-off place for the Oregon Trail. Covered wagons converged there from the East when the plains grass was fresh and green. Additional supplies were packed since hunting was a precarious source of food, and little help could be expected on the two-thousand-mile hike to the Willamette except for certain staple items which might be secured from the poorly stocked fur trading posts. Parties were organized, captains were appointed, and experienced trappers or fur traders were engaged as guides. Amid a great blowing of bugles and cracking of long whips, the caravan, perhaps a hundred wagons strong with thousands of cattle on the hoof, moved off up the west bank of the Missouri. At Fort Leavenworth, one of the bastions of the Indian frontier, the emigrants enjoyed the protection of their flag for the last time.

If the question were to be decided by extent of actual occupation,
the British claim was just and it would be difficult to discover any other basis of division. North of the Columbia near Fort Vancouver and along Puget Sound over seven hundred British subjects were living and only half a dozen American citizens. The United States, however, could well afford to wait. A decline in the Columbia Valley fur trade was making Fort Vancouver unprofitable, and the menacing attitude of the latest American immigrants threatened its security.

XI. TEXAS AND MEXICO ACQUISITIONS

Texas and Mexico were on the other side of the expansion situation. Mexico encouraged American emigration to the area which later became Texas. In 1823, the Emperor Augustine I (Iturbide) confirmed to Stephen A. Austin a concession granted to his father by the Spanish viceroy, to colonize two hundred American families in one of the most fertile regions of Texas. In 1824, the Mexican Congress offered the same empressario privilege, with sixty-six thousand acres free, to anyone who could persuade two hundred families to immigrate and 177 acres of ranch tillage to each immigrant or 4,428 acres of prairie pasture and scrub oak. Why these terms were offered is one mystery and why many did not take advantage of them is another.

Insecurity of slave property was but one of many factors pulling towards the separation of Texas from Mexico. Austin and the older American empressarios tried to be good Mexicans, but it was difficult to respect a government in constant turmoil and revolution. The American colonist admired the horsemanship of his Mexican neighbor,

\[18\] Ibid., p. 360.
adopted his saddle and trappings, and sometimes appropriated his horse. But his general attitude towards Mexico was one of humorous contempt for the people and impatience at the restrictions which the government sought to impose. As time went on, the contempt did not lessen and the irritations multiplied. There was trouble over the tariff, about representation and immigration, in addition to conflicts with the Mexican garrisons whose proud officers resented the crude wit and boisterous individualism of the settlers.

In the early thirties, the quiet law-abiding pioneers of Austin's first hegira began to be outnumbered by men of another type--swashbucklers like Sam Houston, and others who seemed to set the country in an uproar. The break came in 1835, when Santa Anna proclaimed a unified constitution for Mexico that made a clean sweep of state rights. The American settlers of Texas then established a provisional government and expelled the Mexican garrison from San Antonio de Bexar. Over the Rio Grande came Santa Anna with three thousand men. In the Alamo, the fortified mission at San Antonio, was a garrison of less than two hundred Texans. They refused to retreat or to surrender. On March 6, 1836, Santa Anna attacked the Alamo, captured it after every Texan had been killed or wounded, and then put the wounded to death.

On April 21, the tide changed with the battle of San Jacinto in which Santa Anna was defeated and captured by Generalissimo Sam Houston. Except for a fantastic raid in 1842, Mexico made no serious attempt to reconquer Texas, and in 1843 the British minister to Texas negotiated

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19 Ibid., p. 386.
a truce between the two republics.

The American, then, must be visualized as a rugged individualist who lived for the most part in a rugged, unsubdued territory. He was bent on maintaining freedom to roam when the going got rough or whenever too many people moved in around him. Many of these frontiersmen were actually escaping from society, while others were opposed to uniting into a unit of society because of the restrictions placed upon them in an organized society. It was in such an environment as this that Mormonism was established. The uniting constituents of Mormonism were repulsive to the majority of people the Saints came in contact with on the frontiers of America as will be shown in later chapters.
CHAPTER III

SETTING OF THE NATIONAL POLITICAL SCENE OF 1837-44

I. SETTING DURING 1837-1842

President Van Buren inherited from Jackson an organic party whose dominant note was equality and whose common tendency was westward expansion. Eventually the Democratic party became an instrument of slaveholders, but in the thirties it was a well-balanced alliance of North, South, and West. Shortly it became identified with state rights, but in 1837 the sturdy nationalism of Andrew Jackson was still dominant. "Old Hickory" had caught the imagination and catered to the appetite of Southern yeomen and small planters, of pioneer farmers in the Northwest, German and Irish immigrants in the Northern states, and plain country folk in New England and New York. They voted for Van Buren, the adopted heir of Jackson, in 1836 and were prepared to support him as long as he trod in Jackson's footsteps. The "Little Magician," however, could not dispel the whirlwind that Jackson's deed had sowed. Van Buren had scarcely warmed the presidential chair when the panic of 1837 broke over the country. The depression had many causes, and bad times would have come even if Jackson had not withdrawn the government's funds from the Bank of the United States and deposited them in "pet" banks throughout the country. But this move and some of his other measures accelerated the tempo of events.  

Speculation was widespread throughout the nation. The safest way to maintain the value of one's money during inflation was to get rid of it—to buy things, to invest, to speculate. In the western part of the country speculation in land was booming. Since transportation had become relatively easy and prices for agricultural products were high, people south good Western land. However, before the settlers arrived land speculators had already bought up the choice sites, selling them to others at good profits. Sometimes a parcel of land changed hands as many as ten times before it became the possession of the settler.

The government, which in 1836 had been trying to get rid of a surplus of funds, was at a loss to meet expenses in 1837. Van Buren obtained from Congress a temporary issue of treasury notes. As a permanent fiscal policy, he proposed to lock up government funds in an independent treasury at Washington and sub-treasuries in the federal mints, safe from the clutches of the money power and the "wild-cats."³

While Van Buren's Independent Treasury Bill of 1837 was a firm and statesmanlike measure; it was also hailed with delight by the "loco-foco" or radical wing of the New York Democracy. Consequently, by Van Buren going "loco-foco," the Democrats became the party of poverty and number and the Whigs the party of property and talents. As Emerson remarked, the Democrats had the best principles and the Whigs had the best men.⁴ In the North where their favorite son was Daniel Webster, the Whigs car-

³Riegel, op. cit., p. 132.

ried on the nationalist and paternal tradition of Hamilton. The manufacturing interest that wanted protection and the merchants and bankers who suffered from Jackson's financial vagaries went Whig. Earlier third-party movements, such as the Anti-Masons, the nativists, and the anti-slavery followers of J. Q. Adams were also absorbed in introducing a radical strain that contended with the conservative element. A large number of Westerners, including young Abraham Lincoln, were attracted to the Whig Party by the personality of Henry Clay and the hope of getting something done about the public lands. In the South the Whigs were the party of gentility and property, owning over two-thirds of all the slaves. Sugar planters of Louisiana who wanted protection against Cuba, big cotton planters who regretted the United States Bank and who in state politics resisted the repudiating tendencies of their poorer fellows, antique Republicans of Virginia and North Carolina who disliked Jackson's aggressive nationalism and "executive tyranny" all went Whig. It is the opinion of the author that, nowhere but America could a political party have been formed from such heterogeneous elements.

South Carolina followed Calhoun out of the Democratic party in 1832, but refused to ally with the Whigs, noting with alarm the anti-slavery and nationalist tendencies in the northern wing of the party. It was Calhoun's policy to unite the entire South under the banner of states rights and to protect slavery, while political abolitionists endeavored to unite the North under the banner of anti-slavery. Both Whigs and Democrats very wisely endeavored to keep this dangerous issue out of

\[5\text{Ibid.}, \ p. 515.\]
national politics but events were eventually to force it in.

In the opinion of the author, since 1840, successful presidential candidates often had not been prominent and experienced statesmen, but military heroes or relatively obscure men who had not had time to make enemies. Only by inadvertence, as in the case of Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt did the politicians nominate and the people elect a president of some ability.

II. CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION OF 1840

The campaign of 1840 was the jolliest presidential campaign America had ever known. Van Buren suffered from the same buncombe that he had used against Adams in 1828, while the Whigs had plenty of money to influence the numerous unemployed. Clay happily denounced the Independent Treasury as "The perilous union of the purse and sword, so justly defined by our British and Revolutionary ancestors."6 A sensible reorganization of the state militia, proposed by the Secretary of War, was compared to Persian armies. Van Buren was pictured with cologne-scented whiskers, drinking champagne out of a crystal goblet at a table loaded with costly viands and massive plates. An unlucky sneer in a Democratic newspaper to the effect that Harrison would be content with a log cabin and plenty of hard cider gave opportunity for effective contrast. It became the log-cabin, hard-cider campaign.7


The election began in Ohio and Pennsylvania on October 30 and ended in North Carolina on November 12. The result was close. Harrison had 1,275,016 votes against Van Buren's 1,129,102 and the Abolitionist James G. Birney's 7,069. In Maine, Old Tippecanoe won by only 411 votes, and in Pennsylvania by 349 out of a total of 287,693. But the distribution of the votes was such that Harrison received two hundred and thirty-four electoral votes against Van Buren's sixty.\(^8\)

The Democrats wailed: "The standard-bearer of the Federalist and Abolition party has been elected, if the process by which this has been brought about may be called an election."\(^9\) But for the Whigs it was a day to celebrate. "The people are free again," their papers wrote. "Our republican institutions are redeemed from the grasp of tyrants. Let the people . . . rejoice."\(^10\)

The neutral Philadelphia Public Ledger was more level-headed in summing up the election:

For two years past, the most ordinary operations of business have been neglected and President making has become every citizen's chief concern. The result being uncertain, some have been afraid to engage in new enterprises, others have retired from business, others have not dared to prosecute their business with the old vigor. Millions of dollars will now change hands on election bets; millions of days have been taken from useful labor to listen to stump orators, and millions more to build log cabins, erect hickory poles, and march in ridiculous, degrading, mob-creating processions; millions of dollars have been wasted in soul-and-body-destroying intemperance, in paying demagogues for preaching treason and bribing knaves to commit perjury and cast fraudulent votes. However high the hopes inspired by the election of General Harrison, they will

\(^8\)Ibid., p. 73.
\(^9\)Morison, op. cit., p. 556.
\(^10\)Ibid.
prove to be delusive. A national bank cannot be created; the sub-
treasury cannot be repealed; the monetary expansion and speculation
which the hopes of these measures will create will be quickly followed
by contradiction, by ruin, and the prostration of the speculators.\(^\text{11}\)

When inauguration day came, the President-elect rode to the Capitol
on a white charger, escorted by many of his friends, and on the eastern
portico he took the oath and delivered his address, which was full of
allusions to Roman history and proconsuls.\(^\text{12}\) One month later he was
dead. A cold developed into pneumonia, and that was the end of Old
Tippecanoe. He was succeeded by John Tyler, the first Vice-President in
our history to become President by succession.

III. NATIONAL POLITICAL PICTURE BETWEEN 1840-1844

It was soon demonstrated that desire for office was the only binding
force in the Whig party. (Henry Clay expected to be mayor of the White
House as well as leader of the Senate, but the new President was an
obstinate man of commonplace mind and narrow views.) Clay, like Hamilton,
wished to integrate the Federal Government with various influential forces
by catering to substantial money interests, and his immediate ambition
was to charter a new Bank of the United States. Tyler believed it his
mission to assert Virginian state-rights "principles of 1798" and to strip
the Federal Government of its "usurped" power, but he lacked both the
personal magnetism and the saving common-sense of Jefferson.\(^\text{13}\)

Tyler signed the "log cabin" bill which made permanent in public

\(^{11}\text{Ibid.}\)
\(^{12}\text{Gunderson, op. cit., p. 110.}\)
\(^{13}\text{Lorant, op. cit., p. 189.}\)
land policy the pre-emption principle of the Act of 1830. Any American not already an owner of 320 acres or more could stake out 160 acres in public domain, and pay for it later at the rate of $1.25 an acre. This Pre-emption Act of 1841 was probably the most important agrarian measure ever passed by Congress. 14 It was a clear-cut frontier victory.

In other respects, President Tyler fulfilled Whig expectations. He took over Harrison's cabinet intact and carried through the political purge of the civil service that Harrison had begun. He accepted an upward revision of the tariff as a necessary measure for government revenue. But he vetoed all bills for internal improvements and harbor works, and he refused to accept any fiscal device that bore the remotest resemblance to the Bank of United States of detestable memory. Clay's bill for a new bank was returned with the President's veto, as was a second bill especially drafted to meet his constitutional scruples. 15 From that moment there was open warfare between Tyler and Clay. Four days later the cabinet resigned--except Webster, who wished to appear independent of Clay--and the President was read out of the Whig party.

Here was Calhoun's chance to count in the sectional balance of power. For three years (1841-3), while Tyler attempted to form a party with a corporal's guard of faithful Whigs, Calhoun played a waiting game, repressing a secession movement among his hot-headed followers in South Carolina, aspiring to obtain the Democratic nomination for the Presidency in 1844. Webster left the cabinet in 1843, and in March 1844 Calhoun

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14 Ibid., p. 222.
15 Morison, op. cit., p. 572.
became Tyler's Secretary of State.  

The new combination was revolutionary in American politics. It meant that Tyler had gone over to the Democrats, and that Calhoun returned to them. Calhoun's alleged purpose was to "reform" the Democratic party on the basis of state rights and thereby force upon it the formula which he believed to be necessary to preserve the Union. But this state-rights formula was a mere theoretic cover for his main purpose, to perpetuate slavery where it existed and extend it into regions where it did not exist. Calhoun tipped the internal balance of the Democratic party very definitely southward. The loss of Tyler inclined the internal balance of the Whig party slightly, but no less definitely, northward. The important question of which side the West would take was decided when the Democrats nominated James K. Polk for the presidency in 1844 on a platform of westward expansion. It was even more significant that on this same platform the Democrats neglected to reaffirm their faith, as had been their usual action, in the principles of the Declaration of Independence.

It was not long before the clear-cut division between the Democrats, as the party of poverty and numbers and the Whigs, as the party of property and talents, became blurred once again. Only ten years more and the main division between them would be sectional—and the Civil War would then be unavoidable.

With these political uncertainties Joseph Smith put forth his claim to the presidential chair in the 1844 election. The way the politics of the nation had been progressing and with the concept of government that

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16 Ibid., p. 575.
the Mormon Prophet envisioned, it seemed the ideal time to initiate the concept of a united government where union was the goal and not the customary individualism heretofore so manifest.
CHAPTER IV

ILLINOIS IN 1838-39

When the Mormons crossed the Mississippi River to settle in Illinois, the state could still be considered a pioneer country even though it had been a state for twenty years. Its development had been slow. Iowa, to the west of it, was a territory, and only recently organized as such.

In 1840 the population of the whole state was only 467,183; in Hancock County, where the Mormons settled, there were only 9,946 inhabitants. Springfield, the new capital, had no paved streets and few sidewalks and the city charter of Chicago was but two years old. The trapper and fur-trader were disappearing, and the farmers had not put many acres of former trapping grounds under cultivation. The facilities for travel and communication were rudimentary.

Thomas Gregg, publisher of the Warsaw Signal, points out in his History of Hancock County, that most of the early inhabitants of that, as well as the other river counties of Illinois, were "pioneers" and "setlers." "Out of the sixty or seventy men officially recorded as early residents of the county, only one could be found there in 1888. The others tarried for a while, then pushed on westward or were driven on by the forces of law and civilization."\(^2\)

\(^1\) Sixth Census of the United States, Washington D. C., 1841, p. 86. Quincy Whig, January 16, 1841. A local newspaper stated that Hancock County's population was 10,025, while Adams County had 16,023 and McDonough County only 5,358.

When the Saints arrived in Hancock County, there were no established newspapers. Carthage, the county seat, had a population of less than three hundred. Warsaw, the metropolis of the county, had perhaps a few more than three hundred. Quincy was not much larger than Warsaw. On the Iowa side, Keokuk and Fort Madison were mere hamlets. The real metropolis of the region, in its own estimation at least, was Burlington, about thirty miles up the river and at the time the territorial capital of Iowa. The editor of the Territorial Gazette which was published at Burlington on March 1840, proudly declared: "Burlington is the largest, wealthiest, most business-doing and most fashionable city on or in the neighborhood of the upper Mississippi. We have three or four churches, a theater and a dancing school in full blast."\(^3\)

Young as it was, Illinois had had some severe financial experiences. This financial trouble "suggested either gross misuse of public funds or lack of business knowledge on the part of high officials of government."\(^4\) A fourteen million dollar debt had been contracted for state improvements, but not a single railroad or canal had been completed. "The people," said Ford, "looked one way and another with surprise, and were astonished at their own folly."\(^5\) The payment of interest on the state debt ($30,000 per year) ceased after July 1841, and "in a short time

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\(^3\)Territorial Gazette, March 4, 1840.


Illinois became a stench in the nostrils of the civilized world." "The impossibility of selling kept us from losing population;" wrote Ford, "the fear of and disgrace of high taxes, prevented us from gaining materially." The State Bank and the Shawneetown Bank failed in 1842. When Thomas Ford became Governor in that year, he estimated that the good money in the hands of the people did not exceed one year's interest on the public debt. The bonds of the state were quoted at fourteen cents on the dollar. Thus there were no funds available to complete the public works that had been started, or to build the new State House in Springfield. The potential tax base and revenue income from the Mormons settling in Illinois was a very important reason for the friendly welcome extended to the Saints.

Along with her economic problems, the State of Illinois was undergoing an era of legal and social disorders. Such treatment as later befell the Mormons was not a new thing for Illincisians. The state was experiencing a great amount of lawlessness that could scarcely be appreciated now. This part of the country was farther east than Independence, Missouri and presumably nearer civilization, but it was actually not much different than the Missouri Frontier. It was in 1847 that the Reverend Elijah Lovejoy was killed at Alton while maintaining his right to publish an abolition newspaper. The Mississippi River, from the lead mines of Galena to the fur markets of St. Louis, was overrun with thieves, gamblers, counterfeeters, moonshiners, bootleggers, confidence men, cut-throats and fugitives from justice. Around the mouth of nearly

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6Ibid., p. 224.
every river emptying into the "Father of Waters" were settlements of outlaws living in brushwood shacks or colonies of "river rats" who made their homes on shanty boats. Law enforcement agencies had been so powerless to deal with the ravages of outlaw bands that citizens more than once had taken the law into their own hands. "Regulators" or vigilante groups had been formed in Illinois as they had in other sections of the lawless western states. These organizations dealt with the lawbreakers in a crude frontier style. Such vigilante organizations, said Governor Ford, "seeing the impossibility of executing the laws in the ordinary way . . . winked at and encouraged the proceedings of the regulators."7

There was a lack of sufficient jail facilities and this led to different ways of dealing with lawbreakers. The public whipping post was one method to which officials resorted. "Samuel Willard, in his personal reminiscences of this period, described a punishment of thirty lashes received by a man for horse stealing, while public hangings were often carried out in the crudest manner."8

Just to the north of Quincy, in Hancock County, was a vast expanse of unsettled territory known as "the Military Tract." It had been set aside to provide free homesteads for veterans of the War of 1812. As yet, there had been no rush of settlers, but many ex-soldiers had established claims, only to turn around and sell quit-claims on their homesteads to

7Ibid., p. 233.

speculators.

Hundreds of thousands of acres in Illinois and Iowa thus found their way into the hands of speculators. Across the river in Iowa was a similar area known as "the Half-Breed Tract" reserved for homesteads of the half-white descendants of squaws of the Sacs and Fox tribe. Several thousand acres of this land around the mouth of the Des Moines River and an equally large parcel on the Illinois side, opposite the mouth, had been acquired by a syndicate of New York and Connecticut speculators. In the assembly of the property, they were represented by Dr. Isaac Galland, a picturesque adventurer who seemed to be a good manager and also adept at making business deals.

Before the year 1840, mobs were rife in the northern part of the state. The people there had settled on land without title to it, since this was public land of the United States which had been neither surveyed nor placed on the market. These people had made valuable improvements on the land by building mills, opening farms and making villages with populations of six to eight hundred inhabitants. By a conventional law of each neighborhood, the settlers were all pledged to protect each other. There were men who disregarded these conventional arrangements and had little regard for public opinion or abstract right and thus their consciences did not restrain them from "jumping" a neighbor's claim. It soon became evident that actual force was the only protection against the usurpation of property. Although most of the settlers were from the eastern states (from the purported land of steady habits where mobs were said to be hated and denounced), seeing themselves subject to the depredations of the dishonorable and unscrupulous they resolved to pro-
tect themselves with force. There were mobs and riots in every county arising from the above mentioned reasons. Governor Ford observed:

It was curious to witness this change of character with the change of position, in emerging from a government of strict law to one of comparative anarchy. The readiness with which our puritan population from the East adopted the mobocratic spirit, is evidence that men are the same everywhere under the same circumstances.9

I. MORMON ACCEPTANCE IN ILLINOIS

The friendly greeting the Mormons received in Illinois was motivated by both political and business reasons. In those days party feeling ran very high throughout the country. After great excitement the House of Representatives was able to choose a Whig Speaker in December, 1839. At the same time the Whig National Convention at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, nominated General W. H. Harrison for President. Thus the expulsion from Missouri occurred on the eve of one of our most exciting presidential campaigns. The Illinois politicians were quick to appraise the value of the voting strength of the immigrants. As a residence of six months in the state gave a man the right to vote, the Mormon vote would count in the upcoming presidential election.10 The political parties of this area were almost in balance as evidenced in the Illinois gubernatorial election of 1838, where Thomas Carlin, Democrat, led his Whig opponent, Cyrus Edwards, in Hancock County by a vote of 635 to 436.11

9Ford, op. cit., p. 246.
The Democrats were in control in Adams County and the adjoining counties of Hancock, McDonough, and Schuyler, and throughout the entire state, but the Whigs were gaining in numbers and in the quality of their leadership. If several thousand new settlers could be brought into the vicinity of Quincy and made friendly to the Democratic cause, the gains of the Whigs would be offset.

The Democrats of Quincy, inspired by Governor Carlin (a former resident of Quincy) and Stephen A. Douglas, took the lead in the relief movement and appointed a committee to cooperate with the Church officials in their settling in Illinois. The Quorum of Twelve appointed a committee to survey the adjacent country and recommend possible gathering places for the Saints.

The Saints had hardly arrived at Quincy before Dr. Isaac Galland began to urge them to look over his property. The Eastern syndicate's lands in Illinois (of which Dr. Galland was a representative) included a tract on which the tiny settlement called "Venice" had grown up around the headquarters of an Indian agent. The syndicate changed the name to "Commerce" to make it more alluring to potential investors and laid out a suburb adjoining it which they called "Commerce City." These were two "Paper Towns" among the hundreds that were platted throughout the Middle West during the boom that preceded the panic of 1837.

In view of the reputation which the community was to acquire, it might seem that the original name of Venice had something of a prophetic significance, for within a few years Nauvoo, its successor, was to be known as "The City of Venus" by many of the surrounding communities.

While the Democrats had the jump on the Whigs in bidding for the
friendship of the Latter-day Saints, the Whigs were not idle. Two men of power in the Whig Party, in the Legislature and in the party councils, were O. H. Browning of Quincy and Abraham Lincoln of Springfield. There was a great bond of friendship between these two men, and Mrs. Browning was Lincoln's confidante and advisor in his affairs of the heart which proved so troublesome for him at that time. A year before, Lincoln had written her a lengthy letter from Springfield outpouring his humiliation over an unfortunate love affair.12

Within a year the newly-arrived Saints had demonstrated their influence in state and local politics. Thus, in February, 1839, the Democratic Association of Quincy at a public meeting in the courthouse, received a report from the committee previously appointed. This committee adopted resolutions condemning the treatment of the Mormons by the people and officers of Missouri. A broadside had the following notice for all those who would attend a public meeting, indicating that a resolution was to be passed,

for the purpose of devising ways and means for the permanent relief of the distress existing among the strangers who had lately been driven from Missouri, known as the 'Latter Day Saints'; and for affording them immediate aid, as their wants are pressing, a collection will be taken up at the close of the meeting for that purpose.13

The Quincy Argus declared that because of this treatment, Missouri was "now so fallen that we could wish her star stricken out from the


13 Broadside in Chicago Historical Society Library, dated February 28, 1839. Also referred to in Joseph Smith, History of the Church, III, p. 263.
bright constellation of the Union."\(^{14}\)

Still another reason for the friendly reception given to the Mormons by the citizens of Illinois was that the people around Quincy had been for some time on rather strained relations with their Missouri neighbors across the river. The lack of cordiality could be traced to the charges made by the slave-holders of Missouri that runaway slaves, once on the Quincy side, were not only harbored by the citizens but were helped on their way to freedom in Canada via the "Underground Railroad."\(^{15}\)

As a result anything but amicable relations had existed between large elements within the two states. It was therefore appropriate to regard the feeling of friendliness and courtesy extended the Mormons by the Illinoisians as a direct insult to the people of Missouri.

During this same period, the rivals had adopted nicknames for each other. The Illinoisians traveled up the Mississippi River in steamboats in the spring season, worked in the lead mines during warm weather, and then returned down the river again to their homes in the fall season, thus establishing, as was supposed, a similitude between their migratory habits and those of the fishy school called "Suckers." Consequently this name was given to the Illinoisians and it stuck. The Illinoisians, by way of retaliation, called the Missourians "Pukes." It was observed that the lower lead mines in Missouri had sent up to the Galena country whole hoards of uncouth ruffians, from which it was inferred that Missouri had

\(^{14}\) Quincy Argus, February 28, 1839.

\(^{15}\) Inez Davis, Story of the Church, Independence, Mo., Zion's Press, 1943, p. 287. Quincy was supposed to have been a "station" of the famous "Underground Railroad."
taken a "Puke," and had vomitted forth to the upper lead mines, all regularly called "Pukes." By the names "Suckers" and "Pukes" the Illionisians and Missourians were likely to be called amongst the vulgar forever. 16

Sympathy for the Mormons because of the persecution must also be considered a reason for the excellent reception of the newcomers. Governor Ford stated later that the citizens of Illinois at the time were "justly distinguished for feelings and principles of the most liberal and enlightened toleration in matters of religion." 17 Governor Lucas of the Iowa Territory in 1839, replying to a query about the reception the Mormons would receive in his domain, said: "Their religious opinions I consider have nothing to do with our political transactions. They are citizens of the United States, and are entitled to the same political rights and legal protection that other citizens are entitled to." 18 At this same time, Governor Lucas gave to Elder Sidney Rigdon letters of introduction to President Martin Van Buren and Governor Shannon of Ohio.

The Mormons having been driven from New York, Ohio, and Missouri, now hoped to be allowed to establish a solid, close-knit society that could be held up as an example to the world in the proper methods of governing a people. They had previously tried to establish this "ideal" society in Ohio and Missouri, but the rugged individualists of those areas could not see the advantages of the tightly-knit group and thus persecuted

17 Ibid., p. 261.
18 Linn, op. cit., p. 221.
them and caused their removal before the Mormons had a real opportunity to get established their well functioning "Utopia." These two elements conflicted later in Illinois thus causing the Mormons to leave the United States in search of a location where they could set-up the "Ideal Society" of God.
CHAPTER V

PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF JOSEPH SMITH'S THOUGHT

This chapter is divided into four main divisions. They include (1) The Setting and Idea of the Kingdom of God, (2) The Spiritual Basis of the Kingdom of God, (3) The Theory of the Social and Economic Order in the Kingdom of God, and (4) The Concept of the Government of God.

I. THE SETTING AND IDEA OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

As Joseph Smith taught, Mormonism was a complete way of life. It was not just religious in nature, but in addition sought to define correct principles in the socio-economic and political spheres of society. This ideal system was expected to be sufficient within itself to take care of all the needs of its members.

The Church, as an integral part of the total system, was organized on April 6, 1830, in Fayette, New York. From that religious beginning the other aspects of the society began to develop as they were more completely understood by Joseph Smith and as the conditions were adequate for the expansion of the more complete organization.

Having established the religious foundation of the system, the Prophet next commenced to develop the economic law with the establishment of the Law of Consecration and Stewardship in Ohio and Missouri. In addition, the Church began to function in the educational, recreational and cultural spheres of society.

Finally on March 11, 1844, in preparation for the westward movement of the Saints, Joseph Smith commenced to organize the Government of
It should be remembered that this was but the nucleus of the system and was only part of the whole ideal concept proclaimed by the Saints. This political nucleus was called a "Special Council," the "General Council," and the "Council of Fifty." The basic authority for the Kingdom of God was centered in the Holy Priesthood, but the directional control of the political aspects of the Kingdom was vested in the General Council.

The political significance of the organization of the Council of Fifty was interestingly suggested in a letter dated May 3, 1844, from Brigham Young to Rueben Hedlock, President of the European Mission. Said he: "The Kingdom is organized; and, although as yet no bigger than a grain of mustard seed, the little plant is in a flourishing condition, and our prospects brighter than ever." Brigham Young discoursed on these initial developments throughout his leadership of the Church. Earlier he told the Saints that "Joseph Smith had laid the foundation of the Kingdom of God in the last days; others will rear the superstructure." It was upon Brigham Young, first as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and then as President of the Church, that the primary responsibilities of "rearing the superstructure" fell.

Joseph Smith held that the Kingdom of God was the Kingdom predicted

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1Hyrum L. Andrus, Joseph Smith and World Government, Salt Lake City, Deseret Book Company, 1958, p. 2 ff. For a review of these concepts, see this entire publication.


3Brigham Young, et. al., Journal of Discourses (26 vols.; Liverpool: F. D. Richards, et. al., 1854-1884) IX, p. 364. Hereafter cited J.D.
by the Old Testament Prophet Daniel. It was the stone cut out of the mountain without hands that was expected to break into pieces all other kingdoms and stand forever. Daniel was an important political figure, as well as a great prophet. In certain divine manifestations, he was told of the future political systems that would be established in the world. Of particular note are chapters two and seven of Daniel's writings. In chapter two he was shown the political systems that would arise in the future, as they were represented in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel saw "the Babylonian, the Medeo-Persian, the Greco-Macedonian, the Roman Empire (that divided as the body divided downward into the two divisions, one at Rome and the other at Constantinople) and, finally, the modern national-state system."  

It was held that, as the Kingdom (being religious, social, and economical as well as political) extended itself to fill the whole earth, the necessary temporal organization would be made ready for the Eternal King—Jesus Christ. Thus, when He came with the Kingdom of Heaven, the two kingdoms would be joined. Plenary power would then be exercised by Him and the Kingdom of God would assume sovereignty over all the kingdoms of the world. This aspiration for the Kingdom was clearly illustrated in Section 65 of the Doctrine and Covenants, which for clarity is quoted in full.

Harken, and lo, a voice as of one sent down from on high, who

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4Daniel 2.

5Hyrum L. Andrus, "The True Design and Order of World Government," an address given to the Young Americans for Freedom, at Brigham Young University, March 11, 1965, p. 5.
is mighty and powerful, whose going forth is unto the ends of the earth, yea, whose voice is unto men—Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth.

Yea, a voice crying—Prepare ye the way of the Lord, prepare ye the supper of the Lamb, make ready for the Bridegroom.

Pray unto the Lord, call upon his holy name, make known his wonderful works among the people.

Call upon the Lord, that his kingdom may go forth upon the earth, that the inhabitants thereof may receive it, and be prepared for the days to come, in which the Son of Man shall come down in heaven, clothed in the brightness of his glory, to meet the kingdom of God which is set up on the earth.

Whencefore, may the kingdom of God go forth, that the kingdom of heaven may come, that thou, 0 God, mayest be glorified in heaven so on earth, that thine enemies may be subdued; for thine is the honor, power and glory, forever and ever. Amen.6

The followers of Joseph Smith believed that the national-state system reached the point spoken of by Daniel during the 1830's and 1840's, which time coincided with the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God by Joseph Smith. But the Kingdom was not expected to develop its political character to fruition until the great council at Adam-onidi-Ahman was held. At that time, Christ would be officially accepted by the Saints as the literal and actual head of all political authority in the Kingdom on earth. This fact was made clear by Joseph Smith himself when he said:

Daniel in his seventh chapter speaks of the Ancient of Days; he means the oldest man, our Father Adam, Michael, he will call his children together and hold a council with them to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man. He (Adam) is the father of the human family, and presides over the spirits of all men, and all that have had the keys must stand before him in this grand council. This may take place before some of us leave this stage of action.

6Doctrine and Covenants, Salt Lake City, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1954, Section 65, p. 107.
The Son of Man stands before him, and there is given him glory and dominion. Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ, that which was delivered to him as holding the keys of the universe, but retains his standing as head of the human family.\footnote{\textit{D.H.C.}, 3:386-387, (Italics by the author).}

Thus Daniel's interpretation of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar had Church-wide acceptance as prophecy concerning the Kingdom of God which would fill the whole earth. In the words of Daniel, it would be a "kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, . . . but it shall break to pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."\footnote{\textit{Daniel}, Chapter 2, verse 44.}

The second and seventh chapters of Daniel were used by Parley P. Pratt, along with the Revelation of John, in the text of a letter to Queen Victoria of England. "Know assuredly," he wrote, "that the world in which we live is on the eve of a REVOLUTION. . . both religiously and politically--temporally and spiritually; one on which the fate of all nations is suspended, and upon which the future destiny of all the affairs of earth is made to depend."\footnote{Parley P. Pratt, \textit{To Her Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria}, Manchester: Parley P. Pratt, 1841, p. 1. See also \textit{Times and Seasons}, III, 592.} He warned the "Sovereign and people" of England to repent and turn to the Lord, stating that as the elements of clay and iron would not mix, neither would there be unity of independent kingdoms of the world. Said he: "The kingdoms of THIS WORLD SHALL BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF OUR GOD AND HIS CHRIST."\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 2.}

A second characteristic of the kingdom was that it was to be the government of God on the earth, and as such it would eventually absorb all
other governments. "TO ALL THE KINGS OF THE WORLD, TO THE PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: TO THE GOVERNORS OF THE SEVERAL STATES,
AND TO THE RULERS AND PEOPLE OF ALL NATIONS," began the momentous
"Proclamation" of the Twelve Apostles of the Church issued on April 6,
1845. This pamphlet boldly proclaimed: "The kingdom of God has come,
as has been predicted by ancient prophets, and prayed for in all ages;
even that kingdom which shall fill the whole earth, and shall stand
forever."\textsuperscript{11}

The Proclamation earnestly announced that God had once again estab-
lished the High Priesthood or Apostleship which "holds the keys of the
kingdom of God, with power . . . to administer in all things pertaining
to the ordinances, organization, government, and direction of the kingdom
of God." It further claimed that Christ's "coming is near at hand; and
not many years hence, the nations and their kings shall see him coming in
the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."\textsuperscript{12}

Even though it was announced that the Kingdom of God had come, the
Apostles recognized that it was at that moment only a kingdom in embryo.
The people were commanded to repent, to become members and citizens of
the Kingdom, and to devote their spiritual and temporal resources to its
development. Warning the people of the world that a position of neutral-
ity could not be taken, for they would either be for or against the
Kingdom, the proclamation invited them to aid in "the greatest of all

\textsuperscript{11} Wilford Woodruff, PROCLAMATION OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE
CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS, Liverpool, 1845, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 2.
revolutions."\(^{13}\)

It was held that two centers of empire would be developed during the period of preparation before the advent of Christ at the beginning of the millennial period: one at Jerusalem and one at the city of Zion in the Americas. It was predicted that nations would oppose the rise of Jerusalem, that armies would go against her, but she would be defended by the Lord Himself so that a Jewish victory would result. "Jerusalem then becomes the seat of empire," and declared the proclamation, "the great centre and capital of the old world."\(^{14}\)

Zion, at the same time, would be arising as the "seat of government for the whole continent of North and South America..."\(^{15}\) Utopian hopes of brotherhood, freedom, unity and peace were predicted by the proclamation, when the Lord would be the King and Sovereign over both seats of government, and "wars shall cease and peace prevail for a thousand years."\(^{16}\)

While verbs which bespeak violence were used at times to indicate the triumphant establishment of the Kingdom of God, Church leaders wanted it clearly understood that the Kingdom would be established by the word and not the sword. "We would here remark," editorialized Erastus Snow and Benjamin Winchester in the Gospel Reflector, "that it is not our intention to be understood that this destruction is to be

\(^{13}\)Ibid., p. 5.
\(^{14}\)Ibid., p. 7.
\(^{15}\)Ibid., p. 9.
\(^{16}\)Ibid., p. 10.
accomplished by physical force of the people of God, but by the preaching of the gospel, and the judgments and power of God."¹⁷ Joseph Smith drew a contrast between the kingdoms of the world and the Kingdom of God when he stated that each of the great states of the past "was raised to dignity amidst the clash of arms and the din of war." "The designs of God, on the other hand," he indicated; "have been to promote the universal good of the universal world; to establish peace and good will among men; to promote the principles of eternal truth; . . . to make the nations of the earth dwell in peace, and to bring about the millennial glory."¹⁸

The Saints realized, however, that there would be war and carnage during the growth and development of the Kingdom, but the Saints would not initiate it. Because they would not accept the Kingdom, Brigham Young concluded: "The sinner will slay the sinner, the wicked will fall upon the wicked, until there is an utter overthrow and consumption upon the face of the whole earth, until God reigns, whose right it is."¹⁹ Christ and the Jews would defensively take up the sword at Jerusalem, but the world-wide revolution would be brought about by conversion, not conquest. This was stated by Brigham Young when he said:

The kingdom of God in the latter days must triumph upon the earth, subdue every species of sin, and destroy every source of sorrow to which down-trodden humanity has been subject. The work of making the kingdoms of the world the kingdom of God and his Christ has commenced . . .

¹⁷Erastus Snow and Benjamin Winchester, Gospel Reflector, reprinted in the Times and Seasons, III, 612. (Italics by the author.)
¹⁸Ibid., III, p. 855.
¹⁹J.D., II, p. 190.
The world will be revolutionized by the preaching of the Gospel and the power of the Priesthood, and this work we are called to do. In its progress every foolish and unprofitable custom, every unjust and oppressive law, and whatever else that is oppressive to man, and that would impede his onward progress to the perfection of the Holy Ones in eternity, will be removed until everlasting righteousness prevails over the whole earth.  

The Kingdom would be established with divine sanction and not emphasize coercion and violence as basic aspects of its nature. The political entities of man conversely come to power by war and force as demonstrated in the following:

When Christ was arraigned before Pilate to be tried for his life, he said to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." Connect this saying with "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God," and we can understand how the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, because it is established in peace, unlike all worldly kingdoms which are established in war. The motto of his kingdom is "Peace on earth and good will towards men," and hence not after the order of worldly kingdoms.

This theocratic government, as understood by Joseph Smith and many of his followers, was to be a perfect organization and one that would attract the leaders from all over the world to see how it functioned and, in short, to take their instructions from it. This thought was expressed by Brigham Young when he said, "There is a nucleus of a government, formed since that of the United States, which is perfect in its nature. It is perfect, having emanated from a Being who is perfect."  

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20 J.D., Brigham Young, IX, p. 309.
21 Ibid., p. 309, 310.
22 J.D., VII, p. 142.
II. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL BASIS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The Kingdom of God was to "grow out of the Church and be a separate organization." Brigham Young wanted it clearly understood that there was a significant distinction between the Church and the Kingdom, as suggested in the following:

As was observed by Brother Pratt, that Kingdom is actually organized, and the inhabitants of the earth do not know it. All right; it is organized preparatory to taking effect in the due time of the Lord, and in the manner that shall please him. As observed by one of the speakers this morning, that Kingdom grows out of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but it is not the Church, for a man may be a legislator in that body which will issue laws to sustain the inhabitants of the earth in their individual rights, and still not belong to the Church of Jesus Christ at all.

Thus it was necessary first to organize the Church and develop its socio-economic program, and then the organization of the Kingdom would follow. The principles and ordinances of the Gospel would first be taught. John Taylor said: "Before there could be a Kingdom of God, there must be a Church of God, and hence the first principles of the gospel were needed to be preached to all nations, as they were formerly when the Lord Jesus Christ and others made their appearance on the earth."

There were, according to the philosophy of Joseph Smith, four essential items that would have to be present in order to establish the Kingdom of God as a functioning reality. These were, (1) the acknowledgment of the "Spirit of revelation," (2) the influence and regenerating power of the Holy Ghost, (3) the love of God by which free and open union

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24 J.D., II, p. 310, See also XVII p. 156. (Italics by the author)
25 J.D., XVIII, p. 137.
was made possible, and (4) the development of the society of Zion to be an "Ensign" unto the world, with magnetic powers sufficient to attract the people of the world to its law.

The first three of these essentials were emphasized in a talk given by John Taylor, when he explained that the Church must first be established with its saving ordinances. Said he:

And why so? Because of the impossibility of introducing the law of God among a people who would not be subject to and be guided by the spirit of revelation. Hence the world have generally made great mistakes upon these points. They have started various projects to try to unite and cement the people together without God; but they could not do it. Fourierism, communism—another branch of the same thing—and many other principles of the same kind have been introduced to try and cement the human family together. And then we have had peace societies, based upon the same principles. But all these things have failed, and they will fail, because, however philanthropic, humanitarian, benevolent, or cosmopolitan our ideas, it is impossible to produce a true and correct union without the Spirit of the living God and the Spirit can only be imparted through the ordinances of the gospel. Hence Jesus told his disciples to go and preach the gospel to every creature.... It was by this cementing, uniting spirit, that true sympathetic, fraternal relations could be introduced and enjoyed.26

Ordinarily, the principles of freedom and social union are in opposition to each other, as individual freedom and social authority.

However, if these two forces were properly expressed in the society proposed by Joseph Smith, they were expected to be compatible. "The solution of the problems that generally confront society," wrote Hyrum L. Andrus, "can best be achieved where free men cooperate in the spirit of true brotherhood, and act unitedly under intelligent authority."27 For people to be thus united they would have to respond to the influence of

26 J.D., XVIII, p. 137.

divine truth and power. The Prophet taught that this was to be accomplished by teaching men true principles and then letting them govern themselves. Meantime, it also required "the wisdom of God, the intelligence of God, and the power of God." Dr. Andrus further elucidated by saying:

Only by the influence of divine truth and power can man be regenerated, sanctified and raised to a spiritual plane that makes possible the establishment of true brotherhood and social authority, without infringing upon individual freedom. When members of a true Christian society respond intelligently to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, they are motivated by its enlightening powers to live outside themselves in service to others and to sustain willingly and eagerly the authority that ministers truth and light to the system. Only in such a society can individual freedom and union be combined properly with social authority. The influence of the Holy Spirit can therefore change the whole order of society and make possible social relationships that cannot otherwise be attained.

The Church was not to be accepted merely as a religious body, but as a society with socio-religious and economic programs that were accepted by the Saints as being similar to those within the City of Enoch, where the people were said to be of "one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness"; and they had "no poor among them." As viewed in L.D.S. thought, they were living the Law of Consecration and Stewardship in the correct manner.

John Taylor expressed the view that all the proposed systems of the world would ultimately fail, because they lacked the regenerative powers of the Holy Ghost and the saving ordinances through which the Holy Ghost

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28 DEC, V:61-66.
29 Andrus, Loc. Cit.
was manifest. He said concerning efforts that were then being made to establish the ideal society:

All these things have failed, and they will fail, because, however philanthropic, humanitarian, benevolent, or cosmopolitan our ideas, it is impossible to produce a true and correct union without the Spirit of the living God, and this Spirit can only be imported through the ordinances of the Gospel.\(^\text{31}\)

There was to be no force or coercion in the Kingdom as taught by Joseph Smith. Instead, the system was centered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and was therefore dependent upon man and his receptivity to the enlightening powers of God, through the operation of the Holy Ghost. Man was first to be "quickened" or regenerated spiritually by living in accordance with the "restored" Gospel and accepting its saving ordinances. Adherance to these ordinances would have enabled the individual to be filled with love of God to where he would willingly consecrate himself and all that he possessed to the establishment of the Kingdom of God. In return, the individual would receive a stewardship sufficient to sustain himself and his family on an equal standard of living with other "consecrated" members of the system.

In establishing this system, the Holy Priesthood gave men access to more potent and enlightening spiritual powers than were generally available to men on earth. By utilizing these superior powers, the Saints were expected to build up Zion upon a foundation of greater freedom and economic well-being, and prepare the way for the full development of the Kingdom of God upon the earth.\(^\text{32}\) Thus the Church under this divine law

\(^{31}\) J.D., XVIII, p. 137.

would become a free and united order sufficient within itself to care for every legitimate need of its members. Indeed, there was a revelation which stated that Zion's social and economic principles had to be developed as a foundation before the unfolding of the political order could take place. After enumerating certain of these economic principles, the revelation said:

Behold, this is the preparation wherewith I prepare you, and the foundation, . . . that the Church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world; that you may come up unto the crown prepared for you, and be made rulers over many kingdoms.33

It was held that Zion would have to be developed to where it stood independent by means of its own social and economic programs, before the establishment of the political part of the Kingdom could be brought to fruition.

III. THEORY OF THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ORDER

In Missouri the Saints had tried to develop the ideal social and economic program but were evicted before the "ensign" could be raised to the world; and the desire to establish this system in Illinois was still in their minds. In order to see this ideal and appreciate its influence within the minds of the Saints, a brief synopsis of the social and economic system follows.

Under the Law of Consecration, a "regenerated" man recognized that the earth and all things therein belonged to the Lord. He therefore consecrated all that he had acquired, which included his time and talents, to

the upbuilding of the Kingdom. This was done through the Bishop of the Church. Accordingly, each "consecrated" man was given a stewardship—a given portion of the Lord's property to manage and direct as a responsible agent of the Lord.

Stewardships were not necessarily equal in size and responsibility. Nor was there to be a division of property except for the stewardships. Instead, the whole spiritual concept was based upon a union of property. Thus the deed of ownership was reposed in the Church and "regenerated" men were stewards—not private property owners—over the Lord's property.34

With the decentralization of the system, it became a communal order. There was a "Bishop's Storehouse" in each community where the surplus from the stewardships was kept along with the donated surplus when an individual joined and consecrated his belongings to the Lord.

The system proposed by Joseph Smith, should not be confused with such systems that take away the incentive or initiative of the individual. For having consecrated his property to the Lord, each member became an heir within the system; and as such, he was guaranteed certain "private rights." For example, each steward had the right to:

1. Be a steward—to have property or income-producing responsibilities delegated to him, according to his ability to manage.
2. Negotiate as to the size and kind of stewardship he received.
3. Be secure in his stewardship, as it was delegated to him by deed, so that no other person could take it from him without his consent.

34Doctrine and Covenants 104:54-56.
4. Personally manage and develop his stewardship.

5. Have a voice in community storehouse expenditures.

6. Draw upon the storehouse for funds to develop and expand his stewardship.

7. Draw upon the storehouse to supply his family needs in the event of reverses that critically curtailed the income from his stewardship.

8. Present a claim upon the storehouse as for supplying their physical needs in the case of widows and fatherless.

9. Give to his children, as natural heirs within the Society of Zion, a claim upon the storehouse for stewardships by which they might become financially independent and self sustaining.

10. Withdraw from the Society and take his stewardship therefore if he so desired.35

It appears that the Law of Tithing was expected to operate along with the Law of Consecration and Stewardship, because when the Law of Tithing was given to the Church it was designated as a "standing law" unto the Church "forever."36 For this reason, Orson Pratt, speaking of the future redemption of Zion, indicated that the Law of Tithing would be operative along with the Law of Consecration and Stewardship.37


36Doctrine and Covenants 119:4. It is true that the Church was no longer attempting to live the Law of Consecration and Stewardship but the permanence of the Law of Tithing would indicate it was to continue even after the Law of Consecration and Stewardship was reinstated.

37Andrus, Loc. Cit.
addition, Dr. Andrus stated:

While the Law of Consecration will be largely decentralized to function within the various communities of Zion, it seems evident that the Law of Tithing will still function to bring needed funds up to the General Authority level, to care for the more spiritual needs of the Church and to provide operational funds for the benefit of the whole Church.  

In summary, then, the ideal economic system of Joseph Smith was centered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and was by nature a highly individualistic system, requiring and fostering mature agency on the part of each "regenerated" member. It was only under such a program, indicated the Prophet, that the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternal union could be achieved and reconciled in society. This ideal of social union was to be a vital factor in the developments that occurred while the Saints were in Illinois.

IV. THE POLITICAL PART OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The Kingdom of God was to rest politically on the doctrine of legitimacy, expressed succinctly by John Taylor in 1853:

Let us now notice our political position in the world. What are we going to do? We are going to possess the earth. Why? Because it belongs to Jesus Christ, and he belongs to us, and we to him. We are all one, and will take the kingdom and possess it under the whole heavens, and reign over it forever and ever. Now, ye, kings and emperors, help yourselves, if you can. This is the truth, and it may as well be told at this time as at any other.

This concept was further illustrated according to the teachings of Joseph Smith by the fact that the Church of Jesus Christ held the Priesthood, and the Kingdom was to be established and governed by this Priesthood.

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38 Andrus, Loc. Cit.
39 J.D., I, p. 230.
John Taylor has this to say about it:

When the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven, the priesthood will be the only legitimate ruling power under the whole heavens; for every other power and influence will be subject to it. When the millennium...is introduced all potentates, powers, and authorities—every man, woman, and child will be in subjection to the Kingdom of God; they will be under the power and dominion of the priesthood of God; then the will of God will be done on the earth as it is done in heaven.40

The concept was, then, that the Priesthood would be the only ruling power on the earth. Christ in ministering to and ruling over the earth would do so through the Priesthood.

The State program would then be separated completely from the Church, but the Priesthood would rule over both divisions of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, consideration for the political part of the Kingdom will be presented next.

According to the Latter-day Saint view, the Constitution of the United States was a universal document, and rightfully belonged to all mankind. Joseph Smith sought to extend the guarantees therein contained to all men when he expressed his political platform in the 1844 presidential election. There were latter-day revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants sustaining the concept of the universality of the Constitution. Said one: "That law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges is for all mankind."41 George Q. Cannon added: "It is broad enough, if interpreted in its true spirit, to cover the individual, the continent, and the entire

40 J.D., VI, p. 25. (Italics by the author.)
41 Doctrine and Covenants 98:5, see also 101:77-78.
globe and furnish freedom for all."42

One of the primary concerns of the Constitution was the granting and sustaining of individual freedom. In expressing this thought, the Doctrine and Covenants stated that the Constitution should be maintained, "according to just and holy principles, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment."43 The purpose of the Constitution, then, was to maintain human rights and provide the machinery to settle disputes that would arise.

The Kingdom of God was to use the basic principles of the American Constitution, which would be expanded and amplified in such a manner as to serve as the Constitution for the Kingdom of God. The Constitution of the Kingdom of God was given to Joseph Smith, by revelation, in 1844. In 1874 at a conference held in Lehi, Utah, Brigham Young said of it: "I shall not tell you the names of the members of this Kingdom, neither shall I read to you its constitution but the constitution was given by revelation."44

That the Constitution of the United States was inspired by God was a doctrinal position within the Mormon belief. Joseph Smith had this to say about it:

... we say, that the constitution of the United States is a glorious standard; it is founded in the wisdom of God. It is a heavenly banner; it is to all those who are privileged with the sweets of its liberty, like the cooling shades and refreshing waters of a great rock in a thirsty and weary land. It is like a

42 J.D., XX, p. 204.

43 Doctrine and Covenants 101:78; 98:4-8.

44 J.D., XVII, p. 157.
great tree under whose branches men from every clime can be
shielded from the burning rays of the sun. . . . We say that God
is true; that the Constitution of the United States is true; that
the Bible is true; that the Book of Mormon is true; that the Book
of Covenants is true; that Christ is true; that the ministering
angles sent forth from God are true. . . .

Joseph Smith stood alone among all the political leaders of his
day in emphasizing that the Constitution of the United States was in-
spired of God. Others believed that there was some element of inspira-
tion involved in its conception, but none were as determined that it was
an instrument of divine intervention as was Joseph Smith.

The Mormons held that, though the Constitution was inspired, it was
not perfect in every respect. Thus, Joseph Smith found fault with the
Constitution because it lacked the means under certain circumstances to
guarantee religious liberty to all. The Prophet said: "Under its pro-
vision, a man or a people who are able to protect themselves can get
along well enough; but those who have the misfortune to be weak or un-
popular are left to the merciless rage of popular fury." He justified
this statement by the fact that the Latter-day Saints had been persecuted
and driven from Missouri largely for religious reasons.

A basic view held by the Mormons with respect to the Constitution
was expressed by John Taylor when he said it was to be "one of those
stepping stones to a future development in the progress of man to the
intelligence and light, the power and union that God alone can impart to

45 DHC, 3:304.

46 Kenneth W. Godfrey, The Political Ideas of Joseph Smith Compared
With the Political Ideas of His Own Time, 1805-1844. Unpublished term
paper given at Brigham Young University, May 10, 1965.

47 DHC, 6:56-57.
the human family."  Orson Pratt also expressed the idea that it was to be "a stepping stone to a form of government infinitely greater and more perfect . . . a government founded upon divine laws, and officers appointed by the God of heaven."  

However, if this higher political ideal was to be extended throughout the world, the people would have to be shown how, intelligently, to care for their own needs. Joseph Smith stressed that it would require "the wisdom of God, the intelligence of God, and the power of God" to accomplish such an undertaking, and claimed that these necessary items were possessed by the Latter-day Saints.

"When the government of God is in force upon the earth, there will be as many officers and branches to that government as there are now to that of the United States," Brigham Young announced. "There will be such helps, governments, etc., as the people require in their several capacities and circumstances for the Lord will not administer everywhere in person." The organs of enforcement, both executive and judicial, would also be necessary. Sheriffs, marshals, constables, magistrates, jurors, and judges would be needed during the initial period of the Kingdom, he contended, as not all people would be "in the Lord and all walk in his way." When this full unity with the mind and will of the Lord arrived, then mankind would be governed by the word of the Lord, not the sword.

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48 J.D., XXI, p. 31.
49 J.D., VII, p. 215.
50 DHC, 5:61-66.
51 J.D., VI, p. 346.
"But," he concluded, "the kingdom of heaven, when organized upon the earth, will have every officer, law and ordinance necessary for the managing of those who are unruly, or who transgress its laws, and to govern those who desire to do right, but cannot quite walk to the line; and all these powers and authorities are in existence in the midst of this people." 52

Brigham Young happily believed, however, that the officers of the Kingdom would perform their duties justly. He said: "Every man that officiates in a public capacity will be filled with the Spirit of God, with the light of God, with the power of God, and will understand right from wrong, truth from error, light from darkness. . . ." 53 Just administration of righteous laws, based on the revelations of Jesus Christ, would result in the universal justice to be found only in the Kingdom of God. 54 Brigham Young's views were that the Kingdom of God would be like a mighty "ensign" or "standard" unfurled in the breeze and would beckon an invitation for the nations of the world to come up to Zion. 55 On this standard would be a flag of all the nations of the world. Brigham Young's attachment to his native country and the great spiritual implications of the United States being the foundation for the eventual Kingdom are evidenced when he said:

52 J.D., XV, p. 161.

53 J.D., VI, p. 345.

54 J.D., Brigham Young, II, p. 309.

When the day comes in which the Kingdom of God will bear rule, the flag of the United States will proudly flutter unsullied on the flag staff of liberty and equal rights, without a spot to sully its fair surface; the glorious flag our fathers have bequeathed to us will then be unfurled to the breeze by those who have power to hoist aloft and defend its sanctity.\textsuperscript{56}

In the transfer of theocratic procedure to the Kingdom, Brigham Young envisioned a system of government which would require the consent of the governed. Apparently the "voice of the Church," as a principle in Church affairs, would be carried over to play a similar role politically in the Kingdom. "The consent of the creature," the Mormon leader Brigham Young said, "must be obtained before the Creature can rule perfectly."\textsuperscript{57}

As envisioned by Joseph Smith, the Kingdom of God was to include as members and as officers, both non-Mormons and Mormons as well. For instance, at the time Daniel H. Wells was first included in the Council of Fifty, he was not a member of the Church. Later, however, he joined and became an outstanding leader in the organization. Others, understanding the Prophet's views on this subject, expressed themselves from time to time. George Q. Cannon said, for example:

This is the correct view to take. The Kingdom of God is a separate organization from the Church of God. There may be men acting as officers in the Kingdom of God who will not be members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints... men might be chosen to officiate as members of the Kingdom of God who had no standing in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.\textsuperscript{58}

Thus a man could be a legislator in the Political Kingdom which would issue laws to sustain the inhabitants of the earth in their indivi-

\textsuperscript{56}J.D., II, p. 317.

\textsuperscript{57}J.D., XV, p. 134.

\textsuperscript{58}DHC, 7:382. (Italics by the author.)
dual rights and still not belong to the Church of Jesus Christ. Brigham Young stated this concept succinctly when he said:

And further, though a man may not even believe in any religion, it would be perfectly right, when necessary, to give him the privilege of holding a seat among that body which will make laws to govern all the nations of the earth and control those who make no profession of religion at all; for that body would be governed, controlled, and dedicated to the acknowledgment of the rights and privileges of all men.59

The Twelve Apostles again made it clear that the Kingdom was for everybody and that it was not necessarily one organization, when they wrote in the Millennial Star the following:

Come then, ye Saints; come then, ye honorable men of the earth; come then ye wise, ye learned, ye rich, ye noble, according to the riches and wisdom, and knowledge of the Great Jehovah; from all nations, and kindreds, and kingdoms, and tongues, and people and dialects on the face of the whole earth, and join the standards of Emmanuel, and help us to build up the Kingdom of God, and establish the principles of truth, life and salvation. . . .

The Kingdom of God consists in correct principles; and it mattereth not what a man's religious faith is; whether he be a Presbyterian, or a Methodist, or a Baptist, or a Latter-day Saint or "Mormon," or a Catholic, or Episcopalian, or Mohammedan, or even pagan, or anything else, if he will bow the knee and with his tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ, and will support good and wholesome laws for the regulation of society,—we hail him as a brother, and will stand by him while he stands by us in these things; for every man's religious faith is a matter between his own soul and his God alone; but if he shall deny Jesus, if he shall curse God, if he shall indulge in debauchery and drunkenness, and crime; if he shall lie, and swear, and steal; if he shall take the name of the Great God in vain, and commit all manners of abominations, he shall have no place in our midst. . . .60

The Kingdom of God would protect all peoples in their civil and religious rights. In addition to the references just cited concerning this aspect of the Kingdom, it is interesting to note that Brigham Young

59 J.D., II, p. 310.
60 Millennial Star, X, p. 81-88.
said in 1855:

If you and I could live in the flesh until that Kingdom is fully established, and actually spread about to rule in a temporal point of view, we should find that it will sustain and uphold every individual in what they deem their individual rights, so far as they do not infringe upon the rights of their fellow creatures.\textsuperscript{61}

Brigham also said on another occasion:

The kingdom that Daniel saw will push forth its law, and that law will protect the Methodists, Quakers, Pagans, Jews, and every other creed there ever was or ever will be, in their religious rights. . . . The kingdom that Daniel saw will actually make laws to protect every man in his rights, as our government does now, whether the religions of the people are true or false.\textsuperscript{62}

To summarize, the Kingdom of God, as Joseph Smith and the Mormons envisioned it, was to be both a church and a state. The Church, with its social and economic law, was to be a free, united, and open society. There would be no force or coercion within it. Meanwhile, the Government of God was expected to maintain inviolate the rights and the freedom of all men, and to govern them accordingly. These ideals were developing in the minds of the Saints as they commenced to settle in Illinois, and they provided the foundation for the political conflict that thereafter developed.

\textsuperscript{61} J.D., II, p. 309.

\textsuperscript{62} J.D., II, p. 189. See also Ibid., I, 202-3; XIII, p. 125, for other statements by Brigham Young. For a good statement by Wilford Woodruff, see, Ibid., XIII, p. 164.
CHAPTER VI

THE POLITICAL INVOLVEMENTS OF JOSEPH SMITH
AND THE MORMONS FROM 1839 TO 1842

I. DEVELOPMENTS DURING 1839

After Joseph's arrival in Illinois in 1839, he was so involved for a time with other matters that he did not give much attention to politics. But after a summer of regulating church affairs and initiating the building of Nauvoo, Joseph Smith and Elias Higbee (accompanied part way by Sidney Rigdon) carried a petition to Washington D. C. Their problem was acute. The Kingdom of God was endeavoring to discover its niche of freedom within the American commonwealth. Local government institutions in Missouri had failed to provide a sphere of liberty. With the failure to get state support in Missouri, the Mormons next sought federal help from Congress. This, too, met with defeat but much valuable experience was gained.

The net result of the Congressional Committee's deliberations was simply to recommend that the Saints appeal for redress of their wrongs to the United States District Court having jurisdiction in Missouri, or they could, if they desired, "apply to the justice and magnanimity of the State of Missouri..."¹ The Committee felt justified in believing that this appeal would be honored by citizens of Missouri.

On December 5, 1839, Joseph Smith and Elias Higbee wrote a letter from the nation's capital to the Prophet's brother, Hyrum, in Nauvoo.

¹DHC, 4:91-92.
Their description of the White House, their interview with President Martin Van Buren, and their work of "hunting up--Representatives," revealed some of the political realities which the Prophet encountered on his errand. His appeal in the closing paragraph to inundate Congress with letters from "influential men" showed the Prophet to be a realist and acquainted with the processes of public opinion. The postscript speaks for itself.

WASHINGTON CITY, CORNER MISSOURI AND 3RD STS.,
December 5th, 1839.

Dear Brother Hyrum, President, and to the Honorable High Council of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—to whom be fellowship, love, and the peace of Almighty God extended, and the prayer of faith forever and ever. Amen.

Your fellow laborers, Joseph Smith, Jun., Elias Higbee, and agents as well as the servants that are sent by you, to perform one of the most arduous and responsible duties, and also to labor in the most honorable cause that ever graced the pages of human existence, respectfully show by these lines, that we have taken up our cross thus far, and that we arrived in this city on the morning of the 28th November, and spent the most of the day in looking up a boarding house, which we succeeded in finding. We found as cheap boarding as can be had in this city.

On Friday morning, 29th, we proceeded to the house of the President. We found a very large and splendid palace, surrounded with a splendid enclosure, decorated with all the fineries and elegancies of this world. We went to the door and requested to see the President, when we were immediately introduced into his parlor, where we presented him with our letters of introduction. As soon as he had read one of them, he looked upon us with a kind of half frown, and said, "What can I do? I can do nothing for you! If I do anything, I shall come in contact with the whole state of Missouri."

But we were not to be intimidated; and demanded a hearing, and constitutional rights. Before we left him he promised to reconsider what he had said, and observed that he felt to sympathize with us, on account of our sufferings.

We have spent the remainder of our time in hunting up the Representatives in order to get our case brought before the House; in giving them letters of introduction, etc., and in getting acquainted. A meeting of the delegation of the state of Illinois was appointed today, to consult for bringing our case before Congress. The gentlemen from Illinois are worthy men, and
have treated us with the greatest kindness, and are ready to do all that is in their power; but you are aware, brethren, that they with us have all the prejudices, superstition, and bigotry of an ignorant generation to contend with; nevertheless we believe our case will be brought before the House, and we will leave the event with God; He is our Judge, and the Avenger of our wrongs.

For a general thing there is but little solidity and honorable deportment among those who are sent here to represent the people; but a great deal of pomposity and show...

We have already commenced forming some very honorable acquaintances, and have thus far been prospered as much as we had anticipated, if not more. We have had a pleasing interview with Judge Young, who proposed to furnish us with expense money. ... We cannot accomplish the things for which we were sent without some funds. You very well know, brethren, we were contented to start, trusting in God, with little or nothing. We have met with but one accident since we started. The lock of our trunk was broken off, and Brother Lyman Wight's petition is missing; but we trust there is a copy of it preserved; if there is, you will please forward it immediately, with the name and affidavit to it.

For God's sake, brethren, be wide awake, and arm us with all the power possible, for now is the time or never. We want you should get all the influential men you can of that section of country, of Iowa, and of every other quarter, to write letters to the members of Congress, using their influence in our behalf, and to keep their minds constantly upon the subject.

Please to forward this to our wives.

Yours in the bonds of the Everlasting Covenant,

JOSEPH SMITH, JUN.,
ELIAS HIGBEE

P.S.—Congress has been in session for four days, and the House of Representatives is not yet organized, in consequence of some seats being contested in the New Jersey delegation. They have this day succeeded in electing John Q. Adams to the chair pro tem.; but whether they will get their Speaker and Clerk chosen is yet unknown, as there is a great deal of wind blown off on the occasion on each day. There is such an itching disposition to display their oratory on the most trivial occasions, and so much etiquette, bowing and scraping, twisting and turning, to make a display of their witticism, that it seems to us rather a display of folly and show, more than substance and gravity, such as becomes a great nation like ours. (However there are some exceptions).

A warm feeling has been manifested in the discussion of the House today, and it seems as much confusion as though the nation had already began to be vexed....
In our interview with the President, he interrogated us wherein we differed in our religion from the other religions of the day. Brother Joseph said we differed in mode of baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. We considered that all other considerations were contained in the gift of the Holy Ghost, and we deemed it unnecessary to make many words in preaching the Gospel to him. Suffice it to say he has got our testimony. We watch the postoffices, but have received no letters from our sections of the country. Write instantly.

Yours with respect,

J. S. ②Jun.,
E. H.

Upon being treated curtly by President Van Buren, Joseph Smith insisted upon a fair hearing of his story by the President. At the conclusion of Joseph's first visit, President Van Buren consented to reconsider his original statement that he was in no position and had no power to help the Mormons. Joseph was negatively impressed and slightly disdained at the elegance of the White House, the indifference of the President, along with the pomp displayed by many of the Congressmen.

II. DEVELOPMENTS DURING 1840

Upon his return to Nauvoo on March 4, 1840, Joseph commented in his history about his visit with the President and others in Washington D. C. He said:

During my stay I had an interview with Martin Van Buren, the President, who treated me very insolently, and it was with great reluctance he listened to our message, which, when he had heard, he said: "Gentlemen, your cause is just, but I can do nothing for you," and "If I take up for you I shall lose the vote of Missouri." His whole course went to show that he was

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²DHC, 4:39-42.
an office-seeker, that self-aggrandizement was his ruling passion, and that justice and righteousness were not part of his composition. I found him such a man as I could not conscientiously support at the head of our Noble Republic. I also had an interview with Mr. John C. Calhoun, whose conduct towards me very ill became his station. I became satisfied there was little use for me to tarry, to press the just claims of the Saints on the consideration of the President of Congress, and stayed but a few days.\textsuperscript{3}

He also said:

On my way home I did not fail to proclaim the iniquity and insolence of Martin Van Buren, toward myself and an injured people, which will have its effect upon the public mind; and may he never be elected again to any office of trust or power by which he may abuse the innocent and let the guilty go free.\textsuperscript{4}

In the State of Missouri, the Mormons had supported the Democratic Party. They had been driven out by a Democratic governor of a Democratic state; and when they appealed to Mr. Van Buren, the Democratic President of the United States, for relief against the Missourians, he refused to recommend it for want of constitutional power in the United States to coerce a sovereign state in the execution of its domestic policy. This soured and embittered the Mormons against the Democrats. The Whig Congressmen from Illinois, Mr. Clay (Senator) and John T. Stuart (Representative), undertook the Mormon cause, and introduced and presented their

\textsuperscript{3}DHC, 4:80 (Italics by the author)

\textsuperscript{4}DHC, 4:89. It is interesting to note that the Prophet's wish was literally fulfilled. In the Presidential election of 1840, Van Buren was renominated by the Democratic Party, but was defeated by William Henry Harrison, the Whig candidate. Harrison received two hundred and thirty-four electoral votes to sixty for Van Buren—Van Buren did receive about two of each five popular votes. In 1848, Van Buren was again a candidate for President, being the nominee from the Free Soil Party. Lewis Cass was the nominee of the Democrats, and Zachary Taylor of the Whigs. Taylor was elected and Van Buren did not receive a single electoral vote and only about twenty-five percent of the popular votes.
memorials against Missouri with such sincerity that, when the Mormons came to Illinois they attached themselves to the Whig Party.

In the Illinois gubernatorial election of 1838, Thomas Carlin, Democrat, led the Whig opponent, Cyrus Edwards, in Hancock County by a vote of 633 to 436. The closeness of this race helped explain why both political parties extended a welcome to the Mormons upon their arrival in 1839. Within a year, the newly arrived Saints were beginning to give hints of their influence in state and local politics because of their numbers and solidarity.

In August, 1840, they voted unanimously for the Whig candidates for the Senate and Assembly. In the following November, they voted for the Whig candidate for President; and in August, 1841, they voted for John J. Stuart, the Whig candidate for Congress in their district. The Saints voted for Stuart because he had been one of the state representatives in Congress from Illinois when Joseph Smith and Elias Higbee had petitioned Congress for redress against Missouri. Stuart again petitioned the House of Representatives on February 14, May 10, and May 21, 1841 for redress but without success and the memorials were allowed to die there. These efforts were not quickly forgotten by the Saints as is evidenced by their voting.

In the legislature of 1840-41, it became a matter of great interest within both parties to conciliate the Mormon people. They were already numerous, and were fast increasing by immigration from all parts. It was

evident that they were to possess much political power. They had already signified their intention to join neither party, but would vote for such person as would best serve their interests. The leaders of both parties believed that the Mormons would soon hold the balance of power, and therefore sought to win their support through promises and favors.

With this situation prevailing, John C. Bennett presented himself at the seat of the Illinois state government as the agent of the Mormons in soliciting the Nauvoo City Charter. Bennett addressed himself to Mr. Little, the Whig Senator from Hancock County, and to Mr. Douglas, the Democratic Secretary of State, both of whom entered heartily into his plans for the passage of the Charter. Bennett managed matters well for his constituents. He flattered both sides with the hope of Mormon favor, and both sides expected to receive Mormon votes. A city charter, formulated by Joseph Smith, was presented to the Senate by Mr. Little. It was referred to the judiciary committee of which Mr. Snyder, a Democrat, was chairman. The judiciary committee reported back recommending the charter's passage. The Senate approved it without taking a formal vote. In like manner the Nauvoo City Charter passed the House of Representatives where it was never read except by its title. The same unanimous zeal was manifested in the House as had been so conspicuously displayed in the Senate. 6

Thus it was proposed to establish for the Mormons a government within a government; courts to pass ordinances with but little dependence upon the constitutional judiciary; and a military force at their own

6Ford, op. cit., p. 263.
command, to be governed by their own by-laws and ordinances, and subject to no state authority but that of the Governor.

Concerning the charter, Joseph Smith wrote:

The city charter of Nauvoo is of my own plan and device. I concocted it for the salvation of the Church, and on principles so broad that every honest man might dwell secure under its protective influence without distinction of sect or party.  

In terms of the political realities of the period, the charter was a temporary answer to the Mormon search for a sphere of liberty within the American commonwealth where they could have time to perpetuate the Kingdom of God.

The Mormons swelled the Hancock County vote to 1,976 in the 1840 Presidential election—nearly double that of 1838. The Whig Presidential candidate, William Henry Harrison, received more than twice the vote of his Democratic opponent, Van Buren (1,352 to 624). This was evidence that Joseph’s determination that Van Buren would not receive Mormon votes (declared after his trip to Washington D.C.) had been put into effect.

However, not to offend the Democrats too much, the Mormons scratched the last name on the Whig electoral ticket which was Abraham Lincoln, and substituted the Democrat, James H. Ralston instead. Despite this treatment of Lincoln, John C. Bennett observed that he "had the magnanimity to vote for our act (Nauvoo Charter), and came forward after the final vote and congratulated me on its passage."

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7 DHC, 4:249. For the complete version of the Nauvoo Charter, see DHC 4:239-249.

8 Pease, op. cit., p. 117. At Warsaw, Harrison led Van Buren 142 to 78 and at Carthage, 219 to 162.

9 Linn, op. cit., p. 244.
III. DEVELOPMENTS DURING 1841

Because the power of the Mormon vote was recognized by the non-Mormons, the Mormons received political visitors on various occasions. One such visit was on Sunday, May 3, 1841, when Judge Stephen A. Douglas and Cyrus Walker visited Nauvoo. Mr. Douglas was representing the Democratic Party and Mr. Walker the Whig Party. The Saints, realizing the importance of each man in his own party, received them with great consideration and ceremony. They were both introduced to the congregation on the meeting ground and after being complimented by the Prophet made addresses in response. A flattering article from the visitors expressing thanks for their reception was published by Joseph Smith in the next issue of the Times and Seasons. They had also been requested by the Prophet to inspect the Nauvoo Legion. The citizens had previously extended to Judge Douglas the key to the city for which he acknowledged his thankfulness.

The Latter-day Saints as yet were hardly ankle deep in politics, but editor Thomas C. Sharp of the Warsaw Signal determined that the Signal would sit in judgment on any future political activity at Nauvoo, as evidenced by his comment on May 19, 1841:

...Whenever they as a people step beyond the proper sphere of a religious denomination, and become a political body as many citizens are beginning to apprehend will be the case, then this press stands pledged to take a stand against them.\(^{11}\)

\(^{10}\) Western World, was the previous name of the Warsaw Signal, being changed May 12, 1841. See Thomas Gregg, History of Hancock County, Chicago, C. C. Chapman and Co., 1880, p. 390.

\(^{11}\) Warsaw Signal, May 19, 1841. After the May 19, 1841, statement by T. Sharp, Joseph Smith wrote him the following:
It was about this time that the Prophet seemed to change in political alignment from the Whigs to the Democrats. This change was probably aided by the fact that on June 4, 1841, Joseph visited for about two hours with Governor Thomas Carlin (a Whig Governor) at Quincy. They seemed to have had a very pleasant exchange, but within a few hours the Governor issued a warrant for Joseph's arrest which had been requested by the Missouri authorities. Joseph was arrested near Monmouth and there he secured various individuals to serve in his defense; among them were Sidney H. Little, O. H. Browning, James H.Ralston and Cyrus Walker\(^\text{12}\) who were later to play political roles in connection with Mormon voting. In his history the Prophet praised O. H. Browning for his splendid defense and acquittal of the case. He also said of Governor Carlin: "He did not have moral courage enough to resist the demand, although it was founded in injustice and cruelty."\(^\text{13}\)

The non-Mormon population, having begun to be apprehensive of the Mormons, called public meetings throughout the county, and finally agreed to call a county convention to consider the actions of the Latter-day Saints. The county convention was held at Carthage on June 28 and was

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Nauvoo, Ill., May 26, 1841

Mr. Sharp, Editor of the Warsaw Signal

Sir--You will discontinue my paper: its contents are calculated to pollute me. And to patronize that filthy sheet, that tissue of lies, that sink of iniquity, is disgraceful to any moral man.

Yours, with utter contempt,

Joseph Smith

P.S.--Please publish the above in your contemptible paper.

\(^\text{12}\)DHC, 4:367.

\(^\text{13}\)DHC, 4:367.
composed of citizens of both political parties. It was decided to nominate a ticket selected from both parties, to be run at the forthcoming election in August. This was done and Robert Miller, a Whig, and Richard Wilton, a Democrat, were selected for County Commissioner and School Commissioner respectively. They were elected; the first by a majority of 114 votes and the latter by a majority of four votes.

It was at this convention that the Anti-Mormon Party was formed and the term "Anti-Mormon" was applied to those who were seeking to counteract Mormon influence in the county and state. The convention put forth an earnest address to the people, urging them to lay aside all party differences and support the ticket. Several of their resolutions which passed were here included. They resolved:

That with the peculiar religious opinion of the people calling themselves Mormons, or Latter-day Saints, we have nothing to do—being at all times perfectly willing that they shall remain in the full possession of all the rights and privileges which our constitution and laws guarantee and other citizens enjoy.
That in standing up as we do to oppose the influence which these people have obtained and are likely to obtain, in a political capacity, over our fellow citizens and their liberties, we are guided only by a desire to defend ourselves against a despotism, the extent and consequences of which we have no means of ascertaining.\(^4\)

The convention and others similar in nature lead to great awareness on the part of the political parties of the potential "block vote" of the Mormons.

Mobocracy in Hancock County and surrounding areas at this time was on the rise. This spirit of mobocracy was not unique to this area,

but was spreading throughout the United States; in different sections of the country the causes for mobocracy were different, but it was the spirit of the times.

In the *Bloomington Herald* was the following:

The Whigs of Lee County, Iowa have put a Mormon in nomination for the House of Representatives, the more successfully to carry these deluded fanatics to the support of their party. They must love power when they can condescend to honor such a people for the sake of their suffrages.

In such articles as the above, the people were being summoned to support the violent element of society by such terms used to describe the Mormons and their sympathizers as "deluded fanatics," who "love power." The impression was given that Mormons were seeking political power which would deny the non-Mormons their individual freedom. They felt that if the Mormons were allowed to vote in "mass" they would thus rule at election time. An appeal for mob action was being raised against the Saints.

About three weeks later there appeared another article which referred directly to the Mormons and their political activities.

BASE INGRATITUDE.--As we have before stated, the Whigs of Lee County nominated a Mormon for the House of Representatives, for the purpose of securing the undivided support of that sect of deluded fanatics, hoping thereby, to return a

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15 *Bloomington Herald*, July 25, 1841, Vol. I, No. 39, p. 2. The *Hawkeye* referred to above was evidently the *Burlington Hawkeye*, a Whig newspaper with which the Democratic *Bloomington Herald* was engaged in a party argument, so common among the party presses of that section and period.

The main body of the Mormons was at this time (1841) settled in Nauvoo, Illinois; there was also a considerable body of them settled across the river in Lee County, Iowa at Montrose and Keokuk. The two groups, however, were closely connected, Joseph Smith making frequent trips back and forth across the river.
full Whig representation in the House. Upon an exposition of the unholy alliance, the Hawkeye enquired, if in this land of freedom, a man was to be condemned on account of his religious belief?

Well, the election came and the mongrel ticket was defeated by the true democracy of that county. In the last number of that paper, published on the fourth day after the election, the only notice taken of their defeat is in the following words:

'The news from the Mormon county looks rather squally, as brought by Gen. Doge and Johnston.'

How sudden a change has come o'er the spirit of his dreams, where it was found there was not enough of the dear Mormons to defeat the Democracy. If this is not ingratitude, it will be acknowledged that the editor of the Hawkeye is capable of possessing one grateful feeling. 16

Again an element of prejudice toward the Latter-day Saints was manifest when there appeared in the Herald the following in regard to the defeat of the Mormons in Lee County:

The Hawkeye gives a poor apology for having called Lee the "Mormon" county, and takes back all it said prejudicial to her fame. It says—"Lee County is still to be known as the Empire county." Wonderful! 'Spose he thought unless he withdrew the odious title he had given it, that county was ever afterward to be called by that title. Great opinion of his own importance. 17

On December 1, 1841, the Warsaw Signal lamented the low attendance at a Democratic meeting in Carthage and was excited about the Mormons having a complete take-over of politics. Editor Sharp put it this way:

...Politics are dead in this country, and will continue so unless one of the parties will consent to the degradation of uniting itself to a corrupt and degraded church, and suffer Joe Smith to become sole Dictator. To this, we trust neither party will consent. 18

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18 Warsaw Signal, December 1, 1841.
In December, 1841, a State Democratic Convention assembled at Springfield, and there nominated Adam W. Snyder as the Democratic candidate for Governor for the upcoming election in August, 1842. Adam W. Snyder was a member of the Senate when the Nauvoo Charter was passed, and had taken an active part in furthering its passage. In fact, Mr. Snyder was chairman of the Judiciary Committee to which the charter was referred; he reported it to the Senate with a recommendation that it be passed.

A letter written by Joseph Smith on December 20, 1841, was a masterpiece of political realism. This letter added to his greatness as a political thinker along with that of being a religious leader. The political thought which would be advanced, however, was that Joseph Smith was learning the necessity of cooperation without compromise—how to be "in the world" but "not of the world." His statement that the Mormon vote would not be divided—except by individual choice—foretold future difficulties with the men of Illinois. This letter left no doubt in the minds of the politicians where the Mormon vote would go in the election the next year. The letter was placed here in full:

TO MY FRIENDS IN ILLINOIS—The Gubernatorial Convention of the state of Illinois has nominated Colonel Adam W. Snyder for Governor, and Colonel John Moore for Lieutenant-Governor, of the state of Illinois, election to take place in August next.

Colonel Moore, like Judge Douglas and Esquire Warren, was an intimate friend of General Bennett long before that gentleman became a member of our community; and General Bennett informs us that no men were more efficient in assisting him to procure our great chartered privileges, than were Colonel Snyder, and Colonel Moore. They are sterling men, and friends of equal rights, opposed to the oppressor's grasp, and the tyrant's rod. With such men at the head of our State, government will have nothing to fear. In the next canvass, we shall be influenced by no party consideration, and no Carthaginian coalescence or collusion with our people will be suffered to effect, or operate against General Bennett, or any other of our tried friends, already semi-officially in the field; so the partizans in this county, who expect to divide the friends
of humanity and equal rights, will find themselves mistaken—we care not a fig for Whig or Democrat; they are both alike to us, but we shall go for our friends, our tried friends, and the cause of human liberty, which is the cause of God. We are aware that "divide and conquer" is the watchword with many, but with us it cannot be done—we love liberty too well—we have suffered too much to be easily duped—we have no catspaws amongst us. We voted for General Harrison because we loved him—he was a gallant officer and tried statesman; but this is no reason why we should always be governed by his friends. He is now dead, all of his friends are not ours. We claim the privilege of freedom, and shall act accordingly. Douglas is a master spirit, and his friends are our friends—we are willing to cast our banners in the air, and fight by his side in the cause of humanity and equal rights—the cause of liberty and the law. Snyder and Moore are his friends—they are ours. These men are free from the prejudices and superstitions of the age, and such men we love, and such men will ever receive our support, be their political predilections what they may. Snyder and Moore are known to be our friends; their friendship is vouchéd for by those whom we have tried. We will never be justly charged with the sin of ingratitude—they have served us, and we will serve them.

JOSEPH SMITH
Lieutenant-General of the Nauvoo Legion. 19

About this time, Mr. William Harris, an apostate, appeared in the county and lectured against the Mormons on several points. He was not a man of much talent, but by his zeal and energy, he succeeded in stirring up considerable opposition. He also issued a pamphlet, which was printed at the office of the Warsaw Signal, in which he made an effort to expose the Church. 20

In this chapter it has been demonstrated that the Saints were taking sides "en mass" in support of those who would support their rights or at least not fight against them. Their union was stimulated

19 DHC, 4:479-480.

20 DHC, 4:487. Joseph Smith, on December 27, 1841, had this to say about the Signal's editor, Thomas C. Sharp: "It is best to let Sharp publish what he pleases and go to the devil, and the more lies he prints, the sooner he will get through. . ."
by the system they were endeavoring to develop. But, on the other hand, it was very offensive to the non-Mormon segment of the area. The "Anti-Mormons" were very concerned that their individual freedom would be endangered by the potential Mormon unity. Thus it was easy for a few radical elements to arouse the general feelings of society against them. As was mentioned in chapter three, there was also a great amount of lawlessness in Illinois during the 1830's and early 1840's. In addition, the editors of the newspapers were often very irresponsible and were prone to printing the sensational items. All these above mentioned elements combined to add fuel to the growing flames of mobocracy in connection with the Mormon issue in Illinois.
CHAPTER VII

THE POLITICAL INVOLVEMENTS OF JOSEPH SMITH
AND THE MORMONS FROM 1842 TO 1844

I. DEVELOPMENTS DURING 1842

The year 1842 was an eventful one for the Mormons because of their involvement in politics. It started with the Whigs re-nominating past Governor Joseph Duncan for that office. Soon after his nomination, he announced publicly his bitter opposition against the Mormons. Said the Prophet, on January 4, 1842: "Joseph Duncan, candidate for Governor of Illinois, made an inflammatory speech against the Saints at Edwardsville, a mass of falsehoods."¹

The Whigs, feeling that they had been out-manuevered by the Democrats in securing the Mormon vote, became seriously alarmed and sought to repair their losses by inaugurating a crusade to unite the anti-Mormon vote. Especially in the newspapers was this evident. The Whig newspapers teemed with accounts of the proorted "wonders and enormities" of Nauvoo and of the awful wickedness of a party (Democratic) which would consent to receive the support of the Mormons.

The Saints were being severely criticized for their unity and loyalty to Joseph Smith. Not realizing the influence of spiritual factors in their lives and the cementing bond of brotherhood which they produced, the non-Mormons blamed Joseph Smith for having some mystic power over his followers. Anti-Mormons were beginning to show signs of

¹DHC, 4:490.
fear that the Mormon system would challenge their Republican form of
government and their expression of individual rights. These feelings
were expressed in the *Quincy Whig* of January 22, 1842:

The Mormons have a right to vote for Snyder and Moore, if they
choose, as a matter of course, but this clannish principle of
voting in a mass, and this man who has acquired an influence over
the minds of his people through a peculiar religious creed which he
promulgated, is so repugnant to the principles of our Republican
form of government, that its consequences and future effects will be
disagreeable to think of—bitter hatred and unrelenting hostility
will spring up, where before peace and good will had an abiding
place.²

A week later the *Quincy Herald* (a Democratic paper) commented on the
circular letter of Joseph Smith that had been published in the *Times and
Seasons*. The editor of the *Herald* again stressed the conflict he fore-
saw between the Mormon "union" and the individualism of the day. The
charge that Joseph Smith was suppressing freedom of thought and action
by suggesting that his followers vote for prescribed individuals was
very much a part of the conflict that followed. The editor said:

THE MORMON CIRCULAR.—The circular letter of Joseph Smith, the
far-famed Mormon prophet, which appeared in the *Times & Seasons* a
few weeks ago is creating quite a sensation among the Whig papers
in this state. If Mr. Smith had proclaimed his determination to
sustain the Whig nominees for Governor and Lieutenant-Governor, we
are doubtless whether most of the Whig editors in the state would
not have pronounced it a righteous decision; but as the reverse is
the fact, it is denounced as an act of high-handed presumption. In
our opinion, there are two views to be taken of this letter. If Mr.
Smith intended it as the expression of his own individual determina-
tion in regard to which of the candidates he would sustain, no fault
can or ought to be found with it. Every man in this country has a
perfect and undeniable right of expressing and publishing, if he
sees proper, his opinions upon any or all subjects which may be in
agitation before the people. This is a right which is guaranteed
by the great charter of our liberties, and a right which none dare

²*Quincy Whig*, January 22, 1842, Vol. 4, No. 39, p. 2. (Italics by
the author.)
question. Thus far, then, Mr. Smith has only exercised the privileges of the American citizen, and it does seem to us to be extremely foolish for conductors of the press to sneer at him for doing that which they themselves perpetrate every week of their lives. If however, this letter was put forth as a sort of royal edict, as many seem to suppose, commanding all his followers, and all of the same faith persuasion with himself, to vote for the men whom he should signify, then we will admit that it is presumption in the extreme. Mr. Smith has a right to vote for whom he pleases, and has a right to express that determination in any way he sees proper; but he has no right, either religious, moral or political, to put chains upon the minds and wishes of his followers, and say to them—you must vote as I direct! We hope, for the honor of Mr. Smith, that such was not his design; and if it was, we hope for the honor and intelligence of the Mormons, that there is enough independence and love of liberty among them, to treat his requisitions with scorn and contempt they merit. They have foreseen the lands of their nativity, in order that they might enjoy their religion, and worship God in their own way, without fear of dictation from others. If they now suffer one man to shackle their free thoughts and opinions, and use them to subserve his ends, instead of gaining that liberty which they have been seeking, they are the very worst of slaves.

It may seem to some that we are operating against our own interest—the interests of the Democratic nominee, in being thus free to express our sentiments in this matter. But we do not think so. A man who has not independence enough to think and act for himself, is no Democrat; and were we the candidate for Governor, we would not thank him for his vote, even though we are certain that without it we would be defeated. We feel as anxious for the success of Democratic principles, and the election of Col. Snyder, as any man in the state; but we wish to see those principles triumph upon their own merits—we wish to see our candidate elected by free men—men who do not let others think and act for them. As for our part, we shall pursue the course that we had marked out for ourself previous to the appearance of that circular, without regard to anything contained therein, and trusting to no professions but those of truth and honesty. We hope our Democratic brethren will do the same, and not let promises from any quarter slacken their exertions.

The Sangamo Journal was especially bitter in its attacks on the Mormons. An editorial on January 14, 1842, accused Joseph Smith of forsaking religion for politics; and in its issue of June 10, it charged a

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3Quincy Herald, February 3, 1842, Vol. 1, No. 20, p. 2. (Italics by the author.)
collusion between the Democrats and the Mormons in state politics.

According to the newspaper, the state politicians "gave him power, and
his is to give them votes."4

Other factors combined to develop antagonism against the Mormons,
but the passage and character of the Nauvoo Charter along with the result-
ing attitude of the Saints—that they had protection from legal harrass-
ment due to anti-Mormon sources—laid the foundation for future hostility.
Agitation for the repeal of the Nauvoo City Charter was not long in
coming forth and became apparent within a few months after its passage.
Throughout the month of July 1842, the Sangamo Journal continued its
attack upon the Mormons and especially upon the Nauvoo Charter and the
Nauvoo Legion. To illustrate, on July 1, 1842, it said:

The corrupt bargain by which the leaders of the Van Buren party
have sought to purchase the votes of the Mormons, and the open
avowal of Joe Smith, that the Mormons shall support the candidate of
the party, because Judge Douglass and other party leaders have
secured to him certain extra ordinary chartered privileges—over and
above those enjoyed by any other sect—has called public attention
to the movements of Joe Smith. . . .
The people of Illinois will then see the character of that man
who has avowed his determination to fill the two first offices of
this State with his own creatures—Thomas Ford and John Moore.5

The death, in the midst of the campaign, of Adam W. Snyder, Demo-
cratic nominee for Governor, and the substitution of Thomas Ford in his
place did not alter the position of the Mormons. It was of interest that
Ford was from Hancock County and he knew the Mormons first-hand but did
not take a stand against them until later.

4Sangamo Journal, June 10, 1842. The Whig organ at Springfield, Ill.
5Ibid., July 1, July 7, July 15, and July 22, 1842. (Italics by the
author.)
In the county it was still the policy to divide and distract the Mormon vote. The Anti-Mormon party held a convention and placed a ticket in the field which was selected from each of the political parties, viz.:

For Senator
For Representatives
For Sheriff
For County Commissioner
For School Commissioner
For Coroner

William H. Rosevelt (W)
Wesley Williams (W)
Edson Whitney (D)
Stephen H. Tyler (W)
John J. Brent (D)
William D. Abernethy (D)
Benjamin Avise (W)

The Democrats presented the following ticket:

For Senator
For Representatives
For Sheriff
For County Commissioner
For School Commissioner
For Coroner

Jacob Cunningham Davis
Thomas H. Owne
William Smith [brother of Joseph]
William H. Backenstos
John T. Barnett
Franklin J. Bartlett
George W. Stigall

At this time, Joseph Smith indicated that he would not vote a straight Whig or Democratic ticket as such, but "would go for those who would support good order, etc."7

It was only natural for the Prophet to take this position when it was realized that several candidates from each party had made statements in public denouncing the Mormons and their cause. At the same time several others remained silent as to their action against the Mormons. There were two besides Ford and Moore who were in favor of permitting the Saints to live normal lives; and for this reason they were called "friends" by the Mormons. They were Jacob B. Backenstos and William Smith (brother

6Gregg, op. cit., p. 283.
7DHQ, 5:19.
of Joseph).

As the August election drew near, the Democratic editor of the Quincy Herald, one of the most influential Democratic presses in central Illinois, took up the challenge of the Whig press, as noted in the following:

Farmers, read the following from the Nauvoo Wasp, and remember it when you come to the polls next Monday. The Democratic party has been charged by the Whig presses in every part of the State, with having completed a bargain with the Mormons, by which the Mormon votes are to be given to Judge Ford and John Moore, and in case of their election to the offices of Governor and Lieutenant Governor, the Mormons are to have certain other rights and privileges extended to them, in consideration for their support of the Democratic candidates. . . . Read the following, which appeared in the Nauvoo Wasp of the 16th, and then say which party it is, that has completed a bargain with the Mormons for their votes:

COLONEL HENDERSON AND GOVERNOR DUNCAN.—Col. Henderson, was in our city and delivered what we should call a first rate political speech. . .

Gov. Duncan is also a man of the first order. The prejudices of the people where he has traveled, had led him to take a course apparently against the Mormons—but we know Gov. Duncan, and he knows us—there is no misunderstanding between us. The August election is near at hand and that will show who will be Governor.

Every one is well aware that Jo Duncan did attempt to purchase the votes of the Mormons with half-breed lands. . . But here is in part, a solution to the mystery. The same game is to be played that was played in the last Congressional election. The Whigs and the Whig presses denounced Judge Ralston, up to the very day of the election, with having bought up the Mormon vote, and when the result was ascertained, Judge Ralston got 16 votes out of more than 600. . .

Look at the Mormon nominations in this same paper. John F. Charles a rank Whig, and one who was instrumental in procuring the passage of the Nauvoo Charter is announced as a candidate for the House of Representatives. George A. Chittenden, another Whig, is their candidate for Sheriff. Though these are small matters, yet they speak and tell a story which cannot be understood. Do not be deceived then, by the misrepresentations of honest Jo Duncan and his Whig hirelings. The Democrats have nothing to expect from the Mormons. 8

The Warsaw Signal continued the charge against the Democrats and

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the Mormons and the collusion they had formed in the following:

One of our Representatives William Smith is a Mormon, and a brother to the Prophet--our Sheriff Jacob B. Backenstos is in fact and heart a Mormon--the whole ticket is a mongrel affair, made up by agreement between Joe Smith and some anxious office-seekers, of one of the political parties the Democrats.9

_Nile's National Register_ estimated that the Saints had:

...about six thousand votes under their immediate control, sufficient to give them the balance of power between parties in the state. It is alleged that they have found out how to make a profitable market of this power... They are now accused of having contracted to support the (Democratic) party... in consideration of which the city of Nauvoo had a charter granted to it with very extraordinary powers. Legislative powers (are) conferred upon its officers equal to those possessed by the legislature itself.

After John C. Bennett had been expelled from Nauvoo and cut off from the Church, he went to Springfield where he wrote a series of embittered letters to the _Sangamo Journal_. Bennett immediately began an attack on Joseph Smith and other Church leaders at Nauvoo in which he denied everything he had sworn to before the Nauvoo authorities prior to his departure.

Newspapers over the nation were quick to reprint Bennett's statements as published in the _Sangamo Journal_. The _Journal_ editors even went so far as to invite readers to visit their offices and read Bennett's own manuscripts.11 In July, the _New York Herald_, reprinting from the _Sangamo Journal_, devoted a full column of its front page to Bennett's allega-

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9 _Warsaw Signal_, August 6, 1842.

10 _Nile's National Register_, (Baltimore, Md.), August 6, 1842.

11 _New York Herald_, July 30, 1842.
tions.12 Similar accounts had appeared earlier in the St. Louis Bulletin.13 Thomas Gregg, in his History of Hancock County, made this statement about the writings of John C. Bennett:

...These letters were widely read and commented on. They were interesting for many reasons. 1. They exhibit in strong light the character of Bennett himself. 2. Whether he is to be regarded as worthy of full credence or not, they portray the working of that semi-theocratic system which prevailed at Nauvoo; and 3. They give us an idea of the sort of people he had been associating with, and the motives which actuated them and him...14

In quoting but one paragraph from the letters written to the Journal, it was easy to see the style, type of the material and "facts" Bennett used in presenting his story. He wrote, for example, on July 2, 1842, from Carthage, Illinois, to the editor of the Journal:

I am now in this place to attend to some of my official duties as Master in Chancery, and having some leisure time, I shall proceed with my history of Joe Smith and the Saints. It is my determination to state FACTS, and such facts as will arouse the public indignation, if there is yet virtue and courage left in man—for we are exhorted to be enterprising and courageous—but the BEAST and FALSE prophet (Joe Smith) shall tremble in the days of his captivity like an aspen leaf in the wilderness. The "Lord's anointed," as Joe is called, must be washed in the Laver of the Law, until his polluted carcass and corrupt soul be purified by fire.15

The Illinois State Register, a Democratic paper, accused the Sangamo Journal of using Bennett to further its political ambitions. William Walters and George R. Weber, the Register's editors, saw in the Journal's publication of the Bennett letters a design to direct and influence the

12 Ibid., July 30, 1842.
13 St. Louis Bulletin, July 16, 1842.
14 Gregg, op. cit., p. 284.
15 Ibid., p. 284. (Italics by the author.)
approaching gubernatorial election. 16 Joseph Duncan, having failed to win the Latter-day Saint's approval, looked about desperately for some stratagem with which to gull the people. Mr. Duncan was being backed for the governorship by the Journal, thus the editor of the Register reasoned:

In sin and iniquity he conceived one—he determined to excite, if possible, all the other religious sects against the Mormons, hoping to gain their favor by hostility to this mushroom sect. He next charges the Democrats with having bought up the Mormons, by granting them a charter of extraordinary privileges, at the last session of the legislature. But seven months after the passage of the charter, the time he asserts the bargain was made, we find the Mormons to a man, voting for John T. Stuart, the Whig candidate for Congress.

With all the political wrangling that went on, the Democratic party made a clean sweep of Hancock County; and, with the Mormon vote, they also made a clean sweep of the State offices. Thomas Ford received 1,748 votes in Hancock County to 711 for his Whig rival, ex-Governor Joseph Duncan. 18 It is also worthy of note that in his inaugural address Governor Thomas Ford censored the Nauvoo Charter, stating that it had some objectionable areas in it. 19

The newspapers had been mislead by the statement made by the editor of the Wasp that the Mormons "knew Joseph Duncan." The fact was that they "knew" him too well to vote for him and thus he received only about four votes in Nauvoo. This was evidenced by the following:

16 New York Herald, July 30, 1842.
17 Ibid., July 30, 1842. (Italics by the author.)
MORMONS.--A gentlemen who left Nauvoo since the election informs us that the entire Mormon vote, with a single exception, was cast for Judge Ford and John Moore. The expression of the writer in the Wasp, that the Mormons knew Gov. Duncan, must be interpreted differently from the construction we put upon it last week. They "knew" him too well to vote for him.

Before leaving office, Governor Carlin did several things to make the Saints disenchanted with him. He advocated the repeal of the Charter, complied with the Missouri authorities in trying to arrest Joseph Smith and he would not listen to the Mormon pleas for an unbiased investigation of the conflict between the Saints and the anti-Mormons. "It appears evident, by the conversation," said Joseph Smith after having visited with the Governor, "that Governor Carlin was no friend of the Saints and they could expect no good things from him. He explicitly acknowledged his ignorance of the law touching the case in question." Governor Carlin continued to agitate for the repeal of the Nauvoo Charter and also issued a warrant for the arrest of Joseph on "old Missouri" charges. When Emma Smith wrote several letters to him, they fell on deaf ears, and the Governor insisted that Joseph would be arrested as "a fugitive from justice." He also refused Emma's invitation to make a personal investigation of the matter.

Writs for the arrest of the Prophet on the "old Missouri" charges were continually being brought to Nauvoo by law officers. Consequently, Joseph spent the latter part of the year in seclusion, avoiding arrest.

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20 *Quincy Herald*, Vol. 1, No. 46, p. 2. (Italics by the author.)
21 *DHC*, 5:119.
Justin Butterfield, the United States Attorney for the District of Illinois, gave his interpretation of the "old Missouri" charges that were then being made and indicated that they were invalid and void. This judgment was sufficient for the incoming governor, Thomas Ford, and he recommended that the Prophet appear before a circuit judge to get an official acquittal. In order to have his case properly tried at Springfield on the charge of being a fugitive from justice and an accessory to the shooting of ex-Governor Lilburn W. Boggs, Joseph permitted himself to be arrested at Nauvoo on the 26th of December and on the 27th he started for Springfield in the custody of Wilson Law. The trial commenced on January 4, 1843, before Judge Pope, a Whig, who rendered a decision of "not guilty," announced by the Judge on January 5th.

Meanwhile, the legislators continued their quest for the repeal of the Nauvoo Charter. William Smith, their Representative to the state legislature from Hancock County, delivered a speech on December 9, 1842, in defense of the Charter. Later that same month, Joseph went to Springfield, the state capitol, to try to stem the rising tide of opposition against the Charter. He evidently met with little success as the legislature continued in its attempts to repeal "certain sections" of the Nauvoo Charter. Joseph told the legislature that it "was no better than highway robbery, and that he never would consent to lowering their charter;

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24 DHC, 5:205.
25 DHC, 5:201-204.
but they might bring other charters up to it." On February 10, 1843, the bill of repeal was tabled by the House of Representatives.

A few comments on the powers of the Nauvoo Charter are appropriate. The powers granted in the charter were extraordinary. Joseph Smith had sought them and they were granted, the reason being, possibly, the desire of both political parties to gain favor and votes by being extra "nice" to the Mormons. The reason that the Prophet had designed and asked for such a powerful city government in the charter was that he and the Saints had experienced previous persecutions and intolerances in Ohio and Missouri. At the same time he realized that their (the Mormons') government must come from within and not from forces outside the realm of the Church.

Joseph Smith was wholly within the boundaries of the charter when he invoked municipal powers for his own protection against the aggressions of his old enemies in Missouri and his new betrayers in Illinois.

Wittingly or unwittingly a "city-state" had been established within the state of Illinois. Nothing short of this description could adequately describe the municipal government of Nauvoo. The problem of overlapping jurisdiction between the city and the county was solved in the type of local government embodied in the Nauvoo Charter.

B. H. Roberts said that the powers of the Nauvoo Charter would probably not have been sustained or declared constitutional by the Supreme Court:


Whether or not the state courts of Illinois and United States courts would have sustained the Nauvoo Charters if the matter of their validity had been referred to them for adjudication, may not be determined; but the likelihood is that they would not have been sustained; on the contrary they would have been most likely declared anomalous to the American system of government.

Joseph Smith had been released from arrest by Judge Pope, a Whig Judge, and his case had been ably argued by Whig lawyers. This factor was held by the Whig leaders as a means of securing the Mormon vote. The Democrats equally desired a separate party organization by which they could expect to retain the Mormon vote because they had heretofore secured it and saw no reason for a change. The Warsaw Message had succeeded the Signal, under the supervision of Gregg and Patch—the latter its political editor, who strongly favored distinct Whig organization and a full Whig local ticket.

Just after Joseph Smith was released by Judge Pope, Governor Ford told the Prophet that he "should refrain from all political electioneering." The Prophet replied, "The Mormons were driven to union in their election by persecution, and not by my influence." 28

II. DEVELOPMENTS DURING 1843

By the end of 1842, the gap between Joseph Smith and the Whig party of Illinois had become almost insurmountable. The Prophet wrote to the editor of the Wasp on January 23, 1843, the following:

I have of late had repeated solicitations to have something to do in relation to the political farce about dividing the country;


29. DHC, 5:232.
but as my feelings revolt at the idea of having anything to do with politics, I have declined, in every instance, having anything to do on the subject. I think it would be well for politicians to regulate their own affairs. I wish to be let alone, that I may attend strictly to the spirited welfare of the Church.\textsuperscript{30}

However, the above statement was not all inclusive with respect to Joseph Smith's interest and influence in politics. The following statement indicates that he would use all his force to maintain what was right for his people.

There is one thing more I wish to speak about, and that is political economy. It is our duty to concentrate all our influence to make popular that which is sound and good, and unpopular that which is unsound. 'Tis right, politically, for a man who has influence to use it, as well as for a man who has no influence to use his. From henceforth I will maintain all the influence I can get. In relation to politics, I will speak as a man; but in relation to religion I will speak in authority.\textsuperscript{31}

With relation to the repeal of the Nauvoo Charter, the fire never died even though many anti-Mormons thought it had on February 10, 1843, when the repeal bill was tabled. On March 2 another bill was introduced for the repeal or for a partial repeal. It passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 80 to 17. William Smith again spoke strongly against the bill.\textsuperscript{32} The following two newspaper articles indicated how anxious the public was to get the Nauvoo Charter repealed.

The question of repealing the Mormon charters is likely to sleep. We thought we had Smith safe—and while we kept him in fear of being delivered up to Missouri, he was safe.—But he has found out our game. Did you see the letter or Norris (?) to the Quincy

\textsuperscript{30} DHC, 5:259.

\textsuperscript{31} DHC, 5:286.

\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Journal of the House of Representatives of the 13th General Assembly, op. cit.,} p. 512-513. Also DHC, 5:295 says the vote was 58 to 33.
Herald, abusing the Circuit Court for dismissing Smith under the habeas corpus? What an imprudent act! I thought that Norris (?) was too shrewd thus to expose himself and his party.\textsuperscript{33}

In the \textit{Davenport Gazette} was found an article indicative of the aroused determination to wrestle the Charter from the Mormons:

\textbf{NAUVOO ABOLISHED}.--In the Illinois Legislature the Senate has repealed the law creating the Nauvoo Legion military corps. They also repealed the charter of the Mormon City of Nauvoo. The vote in favor of the latter was 22 to 11.\textsuperscript{34}

The last statement concerned only the State Senate Advisory Committee; the bill died in committee and did not come before the House again during that session. However, the newspapers were eager to print any item against the Mormons.

Carthage, Illinois, was fast becoming the center of anti-Mormon activity in Hancock County in 1843. Carthage was without a newspaper, though, and had been since 1837 when Thomas Gregg sold the \textit{Carthagenian} to Isaac Galland who had taken it to Montrose, Iowa. It was Gregg who, with William Patch, came into possession of the \textit{Warsaw Signal} in 1843, and changed its name to the \textit{Warsaw Message}. Editors Gregg and Patch took a more liberal attitude towards the Latter-day Saints than had Thomas Sharp, the earlier \textit{Signal} editor.

The \textit{Message} in September carried under large headlines the report of a meeting of anti-Mormons at Carthage. The Warsaw paper outlined the grievances, real and imagined, which the Carthage committee had drawn up. It "has been heard" the committee stated in the preamble to its resolu-

\textsuperscript{33}\textit{Sangamo Journal}, Vol. 12, No. 28, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{34}\textit{The Davenport Gazette}, Vol. 2, No. 34, p. 3.
tions that Joseph Smith had threatened a Hancock County officer and had "caused his City Council to pass laws contrary to the laws of the state and subversive of the rights of citizens of the State." 35

Unfortunately for the Mormons, the Warsaw Message did not long remain in the hands of Thomas Gregg. In 1844, the printing office reverted to Thomas Sharp, and the Warsaw paper again became known as the Warsaw Signal.

A Whig convention was held on May 10 at Rock Island, Illinois, at which Cyrus Walker of Macomb was unanimously nominated as the Whig candidate for Congress. Joseph P. Hoge of Galena was at about the same time nominated by the Democrats for the same office.

The two candidates were representative men of their respective parties, and were personally very popular. Mr. Walker was an old lawyer, distinguished in the state and regarded as a peer of the state's leading lawyers. Mr. Hoge was younger and newer in politics, but was talented, energetic, and a good stump speaker. He had never been in any way identified with the Mormons, residing in a county remote from them. Walker was supposed to be in good favor with the Saints and had once or twice acted as counsel for the Prophet.

Soon after the nominations the district campaign began with great vigor. To make a thorough canvass in so large a district required a great deal of time and a great amount of physical energy; often it was necessary to address the people in at least three or four, and often eight or ten, places in a county. Irrespective of the Mormon vote,

35 Warsaw Message, September 13, 1843.
there was a decided Whig majority in the district, and the probabilities strongly favored the success of the Whig candidate.

To hold the balance of power was a very dangerous position and it was a status that was seldom permanent. There were always combinations of powers that would quickly combine to depose the holder of that balance. Such were the conditions that confronted the Latter-day Saints at Nauvoo in the Congressional and County elections of the Fall of 1843. The numerical division between the two political parties in the state of Illinois was such that the citizens of Nauvoo held the necessary votes to elect the candidates of their choice. This condition brought to the Saints the usual temporary advantages that went with it. Many concessions were made to them; candidates of both political parties sought their support after the manner of political candidates who were anxious to win. In this instance, however, the position was not sought by the Saints, but was one forced upon them by the nature of the circumstances that environed them. Governor Ford said that the trouble was that the Mormons voted "en masse" for one or the other of the candidates, not dividing their power at the polls. He continued:

The great cause of popular fury was that the Mormons at several preceding elections had cast their votes as a unit, thereby making the fact apparent that no one could aspire to the honors or offices of the county within the sphere of their influence without their approbation and votes.36

Thomas C. Sharp, the editor of the Warsaw Signal, illustrated the growing fear that the non-Mormons felt towards the increasing power of the Saints. Those not understanding the Latter-day Saint concept of the

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36 Ford, op. cit., p. 318.
Kingdom and the spiritual union that existed among the Saints referred to Joseph Smith as a "despot." Mr. Sharp wrote:

The reason why the Mormons and the anti-Mormons cannot live together is this: The Mormons are governed by their religious leaders, their fanatical prophets and priests. The religious leaders are also their civil magistrates, and control the actions and votes of the people with despotic sway. The religious impostors who govern them possess unbounded power and influence over the whole fanatical horde, and can make them vote en masse for any particular candidate or do any other act that may be considered advantageous to their church . . . The power of Joe Smith is a perfect despotism—a despotism strong and vindictive in the midst of a free country. Such a despotism, whether it be religious or civil cannot exist in the midst of a free Republic, but it will inevitably arouse the indignation of the surrounding country, and no written laws, no parchment constitutions, no forms of legal proceedings, can protect it from the hostility and violence of the citizens who come in contact with it.37

The union that existed among the Saints, however, was not the only thing that prompted them to vote as they did. The Prophet himself had given one of the best explanations of the enforced necessity of the Saints voting unitedly:

With regard to election, some say all the Latter-day Saints vote together and vote as I say. But I never tell any man how to vote, or whom to vote for. But I will show you how we have been situated by bringing a comparison. Should there be a Methodist society here and two candidates running for office, one says, "If you will vote for me and put me in governor, I will exterminate the Methodists, take away their charters, etc." The other candidate says, "If I am governor, I will give all an equal privilege." Which would the Methodists vote for? Of course they would vote en masse for the candidate that would give them their rights.

Thus it has been with us. Joseph Duncan said if the people would elect him, he would exterminate the "Mormons" and take away their charters. As to Mr. Ford, he made no such threats, but manifested a spirit in his speeches to give every man his rights; hence the church universally voted for Mr. Ford, and he was elected governor.38

37 Warsaw Signal, July 19, 1843. (Italics by the author.)
38 DHC, 5:490.
In the Congressional and County elections of 1843, the "balance of power" situation became a prominent factor. It was at that time that John C. Bennett cooperated fully with the Whig party. Mr. Bennett, through his repeated writings and pleadings, was able to get Governor Reynolds of Missouri to request the extradition of Joseph Smith on the charge of "treason," which five or six years previously had been issued against President Smith. The Whigs, by using John C. Bennett, were hoping to force Governor Ford to issue extradition papers on Joseph Smith, thus causing the Democratic administration to lose the Mormon vote in the next election. The papers were issued and Joseph was arrested on June 23, 1843, at Dixon, Illinois, while visiting Emma's relatives, the Wasson family.

There were several factors which lead to the consensus that this arrest was a "Whig conspiracy." They were: (1) lawyers Edward Southwick and Shepherd G. Patrick came at the plea of Joseph Smith, but were not permitted to see him while at Dixon;\(^{39}\) (2) Whig candidate, Cyrus Walker was just six miles from Dixon; (3) Walker would not consent to defend President Smith unless he promised to vote for him (Walker) in the upcoming election (which, logically, meant the whole Mormon vote);\(^{40}\) (4) it was known that a special session of the circuit court had been called to get the extradition papers issued; (5) it was also known that Joseph would be taken to Nauvoo for trail and there he would surely be acquitted. This "conspiracy" was brought to light by the *Illinois State*

\(^{39}\) *DHC*, 5:442.

\(^{40}\) *DHC*, 5:444.
Register and reprinted in the Nauvoo Neighbor on July 19.\(^{41}\)

On July 24, 1843, Mr. Hoge, the Democratic candidate, came to Nauvoo to get the support of the Mormons. It is apparent from Joseph Smith's own account of the proceedings that he was aware of the "conspiracy," and thus the Mormon vote was beginning to waver from the Whig Party. At any rate, Sunday, August 6, the day preceding the election, President Smith said in a public meeting:

I am not come to tell you to vote this way, that way or the other. In relation to national matters, I want it to go abroad unto the whole world that every man should stand on his own merits. The Lord has not given me a revelation concerning politics. I have not asked him for one. I am a third party, and stand independent and alone. I desire to see all parties protected in their rights.\(^{42}\)

He then detailed his relations with Cyrus Walker and referred to the fact that Walker in a public speech before the people of Nauvoo had withdrawn all claim to their vote and influence if it would be detrimental to their interests as a people. President Smith added:

Brother Hyrum tells me this morning that he has a testimony to the effect that it would be better for the people to vote for Hoge; and I never knew Hyrum to say he had a revelation and it failed. Let God speak, and all men hold their peace. I never authorized Brother Law \(^{43}\) to tell my private feelings; and I utterly forbid these political demagogues from using my name henceforth and forever.\(^{43}\)

Joseph Smith personally voted for Cyrus Walker as he had promised, but the Democratic ticket both for Congressmen and for Hancock County officers was triumphantly elected.\(^{44}\) The voting records indicate that

\(^{41}\) DHC, 5:513-515.
\(^{42}\) DHC, 5:526.
\(^{43}\) DHC, 5:526.
\(^{44}\) DHC, 5:526.
the Mormons voted Hoge, except in outlying areas that didn't hear about the "revelation" to Hyrum Smith. Linn says that Hoge was elected by a majority of 455; however, Hoge officially carried Hancock County by a margin of 2,088 to 733.

The sudden and unexpected change in the vote of the citizens of Nauvoo stirred to the very depths the enmity of the Whig Party. The following newspaper articles give some indication just how upset the non-Mormons were:

After the election, Hoge was found to have a majority of 1355 votes in Hancock County. Apparently the revelation was successful. The non-Mormon failed to appreciate these convenient election revelations, which, among other things, were beginning to make the Mormons obnoxious to them.

The Burlington Hawkeye carried this comment:

1900 votes were pooled at the recent election at Nauvoo. All the Mormon candidates in the county were elected; the anti-Mormons did not turn out except at Warsaw; they feel that the election franchise to them is a mere farce.

Finally, the Warsaw Signal commented that:

The majority possessed by the Mormons in that county enabled them to select their own county courts, their own sheriffs and constables, their own city mayor, their own county, township and city offices of every kind; and also summon grand juries and petit juries devoted to the success of Mormonism. If they have the election of all the officers of the county, and the selection of the juries, a Gentile (as the non-Mormons are called) would have but little chance for justice in any controversy, civil or criminal, with a Mormon.

45 Linn, op. cit., p. 249.
46 Pease, op. cit., p. 140.
49 Warsaw Signal, August 26, 1843.
Every Whig paper was loaded with accounts of the "wickedness, corruption and enormities" that could be thought of in connection with Nauvoo. "From this time forth, the Whigs generally, and in part the Democrats, determined upon driving the Mormons out of the State; and everything connected with the Mormons became political." 50

With all this political clamor the enraged Whig party called a convention on the Saturday after the election, August 19, to protest against the Mormons holding political offices. 51 Their next meeting was held on September 6, at Carthage. To enumerate the crimes alleged against the Saints in the preamble to the resolutions which were adopted at their second meeting, they drew up a list of all the crimes that ever threatened the peace, happiness, prosperity and liberty of a state. They resolved that from recent movements among the "Mormons" there were indications that they were unwilling to conform to the ordinary restrictions of law, they therefore concluded that the people of Illinois must assert their rights in some way, that while they deplored anything like lawless violence, they pledged themselves to resist all wrongs the "Mormons" should inflict upon them in the future—"peaceably if they could, but forcibly if they must." They called upon all good and honest men to assist in humbling the pride of that "audacious despot," Joseph Smith; pledged themselves

50Ford, op. cit., p. 319. Every possible derogatory incident concerning Nauvoo or Joseph Smith was reported by the Whig press. Even a minor rift between Joseph and his wife in April, 1844, was reported in a manner greatly out of proportion to its significance. Warsaw Signal, April 17, 1844.

51Roberts, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 197. Also see Niles National Register, September 2, 1843, for a report of the meeting as it reached Maryland.
to raise a posse to take him if the authorities of Missouri made another demand for him, that it might not be said of them that they allowed the most outrageous culprits "to go unwhipped of justice." They agreed to support no man of either political party who should truckle to the "mormons" for their influence, and finally:

RESOLVED, that when the government ceases to afford protection, the citizens of course fall back upon their original, inherent right of self-defense.52

An editorial appearing October 1, 1843, in the Times and Seasons indicated that the Saints, and especially Joseph Smith, were already beginning to look forward to the next Presidential election in the autumn of 1844. The article indicated that the Saints were to look for someone who would give them protection from the mobs and violence that were beginning to grow, almost with each passing day.

In the latter part of November, there came to Nauvoo representatives of John C. Calhoun (Colonel Frierson was one of these) to visit with the Prophet. They agreed to have Senator Rhett of South Carolina present and attempt to push through Congress the Mormon claim for redress from the State of Missouri. A memorial was written for them to be presented to Congress in behalf of the Saints.53

President Smith took another measure to protect Nauvoo at this time. An "Extra Ordinance for the Extra Case of Joseph Smith" was passed by the City Council on December 8, 1843. This ordinance made it an offense punishable with life imprisonment for anyone to attempt kidnapping Joseph

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52DHC, 6:4-8.
53DHC, 6:84-88.
Smith from Nauvoo on the "old Missouri" charges. Then on December 14, a letter was received from Governor Thomas Ford\(^5\) in which he made a clean break from the Mormons. After this, he was held to be their enemy.

During the last part of November a number of the prominent Latter-day Saints, at President Smith's suggestion, made appeals to their native states, reciting the story of the wrongs inflicted upon them, deploring and denouncing the general government for assuming that it had not power to redress those grievances, and calling upon their respective states to unite in resenting the injustice of Missouri against the Saints. The appeals called upon the various states to unite in chastizing Missouri for crimes against republican institutions, and sought to procure in some way redress of grievances for those who had been wronged.\(^5\) The object of these appeals was to bring national light upon Missouri, with the hopes of receiving partial or full payment for the losses suffered there. An even more important reason was to put an end to the rising tide of mobocracy and lawlessness in Illinois by bringing this condition to national prominence.

About this time (December 21, 1843), Mayor Joseph Smith and the City Council petitioned Congress to take the City of Nauvoo directly under the protection of the United States government and to accept the Nauvoo Legion as Federal troops. This federalization of the city and Legion of Nauvoo would have put them outside the powers of the local and state authorities. Of course, this move was not feasible and further agitated

\(^5\) _DHC_, 6:113-115.
\(^5\) _DHC_, 6:88-93.
the non-Mormons.

The Prophet realized that much of the trouble was coming because the Charter of Nauvoo granted to the Saints powers that were almost as strong as the state government itself. Thus on numerous occasions the mobs and anti-Mormon elements were stymied in their attempts to harrass the Saints. In addition, if the Legion had been federalized it would not have been at the command of the Governor of the State, this would have taken from him the power to disarm the Legion.

By the close of the year 1843, the Mormons were in the powerful position of being able to control the political elections of the county and state. They had not desired this situation. But because of their unity and their voting for the person who would grant unto them their Constitutional rights, they always voted "en masse." This caused the non-Mormon element, which did not understand the Kingdom of God concept, to fear their power and eventual control of state politics.

The anti-Mormons in their attempt to offset the "Mormon menace" went to the newspapers with alarming rumors about the Latter-day Saints. They continued their fight for the repeal of the Nauvoo Charter, in order to contain Joseph Smith. Joseph Duncan, before leaving office, did all in his power to agitate and harrass the Saints. John C. Bennett's defamatory letters to the Sangamo Journal and the turning of the newly elected Governor, Thomas Ford, against them caused the Saints to widen their view and seek help and redress on a national level.
CHAPTER VIII

THE POLITICAL VIEWS AND PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORM

As the United States Presidential election of 1844 approached, the Saints began to discuss the prospective candidates for the office of President. But all the personalities who seemed to dominate the scene in 1844 proved, upon examination, to be objectionable to them. John C. Calhoun, the leading figure of the Southern Democrats, had come to be so clearly identified with slavery of the South Carolina variety that he could never be acceptable to the rest of the country. Henry Clay, the leading figure among the Whigs, was so inconsistent on most issues that he failed to satisfy a majority of the voters. Later the real feelings of the public voters expressed themselves in the dark horse, James K. Polk, who was a compromise candidate and whose strong emphasis on the forthright annexation of Texas irresistibly crystallized a wish for action.¹ The marked division of northern and southern interests became almost indelible, affecting the subsequent history of the country.

The background of the political situation has to be considered in two phases, the external and the internal. The external phases included the expansionist movement and the Anglophobia dominating the time. The internal phases, on the other hand, included the struggling elements of what could be loosely called "puritanism" and "utopianism."²


Several attempts had been made to get redress for the wrongs suffered in Missouri and the Prophet had made a trip to Washington D. C. hoping to obtain restitution through the Federal Government for the losses suffered in Missouri. But neither President Van Buren nor President Tyler had been of any help, and Calhoun had been distinctly cold on the subject of any invasion of States' rights. Now, as the Presidential campaign of 1844 approached, there appeared to Joseph Smith the opportunity of making Mormonism a national, not just a local mid-western issue and to set forth a proposal of how true freedom might be achieved.

First Joseph wrote a form letter to the principal presidential candidates asking them to state their views on civil liberties, especially indicating their views on freedom of religion. He wrote to the following men: Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, Lewis Cass, Richard M. Johnson and Martin Van Buren. This attempt to discover how the candidates stood on the issue of religious liberty and redress from Missouri proved fruitless. Whether from fear of the ministers of orthodox religions or from their former policies of political pettifogging, none of the candidates who replied made any satisfactory statement of their position.

Joseph Smith, as previously mentioned, had predicted civil strife and an eventual civil war if corrective measures were not taken to curb the conditions. Therefore, the Prophet and his associates could see no

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4 *DHC*, 6:64-65, 155-160. Discussed more fully in Chapter IX.
other solution to solving the existing trends toward the national crisis. Under these conditions the citizens of Nauvoo felt that the only consistent step they could take was to place their own candidate in the field. Consequently, at a political convention held in Nauvoo, January 29, 1844, Joseph Smith was nominated as a candidate for the Presidency of the United States, and on May 17, a state convention was held at Nauvoo where his nomination was sustained. There seemed to be at least four specific reasons for this decision. First, the Latter-day Saints could not vote with a clear conscience for the national figures who were then aspiring for the office of President. As Joseph noted in his Journal, "It is morally impossible for this people, in justice to themselves, to vote for the re-election of President Van Buren." Henry Clay was likewise dismissed and Calhoun was not mentioned for obvious reasons.

Second, Joseph Smith entered the Presidential race so that the Latter-day Saints might disassociate themselves from the political struggle which had previously given their enemies reason to abuse and slander them. An article in the Times and Seasons in February 1844 had this to say about the situation:

One great reason that we have for pursuing our present course is, that at every election we have been made a political target for the filthy demagogues in the country to shoot their loathsome arrows at. And every story has been put into requisition to blast our fame from the old fabrication of 'walk on the water' down to 'the murder of ex-Governor Boggs.' The journals have teemed with this filthy trash, and even men who ought to have more respect for themselves—men contending for the gubernatorial chair have made

5 DHC, 6:187-188.
6 DHC, 6:188.
use of terms so degrading, so mean, so humiliating, that a Billingsgate fisherwoman would have considered herself disgraced with. We refuse any longer to be thus bedaubed for either party. We tell all such to let their filth flow in its own legitimate channel, for we are sick of the loathsome smell.\(^7\)

The third reason that Joseph Smith became a candidate for President of the United States had to do with the Latter-day Saint effort to gain redress from Missouri, that in turn there might not be a recurrence of the Missouri difficulties on a larger scale in Illinois. If they could bring Missouri to justice, the disintegration of their position in Illinois could be checked. They had petitioned state legislatures, Congress, and the President of the United States and now their appeal for redress of their wrongs was to the free American people.\(^8\)

Joseph Smith gave his own reasons on the subject as follows:

I would not have suffered my name to have been used by my friends on anywise as President of the United States, or candidate for that office, if I and my friends could have had the privilege of enjoying our religious and civil rights as American citizens, even those rights which the Constitution guarantees unto all her citizens alike. But this as a people we have been denied from the beginning. Persecution has rolled upon our heads from time to time, from portions of the United States, like peals of thunder, because of our religion; and no portion of the Government as yet has stepped forward for our relief. And in view of these things, I feel it to be my right and privilege to obtain what influence and power I can, lawfully, in the United States, for protection of injured innocence; and if I lose my life in a good cause, I am willing to be sacrificed on the altar of virtue, righteousness and truth, in maintaining the laws and Constitution of the United States, if need be, for the general good of mankind.\(^9\)

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\(^7\)&lt;DHC, 6:217.


\(^9\)&lt;DHC, 6:210-211.
The tide was moving fast, as could be seen by a letter signed by Joseph Smith and written by Willard Richards to James Arlington Bennett of New York:

...We have no alternative but to fight or die. All the horrors of Missouri's murders are crowding thick upon us, and the citizens of this county declare in mass-meetings, "No peace till the Mormons are utterly exterminated from the earth." 10

Only a week before his death, Joseph made a final appeal to the Federal Government for help in maintaining the rights of the Saints. The following was an excerpt from his letter to President John Tyler:

...And now, sir, as President of the United States, will you render that protection which the Constitution guarantees in case of "insurrection and rebellion," and save the innocent and oppressed from such horrid persecution? 11

The fourth reason was to stem, if possible, the developing trends towards strife on a national scale. "We are satisfied, fully satisfied," wrote Willard Richards to James Arlington Bennett in the above letter, "that this is the best or only method of saving our free institutions from a total overthrow." 12 Continuing, he declared:

If you sit calmly still and see the most virtuous and noble people that ever trod upon the footstool of Jehovah ground to powder by a miscreant mob and not stretch forth your potent arm for their defense...your turn may come next; and where will it cease?" 13

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10 DHC, 6:517. James Arlington Bennett was the owner of the New York Herald newspaper and could have wielded a powerful influence in favor of the Mormons.

11 DHC, 6:508.

12 DHC, 6:516 also 231.

13 DHC, 6:518.
George Q. Cannon said of the bid by Joseph Smith for the Presidency:

Joseph Smith had not allowed his candidacy to be announced until every effort had been made to impress the leading politicians of the day with a sense of national peril and with recognition of the means by which overhanging disaster might be dissipated.14

Joseph Smith's *Views of the Powers and Policy of the Government of the United States*, as a statement of his political views, was a twelve page document "pointing out the way for temporal salvation of this Union, showing what would be the best policy, pointing out the rocks and quicksand where the political bark is in danger of being wrecked, and the best way to escape it."15 The Prophet said that this document was devised to "promote the interests of the General Government"16 and to give a practical solution to the cancerous problems that were gnawing relentlessly at peace in America.17

Before discussing the things he felt were wrong in the country and in its government and before giving his proposals for correcting these things, Joseph Smith drew heavily upon the Founding Fathers of the Republic to indicate his faith in the original tenets of free and open union which the Constitution had envisaged. When the Constitution spoke of forming a more perfect union, establishing justice, ensuring domestic

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15*DHC*, 6:211.

16*DHC*, 6:197.

tranquility, providing for the common defense, promoting the general welfare, and securing the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, he declared it "meant just what it said without reference to color or condition ad infinitum."\(^\text{18}\)

While Joseph Smith emphasized the individual's inalienable rights, he believed that, properly organized and righteously administered, the American system of government could and should result in a "more perfect union" among men. Said he:

Unity is power; and when I reflect on the importance of it to the stability of all governments, I am astounded at the silly moves of persons and parties to foment discord in order to ride into power on the current of popular excitement; nor am I less surprised at the stretches of power or restrictions of right which too often appear as acts of legislators to pave the way to some favorite political scheme as destitute of intrinsic merit as a wolf's heart is of the milk of human kindness. A Frenchman would say, "Presque tout aimer richesses et pouvoir." (Almost all men like wealth and power.)\(^\text{19}\)

According to the Latter-day Saint opinion, the views of Joseph Smith if they had been properly interpreted could have solved the problems that were confronting the nation. A brief review was presented in chapter one. Therefore, without going into detail on each point of the platform, the solutions to each of the pressing issues of the day will herein be stated.

**I. A POPULAR GOVERNMENT**

Joseph Smith indicated that the governmental processes should be

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\(^{18}\) **DHC**, 6:198.

\(^{19}\) **DHC**, 6:198.
more concerned with the people of the nation and not just the few who were close to the halls of Congress. The legislators had been passing legislation in favor of the more vociferous, instead of the general citizenry. The Prophet indicated that the objective of government should be "to study the convenience of the people more than the comfort of the cabinet."20

President Smith was concerned with the lack of unity in the Federal Government, and expressed his fears for eventual disintegration and strife that would follow. He said:

Verily, here,—shine the virtue and wisdom of a statesman in such lucid rays, that had every succeeding Congress followed the rich instruction in all their deliberations and enactments, for the benefit and convenience of the whole community and the communities for which it is composed, no sound of rebellion in South Carolina, no rupture in Rhode Island, no mob in Missouri expelling her citizens by Executive authority, corruption in the ballot-boxes, no border warfare between Ohio and Michigan, hard times and distress, outbreak upon outbreak in the principal cities, murder, robbery, and defalaction, scarcity of money, and a thousand other difficulties, would have torn asunder the bonds of the Union, destroyed the confidence of man with man, and left the great body of the people to mourn over misfortunes in poverty brought on by corrupt legislation in an hour of proud vanity for self-aggrandizement.21

II. FOREIGN POLICY

The United States was taking her place among the older nations of the world and thus needed a concrete foreign policy. To indicate his views on America's relations with foreign nations, Joseph Smith quoted from James Madison's 1809 Inaugural Address. Madison expressed

20 DHC, 6:199.
21 DHC, 6:199.
the view that America should seek "friendly intercourse with all nations," while staying clear of "foreign intrigues and foreign partialities." The nation, Madison declared, should "foster a spirit of independence too just to invade the rights of the others, too proud to surrender our own." As for belligerent nations, America should allow a course of "sincere neutrality." 22

Pacifism

This concept was in harmony with the concept of the Saints that America was to become Zion or the "Ensign" which would be raised unto the world. In this respect, then, Joseph Smith proposed that the United States not get involved outside the country but that it build itself up and avoid all contentions with other nations. The Prophet was not an isolationist but taught that the United States should be built up and strengthened before lending aid and power to other older nations.

III. NATIONAL SECURITY

Joseph Smith cited Washington's dictum that "to be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace." 23 The emphasis must, however, be on peace. "If national pride is ever justifiable or excusable," the Prophet quoted John Adams as saying, "it is when it springs not from power or riches, grandeur or glory, but from conviction of national innocence, information, and benevolence." 24

This proposal was in accord with the ideal of protecting self so that the potential good of the United States could go forth unto all

22. DHC, 6:201.
23. DHC, 6:199.
24. DHC, 6:200.
nations as an example to them.

At this time it looked as if the United States could easily get into a war with England over the Oregon Territory or with Mexico and France over the Texas question. Consequently, this plank in the Prophet's platform was most timely.

IV. GOVERNMENTAL DECAY

Joseph Smith was quite disenchanted with the political scene of his day. He made several comments in his "Views" which expressed this disappointment.

In the eyes of the Prophet, the United States government had reached its peak during the administration of President Jackson, but the successive administrations had been of somewhat lesser quality. He stated it thus: "General Jackson's administration may be denominated as the Acme of American glory, liberty, and prosperity."  

The Prophet continued saying:

The Government has once flourished under the guidance of trusty servants. . . . But, 'since the fathers have fallen asleep,' wicked and designing men have unrobed the Government of its glory; and the people, if not in dust and ashes, or in sackcloth, have to lament in poverty her departed greatness, while demagogues build fires in the north and south, east and west, to keep up their spirits till it is better times. But, year after year has left the people to hope, till the very name Congress or State legislature is horrible to the sensitive friend of his country as the house of 'Bluebeard' is to children or 'Crockford's Hell of London' to meek men.

Joseph Smith was dissatisfied with the government after he went

25 DHC, 6:203.

26 DHC, 6:200-201. Reference is had to Crockford's famous gambl-club house at No. 50 on the West side of St. James Street, London.
to Washington in 1839. President Van Buren had been discourteous to him and had not fulfilled the expectations that Joseph Smith had held for the President of the United States. The Prophet concluded:

At the age, then, of sixty years, our blooming Republic began to decline under the withering touch of Martin Van Buren! Disappointed ambition, thirst for power, pride, corruption, party spirit, faction, patronage, prerequisites, fame, tangling alliances, priestcraft, and spiritual weakness in high places, struck hands and revelled in midnight splendor.27

The Prophet stated that practical politics and politicians would make free use of reform measures to win fame and power. But the election of Harrison ushered in a temporary calm. Joseph quoted the words of "that venerable patriot," when, in his inaugural address, he voiced his "determination to arrest the progress" of possible trends leading away from the fundamentals upon which America had been founded "and restore the Government to its pristine health and vigor."28 But Harrison died within a month after his inaugural. He was followed, in the words of Joseph Smith, by "acting President Tyler's three years of perplexity, and pseudo-Whig-Democrat reign to heal the breaches or show the wounds, secundum artem."29 The Prophet said: "Every man has his price! Now, O People! People! turn unto the Lord and live, and reform this nation. Frustrate the designs of wicked men."30

27DHC, 6:203.
28DHC, 6:203-204.
29DHC, 6:204.
30DHC, 6:204. (Italics by the author.)
V. CONGRESSIONAL REFORM

Another part of Joseph Smith's "Views" was dedicated to the reduction of Congress by two-thirds. Congress was beginning to be cumbersome because of its size and the formalities involved. Therefore, with this reduction, the Prophet also advocated that their pay be reduced to two dollars a day, which at the time was the average daily income. He said:

Reduce Congress at least two-thirds. Two Senators from a state and two members to a million of population will do more business than the army that now occupy the halls of the national Legislature. Pay them two dollars and their board per diem (except Sundays.) That is more than the farmer gets, and he lives honestly. Curtail the officers of Government in pay, number, and power; for the Philistine Lords have shorn our nation of its goodly locks in the lap of Delilah.\(^{31}\)

The number of Congressmen seemed to Joseph Smith to be over-abundant for the effective maneuvering of the government.

The honor of public trust was to be, in the main, the compensation for holding public office. Benjamin Franklin was also a great advocate of this type of service. The Prophet was exemplary in this, also, for he was as a councilman in Nauvoo for fourteen months and received less than twenty-five dollars for his services.\(^{32}\)

VI. MORE ECONOMY AND LESS TAXATION

With the reduction of Congress, and various other means of reducing governmental expenses, Joseph Smith would have reduced the taxes. With this whole concept came the idea of equality, so significant to the

\(^{31}\)DHG, 6:205.

Kingdom of God. He said:

More economy in the national and state governments would make less taxes among the people; more equality through the cities, towns, and country, would make less distinction among the people; and more honesty and familiarity in societies would make less hypocrisy and flattery in all branches of the community; and open, frank, candid decorum to all men, in this boasted land of liberty, would begat esteem, confidence, union, and love; and the neighbor from any state or from any country, of whatever color, clime or tongue, could rejoice when he put his foot on the sacred soil of freedom, and exclaim, The very name of "America" is fraught with "friendship!"

VII. JUDICIOUS TARIFF

Because the United States was young in the commercial world and needed protection from the old, established foreign companies, Joseph Smith held that protective tariffs were necessary. These were to help the United States become independent of all other nations. The Prophet said: "Agriculture, manufacturers, navigation, commerce, need the fostering care of government." Therefore a judicious tariff would be set-up for the protection of young American industries.

VIII. FEDERAL BANKING SYSTEM

In respect to money and banking, the Prophet's ideas were as revolutionary as were his ideas on civic and economic life. At one stroke he would eliminate every vestige of private profit from our monetary scheme and vest in the federal government all the perogatives of making, holding, and lending money.

The bulk of business was to be conducted with credit, and an

33 DHC, 6:205-206.
34 DHC, 6:200-201.
enormous credit system was to be built upon a relatively small amount of gold. By controlling the gold, banks controlled credit and by controlling credit, banks controlled business. Truly by controlling business, they control the nation.

There was to be a national bank in the nation's capital. This was not a new idea, for a national bank had been organized under President Washington and again under President Madison. In the first case, it remained in existence till 1811; in the second, from 1816 to 1836, being abolished by President Jackson, on the ground that it was monopolistic. At the time when the First National Bank was created, there were only three banks in the United States—one in Boston, one in New York, and one in Philadelphia. During the administration of Woodrow Wilson, the Federal Reserve Act was passed, which established a bank in each of twelve districts. But the owners of these Federal Banks were the national banks within the district and such banks as wished to join under the conditions laid down in the law. Their depositors were the member banks and their borrowers were the members within the district. Joseph Smith's Federal Bank would be owned by the government and operated by the government; no individuals would be allowed to own stock.

This Central Bank, however, would establish "branches in each state and territory" of the Union. Whereas the stock in the Central Bank would be owned by the Federal Government, the stock of the branch banks would be owned by the state or territory in which they were located. Here, too, no individual would be permitted to own any of its stock. (Thus, in both the central bank and the branch banks the element of private profit would be entirely eliminated.)
What was to become of the earnings of these banks? The Prophet had a unique suggestion. Whatever interest was earned by the Central Bank would go (1) to pay the expenses of running the institution and (2) to reduce the burden of taxes of the people. The earnings of the branch banks would go (1) to paying the expenses of operating the bank and (2) to reduce the taxes of the citizens of the state or territory in which they were located. None of the money earned by any of the banks would go into the pockets of private individuals.

The Prophet stated it in this manner:

For the accommodation of the people, in every state and territory, let Congress show their wisdom by granting a national bank, with branches in each State and Territory, where the capital stock shall be held by the nation for the Central Bank, and by the states and territories for the branches; and whose officers and directors shall be elected yearly by the people, with wages at the rate of two dollars per day for services; which several banks shall never issue any more bills than the amount of capital stock in her vaults and the interest. The net gain of the Central Bank shall be applied to the national revenue, and that of the branches to the states and territories' revenues. And the bills shall be par throughout the nation, which will mercifully cure that fatal disorder known in cities as brokerage, and leave the people's money in their own pockets.35

IX. PRISON REFORM

The power of truth and proper moral values were to take the place of the artificial restraints of society; ideally, they were conceived in the Kingdom of God. "Remember that honesty is not subject to law. . .the law was made for transgressors,"36 said the Prophet.

35 DHC, 6:206.

36 DHC, 6:206.
Joseph Smith taught that it was the duty of society to create such conditions as will make for good manhood and womanhood.\textsuperscript{37} Previously, people had been placed in prison on trivial charges with no legal procedure for being released. Thus many people were bitterly rotting in jails throughout the country. Imprisonment for debt had been abolished in various areas, but this evil practice would have been completely eliminated throughout the United States under the Prophet's plan.

Joseph Smith was primarily interested in the latent potential of the prisoner. He would provide work for him. He would train his mind. He would cultivate his soul. But he would do more than this: he would extend to him a friendly hand and treat him as a human being, instead of dealing harshly with him. Under this policy, Joseph Smith would abolish all places of enforced confinement, except in the case of the murderer. The Prophet's idea was that the "spirit of the Holy Ghost" could be given to the transgressors, that honor and moral decency could be taught them and thus they could become respectable citizens. He said:

\begin{quote}
Petition your State Legislatures to pardon every convict in their several penitentiaries, blessing them as they go, and saying to them, in the name of the Lord, Go thy way, and sin no more. Advise your legislators, when they make laws for larceny, burglary, or any felony, to make the penalty applicable to work upon roads, public works, or any place where the culprit can be taught more wisdom and more virtue, and become more enlightened. Rigor and seclusion will never do as much to reform the propensities of men as reason and friendship. Murder only can claim confinement or death. Let the penitentiaries be turned into seminaries of learning, where intelligence, like the angels of heaven, would banish such fragments of barbarism. Imprisonment for debt is a meaner practice than the savage tolerates, with all his ferocity. \textsuperscript{38}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Doctrine and Covenants}, 68:25.

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{DHC}, 6:205.
X. MILITARY REFORM

With respect to the reformation of military procedures, Joseph Smith was idealistic. If his ideas and concepts could have been put into practice under the conditions of the Kingdom, and with the regenerative powers of the Holy Ghost, then a suggestion that no court-martials be held for desertion would not seem strange at all. He stated:

Abolish the practice in the army and navy of trying men by court-martial for desertion. If a soldier or marine runs away, send him his wages, with this instruction, that his country will never trust him again; he has forfeited his honor. Make honor the standard with all men. Be sure that good is rendered for evil in all cases.

Ideally, the plan of Joseph Smith was based on honor and moral responsibility. If a person abused this honor and trust he would not be permitted to enjoy the varied benefits of citizenship.

XI. PRESIDENTIAL AND GOVERNMENTAL POWER

The Prophet realized that occasionally private individuals did not have the financial means to complete projects for the well-being of many, so he advanced the idea that the government should assume the responsibility. For example, Joseph Smith wanted the government to build public projects that would be of benefit to the country, such as the building by the government of a dam across the Mississippi at Keokuk and the construction locks to aid shipping around the rapids at the places where necessary. This ideal was followed through and the locks were completed in 1877 at a cost of four and one-half million dollars.

Also, because the Mormons had not been able to receive federal

\(^{39}\text{DHG, 6:205.}\)
help for the persecution and harassment they had suffered, Joseph Smith would have defined more completely the powers of the President of the United States in suppressing mob action. He said:

Give every man his constitutional freedom and the President full power to send an army to suppress mobs, and the state authority to repeal and impugn that relic of folly which makes it necessary for the governor of a state to make the demand of the President for troops, in case of invasion or rebellion.

The governor himself may be a mobber; and instead of being punished, as he should be, for murder or treason, he may destroy the very lives, rights and property he should protect. Like the good Samaritan, send every lawyer as soon as he repents and obeys the ordinances of heaven, to preach the Gospel to the destitute, without purse of script, pouring in the oil and the wine. A learned Priesthood is certainly more honorable than "an hireling clergy."40

XII. SLAVERY

As was mentioned in chapter one, the issue of slavery was shaping the political scene. A definite position on the part of politicians became a crying need. Therefore, in response to a question by Orson Hyde in 1843 as to the "situation of the Negro," Joseph Smith said:

They came into the world slaves, mentally and physically. Change their situation with the whites, and they would be like them. They have souls, and are subject to salvation. Go into Cincinnati or any city, and find an educated Negro, who rides in his carriage, and you will see a man who has risen by the powers of his own mind to his exalted state of respectability. The slaves in Washington are more refined than many in high places, and the black boys will take the shine off many of those they brush and wait on.41

The Mormon leader could see that the issue of slavery was pulling the nation apart and would eventually lead to a national crisis. Consequently he advocated that the slaves be freed by the government buying

40 DHC, 6:205-206. (Italics by the author.)
41 DHC, 5:217.
their independence.

The Prophet had this to say with respect to the slavery problem:

Petition, also, ye goodly inhabitants of the slave States, your legislators to abolish slavery by the year 1850, or now, and save the abolitionist from reproach and ruin, infamy and shame. Pray Congress to pay every man a reasonable price for his slaves out of the surplus revenue arising from the sale of public lands, and from the deduction of pay from the members of Congress. Break off the shackles from the poor black man, and hire him to labor like other human beings; for "an hour of virtuous liberty on earth is worth a whole eternity of bondage." 42

In the above passages Joseph Smith indicated (1) a strong conviction respecting human freedom, (2) an absence of any prejudice on the race question, and (3) a belief concerning the Negro that went even farther than that of Northerners in general. 43

If Joseph Smith's plan to buy the slaves with money derived from the sale of public lands had been adopted, and if the value of the slaves, which had been estimated at two billion dollars 44 had been accepted, then the nation would have saved something like six billion dollars, not counting the billions of dollars paid out in pensions to Civil War veterans and their families. The total cost of the war to both South and North was approximately eight billion dollars. Furthermore, nearly seven hundred thousand men would not have died. Nor would there have been the bitterness, carpetbagging and ill-feelings that have since existed.

42DHC, 6:205.

43John Henry Evans, Leadership of Joseph Smith, Salt Lake City, Deseret News Press, 1933, p. 43.

Joseph Smith manifested a great belief in humanity. The following quote about the Southern people illustrated this point. "The Southern people are hospitable and noble. They will help to rid so free a country of every vestige of slavery, whenever they are assured of an equivalent for their property."45

XIII. ANNEXATION AND EXPANSION

One of the foremost problems of the day was the expansion of the United States borders and the annexation of Texas. The legislators were debating whether Texas should be admitted to the Union and, if she were, how this could be justified with Mexico. Also the "Oregon Territory," as explained in chapter one, was being jointly occupied by Great Britian and the United States. The occupants from Britian greatly outnumbered those from the United States, but Americans wanted this territory in order that a western sea port might be established. It was felt that by the Congressmen that rapid movement towards annexation could cause all-out war with England.

Joseph Smith was definitely an expansionist and believed that Texas and the "Oregon Territory" rightly belonged to the States. He said:

Oregon belongs to this government honorably; and when we have the red man's consent, let the Union spread from the east to the west sea; and if Texas petitions Congress to be adopted among the sons of liberty, give him the right hand of fellow-ship, and refuse not the same friendly grip to Canada and Mexico. 46

Joseph was aware that England wanted to get a foothold in Texas

45 DHC, 6:207.
46 DHC, 6:206.
and therefore he had a suggestion to stop them in this intention. He would free the slaves in Texas after accepting them into the union, and then use them and the Indians, along with United States forces, to defend the United States against the "Mother Country." Said he:

"It would be more honorable for us to receive Texas and set the negroes free, and use the negroes and Indians against our foes. Don't let Texas, lest our mothers and daughters of the land should laugh us in the teeth; and if these things are not so, God never spoke by any Prophet since the world began. How much better it is for the nation to bear a little expense than to have the Indians and British upon us and destroy us all. We should grasp all the territory we can. I know much that I do not tell. I have had bribes offered me, but I have rejected them. . . . The South holds the balance of power. By annexing Texas, I can do away with the evil. As soon as Texas was annexed, I would liberate the slaves in two or three states, indemnifying their owners, and send the negroes to Texas, and from Texas to Mexico, where all colors are alike. And if that was not sufficient, I would call upon Canada, and annex it."

Joseph definitely had the "Zion concept" in mind when he expressed the idea of world brotherhood:

"Come—yea, come, Texas; come Mexico, come Canada; and come, all the world: let us be brethren; let us be one great family, and let there be a universal peace."

In summary, he favored a true National Bank with branches everywhere in the country; the reduction of the number of Congressmen by at least two-thirds and the remainder to be paid two dollars and board per diem; curtailment of the number of government officers, especially in regard to their pay, rank and power; the elimination of imprisonment for minor offenses, and all crimes except murder to be punished by work in

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47 DHC, 6:243-44. (Italics by the author.)

48 DHC, 6:208. (Italics by the author.)
public projects; murder alone punishable by imprisonment or death; the abolition of slavery by Congress by 1850, through paying a reasonable price to slave holders from revenue coming from sale of public lands and national economies; abolition of court-martials for army deserters; fewer differences between classes; every man given his constitutional freedom and the President given the right to suppress mobs; the State governors forbidden to appeal to the President for armed support of their policies; and finally, provisions for the annexation of Oregon, Texas and even Canada and Mexico if the latter two so desired.

In his "Views" were many of the singularities of Joseph Smith, i.e., his ability as a portrayer of "Utopia" and champion of economy; a reflection of his own experience with the law and its cruelties to the criminal and the outcast; and finally, his championship of freedom and the extension of this freedom to areas beyond the limited boundaries of the United States, for the eventual establishment of the Kingdom of God. The keystone of this scheme was divine revelation. Joseph Smith believed that all human institutions should be divinely organized and directed by inspiritation.
CHAPTER IX

THE POLITICAL INVOLVEMENTS OF JOSEPH SMITH

DURING 1844 AND THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

Joseph Smith's campaign for the Presidency of the United States was not a "half-hearted" attempt. Every aspect of his attempt at the Presidency was well-planned, and his political platform dealt with the most pressing issues of the time. His determination in this endeavor was expressed in this statement:

I would not have suffered my name to have been used by my friends on anywise as President of the United States, or candidate for that office, if I and my friends could have had the privilege of enjoying our religious and civil rights as American citizens, even those rights which the Constitution guarantees unto all her citizens alike. But this as a people we have been denied from the beginning. Persecution has rolled upon our heads from time to time, from portions of the United States, like peals of thunder, because of our religion; and no portion of the Government as yet has stepped forward for our relief. And in view of these things, I feel it to be my right and privilege to obtain what influence and power I can, lawfully, in the United States, for the protection of injured innocence; and if I lose my life in a good cause I am willing to be sacrificed on the altar of virtue, righteousness and truth, in maintaining the laws and Constitution of the United States, if need be, for the general good of mankind.

The following is a copy of the letter Joseph Smith sent in behalf of the Church on November 4, 1843, to the five most likely Presidential candidates in the forthcoming election of 1844.

Hon. John C. Calhoun.

Dear Sir,—As we understand you are a candidate for the Presidency at the next election; and as the Latter-day Saints (sometimes called "Mormons," who now constitute a numerous class in the school politic of this vast republic,) have

\[1\] DEC, 6:210-211. (Italics by the author.)
been robbed of an immense amount of property, and endured nameless sufferings by the State of Missouri, and from her boarders have been driven by force of arms, contrary to our national covenants; and as in vain we have sought redress by all constitutional, legal, and honorable means, in her courts, her executive councils, and her legislative halls; and as we have petitioned Congress to take cognizance of our sufferings without effect, we have judged it wisdom to address you this communication, and solicit an immediate, specific, and candid reply to "What will be your rule of action relative to us as a people," should fortune favor your ascension to the chief magistracy?

Most respectfully, sir, your friend,
and the friend of peace, good order,
and constitutional rights,

JOSEPH SMITH

In behalf of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Post Script to Van Buren.

Also whether your views or feelings have changed since the subject matter of this communication was presented you in your then official capacity at Washington, in the year 1841, and by you treated with a coldness, indifference, and neglect, bordering on contempt.²

As was evident in the preceding letter, Joseph Smith called attention to the wrongs endured by the Saints in Missouri, and to their being robbed, abused and deprived of the rights tendered to citizens of the United States. He also pointed out their ineffectual attempts to obtain redress for their grievances. Finally, he asked these candidates what would be their "rule of action" relative to the Saints as a people, should fortune favor their "ascension to the chief magistracy?" Only John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay and Lewis Cass saw fit to answer the Prophet's letter. John C. Calhoun's opinion was that the general government possessed such limited and specific powers that the Missouri troubles of the Saints didn't fall within the jurisdiction of the Federal Government.

²DHC, 6:64-65.
When Henry Clay's answer came, he partially denied being a candidate for the Presidency, but said that if he did go into the Presidential chair, he wanted to go free and "unfettered" and with no guarantees to anyone. He said in relation to the Mormons that he would stand on his record and previous conduct. He was, however, careful to indicate that he had watched the suffering of the Saints and sympathized with them in their sufferings.

Ex-President Van Buren apparently ignored the Prophet's inquiry. Mr. Lewis Cass did not consider himself a likely candidate for the Presidential chair. However, he did express the same views as Mr. Calhoun, which were that the Federal Government was very limited in its powers.\(^3\)

Joseph Smith answered both Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun with "scathing" replies for their lack of genuine interest in sustaining the rights of the Latter-day Saints as American citizens.) In the letter to Calhoun, Joseph Smith dealt in particular with the Senator's views on the limited powers of the Federal Government in connection with the wrongs the Saints had suffered in Missouri. He also warned him in positive terms that failure to uphold the rights of the Saints as American citizens would feed the fires of disorder that were then prevalent in the land and lead eventually to civil conflict.

In the letter written to Henry Clay, Joseph Smith dealt mainly

\(^3\)DHC, 6:143-144. Wednesday, December 27, 1843: I received letters from General Lewis Cass of Michigan and John C. Calhoun of South Carolina in answer to mine of November 4th. These letters are quoted in full in the appendix.
with the gentleman's proposition. Mr. Clay said that he could offer the Mormons "no pledge nor guarantee," only that which "could be drawn from his whole life, character and conduct." To this President Smith took exception and mentioned parts of Clay's life and conduct that could cause him much embarrassment.

These letters contained certain superfluous and "educated" terms seemingly bent on giving them an air of importance. It was the opinion of Church historians that W. W. Phelps was mainly responsible for these insertions.  

On January 29, 1844, Joseph Smith, the Twelve Apostles, W. W. Phelps, Hyrum Smith and John P. Greene met to decide the course of action that the Mormon people should take for the Presidential election. After a discussion of the probable candidates, it was decided that the Saints could not support any of them and feel good about it. Consequently, Willard Richards proposed that the Saints run an independent electoral ticket. Joseph Smith was to be the Presidential candidate with James Arlington Bennett of New York as the Vice-Presidential nominee. It was later learned that Mr. Bennett was of foreign birth and thus ineligible to run, so Colonel Solomon Copeland of Paris, Tennessee, was next offered the number two position. For some unknown reason he didn't accept, and Sidney Rigdon, who had recently moved to Pennsylvania, was selected.

At the above-mentioned meeting Joseph Smith began to dictate to W. W. Phelps his "Views on the Powers and Policy of the Government of

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4 CHC, 2:146.

5 DHC, 6:187-188.
the United States." This document was completed on February 7, 1844. These "Views" were discussed in the preceding chapter.

By this time the importance of the upcoming Presidential election was beginning to be manifest and Joseph Smith made the following statement:

If you attempt to accomplish this, you must send every man in the city who is able to speak in public throughout the land to electioneer and make stump speeches, advocate the "mormons" religion, purity of elections, and call upon the people to stand by the law and put down mobocracy. David Yersly must go—Parley P. Pratt to New York, Erastus Snow to Vermont, and Sidney Rigdon to Pennsylvania. After the April Conference we will have General Conferences all over the nation, and I will attend as many as convenient. Tell the people we have had Whig and Democratic Presidents long enough: we want a President of the United States. If I ever get into the presidential chair, I will protect the people in their rights and liberties. I will not electioneer for myself. Hyrum, Brigham, Parley and Taylor must go. Clayton must go, or he will apostatize. The Whigs are striving for a king under the garb of Democracy. There is oratory enough in the Church to carry me into the presidential chair the first slide. 6

I. THE NAUVOO CHARTER

The agitation in Illinois did not stop as far as the desire for the repeal of the Nauvoo Charter was concerned, and throughout the year 1844 elements in the General Assembly continued their attacks upon the Charter in an effort to abolish it. For several months, however, the action of the legislators to repeal the Charter was suspended. Still dominant in the minds of many were the political consequences of such a repeal. In the Senate bills for the repeal of the Charter were constantly introduced during 1844. Joseph Smith, noting this constant opposition to

6DHQ, 6:188. (Italics by the author.)
the Charter, placed a motion before the city council on February 12 that
the "extra ordinance for the extra case of Joseph Smith" be removed
from the Charter. This "extra ordinance" was a measure against anyone
who would try to arrest Joseph Smith on the "old Missouri" charges. This
action was accordingly taken. Notwithstanding this move on the part
of the Mormons, a bill to abolish the Charter was introduced on December
28, 1844. This bill was given a review in a national newspaper which
stated that a bill for the consideration of the repeal of the Nauvoo
Charter had been introduced in the State Senate and had passed by a vote
of 108 to 4. (Two of the four dissenting votes were cast by Mormons in
the legislature.) Two newspapers also expressed a belief that the Charter
would be quickly repealed.

Orson Pratt and Orson Hyde were sent in March with proper
credentials to Washington D. C. to lobby for the passage of a "Memorial" in
which Joseph Smith proposed to raise a company of one hundred thousand
armed volunteers (1) to extend a hand of deliverance to Texas, (2) to
protect the inhabitants of Oregon from foreign aggressors and (3) to
prevent the crowned nations from encircling the United States on its
western and southern boarders. Elder Pratt was selected to work with the
Senate and Elder Hyde with the House of Representatives in getting support
for this Memorial. These men met with the delegation from Illinois which

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7 DHC, 6:212.

8 Niles National Register, December 28, 1844. The same source was able to report the following in February, 1845: "The Mormon Charter of Nauvoo has been unconditionally repealed by the legislature of Illinois, by a decided majority of votes."

9 DHC, 6:275-277.
consisted of Joseph P. Hoge, J. J. Hardin, John Wentworth, Stephen A. Douglas and Senator James Stemple. Despite the fact that they worked hard, they had very little success. John Wentworth started reading the "Memorial" to the House of Representatives on May 25, 1844, but was stopped by an objection from J. R. Ingersoll. It was then moved in the House that they proceed with the territorial expansion problem. This ended the presentation of the "Memorial" before that body of legislature. Meanwhile, Stephen A. Douglas advised the Saints to go west. He also supplied Orson Pratt with a map of Oregon and copies of John C. Fremont's freshly published report of the Rocky Mountain area.

The implications of this "Memorial" could have been far-reaching. It would have put upwards of a hundred thousand settlers, many would have been Mormons, in the Rocky Mountains, thus establishing the United States' claim to the Oregon Territory. It would have sent them there under governmental protection and the Missourians, who were at this time the principal settlers there, could have done nothing to stop them.

Correlated with this proposal was an effort on the part of Joseph Smith to have the Federal Government recognize his state commission as a Lieutenant-General, which, according to Edward Tullidge, would have made him the highest ranking officer in the United States Army and thus Commander-in-Chief under the President of the United States. There again it is evident that Joseph Smith could foresee the coming difficulties that were about to break upon the Saints in Illinois and was moving to preserve his authority against the influence of his enemies in the State Legislature.

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There are several reasons why this "Memorial" never received a fair hearing. First, it was an election year, and none of the congressmen were willing to do anything that would hurt their chances in the upcoming election. Second, there were already two bills before Congress for the annexation of Oregon. And, third, they would not recognize Joseph Smith's commission for obvious reasons.

While the Memorial was not acted upon with favor by the Federal Government, there were certain benefits that the Saints acquired by this experience in Washington D. C.: First, those involved gained experience and valuable "contacts". Second, much factual information was gained about the west. Third, because of the valuable "contacts" gained and other "contacts" obtained later, the Mormon Battalion within two years was called in answer to the supplications of the Church for aid from the government in their westward trek.

On February 15, the Nauvoo Neighbor printed an editorial entitled "Who Shall Be Our Next President?" The main ideas and planks of Joseph Smith's platform were reiterated, and an appeal was made for men to go stumping and preaching throughout the country in support of Joseph Smith.

In answer to this article, an "anti-Mormon" meeting was held in Carthage to devise ways of getting the Mormons out of Illinois. A special "Wolf Hunt" was called and everyone knew the wolves would be Mormons. This hunt, however, never materialized.

The Prophet, analyzing the trends that were then being manifest, charged the Twelve Apostles on February 20th to send a delegation to the mountains to seek out a place for the Saints to inhabit. Five days later Joseph prophesied that within five years the Saints would be out of the
hands of their enemies. At this same time the "Views" came off the press (1,500 copies) and copies were sent to the President of the United States, the Supreme Court Justices, the Cabinet Officers, Congressmen, Postmasters and any other persons who had influence.

On the 27th of February the editorial in the Nauvoo Neighbor pleaded with the Latter-day Saints to disabuse the public mind of all the "false coloring" of the character of Joseph Smith. Then again on the 7th of March, in a special meeting for the construction of the Temple, Joseph Smith said, "I care little about the presidential chair. I would not give half as much for the office of President of the United States as I would for the one I now hold as Lieutenant-General of the Nauvoo Legion." Continuing, the Prophet further justified his nomination and campaign for the presidential chair along with again illustrating the plan the Mormons had of making mobocracy a national issue in order to quiet the mob spirit. He said:

We have as good a right to make a political party to gain power to defend ourselves, as for demagogues to make use of our religion to get power to destroy us. In other words, as the world has used the power of government to oppress and persecute us, it is right for us to use it for the protection of our rights. We will whip the mob by getting up a candidate for President.

When I get hold of the Eastern papers, and see how popular I am, I am afraid myself that I shall be elected; but if I should be, I would not say, "YOUR CAUSE IS JUST, BUT I CAN DO NOTHING FOR YOU." Again, the seriousness of Joseph Smith's campaign was demonstrated

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11 DHC, 6:227-228.
12 DHC, 6:243.
13 DHC, 6:243. (Italics by the author.)
when on March 11, 1844, he organized a "Special Council." One of the
duties of this council, explained in chapter four, was to carry out the
political activities of the Church. Theologically, it was held to be the
beginning of the "Kingdom of God" on the earth. There were twenty-three
present who were mentioned by name and the charge given them was:

...to take into consideration the best policy for this
people to adopt to obtain their rights from the nation and
insure protection for themselves and children; and to secure
a resting place in the mountains, or some uninhabited region,
where we can enjoy the liberty of conscience guaranteed to us
by the Constitution of our country. ...

It should also be noted that this "Special Council" took over the
operation of the political campaign of Joseph Smith. Later it was
responsible for the movement of the Saints westward.

The non-Mormons, in their struggle to break down the unity of the
Saints and to further incite public opinion against them, turned to the
newspapers. The newspapers teemed with such terms describing the Prophet
as "strange," "fanatic," and a "religious dictator." The intention of
most of the newspaper articles was to keep Joseph Smith from receiving
national attention by degrading him. A quotation from the most vehement,
the Warsaw Signal, illustrated this point.

Joe—You are a greater dunce than nature ever intended you
to be, and that you have about as much knowledge in your cranium
of the relative limits and structure of our Governmental policy,
as there is essential moisture in a January corn stalk.

One week later, the same paper commented: "As a General,

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14 DHC, 6:260-261.
15 DHC, 6:261.
16 Warsaw Signal, March 13, 1844.
Legislator, and Jurist, Joe can’t be beat—except by a jackass."  

Other papers such as the *Quincy Whig* and the *New York Tribune* also published very slanderous reports about Joseph Smith’s candidacy.

Despite the abuse by the press, other methods of determining the interest of the citizenry in Joseph Smith and his bid for the Presidency were the comments of important individuals. One of these was the famous Methodist circuit rider, Peter Cartwright, who claimed that "almost every infidel association in the Union declared in his favor."

It was interesting to conjecture what the word "infidel" meant to a Methodist preacher. This possibly could be interpreted as a complaint against an increasing movement toward Joseph Smith’s bid for the Presidential chair.

A very important announcement was made by Joseph Smith on the 15th of April, in which he outlined his campaign plans from May 4 to September 15. In his history, Joseph Smith gave credit to the Twelve Apostles for the planning of these "conferences," but in actuality it was the "Council of Fifty"—the Twelve being executive officers—who completed the plans.

There were forty-seven such "conferences" to be held. These were to cover twenty-six states and one territory. Along with the "conferences," some three hundred and forty men were called and assigned various states in which they were to campaign for the election of Joseph Smith.

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20 *DHC*, 6:334-340. For a complete copy see Appendix.
These Elders were told to "preach the truth in righteousness and present before the people General Smith's Views of the Powers and Policy of the General Government, and seek diligently to get up electors who would go for him for the presidency." In addition to these three hundred and forty Elders, the Twelve Apostles were to travel throughout the nation and they, along with Joseph Smith, would attend as many of the "conferences" as was possible.

Almost immediately after this announcement was made, Latter-day Saints began to volunteer for this assignment. On the 23rd of April, D. S. Hollister was selected to go to the National Whig Convention to be held at Baltimore, Maryland; the convention was called the Baltimore Convention. There he was to nominate Joseph Smith for President.

From time to time during the campaign various tolerant or complimentary articles were written about Joseph Smith. The following was reprinted in the Nauvoo Neighbor from the St. Louis Organ:

FOREBEAR AWHILE—WE'LL HEAR A LITTLE MORE. The matter is now settled with Messrs. Clay, Tyler and Van Buren. Let Mr. Clay return at once from his political perambulations in the South, Mr. Tyler abandon his hopes of re-election by aid of the "immediate annexation" of Texas, and let Mr. Van Buren be quiet at Kinderhook, that he may watch the operations of the "sober second thought" of the people!  

Another article in a positive vein which was printed in the Times and Seasons and written by a non-Mormon said:

General Smith is a man who understands the political history of his country as well as the religious history of the world,

21 DHC, 6:340.

22 Nauvoo Neighbor, May 8, 1844, and also DHC, 6:361.
as perfectly as any politician or religionist I have ever met with. He advances ideas which if carried into effect would greatly benefit the nation in point of commerce and finance; and while he maintains and philosophically shows that our country is approaching a fearful crisis, which, if not arrested, will end in disgrace to the country, and cause our national banner to hug its mast in disgust and shame, clearly points out the remedy.

... Mr. Smith's "Views of the Powers and Policy of the Government" manifest a Republican spirit, and if carried out, would soon place the nation in a prosperous condition and brighten the prospects of those who now toil so incessantly to support the profligate expenditures and luxurious equipage of the present rulers and representatives of our nation.

Joseph Smith is a man who is in every way calculated to make a free people happy. He is liberal in his sentiments and allows every man the free expression of his feelings on all subjects; he is sociable and easy in his manners, is conversant and familiar on all exciting topics, expresses himself freely and plainly on the different methods of administering the Government, while he is not ashamed to let the world know his views and criticise upon his opinions. 23

Continuing along on the sympathetic side of Joseph Smith's campaign, and more particularly with the "Views" of the Prophet, the Bloomington Herald printed the following:

Jo Smith having written to, and received letters from all the prominent candidates for the Presidency, (except Van Buren, whose views he had received on a former occasion) had determined, that as none of them think that the general government is unlimited in power, therefore, he will not vote for any of them, nor shall his followers. Jo., therefore, announces himself a candidate for the Presidency, and shows forth his views, in a circular an hour long. We have not seen this wonderful production, but it is a choice Morceau, and like his late letter to John C. Calhoun, filled with statesman-like views. 24

Instead of using the "Gallup Polls" in the prediction of elections the people in the West used mock-voting as they journeyed on the steam-

23 *Times and Seasons*, May 12, 1844 and also *DHC*, 6:367-368. (Italics by the author.)

ships passing up and down the Mississippi River. Most of those polled were tourists, businessmen, etc., which gave as good a cross-section opinion as could be had under the existing conditions. These polls were printed occasionally in the Nauvoo Neighbor. On May 8, 1844, the following appeared in the Neighbor:

General Joseph Smith, the acknowledged modern Prophet, has got them all in the rear; and from the common mode of testing the success of candidates for the Presidency, to wit, by steamboat elections, he (Smith) will beat all the other aspirants to that office two to one.25 We learn from the polls of the steamboat OSPREY, on her last trip to this city, that the vote stood for General Joseph Smith, 20 gents and 5 ladies; Henry Clay, 16 gents and 4 ladies, Van Buren, 7 gents and 0 ladies.26

This type of polling was carried on by others. John D. Lee, while campaigning for the Prophet, reported that while on the boat bound for St. Louis he also had taken a poll. The results of this poll were 29 for Joseph Smith, 8 for Henry Clay and 2 for Martin Van Buren.26 Still another such poll was taken on May 30 on board the OSPREY and the results were as follows:

Joseph Smith, 65 gentlemen and 6 ladies = 71
Henry Clay, 27 gentlemen and 3 ladies = 30
Van Buren, 12 gentlemen and 0 ladies = 12

The next significant event was the State Convention held at Nauvoo on the 17th of May. At this convention Joseph Smith was nominated officially for the Presidency of the United States with Sidney Rigdon of Pennsylvania receiving the nomination for the Vice Presidency. There

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25 Nauvoo Neighbor, May 8, 1844; DHC, 6:361.
27 DHC, 6:423.
were resolutions passed which invited all men of all parties to assist in
the work of reforming the government. Also, the "Views" of Joseph Smith
were ratified by the convention.

According to B. H. Roberts, a noted Church Historian, the name
of the party was "The Reform, Jeffersonian Democracy, Free Trade and
Sailors Rights Party." Most of the time it was referred to as the
"National Reform Party."

At this convention various men were requested to return to their
native states and to campaign there. These men were to specifically seek
out the national delegate and attempt to convince him to vote for Joseph
Smith at the Baltimore Convention which was to be held July 13.

Another indication of the seriousness of Joseph Smith and his
adherents was evidenced by the journal kept by George A. Smith. He wrote:

Friday, May 17, 1844. A large assembly of five hundred people
at Ottawa (Lasalle County, Illinois) and I addressed them on the
subject of General Joseph Smith's claim for a candidate for the
Presidency of the United States. . .The people applauded the
sentiment very highly and seemed much pleased. After the meeting
they all quietly dispersed without the least sign of any unfriendly
feeling.

Monday, May 20. Met in the evening at a public meeting and
read General Joseph Smith's views on the policy and powers of
government and discussed the subject of politics (at Newark, Kendal
County, Illinois). Brother Fulmer addressed the meeting in a very
eloquent manner; after which I made some remarks about the treatment
and conduct of the Mormons, etc. The Democrats got much agitated
and Dr. Smith turned around and attempted to defend Mr. Clay. Much
confusion prevailed but finally the meeting adjourned in good order.

Tuesday, May 21. We preached on politics to a very attentive
assembly in a large school room (at Newark).

Friday, May 31. A public meeting was held to which General
Charles C. Rich and Elders Harvey Green, S. Brent, and many other
Elders came. Wilford Woodruff made an address to the people on
the claims of General Joseph Smith for a candidate for the

Presidency of the United States. After him I made some remarks using such arguments as I knew of. Elder David Fulmer, General C. Rich and others followed with suitable remarks. A good feeling prevailed among the congregation; and they gave good attention and seemed much pleased. (Meeting held at Comstock, Kalamazoo County, Michigan.)

Monday, June 10. Delivered a lecture on politics (at Pleasant Valley, Livingston County, Michigan).  

II. TROUBLES WITHIN THE CHURCH

During the month of April there was a "cleansing" within the Church, and the Foster, Law, and Higbee brothers were cut off from the Church. These men were instrumental in planning and plotting the deaths of Joseph and Hyrum Smith two months later in Carthage. These men were determined to have their vengeance upon Joseph Smith, so they concocted the idea of the Nauvoo Expositor. The Expositor had two objectives as contrived by the Fosters, Laws and Higbees. One objective was to publish gossip about plural marriage. The other objective was the possible destruction of the Expositor. Through this they hoped to unite the public against Joseph Smith.

This cleverly devised scheme was used to put the Prophet in a situation from which it would be impossible for him to escape. If nothing were done with the Expositor's publications, Joseph Smith and the Saints could be degraded without limit. And if action were taken against the publishing of issues, the wrath of the public could be brought against Joseph Smith for not permitting freedom of the press.

The Nauvoo City Council decided to destroy the press of the

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29George Albert Smith, "History of George Albert Smith," copy in Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City, Utah.
Expositor after the first issue on June 7, 1844. The Sheriff and his deputies were sent to carry out the order. The City Council charged the Expositor press with being a "public nuisance." As a "public nuisance," the City Council had the authority to destroy the press.

Because Joseph Smith was receiving national recognition, the mob forces worked even more diligently to keep him out of the national political scene. These people were determined that the Prophet should not, with his unified body of believers, acquire a controlling influence in the State; therefore, a mass meeting of the anti-Mormons was called June 13, 1844, at Warsaw to further solidify their plans to oppose the Prophet. The main reason for their hostile sentiments at this meeting was the recent destruction of the Nauvoo Expositor press at the command of the Nauvoo City Council.

There were eight resolutions adopted by this mass meeting. They were:

1. That the citizens of Warsaw were outraged at the "alarming character" of Joseph Smith who was "revolutionary and tyrannical" in tendency; and who, "being under color of law (referring to the destruction of the Expositor), calculated to subvert and destroy, in the minds of the community, all reliance upon the law."

2. That the citizens of Warsaw felt required to go before the law for redress, but the law had failed them, and they declared that the destruction of the Expositor was a violation of "the highest privilege in government."

3. That all "good citizens put an immediate stop to the career of the mad prophet and his demoniac coadjutors." They "must not only
defend" themselves, but they must be resolved to "carry the war into the enemy's camp" by cooperating fully with the Missourians "to exterminate, utterly exterminate, the wicked and abominable Mormon leaders, the authors of their troubles."

4. That a committee of five be appointed to rally sufficient forces to carry out the resolutions of the mass meeting.

5. That they were resolved to drive the Mormons from Nauvoo and the surrounding areas.

6. That the people were to arm themselves in readiness for such event.

7. That two "discreet" men be sent to Governor Ford in Springfield to solicit his sanction of their actions.

8. That these men were to take sufficient evidence with them to convince Governor Ford that their resolved actions were justified.\footnote{DHC, 6:463-465. (Italics by the author.)}

From the above resolutions it was evident that the "spirit of mobocracy" had obtained a firm hold on the non-Mormon element of the area. Their complaint was the destruction of the Expositor; but as seen from their own statements this was only an excuse for getting at the real source of trouble, which was the unity of the Mormons and the potential power they would control if they were permitted to continue progressing. Also, the anti-Mormons were determined not to let Joseph Smith get the true "Mormon Story" before the nation.

In the midst of all the confusion and rumors being spread, the Mormons called a meeting on June 16. The purpose of this meeting was to
organize, in an efficient manner, for the purpose of disabusing the public mind of the false rumors and slanderous remarks being circulated about Joseph Smith and the Saints. Men were sent into all parts of Hancock County to proclaim the truth about the Church and the Prophet. They carried with them a "proclamation" issued by Joseph Smith explaining the conditions in Nauvoo. The Prophet also sent a letter to Governor Ford asking him to come to Nauvoo to investigate the rumors. On June 22, the Governor answered, saying:

"...I am anxious to preserve the peace. A small indiscretion may bring on a war. The whole country is now up in arms, and a vast number of people are ready to take the matter into their own hands. Such a state of things might force me to call out the Militia to prevent a civil war. And such is the excitement of the country that I fear the Militia, when assembled, would be beyond legal control."

From the above article, it was evident the frenzied state of mind in which the people of Hancock County found themselves. The Governor was even afraid that the Militia would join the mob if they were called into service.

In a final appeal for Federal action in averting the calamities which were about to take place, Joseph Smith wrote to President John Tyler, requesting the Federal government to take steps to allay the spirit of mobocracy which had gripped Hancock County. This petition fell on deaf ears as the preceding pleas had done.

Such was the state of affairs when Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were taken to Carthage and there shot in cold blood on June 27, 1844.\(^{32}\)

\(^{31}\)DHC, 6:536. (Italics by the author.)

\(^{32}\)DHC, 6:508.
Joseph Smith had an ideal plan which he had diligently tried to propagate. He had tried to get his plan functioning smoothly to the extent that others would be able to see the benefits it would have for mankind. One reason that his plan was not put into practice was that his actions were interpreted wrongly by the non-Mormons. Instead of taking away their individual freedoms and liberties, he proposed to give them more liberty and freedom through union and the love of God. The non-Mormons, however, believed that Joseph Smith was becoming a despot and a religious fanatic, who, if not checked in time, would eventually gain political control over the State.

The anti-Mormons increased their determination to prevent Joseph Smith's becoming a national political figure. Meetings were held for the purpose of unifying the non-Mormon elements against the Saints. And when the Expositor was destroyed, the needed provocation was obtained for the mob forces to unite in the eviction and/or the extermination of Mormons from Illinois.
CHAPTER X

CONCLUSIONS

The history of Mormonism reveals that almost from its beginning the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was to be not only a basis for an ecclesiastical kingdom of God, but a temporal kingdom as well. This temporal kingdom, never fully realized, was to develop into a political state preparatory to the inauguration of the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth. Ultimately, this Kingdom was expected to rule the whole world.

The ideal concepts proclaimed by Joseph Smith were of such a nature as to cover all aspects of life. The Church and its organization came first, then the rest of the kingdom was to follow. With the Church came the necessary elements to expand the concept of the kingdom of God into all functions of life. These elements were the spirit of revelation, the gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost, and the eternal bonds of brotherhood as attained through the Priesthood. With these elements Zion could be raised as a "standard" in such a way as to attract individuals from all over the world.

The political and ecclesiastical kingdoms were to be two separate institutions under the direction of the Priesthood. Gentiles were not only considered eligible to become members of the political kingdom, regardless of their religious affiliations, but might also represent their respective groups in its governing councils. This concession was a logical corollary of a special emphasis on the doctrine of individual rights which in Mormon political thought was emphasized in place of the
traditional concept of majority rule. The doctrine of individual rights was to serve as a check against the injustices which, as the Mormons had experienced themselves, could occur only too easily under the ideal of majority rule. The political kingdom of God was to be the vehicle for realizing these ideas. All aspects of the Kingdom would function under the direction of Jesus Christ and by the authority of the Holy Priesthood. The constitution of the kingdom of God was to resemble closely the Constitution of the United States. The leaders of the Church apparently saw no significant contradiction between democratic ideals and theocratic practices.

The General Council, as this embryo world government was most often called, actively worked to foster the Prophet's political concepts. In response to its immediate cause for organization, the Council directed the political campaign for Joseph Smith and explored the possibilities of relocating the Saints in the West. After the untimely death of Joseph Smith, it was this Council which organized and directed the exodus of the Saints to the West.

The Latter-day Saints were trying to organize a kingdom that would be built upon unity as well as freedom, while the rugged American of this day was an ardent individualist and wanted nothing to do with anything that might infringe upon his freedom. Consequently, lack of understanding on the part of the general public caused Mormonism to be continually rebuffed and belittled.

The ideal system proposed by Joseph Smith was to be built upon the concept of unity in all walks of life; not just religious, but social, economic, and political as well. That this unity was most offensive to
the rest of the population was expressed by Bernard De Voto: "Their political solidarity offended everyone... Their landholdings and financial practices were economic weapons, so were their cooperative business enterprises."\(^1\)

Another element of consideration was the fact that in the United States during this time there was a great amount of lawlessness and mobocracy. If the non-Mormons were threatened with the dominating influence of Mormonism, as they believed would be the case if Joseph Smith was permitted to gain State control, they were easily incited to violent action. The newspaper editors did much to excite these undisciplined actions by the citizens at large with their emotion-packed editorials.

Joseph Smith, with his knowledge and foresight, held that the United States government was descending from the high standards of the Jacksonian and pre-Jacksonian periods. As he entered the political scene, it was his desire to restore the former ideals and check the existing disintegration. To this end, the Prophet proposed answers to the political problems of his day. His main reason for entering the Presidential campaign was to get the "Mormon question" before the public. With this move he hoped to right the wrongs the Saints had suffered in Missouri and check the spirit of mobocracy in Illinois.

In part, Joseph Smith was successful in making a national issue out of Mormonism. This was evidenced by the comments made about him in the national newspapers.\(^2\) His ideas and concepts were being put before the


\(^2\) *DHC*, 6:154.
public almost daily in some part of the country. In addition, the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith was given front-page priority in hundreds of newspapers across the nation.3 The Warsaw Signal ran an "extra" on the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, as did the New York Herald when the news reached New York.

During his political career, Joseph Smith achieved national recognition. He had been to Washington, D. C., and was personally acquainted with many of the prominent political leaders of the day. These political leaders realized that this man could very easily take on national stature. John C. Calhoun was interested enough to send his son to visit with Joseph Smith just four days before the Prophet was killed.4 What they talked about is unknown, but John C. Calhoun was extremely interested in the westward movement and had advised the Saints to go west on previous occasions.

Joseph Smith could have very definitely influenced the 1844 Presidential election. The fact was that the Prophet's balance of power in Illinois might have been the balance of national power in the election.

"The actual popular vote stood as follows in November-December, 1844: James K. Polk, Democrat, 1,337,000; Henry Clay, Whig, 1,299,000; James C. Birney, Liberty (Abolitionist) Party, 62,000."5 Continuing with this thought, Dr. G. Homer Durham said:

In the electoral college, Polk required 138 votes of the 275 total to win. He carried fifteen states to gain 170 electors, thirty-

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3Banks, op. cit., p. 280.
4DHC, 7:78.
5Durham, op. cit., p. 203-204.
two more than necessary. Clay carried eleven states and gained 105 electors. Birney obtained none. If Joseph Smith had lived, and had carried only Illinois, which is within the range of possibility, Polk's total, true, would only have been reduced by Illinois' nine electors, from 170 to 161, leaving 114 for Clay.

But this is not the significant aspect of this election. Remember that Brigham Young and men like him were campaigning in the 26 states (and 1 territory)! Edward Stanwood-in History of the Presidency (1906) shows that "a change of 7,918 votes, carefully distributed in the states of New York, Pennsylvania, Georgia and Indiana would have given Clay (not Polk) a majority of 103 electoral votes." If New York alone had gone Whig, Clay would have been elected by 141 to 134! And if Clay had been elected, it is barely possible that California, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Idaho, Washington might not be a part of the United States of America today! I say "barely possible" and not probable; but "manifest destiny" might have been delayed another decade, to say nothing of the curious way in which Polk provoked an expansionist war with Mexico!

In view of the fact that what happened did happen, is there any evidence to suggest that Mormon voting behaviour contributed to the significant decision that put Polk not Clay in Washington? Too much cannot be suggested, of course. But Hancock County, Illinois, went for Polk, and the returns in Illinois showed 57,920 for Polk, 45,528 for Clay and 5,570 for Birney. So Illinois stood for Polk and expansion, That Mormon campaigning in the east was abruptly terminated meant that no deflection, from this source, affected Polk's slim majority in such states as New York (36 electors, Polk, 237,577; Clay, 232,482), and Pennsylvania (26 electors, Polk, 167, 635; Clay, 161,203).

The Mormons as a unified group moved into Illinois where the political balance between the Whigs and the Democrats was almost equal.

Shortly, the union of the Mormons became apparent to the non-Mormons. Thus opposition was generated; political opponents openly denounced them in hopes of gaining favor with the non-Mormon populace. Under the ideal of social union and forced toward union by their enemies, the Mormons voted "en masse" for the candidates who would give them freedom and constitutional rights.

6 Ibid.
With the active proselyting program of the Saints, converts were arriving almost daily in the Nauvoo area. With the increase of adherents, their influence in social and political matters grew. In order to counter this influence, newspaper editors and anti-Mormons fostered the spirit of mobocracy and in other ways threatened the security of the Mormon's system. One such way this security was threatened was by the proposed repeal of the Nauvoo Charter.

Finally, as a means of coping with the problem, Joseph Smith entered the presidential campaign. The Prophet entered the campaign with the intent of getting redress from Missouri in order to prevent a possible repetition in Illinois of such actions as the Saints had experienced in Missouri. He also sought in this way to turn the national spotlight on the mob elements in Illinois. But before his program was fully underway, the mob elements in Illinois, coupled with apostates from the Mormon system, devised a plan to bring about the destruction of the Prophet.

Thus commenced the slanderous Nauvoo Expositor with the intent of continuing its publication or inciting the Prophet to take action against it. When the Nauvoo City Council did take action, the opponents of Joseph Smith raised the general issue of the freedom of the press, thereby whipping the mob spirit into a consuming fire. Under these pervading emotions the Prophet and his brother, Hyrum, were brutally murdered in Carthage.

The basic cause for conflict between the Mormons and the non-Mormons was the religion of the Latter-day Saints. However, it is concluded from this study first, that Joseph Smith entered the political scene with the purpose of gaining time and freedom sufficient to establish his concept of the Kingdom of God on the earth. Secondly, "rugged
individualists" of Illinois feared the potential political power of Joseph Smith to the extent that they unlawfully took his life.
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APPENDIX A

HOW THE MORMONS VOTED IN HANCOCK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, AND SURROUNDING AREAS

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<th>Year</th>
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APPENDIX B

THE SAINT'S PETITION TO CONGRESS

After thirteen pages of describing the persecutions that the Saints had suffered in Missouri the Memorial continued.

For these wrongs, the "Mormons" ought to have some redress; yet how and where shall they seek and obtain it? Your constitution guarantees to every citizen, even the humblest, the enjoyment of life, liberty, and property. It promises to all, religious freedom, the right to all to worship God beneath their own vine and fig tree, according to the dictates of their conscience. It guarantees to all the citizens of the several states the right to become citizens of any one of the states of his adoption. Yet of all these rights have the "Mormons" been deprived. They have been driven from the state of Missouri, at the point of the bayonet, and prevented from enjoying and exercising the rights of citizens of the state of Missouri. It is the theory of our laws, that for the protection of every legal right, there is provided a legal remedy. What, then, we would respectfully ask, is the remedy of the "Mormons"? Shall they apply to the legislature of the state of Missouri for redress? They have done so. They have petitioned, and these petitions have been treated with silence and contempt. Shall they apply to the federal courts? They were, at the time of the injury, citizens of the state of Missouri. Shall they apply to the court of the state of Missouri? Whom shall they sue? The order for their destruction, then extermination, was granted by the executive of the state of Missouri. Is not this a plea of justification for the loss of individuals, done in pursuance of that order? If not, before whom shall the "Mormons" institute a trial? Shall they summon a jury of the individuals who composed the mob? An appeal to them were in vain. They dare not go to Missouri to institute a suit; their lives would be in danger.

For ourselves we see no redress, unless it is awarded by the Congress of the United States. And here we make our appeal as American Citizens, as Christians, and as Men—believing that the high sense of justice which exists in your honorable body, will not allow such oppression to be practiced upon any portion of the citizens of this vast republic with impunity; but that some measures which your wisdom may dictate, may be taken, so that the great body of people who have been thus abused, may have redress for the wrongs which they have suffered. And to your decision they look with confidence; hoping it may be such as shall tend to dry up the tear of the widow and orphan, and again place in situations of peace, those who have been driven from their homes, and have had to wade through scenes of sorrow and distress.

And your Memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray.¹

¹DHG, 4:24-38.
APPENDIX C

LETTER: JOHN C. CALHOUN TO JOSEPH SMITH

PORT HILL, December 2, 1843.

Sir:—You ask me what would be my rule of action relative the Mormons or Latter-day Saints, should I be elected President; to which I answer, that if I should be elected, I would strive to administer the government according to the Constitution and the laws of the union; and that as they make no distinction between citizens of different religious creeds I should make none. As far as it depends on the Executive department, all should have the full benefit of both, and none should be exempt from their operation.

But as you refer to the case of Missouri, candor compels me to repeat what I said to you at Washington, that, according to my views, the case does not come within the jurisdiction of the Federal Government, which is one of limited and specific powers.

With respect, I am, &c., &c.

J. C. Calhoun.²

²DHCh, 6:155-56.
APPENDIX D

LETTER: JOSEPH SMITH TO JOHN C. CALHOUN

NAUVOO, ILLINOIS, January 2, 1844

Sir:--Your reply to my letter of last November, concerning your rule of action towards the Latter-day Saints, if elected President, is at hand; and that you and your friends of the same opinion relative to the matter in question may not be disappointed as to me or my mind upon so grave a subject, permit me, as a law-abiding man, as a well-wisher to the perpetuity of constitutional rights and liberty, and as a friend to the free worship of Almighty God by all, according to the dictates of every person's own conscience, to say that I am surprised that a man or men in the highest stations of public life should have made up such a fragile "view" of a case, than which there is not one on the face of the globe fraught with so much consequence to the happiness of men in this world or the world to come.

To be sure, the first paragraph of your letter appears very complacent and fair on a white sheet of paper. And who, that is ambitious for greatness and power, would not have said the same thing? Your oath binds you to support the Constitution and laws; and as all creeds and religions are alike tolerated, they must, of course, all be justified or condemned according to merit or demerit. But why--tell me why all are the principal men held up for public stations so cautiously careful not to publish to the world that they will judge a righteous judgment, law or no law? for laws and opinions, like the vanes of steeple, change with the wind.

One Congress passes a law, another repeals it; and one statement says that the Constitution means this, and another that; and who does not know that all may be wrong? the opinion and pledge, therefore, in the first paragraph of your reply to my question, like the forced stream from the engine of a steam-boat, makes the show of a bright cloud at first; but when it comes in contact with a purer atmosphere, dissolves to common air again.

Your second paragraph leaves you naked before yourself, like a likeness in a mirror, when you say, that according to your view, the Federal Government is "one of limited and specific powers" and has no jurisdiction in the case of the "Mormons". So then a State can at any time expel any portion of her citizens when impunity; and, in the language of Mr. Van Buren, frosted over with your gracious "views of the case," though the cause is ever so just, Government can do nothing for them, because it has no power.
Go on, the, Missouri, after another set of inhabitants (as the
Latter-day Saints did,) have entered some two or three hundred thousand
dollars' worth of land, and made extensive improvements thereon; go on,
the, I say; banish the occupants or owners, or kill them, as the mobbers
did many of the Latter-day Saints, and take their land and property as
spoil; and let the Legislature, as in the case of the "Mormons," ap-
propriate a couple of hundred thousand dollars to pay the mob for doing
that job; for the renowned Senator from South Carolina, Mr. J. C.
Calhoun, says the powers of the Federal Government are so specific and
limited that it has no jurisdiction of the case!

0 ye people who groan
under the oppression of tyrants!—ye exiled Poles, who have felt the
iron hand of Russian grasp!—ye poor and unfortunate among all nations!
come to the asylum of the oppressed; buy ye lands of the General Govern-
ment; pay in your money to the treasury to strengthen the army and the
navy; worship God according to the dictates of your own consciences; pay
in your taxes to support the great heads of a glorious nation: but
remember a "sovereign State" is so much more powerful than the United
States, the parent Government, that it can exile you at pleasure, mob
you with impunity, confiscate your lands and property, have the Legis-
lature sanction it,—yea, even murder you as an edict of an emperor, and
it does not wrong; for the noble Senator of South Carolina says the power
of the Federal Government is so limited and specific, that it has no
jurisdiction of the case! What think ye of imperium in imperio?

Ye spirits of the blessed of all ages, hark! Ye shades of
departed statemen, listen! Abraham, Moses, Homer, Socrates, Solon,
Solomon, and all that ever thought of right and wrong, look down from
your exaltations, if you have any; for it is said, "In the midst of
counselors there is safety;" and when you have learned that fifteen thou-
sand innocent citizens, after having purchased their lands of the United
States and paid for them, were expelled from a "sovereign State," by
order of the Governor, at the point of the bayonet, their arms taken
from them by the same authority, and their right of migration into said
State denied, under pain of imprisonment, whipping, robbing, mobbing,
and even death, and no justice or recompense allowed; and, from the
Legislature with the Governor at the head, down to the Justice of the
Peace, with a bottle of whisky in one hand a bowie-knife in the other,
hear them all declare that there is no justice for a "Mormon" in that
State; and judge ye a righteous judgment, and tell me when the virtue of
the States was stolen, where the honor of the General Government lies
hid, and what clothes a senator with wisdom. 0 nullifying Carolina! 0
little tempestuous Rhode Island! Would it not be well for the great men
of the nation to read the fable of the partial judge; and when part of
the free citizens of a State had been expelled contrary to the Consti-
tution, mobbed, robbed, plundered, and many murdered, instead of searching
into the course taken with Joanna Southcott, Ann Lee, the French
Prophets, the Quakers of New England, and rebellious negroes in the slave
States, to hear both sides and then judge, rather than have the mortifi-
cation to say, "Oh, it is my bull that has killed your ox! That alters
the case! I must inquire into it; and if, and if—!
If the General Government has no power to reinstate expelled citizens to their rights, there is a monstrous hypocrite fed and fostered from the hard earnings of the people! A real "bull beggar" upheld by sycophants. And although you may wink to the priests to stigmatize, wheedle the drunkards to swear, and raise the hue-and-cry of--"Imposter! false prophet! G-- d--n old Joe Smith!" yet remember, if the Latter-day Saints are not restored to all their rights and paid for all their losses, according to the known rules of justice and judgment, reciproca-
tion and common honesty among men, that God will come out of His hiding place, and vex this nation with a sore vexation: yea, the consuming wrath of an offended God shall smoke through the nation with as much distress and woe as independence has blazed through with pleasure and delight. Where is the strength of Government? Where is the patriotism of a Washington, a Warren, and Adams? And where is a spark from the watch-fire of '76, by which one candle might be lit that would glimmer upon the confines of Democracy? Well may it be said that one man is not a state, nor one state the nation.

In the days of General Jackson, when France refused the first installment for spoliations, there was power, force, and honor enough to resent injustice and insult, and the money came; and shall Missouri, filled with negro-drivers and white men stealers, go "unwhipped of justice" for tenfold greater sins that France? No! verily, no! While I have powers of body and mind--while water runs and grass grows--while virtue is lovely and vice hateful; and while a stone points out a sacred spot where a fragment of American liberty once was, I or my posterity will plead the cause of injured innocence, until Missouri makes atonement for all her sins, or sinks disgraced, degraded, and damned to hell, "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

Why, sir, the powers not delegated to the United States and the States belong to the people, and Congress sent to do the people's business have all power; and shall fifteen thousand citizens groan in exile? O vain men! will ye not, if ye do not restore them to their rights and $2,000,000 worth of property, relinquish to them, (the Latter-day Saints,) as a body, their portion of power that belongs to them according to the Constitution? Power has its convenience as well as inconvenience. "The world was not made for Caesar alone, but for Cassius too."

I will give you a parable. A certain lord had a vineyard in a goodly land, which men labored in at their pleasure. A few meek men also went and purchased with money from some of these chief men that labored at pleasure a portion of land in the vineyard, at a very remote part of it, and began to improve it, and to eat and drink the fruit thereof,—when some vile persons, who regarded not man, neither feared the lord of the vineyard, rose up suddenly and robbed these meek men, and drove them from their possessions, killing many.
This barbarous act made no small stir among the men in the vine-
yard; and all the portion who were attached to that part of the vineyard
where the men were robbed rose up in grand council, with their chief men,
who had firstly ordered the deed to be done, and made a covenant not to
pay for the cruel deed, but to keep the spoil, and never let those meek
men set their feet on that soil again, neither recompense them for it.

Now, these meek men, in their distress, wisely sought redress of
those wicked men in every possible manner, and got none. They then sup-
plicated the chief men, who held the vineyard at pleasure, and who had
the power to sell and defend it, for redress and redemption; and those
men, loving the fame and favor of the multitude more than the glory of
the lord of the vineyard, answered—"Your cause is just, but we can do
nothing for you, because we have no power."

Now, when the lord of the vineyard saw that virtue and innocence
were not regarded, and his vineyard occupied by wicked men, he sent men
and took the possession of it to himself, and destroyed those unfaithful
servants, and appointed them their portion among hypocrites.

And let me say that all men who say that Congress has no power to
restore and defend the rights of her citizens have not the love of the
truth abiding in them. Congress has power to protect the nation against
foreign invasion and internal broil; and whenever that body passes an
act to maintain right with any power, or to restore right to any portion
of her citizens, it is the supreme law of the land; and should a State
refuse submission, that State is guilty of insurrection or rebellion,
and the President has as much power to repel it as Washington had to
march against the "whisky boys at Pittsburg," or General Jackson had to
send an armed force to suppress the rebellion of South Carolina.

To close, I would admonish you, before you let your "candor
compel" you again to write upon a subject great as the salvation of man,
consequential as the life of the Savior, broad as the principles of
eternal truth, and valuable as the jewels of eternity, to read in the
8th section and 1st article of the Constitution of the United States,
the first, fourteenth and seventeenth "specific" and not very "limited
powers" of the Federal Government, what can be done to protect the lives,
property, and rights of a virtuous people, when the administrators of
the law and law-makers are unbought by bribes, uncorrupted by patronage,
untempted by gold, unavowed by fear, and uncontaminated tangling alliances
—even like Caesar's wife, not only unspotted, but unsuspected! And God,
who cooled the heat of Nebuchadnezzar's furnace or shut the mouths of
lions for the honor of a Daniel, will raise your mind above the narrow
notion that the General Government has no power, to the sublime idea
that Congress, with the President as Executor, is an almighty in its
sphere as Jehovah is in his.
With great respect, I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant,

Joseph Smith.

Hon. ("Mr.") J. C. Calhoun,
Fort Hill, S. C.
APPENDIX E

LETTER FROM HENRY CLAY TO THE PROPHET

ASHLAND, November 15, 1843

DEAR SIR.--I have received your letter in behalf of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, stating that you understand that I am a candidate for the presidency, and inquiring what will be my rule of action relative to you as a people should I be elected.

I am profoundly grateful for the numerous and strong expressions of the people in my behalf as a candidate for president of the United States; but I do not so consider myself. That must depend upon future events and upon my sense of duty.

Should I be a candidate, I can enter into no engagements, make no promises, give no pledge to any particular portion of the people of the United States. If I ever enter into that high office I must go into it free and unfettered, with no guarantees but such as are to be drawn from my whole life, character and conduct.

It is not inconsistent with this declaration to say that I have viewed with lively interest the progress of the Latter-day Saints; that I have sympathized in their sufferings under injustice, as it appeared to me, which have been inflicted upon them; and I think, in common with other religious communities, they ought to enjoy the security and protection of the Constitution and the laws.

I am, with great respect, your friend and obedient servant,

H. Clay

To Joseph Smith, Esq. 4

4DHCO, 6:376.
APPENDIX F

JOSEPH SMITH'S LETTER TO HENRY CLAY

NAUVOO, ILL., May 13th, 1844

Sir,—Your answer to my inquiry, 'What would be your rule of action towards the Latter-day Saints, should you be elected President of the United States?' has been under consideration since last November, in the fond expectation that you would give (for every honest citizen has a right to demand it,) to the country a manifesto of your views of the best method and means which would secure to the people the whole people, the most freedom, the most happiness, the most union, the most wealth, the most fame, the most glory at home, and the most honour abroad, at the least expense. But I have waited in vain. So far as you have made public declarations, they have been made like your answer to the above, soft to flatter, rather than solid to feed the people. You seem to abandon all former policy which may have actuated you in the discharge of a statesman's duty, when the vigour of intellect and the force of virtue should have sought out an everlasting habitation for liberty; when, as a wise man, a true patriot, and a friend to mankind, you should have resolved to ameliorate the lawful condition of our bleeding country by a mighty plan of wisdom, righteousness, justice, goodness, and mercy, that would have brought back the golden days of our nation's youth, vigour, and vivacity, when prosperity crowned the efforts of a youthful republic, when the gentle aspirations of the sons of liberty were, 'We are one!'

[In your answer to my questions last fall, that peculiar tact of modern politicians declaring, 'If you ever enter into that high office, you must go into it free and unfettered, with no guarantees but such as are to be drawn from your whole life, character, and conduct,' so much resembles a lottery-vendor's sign, with the goddess of good luck sitting on the car of fortune a-straddle of the horns of plenty, and driving the merry steeds of beatitude, without reins or bridle, that I cannot help exclaiming—0 frail man, what have you done that will exalt you? Can anything be drawn from your life, character, or conduct that is worthy of being held up to the gaze of this nation as a model of virtue, charity, and wisdom?] Are you not a lottery picture, with more than two blanks to a prize? Leaving many things prior to your Ghent treaty, let the world look at that and see where is the wisdom, honour, and patriotism which ought to have characterized the plenipotentiary of the only free nation upon the earth? A quarter of a century's negotiation to obtain our rights on the north-eastern boundary, and the motley manner in which, Oregon tries to shine as American territory, coupled with your presidential race and come-by-chance secretaryship in 1825, all go to convince the friends of freedom, the golden patriots of Jeffersonian democracy, free trade, and sailor's rights, and the protectors of person and property that an honourable war is better than a dishonourable peace.
But had you really wanted to have exhibited the wisdom, clemency, benevolence, and dignity of a great man in this boasted republic, when fifteen thousand free citizens were exiled from their own homes, lands, and property, in the wonderful patriotic State of Missouri, and you then upon your oath and honour occupying the exalted station of a Senator of Congress from the noble-hearted State of Kentucky, why did you not show the world your loyalty to law and order, by using all honourable means to restore the innocent to their rights and property? Why, sir, the more we search into your character and conduct, the more we must exclaim from Holy Writ, "The tree is known by its fruit."

Again; this is not all. Rather than show yourself an honest man, by guaranteeing to the people what you will do in case you should be elected President, 'you can enter into no engagement, make no promises, and give no pledges' as to what you will do. [Well, it may be that some hot-headed partisan would take such nothingarianism upon trust; but sensible men and even ladies would think themselves insulted by such an evasion of coming events!] If a tempest is expected, why not prepare to meet it, and, in the language of the poet, exclaim—

'Then let the trial come; and witness thou If terror be upon me,—if I shrink Or falter in my strength to meet the storm When hardest it besets me.'

True greatness never wavers; but when the Missouri compromise was entered into by you for the benefit of slavery, there was a mighty shrinkage of western honour; and from that day, sir, the sterling Yankee, the struggling Abolitionist, and the staunch Democrat, with a large number of the liberal-minded Whigs, have marked you as a black-leg in politics, begging for a chance to shuffle yourself into the Presidential chair, where you might deal out the destinies of our beloved country for a game of brag that would end in—'Hark from the tombs a doleful sound.' Start not at this picture; for your 'whole life, character, and conduct' have been spotted with deeds that cause a blush upon the face of a virtuous patriot. So you must be contented in your lot, while crime, cowardice, cupidity, or low cunning have handed you down from the high tower of a statesman to the black-hole of a gambler.] A man that accepts a challenge or fights a duel is nothing more nor less than a murderer; for Holy Writ declares that 'Whoso sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed:' and when in the renowned city of Washington the notorious Henry Clay dropped from the summit of a Senator to the sink of a scoundrel to shoot at that chalk-line of a Randolph, he not only disgraced his own fame, family, and friends, but he polluted the sanctum sanctorum of American glory; and the kingly blackguards throughout the whole world are pointing the finger of scorn at the boasted 'asylum of the oppressed,' and hissing at American statesman as gentlemen vagabonds and murderers, holding the olive branch of peace in one hand a pistol for death in the other! Well might the Savior rebuke the heads of this nation with 'Wo unto you scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites!' for the United
States Government and Congress, with a few honourable exceptions, have
gone the way of Cain, and must perish in their gainsayings, like Korah
and his wicked host. And honest men of every clime, and the innocent,
poor, and oppressed, as well as heathens, pagans, and Indians, every-
where, who could but hope that the tree of liberty would yield some
precious fruit for the hungry human race, and shed some balmy leaves for
the healing of nations, have long since given up all hopes of equal
rights, of justice and judgment, and of truth and virtue, when such pol-
luted, vain, heaven-daring, bogus patriots are forced or flung into the
front rank of Government to guide the destinies of millions. Drape the
heavens with weeds of wo, gird the earth with sackcloth, and let hell
mutter one melody in commemoration of fallen splendour! for the glory
of America has departed, and God will set a flaming sword to guard the
tree of liberty, while such mint-tithing Herods as Van Buren, Boggs,
Benton, Calhoun, and Clay are thrust out of the realms of virtue as fit
subjects for the kingdom of fallen greatness. Vox reprobis vox Diaboli!

In your late addresses to the people of South Carolina, where
rebellion budded, but could not blossom, you 'renounced ultraism,'
'high tariff,' and almost banished your 'banking systems' for the more
certain standard of 'public opinion.' This is all very well, and marks
the intention of a politician, the calculations of a demagogue, and the
allowance for leesings of a shrewd manager, just as truly as the weather-
cock does the wind when it turns upon the spire. Hastings for the South,
barbecues for the West, confidential letters for the North, and 'Ameri-
can system' for the East.

'Lull-a'by baby upon the tree top,
And when the wind blows the cradle will rock.'

Suppose you should also, taking your 'whole life, character, and con-
duct,' into consideration, and as many hands make light work, stir up
the old 'Clay party,' the 'National Republican party,' the 'High
Protective Tariff party,' and the late coon-skin party, with all their
paraphernalia, ultraism, ne plus ultraism, sine qua non, which have
grown with your growth, strengthened with your strength, and shrunk with
your shrinkage, and ask the people of this enlightened republic what
they think of your powers and policy as a statesman; for verily it
would seem, from all past remains of parties, politics, projects, and
pictures, that you are the Clay, and the people the potter; and as some
vessels are marred in the hands of the potter, the natural conclusion
is that you are a vessel of dishonour.

You may complain that a close examination of your 'whole life,
character, and conduct,' places you, as a Kentuckian would pleasantly
term it, 'in a bad fix.' But, sir, when the nation has sunk deeper and
deeper in the mud at every turn of the great wheels of the Union, while
you have acted as one of the principal drivers, it becomes the bounden
duty of the whole community, as one man, to whisper you on every point
of government, to uncover every act of your life, and inquire what
mighty acts you have done to benefit the nation, how much you have
tithed the mint to gratify your lust, and why the fragments of your
raiment hang upon the thorns by the path as signals to beware!

But your shrinkage is truly wonderful! Not only your banking
system and high tariff project have vanished from your mind 'like the
baseless fabric of a vision,' but the 'annexation of Texas' has touched
your pathetic sensibilities of national pride so acutely, that the poor
Texans, your own brethren, may fall back into ferocity of Mexico, or be
sold at auction to British stock-jobbers, and all is well, for 'I,' the
old Senator from Kentucky, am fearful it would militate against my
interest in the north to enlarge the borders of the Union in the south.
Truly 'a poor wise child is better than an old foolish king who will be
no longer admonished.' Who ever heard of a nation that had too much
territory? Was it ever bad policy to make friends? Has any people ever
become too good to do good? No, never. But the ambition and vanity of
some men have flown away with their wisdom and judgment, and left a
croaking, skeleton to occupy the place of a noble soul.

Why, sir, the condition of the whole earth is lamentable. Texas
dreads the teeth and the nails of Mexico. Oregon has the rheumatism,
brought on by a horrid exposure to the heat and cold of British and
American trappers. Canada has caught a bad cold from extreme fatigue in
the patriot war. South America has the headache, caused by bumps against
the beams of Catholicity and Spanish sovereignty. Spain has the gripes
from age and inquisition. France trembles and wastes under the effects
of contagious diseases. England groans with the gout, and wiggles with
wine. Italy and the German States are pale with the consumption,
Prussia, Poland, and the little contiguous dynasties, duchies, and
domains, have the mumps so severely, that 'the whole head is sick, and
the whole heart is faint.' Russia has the cramp by lineage. Turkey has
the numb palsy. Africa, from the curse of God, has lost the use of her
limbs. China is ruined by the Queen's evil, and the rest of Asia fear-
fully exposed to the smallpox, the natural way, from British pedlars.
The islands of the sea are almost dead with the scurvy. The Indians are
blind and lame; and the United States, which ought to be the good
physician with 'balm from Gilead' and an 'asylum for the oppressed,' has
boosted and is boosting up into the council chamber of the Government a
clique of political gamblers, to play for the old clothes and old shoes
of a sick world, and 'no pledge, no promise to any particular portion of
the people' that the rightful heirs will ever receive a cent of their
Father's legacy! Away with such self-important, self-aggrandizing and
self-willed demagogues! Their friendship is colder than polar ice, and
their profession meaner than the damnation of hell.

O man! when such a great dilemma of the globe, such a tremendous
convulsion of kingdoms shakes the earth from centre to circumference;
when castles, prison-houses, and cells raise a cry to God against the
futility of man; when the mourning of the fatherless and the widow causes
anguish in heaven; when the poor among all nations cry day and night for
bread, and a shelter from the heat and storm; and when the degraded black slave holds up his manacled hands to the great statesmen of the United States, and sings—

'O liberty, where are thy charms,
That sages have told me were sweet!'

And when fifteen thousand free citizens of the high-blooded republic of North America are robbed and driven from one State to another without redress or redemption, it is not only time for a candidate for the Presidency to pledge himself to execute judgment, and justice in righteousness, law or no law; but it is his bounden duty as a man, for the honour of a disgraced country, and for the salvation of a once virtuous people, to call for a union of all honest men, and appease the wrath of God by acts of wisdom, holiness, and virtue! 'The fervent prayer of righteous man availeth much.'

Perhaps you may think I go too far with my strictures and inendoes, because in your concluding paragraph you say 'it is not inconsistent with your declarations to say that you have viewed with a lively interest the progress of the Latter-day Saints, that you have sympathised in their sufferings under injustice, as it appeared to you, which has been inflicted upon them, and that you think, in common with all other religious communities, they ought to enjoy the security and protection of the constitution and the laws.' If words were not wind, and imagination not a vapour, such 'views' with a lively interest' might coax out a few Mormon votes; such 'sympathy' for their suffering under injustice might heal some of the sick yet lingering amongst them, raise some of the dead, and recover some of their property from Missouri; and finally, if thought was not a phantom, we might, in common with other religious communities, 'you think, enjoy the security and protection of the constitution and laws.' But during ten years, while the Latter-day Saints have bled, been robbed, driven from their own lands, paid oceans of money into the Treasury to pay your renowned self and others for legislating and dealing out equal rights and privileges to those in common with all other religious communities, they have waited and expected in vain! If you have possessed any patriotism, it has been vailed by your popularity, for fear the Saints would fall in love with its charms. Blind charity and dumb justice never do much towards alleviating the wants of the needy; but straws show which way the wind blows. It is currently rumored that your dernier resort for the Latter-day Saints is emigrate to Oregon or California. [Such cruel humanity, such noble injustice, such honorable cowardice, such foolish wisdom, and such vicious virtue could only emanate from Clay.] After the Saints have been plundered of three or four millions of land and property by the people and powers of the sovereign State of Missouri—after they have sought for redress and redemption, from the county court to Congress, and been denied through religious prejudice and sacerdotal dignity—after they have builded a city and two temples at an immense expense of labor and treasure—after they have increased from hundreds to hundreds of thousands, and after they have sent missionaries to the various nations of
the earth to gather Israel, according to the predictions of all the holy Prophets since the world began, that great plenipotentiary, the renowned Secretary of State, the ignoble duelist, the gambling Senator, and Whig candidate for the Presidency, Henry Clay, the wise Kentucky lawyer, advises the Latter-day Saints to go to Oregon to obtain justice and set up a government of their own.

O ye crowned heads among all nations, is not Mr. Clay a wise man, and very patriotic? Why, great God! to transport 200,000 people through a vast prairie over the Rocky Mountains, to Oregon, a distance of nearly two thousand miles, would cost more than four millions! or should they go by Cape Horn in ships to California, the cost would be more than twenty millions! and all this to save the United States from inheriting the disgrace of Missouri for murdering and robbing the Saints with impunity! Benton and Van Buren, who make no secret to say that if they get into power they will carry out Boggs' exterminating plan to rid the country of the Latter-day Saints, are

'Little nipperkins of milk,'

compared to Clay's great aquafortis jars. Why, he is a real giant in humanity! 'Send the Mormons to Oregon, and free Missouri from debt and disgrace!' Ah! sir, let this doctrine go to-and-fro throughout the whole earth—that we, as Van Buren, said, know your cause is just, but the United States Government can do nothing for you, because it has no power. 'You must go to Oregon, and get justice from the Indians!'

[I mourn for the depravity of the world; I despise the hypocrisy of Christendom; I hate the imbecility of American statesmen; I detest the shrinkage of candidates for office from pledges and responsibility; I long for a day of righteousness when 'He whose right it is to reign shall judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth;' and I pray God, who hath given our fathers a promise of a perfect government in the last days, to purify the hearts of the people and hasten the welcome day.]

With the highest consideration for virtue and unadulterated freedom,

I have the honor to be
Your obedient servant,

Joseph Smith

Hon. H. Clay, Ashland, Ky. 5

5Millennial Star XXII, pp. 533-537.
APPENDIX G

LETTER FROM LEWIS CASS TO JOSEPH SMITH

Detroit, Dec. 9, 1843

Sir: I received not long since your letter of the 5th ult., in which after referring to the difficulties, which the people called 'Mormonites' have experienced, you ask me 'what would be my rule of action towards them as a people should fortune favor my ascension to the Chief Magistracy.

[The contingency to which you refer is one which I have never sought, and never shall seek to attain,] nor will the prospect of it whether near or remote, have the slightest influence upon my feelings or opinions. And without any affection of humility, I may truly say that when I look to the able men whose names are now before the country, in connection with that high office, I cannot but think that the selection will fall upon one of them, rather than upon me.

Still ordinary civility requires that I should answer you, and I do so with the less hesitation as your questions involves neither doubt nor difficulty. I think then that the 'Mormonites' should be treated as all other persons are treated in this country. That is they should be protected in their rights, and punished when they violate the laws. Our constitution recognizes no system of religion, either as a test for public office, or as a condition for private protection, and all, whatever may be their faith or worship, are equal before the law.

In thus stating great general principles, I have stated what would be my rule of action, as a magistrate or as a citizen, should any case arise requiring my decision. Farther than this, I can make no declaration. Of the facts to which you refer, I have but a vague knowledge, having been absent from the country, during the period of their occurrence. [I am bound, however, in candor to add, that if your application for the redress to which you consider yourselves entitled has been, as you say rejected by the constituted authorities of the State of Missouri and by Congress, I do not see what power, the President of the United States can have over the matter, or how he can interfere in it.]

Very respectfully, I am sir,
Your obedient servant,

Lewis Cass

Gen. Joseph Smith
Nauvoo.  

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^Journal History, December 9, 1843.
APPENDIX H

IMPORTANT POLITICAL DATES IN THE
ILLINOIS PERIOD OF CHURCH HISTORY

1839

February 25. The Democratic Association of Quincy meets and approves a resolution friendly to Mormon settlement in Illinois.

October 20. Decides to personally present the Mormon case before the 26th Congress and President Van Buren.

October 29. Leaves Nauvoo for Washington, D. C., with Rigdon, Elias Higbee, Porter Rockwell, and Dr. R. D. Foster.

November 18. Leaves all but Higbee in Columbus, Ohio, and proceeds to Washington.

November 28. Arrives in the nation's capital; the Twenty-sixth Congress is about to convene.

November 29. Interviews President Martin Van Buren in the White House.

December 6. Meets with the Illinois congressional delegation at the capitol, on Mormon claims bill, totaling $1,381,044. Calls on Clay, Calhoun, and others.

1840


March 4. Arrives in Nauvoo. In Washington the Senate judiciary committee discharges itself from the Mormon claim ruling that "It can never be presumed that a state (Missouri) either wants the power or lacks the disposition to redress the wrongs of its own citizens...whether they proceed from the lawless acts of her officers or any other persons." The view accords with a Supreme Court ruling of 1833.

April 8. General conference at Nauvoo goes on record that it considers the Senate report "unconstitutional and subversive to the rights of a free people."

October 4. General conference votes to draft a bill of incorporation for Nauvoo. Plans laid for establishing stakes of Zion throughout the area. People pouring in.
November 28. Elias Higbee and R. B. Thompson represent the Prophet's petition to the Congress.

December 16. The Nauvoo charter passes the Illinois legislature, is signed by Governor Carlin. A young legislator named Abraham Lincoln comes forward and cordially congratulates the Mormon managers on their bill's successful passage.

1841

February 1. First municipal election, Nauvoo. Joseph elected member of the City Council.

February 3. Presents ordinances establishing Nauvoo Legion and University. State legislature amends Nauvoo charter to permit "any citizen of Hancock county. . . (to) attach himself to the Nauvoo Legion. . . ."

February 4. Elected Lieut.-Gen., Nauvoo Legion. (Commissioned formally by the Governor, March 10.)

May 24. Joseph calls upon the Saints to concentrate at Nauvoo.

June 4. Trouble afoot, visits Governor Carlin at latter's Quincy home.

June 5. Surprise arrest, on Carlin's order, granting extradition to Missouri.


June 10. Douglas orders release. Returns to Nauvoo to regulate affairs and build up the city.

1842


March 2. Is visited by Governor Dudley of Connecticut.

May 19. Elected Mayor in place of John C. Bennett who resigned May 17.

May 22. Issues statement disavowing complicity in attempt on life of ex-Governor Boggs in Missouri.
June 1. Attends a political meeting "in the grove" and approves list of candidates for public office in Hancock County, with exception of the candidate for sheriff.

July 4. In an Independence Day address, declares the purpose of the Legion "to yield obedience to the institutions of our country, and protect the Saints from mobs.

July 5. Approves ordinance making it illegal to remove any citizen from the city without privilege of investigation before the Municipal Court of Nauvoo and the writ of habeas corpus. (A Missouri dragnet, aided by extradition in Illinois, is after the Prophet.)

August 6. In Montrose, Iowa, at installation of Rising Sun Lodge, York rite Masons, prophesies removal of the Mormon people to the Rocky Mountains.

August 8. Arrested as accessory to the attempt on Bogg's life, by extradition proceedings. Released on habeas corpus issued by the Nauvoo Municipal Court. Seeks seclusion. City council passes supplementary ordinance bolstering habeas corpus procedure.

October 2. Governor Carlin having previously issued a proclamation for the arrest of Joseph Smith, a reward of $500 is now posted for his capture, $300 of it by Governor Reynolds of Missouri.

December 8. Thomas Ford, inaugurated as Governor of Illinois, at the polls, recommends modifications in the Mormon charters.

December 9. Bills introduced into the Illinois legislature to repeal the charters.


1843

January 1-7. At home of James Adams in Springfield. Trial before Judge Pope. Illinois' prosecutors challenge jurisdiction of the federal court, but are overruled. Pope orders release and Ford advises Joseph to "refrain from all political electioneering." The Prophet tells him that Mormons vote as they please.

February 6. Re-elected mayor unanimously.

March 2. Reads law, Blackstone and Phillips, in connection with his duties as chief justice of the municipal court.

March 4. Charter saved in the upper house by narrow margin of 17-16, refusing to consider. Repealing measure tabled.

May 18. Dines with Stephen A. Douglas and tells that gentleman he will aspire to the U. S. Presidency. Douglas, aged 30, acknowledges that the prophet has read his ambition correctly.

June 16. Word from Springfield indicates that Ford is about to yield to pressure and comply with Missouri request for extradition.

June 21. At Dixon, Lee County, some 200 miles from Nauvoo, visiting Emma's relatives and his family.

June 23. Arrested without due process at Dixon by Joseph H. Reynolds, sheriff of Jackson County, Missouri, and Harm T. Wilson, constable of Carthage, county seat of Hancock (Nauvoo) county. Resists, is manhandled, but succeeds in filing counter-suit of false arrest.

June 24. Retains Cyrus Walker, Whig candidate for Congress (same district as Nauvoo) in August election, on forced promise to give Walker his vote. Sets writ of habeas corpus from Master of Chancery at Dixon, "returnable to the nearest court having jurisdiction," and proceeds under arrest to Quincy for trial.


June 29. Steers his captors towards Nauvoo instead of Quincy, to get protection of municipal court.

June 30. Triumphal entry into Nauvoo. Reynolds refuses to recognize the city court but Joseph gets his writ anyway and is delivered into the hands of his city marshal. Reynolds and Wilson go to Carthage to organize a posse to take their intended captive.

July 4. Declares he never tells any man how to vote, but explains why the Mormons voted for Ford rather than Duncan at last election.

July 29. Visited by Joseph P. Hoge (Democrat) and Cyrus Walker (Whig), rival candidates for Congress, climaxing their campaign.

August 6. Election eve. Says "The Lord has not given me a revelation concerning politics. I have not asked Him for one. I am a third party and stand independent and alone." Declares, then, that he will vote for Walker but advises large meeting that Hyrum has had a testimony that the people should vote for Hoge, and that Hyrum's revelations are seldom wrong.
August 7. Votes for Walker, as pledged; but Hoge is overwhelmingly elected for Congress.

August. Increasing friction between the governmental authority of the city of Nauvoo, and that of Hancock county (seat, Carthage). Tax collections controlled by the county.

September 4. The New York Sun calls him, "one of the great men of this age."

September 5. The first of a series of formal anti-Mormon meetings convenes at Carthage and appoints committees of correspondence to take suitable action against those who yield "implicit obedience" to "this latter-day would-be Mahomet." Resolution to blacklist any political party or leader that goes to Nauvoo to "truckle...for their influence."

October 1. Times and Seasons asks, editorially, "Who Shall be Our Next President?"

November 4. Writes letters to leading presidential candidates, Van Buren, Cass, Johnson, Clay, and Calhoun, asking their attitude towards Mormon claims.

November 15. Speaks of writing a proclamation to the kings of the earth.

November 25–29. Waited upon by agent of John C. Calhoun, who agrees to have Senator Rhett of South Carolina push Mormon claims, and who composes a model "petition" to be presented.


December 14. Ford breaks with the Mormons.

December 18. Joseph orders out a company of 100 Legionnaires to apprehend Levi Williams of Carthage, for the kidnapping of Mormon brethren and attempting to take them to Missouri. Williams retaliates by organizing a company at Warsaw.

December 21. A memorial dispatched to Congress asking that Nauvoo be clothed with authority of a federal district; that the Legion be accounted as federal troops under the city's control.

1844

January 2. Writes scorching letter to Calhoun disagreeing with
his restricted view of the national power under the Constitution.


February 3. Niles' Register publishes Smith-Calhoun correspondence.

February 7. Completes writing the "Views."

February 12. Recommends repeal of the "extra ordinance" and sends Orson Pratt and Orson Hyde to Washington with specific instructions for dealing with the Illinois delegation, John Quincy Adams, and the Massachusetts delegation.

February 17. The anti-Morman convention at Carthage considers ways and means of expelling the Mormons from Illinois.

February 20. The Twelve instructed to send out an Oregon and California exploration company to locate a new home for the Church. Carthage convention sets date for a "wolf hunt."

February 24-27. Fifteen hundred copies of the "Views" come from the press and are mailed to the President, supreme court justices, cabinet officers, congressmen, postmasters, and others.

March 26. Petitions Congress for permission to raise and equip 100,000 men "for the protection of the citizens of the United States emigrating to the territories, and for the extension of the principles of universal liberty."


May 10. Prospects for a new paper, the Nauvoo Expositor, circulated throughout the city. A jury in Lee County awards Joseph $40 damages against Wilson and Reynolds for false arrest and imprisonment.

May 17. A state political convention, in Nauvoo, endorses the prophet's candidacy for President.

May 25. [In what I believe to be an effort to secure grounds for transfer to a federal court in event of future arrest], urges agents in Washington to use pressure on Hoge and others to gain him the Nauvoo postmastership in lieu of Rigdon. Rigdon resigns and recommends Joseph Smith as his successor.

June 8. Considers subject of the Nauvoo Expositor in city
council. Polk's nomination made known. William Clayton says that William Law has offered Joseph H. Jackson $500 to kill the prophet.

June 10. Orders the destruction of the Expositor as a "nuisance." Order executed by city marshal.

June 14. Sends the Mormon side of the story by carrier to Ford, supported by a mass of documents.

June 16. Sends agents to surrounding towns to disabuse the public mind.

June 17. Attempts to solve the problem by having himself arrested by Joel S. Miles and submitting to hearing before a friendly but non-Mormon justice of the peace, Daniel H. Wells, at Nauvoo. Subject: the Expositor. Wells discharges the prisoner. Legal position of the prophet strong. Orders Legion in readiness, as Carthage acknowledges that he is beyond powder and ball.

June 22. Invites Ford to Nauvoo. Ford writes that it was illegal to suppress the Expositor under the law governing nuisances. Invites Joseph to Carthage under guarantee of safety; threatens militia if noncompliance. Joseph replies "We dare not come, though your excellency promises protection." During the day a son of John C. Calhoun calls, on political business. Joseph plans to cross river, go west, sending his family to Cincinnati, and W. W. Phelps to Washington as emissary.


June 24. In custody of Ford's posse. Countersigns Ford's order disarming Nauvoo Legion. Says "I am going like a lamb to the slaughter."

June 25. In Carthage. Another writ, for treason, served. Arraigned before Justice R. F. Smith on charge of riot and is bound over to the circuit court for trial. Imprisoned on a false commitment at 11:30 p.m.

June 26. Asks change of venue to Quincy. Sends repeated messages to Ford, who comes to Carthage jail for interview at 9:27 a.m. and again promises protection from violence. Taken again to courtroom for a justice's examination, same postponed until next day and is returned to jail. Meanwhile a military council, including Ford, decides to march the restless troops to Nauvoo next day, to return the day following. Joseph's trial to be further postponed until June 29th. A few men to be left to guard the jail.
June 27. With some modifications, the council's plan proceeds. With John Taylor, Willard Richards, and Hyrum, Joseph is guarded in the jail by a small detachment of Carthage Greys. Ford goes to Nauvoo with the remnants of the militia. The rest are disbanded. The stage is set for the drama of the afternoon. At four p.m. the guard is changed to eight men. At five p.m. a mob with painted faces and disguises storms the jail. Joseph Smith, with his brother Hyrum, are killed by gunfire shortly after 5:15 p.m.\footnote{G. Homer Durham, Joseph Smith, Prophet-Statesman. The Bookcraft Company, Salt Lake City, 1944, pp. 212-213.}
APPENDIX I

THE CAMPAIGN CONFERENCES AND ASSIGNMENTS

The Twelve Apostles arranged the appointments for the general conferences in the United States as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quincy, Illinois</td>
<td>Sat. and Sun. May 4 and 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess Grove, Ill.</td>
<td>&quot; 11 and 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ottowa, Ill.</td>
<td>&quot; 18 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago, Ill.</td>
<td>&quot; 25 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comstock, Kalamazoo County, Mich.</td>
<td>&quot; June 1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Valley, Mich.</td>
<td>&quot; 8 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frankland, Oakland County, Mich.</td>
<td>&quot; 15 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kirtland, Ohio</td>
<td>&quot; 22 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.A. Neal's six miles west of Lockport, N.Y.</td>
<td>&quot; 29 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batavia, N. Y.</td>
<td>&quot; July 6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portage, Alleghany County, N. Y.</td>
<td>&quot; 13 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton, Madison County, N. Y.</td>
<td>&quot; 20 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oswego, N. Y.</td>
<td>&quot; June 29 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adams, Jefferson County, N. Y.</td>
<td>&quot; July 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London, Caledonia County, N. Y.</td>
<td>&quot; June 15 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northfield, Washington County, ten miles of Montpelier, at Lyman Houghton's, N. Y.</td>
<td>&quot; 29 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairfield, Essex Co., at Elder Tracy's, N. Y.</td>
<td>&quot; July 13 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston, Mass.</td>
<td>&quot; June 29 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salem, Mass.</td>
<td>&quot; July 6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Bedford, Mass.</td>
<td>&quot; 13 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peterboro, N. H.</td>
<td>&quot; 13 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lowell, Mass.</td>
<td>&quot; 27 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scarboro, Maine</td>
<td>&quot; 6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vinal Haven, Maine</td>
<td>&quot; 13 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Westfield, Mass.</td>
<td>&quot; 27 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farmington, Mass.</td>
<td>&quot; Aug. 3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Haven, Conn.</td>
<td>&quot; 10 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canaan, Conn.</td>
<td>&quot; 17 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norwalk, Conn.</td>
<td>&quot; 24 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York City, N. Y.</td>
<td>&quot; 17 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philadelphia, Pa.</td>
<td>&quot; 31 Sept. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dresden, Weekly County, Tenn.</td>
<td>&quot; May 25 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eagle Creek, Benton County, Tenn.</td>
<td>&quot; June 8 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dyer County, C. H., Tenn.</td>
<td>&quot; 22 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rutherford County, C. H., Tenn.</td>
<td>&quot; July 20 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexington, Henderson County, Tenn.</td>
<td>&quot; Aug. 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Albany, Clinton County, Ky.</td>
<td>&quot; June 29 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alquina, Fayette County, Ia.</td>
<td>&quot; 1 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pleasant Garden, Ia.</td>
<td>&quot; 15 16</td>
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</table>
Fort Wayne, Ia. ......................... Sat. and Sun. June 29 and 30
Northfield, Boon County, Ia. ........... "    " July 13 14
Cincinnati, Ohio. ......................... "    " May 18 19
Pittsburgh, Pa. .......................... "    " June 1 2
Leechburg, Pa. .......................... "    " 15 16
Running Water Branch, Noxuble Co., Miss. "    " 1 2
Tuscaloosa, Ala. ........................ "    " 22 23
Washington City, D. C. ................... Sept. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, & 15

We also publish the names of the Elders who are appointed to the
several states, together with their appointments. Those who are numbered
with the figures 1 and 2 will take the presidency of the several states
to which they are appointed.

Maine.

J. Butterfield, 1st  
Elbridge Tufts, 2nd  
S. B. Stoddard

Jonathan H. Hale  
Henry Herriman  
John Moon

New Hampshire.

W. Snow, 1st  
Howard Egan, 2nd  
Alvin Cooley  
John S. Twiss  
Charles A. Adams  
Bethuel Miller  
A. D. Boynton

Harley Morley  
Israel Barlow  
David Clough, Sen.  
Calvin Reed  
Chilion Mack  
Isaac Burton

Massachusetts.

Daniel Spencer, 1st  
Milton F. Bartlett  
Daniel Loveland  
Joseph J. Woodbury  
W. H. Woodbury  
John R. Blanchard

George Lloyd  
Orlando D. Hovey  
Nathaniel Ashby  
Samuel P. Hoyt  
Daniel W. Gardner

Rhode Island.

William Seabury, 1st  
Thomas McTaggart

Melvin Wilbur

Connecticut.

E. H. Davis, 1st  

Quartus S. Sparks
Vermont.

Erastus Snow, 1st
William Hyde
Denman Cornish
Jeremiah Hatch
Martin Titus
William Haight
John D. Chase
Josiah H. Perry
Amos Hodges

Warren Snow
Dominicus Carter
Levi W. Hancock
Alfred Cordon
Charles Snow
James C. Snow
A. M. Harding
Isaac Houston

New York.

C. W. Wandell, 1st
Marcellus Bates, 2nd
Truman Gillett
A. A. Farnham
Edmund Ellsworth
Gregory Bentley
Homer C. Hoyt
Isaac Chase
Simeon A. Dunn
Daniel Shearer
James W. Phippin
J. H. Van Natta
Samuel P. Bacon
Bradford W. Elliott
J. R. G. Phelps
Joseph P. Noble
John Tanner
Thomas Fuller
O. M. Duel
Samuel White
W. R. R. Stowell
William D. Pratt
Marcellus McKeown
Horace S. Eldredge

William Newland
Allen Wait
William H. Parshall
C. H. Wheelock
Timothy B. Foote
George W. Fowler
Henry L. Cook
William W. Dryer
Elijah Reed
Solon Foster
Hiram Bennett
Chandler Holbrook
Lyman Hall
William Felshaw
Daniel Fisher
D. H. Redfield
Martin H. Tanner
G. D. Goldsmith
Charles Thompson
B. C. Elsworth
Archibald Bates
David Pettigrew
Ellis Eames

New Jersey.

Ezra T. Benson, 1st

John Pack

Pennsylvania.

D. D. Yearsley, 1st
Edson Whipple, 2nd
John Duncan
Stephen Post
G. W. Crouse

William P. McIntyre
Jacob Zundall
Orrin D. Farlin
Henry Moyer
G. Chamberlain
Jacob Shoemaker
Stephen Winchester
Hyrum Nyman
J. M. Cole
Charles Warner

Thomas Hess
A. J. Blaufke
Henry Dean
James Downing

Delaware.

John Jones
Warren Snow

Jonathan O. Duke
Justus Morse

Maryland.

Jacob Hamblin
Lyman Stoddard

Patrick Norris

Virginia.

B. Winchester, 1st
S. C. Shelton, 2nd
Geo. D. Watt, 3rd
Chapman Duncan
Joseph King
Peter Fife
Robert Hamilton

James Park
A. W. Whitney
Pleasant Ewell
W. E. Higginbottom
John F. Betts
Alfred B. Lambsen
David Evans

North Carolina.

A. McRae, 1st
Aaron Razer, 2nd
Thomas Guymon
George Watt

John Holt
John Houston
James Sanderson

South Carolina.

Alonzo LeBaron, 1st
John M. Emell
William D. Lyman

Ekells Truly
William Smith

Georgia.

Morgan L. Gardner
Isaac Beebe

Miles Anderson
S. E. Carpenter

Kentucky.

John D. Lee, 1st
D. H. Rogers
Samuel B. Frost
John O. Angus

D. D. Hunt
M. B. Welton
Horace B. Owens
Joseph Holbrook
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<td>Lorenzo Moore</td>
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<td>B. W. Wilson</td>
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<td>Elijah Newman</td>
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<td>Milton Stow</td>
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<td>S. P. Hutchins</td>
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<td>J. H. Foster</td>
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<td>Nathan T. Porter</td>
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<td>Ezra Vincent</td>
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<td>Jared Porter</td>
<td>Lysander Dayton</td>
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</tbody>
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**Indiana.**

| Amasa Lyman, 1st              | U. V. Stewart                  |
| G. P. Dykes, 2nd              | Washington Lemon               |
| A. L. Lamoreaux               | Edward Carlin                  |
| Charles Hopkins               | L. D. Young                    |
| F. M. Edwards                 | Wm. Snow                       |
| Salmon Warner                 | Nathan Tanner                  |
| F. D. Richards                | Wm. Martindale                 |
| S. W. Richards                | Henry Elliott                  |
| John Mackey                   | A. F. Farr                     |
| James Newberry                | John Jones                     |
| Abraham Palmer                | Frederick Ott                  |
| John G. Smith                 |                                 |

**Michigan.**

| Charles C. Rich, 1st         | Wm. Savage                     |
| Harvey Green, 2nd            | David Savage                   |
| Thomas Dunn                  | Graham Coltrin                 |
| R. C. Sprague                | Samuel Parker                  |
| Joseph Curtis                | Jeremiah Curtis                |
| Zebedee Coltrin              | C. W. Hubbard                  |
| Reuben W. Strong             | S. D. Willard                  |
| L. N. Kendall                | Wm. Gribble                    |

**Illinois.**

| E. H. Groves, 1st            | Morris Phelps, 2nd             |
| John Vance                   | S. Mulliner                    |
| H. Olmstead, Galena          | John Gould                     |
| H. W. Barnes, do.            | Zenas H. Gurley                |
| Hiram Mott                   | Jefferson Hunt                 |
| David Candland               | Jacob L. Burnham               |
| W. A. Duncan                 | D. J. Kershner                 |
| Wm. O. Clark                 | N. Leavitt                     |
Almon Bathrick  
P. H. Buzzard  
Zachariah Hardy  
John Hammond  
G. W. Hickerson  
Daniel Allen  
David Judah  
Thomas Dobson  
James Nelson  
David Lewis  

John Laurence  
Nathan A. West  
Levi Jackman  
Abel Lamb  
Howard Coray  
Stephen Markham  
Levi Stewart  
James Graham  
Timothy S. Hoit  
Duncan McArthur

Missouri.

A. H. Perkins, 1st  
John Lowry, 2nd  
Wm. G. Rule

Wm. Coray  
O. M. Allen  
Wm. H. Jordan

Wisconsin Territory.

S. H. Briggs

Free.

F. Nickerson, 1st  
A. C. Nickerson  
L. S. Nickerson

Those Elders who are numbered in the foregoing list to preside over the different states will appoint conferences in all places in their several states where opportunities present, and will attend all the conferences, or send experienced and able Elders, who will preach the truth in righteousness, and present before the people "General Smith's Views of the Powers and Policy of the General Government," and seek diligently to get up electors who will go for him for the Presidency. All the elders will be faithful in preaching the Gospel in its simplicity and beauty, in all meekness, humility, long-suffering and prayerfulness; and the Twelve will devote the season to traveling, and will attend as many conferences as possible.

Elder B. Winchester is instructed to pass through Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, North and South Carolina and Virginia, to visit the churches, hold conferences, and preside over them.

Brigham Young, President
W. Richards, Clerk of the Quorum of the Twelve.

8DHC, 6:334-340.
A STUDY OF THE POLITICAL INVOLVEMENTS IN THE CAREER OF JOSEPH SMITH

An Abstract of a Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of the Department of Graduate Studies in Religious Instruction, Brigham Young University

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

by
Edward G. Thompson
February 1966
ABSTRACT

Since the death of Joseph Smith there have been many reasons given in an attempt to explain why he was "martyred." In this study the influence of politics was analyzed to determine the influence it had on the death of the Mormon Prophet.

The Journal History of the Church, the Documentary History of the Church and the Comprehensive History of the Church, along with the Journal of History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, were used as basic source material. The contents of newspaper articles, personal journals and diaries of the period were also studied.

It was found from this study that Joseph Smith taught the Latter-day Saints a system of brotherhood and union which should be obtained through adherence to the principles of the Church. The resulting unity of the Saints was looked upon by the "rugged individualist" of the frontier society with disfavor and fear. Some who saw the ever increasing number of Saints moving into the Nauvoo area took steps to thwart Joseph Smith's acquisition of power and his control of the state political scene. Men of influence in public positions were afraid of the machinery that the Mormons had for proselyting. They feared that this form of proselyting would bring state political control and national prominence to the Mormon Prophet and his cause.

At first the Saints tried to vote for those men who would sustain them in their constitutional rights. However, this policy became increasingly difficult, as the anti-Mormon forces combined to thwart the Mormons at the polls. In an effort to gain justice the Saints sought dilligently
to determine how the prospective candidates for state office in Illinois felt about them and their cause before they gave them their support. When a political candidate lost the support of the Mormons, he often used all his influence in persecuting them. The Saints, in an effort to retain their rights nominated several individuals of their own religion, while continuing to support others who did not plot their destruction. The anti-Mormons tried unsuccessfully to divide the usual "block vote" of the Saints in an effort to prevent them from gaining political power.

Joseph Smith went to the federal government for redress from Missouri, but he was denied any help. The increasing antagonism towards the Saints in Illinois caused them to fear a repetition of the severe treatment that they had experienced in Missouri. Therefore, in order to focus national attention on their situation, the Saints urged Joseph Smith to seek the office of President of the United States.

The non-Mormon element reacted violently to the entrance of Joseph Smith into the national political scene. Newspaper editors wrote editorials that aroused the undisciplined spirit of lawlessness within the general public. A few bitter anti-Mormons, coupled with vengeful apostates from the Mormon faith, set about openly to plot the destruction of Joseph Smith by printing the Nauvoo Expositor. This plot was successful when the Nauvoo City Council had the Nauvoo Expositor destroyed. These forces then raised the cry that they had been denied the "freedom of the press" and obtained national sympathy for their cause. They were then able to place Joseph Smith in the hands of the law. While Joseph Smith was in Carthage Jail, the mob forces took the law into their own hands and killed the Mormon Prophet, June 27, 1844.
The basic cause for conflict between Mormons and non-Mormons was the religion of the Latter-day Saints. However, it is concluded from this study first, that Joseph Smith entered the political scene with the purpose of gaining time and freedom sufficient to establish his concept of the Kingdom of God on earth. Second, "rugged individualists" of Illinois feared the potential political power of Joseph Smith to the extent that they unlawfully took his life.