

COPY

"MORMON DOCTRINE" - McCONKIE

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

THE COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE  
47 E. SOUTH TEMPLE STREET  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

January 28, 1959

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President David O. McKay  
Building

Dear President McKay:

This is my report on MORMON DOCTRINE, by Bruce R. McConkie, which on January 5, you asked me to read.

The book is a 776 page work which, in the words of the author, purports to be, "the first major attempt to digest, explain, and analyze all of the important doctrines of the kingdom . . . the first extensive compendium of the whole gospel--the first attempt to publish an encyclopedic commentary covering the whole field of revealed religion."

"For the work itself," the author assumes the "sole and full responsibility." (Exhibit I) (The exhibits cited in this report consist of printed pages from the book. The statements in point are underscored in red.)

Preparation of the volume has entailed much study and research. Its favorable reception evidences a felt need for such a treatise.

The author is an able and thorough student of the gospel. In many respects he has produced a remarkable book. Properly used, it quickly introduces the student to the authorities on most any gospel subject.

As to the book itself, notwithstanding its many commendable and valuable features and the author's assumption of "sole and full responsibility" for it, its nature and scope and the authoritative tone of the style in which it is written pose the question as to the propriety of the author's attempting such a project without assignment and supervision from him whose right and responsibility it is to speak for the Church on "Mormon Doctrine." Had the work been authoritatively supervised, some of the following matters might have been omitted and the treatment of others modified.

- A. References to churches and other groups who do not accept "Mormon Doctrine".
1. "Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," who sometimes refer to themselves as "Josephites". (Exhibit II-1, pages 50, 141, 362)
  2. "Christian Churches" generally. (Exhibit II-2, pages 139, 455)
  3. "Catholic Church". (Exhibit II-3, pages 13, 66, 69, 129, 130, 216, 241, 242, 314-15, 342, 346, 350, 422, 499, 511, 697)
  4. Communists and Catholics. (Exhibit II-4, pages 26-7, 131)
  5. Evolution and Evolutionists. (Exhibit II-5, pages 37, 77, 136, 180, 228, 238, 659)
- B. Declaration as to "Mormon Doctrine" on controversial issues.
1. "Pre-Adamites". (Exhibit III-1, pages 17, 262)
  2. Status of Animals and Plants in the Garden of Eden. (Exhibit III-2, pages 36, 234-35)
  3. Meaning of the various accounts of Creation. (Exhibit III-3, pages 157-8, 167-8)
  4. Dispensation of Abraham. (Exhibit III-4, page 203)
  5. Moses a translated being. (Exhibit III-5, pages 206, 445, 466, 727-8)
  6. Origin of Individuality. (Exhibit III-6, page 404)
  7. Defiling the priesthood. (Exhibit III-7, page 437)
  8. Manner in which Jesus was Begotten. (Exhibit III-8, page 494)
  9. Written sermons. (Exhibit III-9, pages 634-5, 716)
  10. Resurrection of stillborn children. (Exhibit III-10, page 694)

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## C. Miscellaneous Interpretations. (Exhibit IV)

Frequency of Administrations, page 22

Baptism in the "molten sea," page 98

II Peter 1:19, page 102

Paul married, page 112

Status of those "with Christ in His Resurrection", page 128

Consecration of oil, page 147

Councils and schools among the Gods, page 151

Limitations on Deity, page 154

Sunday not a proper day for family reunions, page 254

Geological changes at time of the deluge, page 268

The Holy Ghost a spirit man, page 329

Facing east in temples when giving the Hosanna Shout,  
page 337Details on family prayer and asking the blessing on  
food, page 526

Women to be gods, page 551

Interpretation of the Doctrine and Covenants 93:1, page 581

Interpretation of "Every spirit of man was innocent in  
the beginning," page 606

Status of little children in the celestial kingdom, page 607

Resumption of schools of the prophets, page 613

Time of beginning of seasons, page 616

Interpretation of III Nephi 12:20, page 618

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President McKay

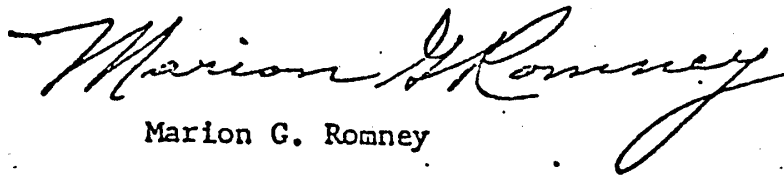
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- D. Repeated use of the word "apostate" and related terms in a way which to many seems discourteous and to others gives offense. (Exhibit V, pages 123, 125, 160, 169, 212, 223, 383, 528, 538, 546, 548, 596)

Faithfully and Respectfully submitted,



Marion G. Romney

Enc.

P. S.

As per my letter to you of January 9, I have promised to contact Marvin Wallin, manager of Bookcraft Company, by the 9th of February about the 4,000 volume edition of MORMON DOCTRINE which he is holding.

I shall therefore seek to contact you about the matter near the end of next week.

Sincerely,

M. G. R.

Note: Original letter and copy of manuscript  
in First Presidency's Office.

Thursday, January 7, 1960

6:00  
to  
6:00  
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10:00  
10:15  
1:30  
1:45  
2:00  
2:15  
2:30  
2:45  
1:00

6:30 a.m.

Arrived at the office -- took care of correspondence until 7:45 a.m.

7:45 to 8:30 a.m. - Dictation and instructions to Clare

8:30 a.m.

Set apart Brother Clifford O. Gledhill as President of the Great Lakes Mission. Pres. Moyle set apart Sister Gledhill.

9 to 10:15 a.m.

The First Presidency held their regular daily meeting.

A few of the matters considered:

(1) New Counselors for the Los Angeles Temple President

A letter from President Benjamin E. Bowring of the Los Angeles Temple reported that Morgan H. White has been released as 2nd counselor of the Los Angeles Temple Presidency, and asked that a letter of release be sent to him by the First Presidency.

Brother Bowring recommended that Elder H. Harold Jackson be approved to serve as 1st counselor and Elder Leonard A. Anderson, the present recorder, to serve as 2nd counselor and Recorder.

These recommendations were approved, and it was agreed that President Bowring be asked to express appreciation of the First Presidency to Brother White.

It was decided that I should set apart the new counselors when I am in California.

(2) Reorganization of Arizona Temple Presidency

It was decided that the Arizona Temple Presidency be reorganized. Former president J. R. Price of the Central Atlantic States Mission, a former bishop, was considered to succeed President Pierce, and his being called was viewed with favor after a review of his career in Church positions.

(3) Junior Colleges - and Salt Lake City's Interest to Re-Purchase Forest Dale Golf Course.

By telephone, Henry Smith of the Desert News, asked for instructions in the matter of a newspaper report of the interest of the Salt Lake City Commission in the re-purchase of the Forest Dale Golf Course. After consideration, it was agreed that it will be better if nothing is said about the matter in the newspapers. It was explained that the Mayor had been informed that nothing has been done about building a Junior College on the property. No decision about the building will be made until the Church gains possession of the property in 1961.

I stated that the whole question of Junior Colleges, institutes, and seminaries is before the First Presidency. The rapid expansion of the Brigham Young University and the matter of providing additional Junior Colleges in several places and giving training in basic

(over)

THURSDAY, January 7, 1960

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HOUR	Tel.	Appt.	Cont.	Names of Persons and Organizations
1:30				courses in education rather than in the "fringe" subjects were mentioned as warranting a full review of the general subject with President Wilkinson.
2:00				<u>(4) Los Angeles Temple Bureau of Information and Statue of Joseph Smith.</u>
2:30				A letter from President John M. Russon relating to the appointment of a director to the Bureau of Information for the Los Angeles Temple was presented.
2:45				I stated that the suggestion had been made that a statue of the Prophet Joseph Smith of heroic size be erected on the grounds of the Los Angeles Temple and that statements from certain of the remarkable revelations of the Prophet appear at the base of the monument. After discussion it was decided that I should invite Avard Fairbanks and Ortho Fairbanks to submit models of what they might propose such a statue should be.
3:00				
3:15				(See telephone calls to these men January 14, 1960)
3:30				<u>10:15 to 12:45 p. m.</u> Re: The book - "Mormon Doctrine"
3:45				The First Presidency met with Elders Mark E. Petersen and Marion G. Romney. They submitted their report upon their examination of the book "Mormon Doctrine" by Elder Bruce McConkie.
4:00				These brethren reported that the manuscript of the book "Mormon Doctrine" had not been read by the reading committee; that President Joseph Fielding Smith did not know anything about it until it was published. Elder Petersen stated that the extent of the corrections which he had marked in his copy of the book (1067) affected most of the 776 pages of the book. He also said that he thought the brethren should be under the rule that no book should be published without a specific approval of the First Presidency.
4:15				I stated that the decision of the First Presidency and the Committee should be announced to the Twelve.
4:45				It was agreed that the necessary corrections are so numerous that to republish a corrected edition of the book would be such an extensive repudiation of the original as to destroy the credit of the author; that the republication of the book should be forbidden and that the book should be repudiated in such a way as to save the career of the author as one of the General Authorities of the Church. It was also agreed that this decision should be announced to the Council of the Twelve before I talk to the author.
5:00				Elder Petersen will prepare an editorial for publication in the Improvement Era, stating the principle of approval of books on Church doctrine. A rough draft will be submitted to us for approval.
5:30				(au. Bro. Remonstrant following) (see also January 5, 1960) (also see Jan. 27, 1960)
6:00				
7:00				<u>1:30 p. m.</u> Gave Roscoe Grover permission to view portraits of General Authorities in the Salt Lake Temple.
8:00				Left for home -- Did not return to the office.

Friday, January 8, 1960

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HOUR	Tel.	Appt.	Cont.	Names of Persons and Organizations
7:00 to 8:00				4 a. m. Arose
8:30				6:15 a. m. - Arrived at the office -- took care of the reading of letters, signing of others until 7:45 a. m.
9:00				7:45 to 8:30 a. m. - Dictation and instructions to Clare
9:30				8:30 a. m. I set apart John Henry Voelker as President of the Netherlands Mission.
10:00				9 a. m. Elder Ray E. Dillman, recently released President of the Hawaiian Temple, and Brother and Sister Henry Roland Tietjen called on
10:15				the First Presidency. We discussed with them the relationship of the President of the Hawaiian Temple to the Bureau of Information, and decided that
10:30				Brother Tietjen would succeed Brother Dillman as President of the Temple in charge, also, of the old dormitory house where
10:45				Temple workers find lodgings, and for the time being will also have charge of the Bureau of Information, but only temporarily until we reorganize the Bureau of Information.
11:00				9:45 a. m. The Presiding Bishopric held their regular meeting with the First Presidency.
11:15				10:30 to 11:40 a. m. Dr. A. Ray Olpin, President of the University of Utah, came in, and brought a special message from the Vice President of India --
11:30				Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, New Delhi, India, who visited me on March 30, 1958.
11:45				On a trip to New Delhi, Dr. Olpin visited with the Vice President, at which time Dr. Radhakrishnan mentioned his trip to Utah and his visit and consultation with me about missionary work in India.
12:00				He wanted to know if a Branch of the Church had been established in India. I told Dr. Olpin that I would write a letter to Dr. Radhakrishnan and thank him for his greetings and interest in our missionary work.
12:15				11:55 to 12:15 p. m. The First Presidency held a meeting. We decided that Bruce R. McConkie's book, "Mormon Doctrine" recently published by Bookcraft Company, must not be re-published, as it is full of errors and misstatements, and it is most unfortunate that it has received such wide circulation. It is reported to us that Brother McConkie has made corrections in his book, and is now preparing another edition. We
12:45				(continued)
1:00				

FRIDAY, January 8, 1960

continued (2)

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UR	Rel.	Appt.	Conf.	Names of Persons and Organizations
30				decided this morning that we do not want him to publish another edition.
30				We decided, also, to have no more books published by General Authorities without their first having the consent of the First Presidency. (see January 7, 1960) - (also see Jan. 27, 1960) <i>see above.</i>
10				We also discussed the matter of choosing new Directors for the Zion's First National Bank. Elders Harold B. Lee and Delbert L. Stapley were suggested as new directors and approved.
10				Brother Louis T. Ellsworth, president of the Surety Life Insurance, was suggested. He has a small deposit now with the bank. I suggested that they hold this suggestion up for further investigation.
10				
15				Following the above meeting, I received calls from Elder Alvin R. Dyer, newly appointed President of the European Mission, who came in to say goodbye, - He is leaving tomorrow morning, - and from my sister (Elizabeth) and her husband Dr. George R. Hill. They came in just to say hello.
30				
15				Note: Sent a telegram to Brother J. Karl Wood, Logan, Utah, formerly supervisor of Church seminaries, expressing sympathy at the passing of his wife.
30				<u>12:45 p.m.</u> Left for home
15				<u>3 p.m.</u> At the invitation of Elder Spencer W. Kimball, met with the counselors in the First Presidency, and other General Authorities in the film room in the basement of the Church Offices, and viewed a film on the Indians showing our work with them in putting them into foster homes, etc. It was very interesting.
30				
45				<u>4:30 to 5 p.m.</u> Read and signed letters
30				<u>5:10 p.m.</u> - Left for home
15				
30				<u>Telephone Call</u> Re: Tabernacle Choir Brother J. Willard Marriott called by telephone from Florida regarding the Tabernacle Choir's participating in a dinner for President Dwight D. Eisenhower - a Republican fund raising dinner -- see notes following. (See also copies of letters regarding this function.)
45				

WEDNESDAY, January 27, 1960

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HOUR	Tel.	App.	Conf.	Name of Persons and Organizations
7:00 to 8:00				7 a. m. - Arrived at the office
8:30				7:10 to 8:30 a. m. - Dictation to my secretary Clare
9:00				8:30 to 9:30 a. m. - Brother Thomas Stuart Ferguson of the New World Archaeological Society who lives in Oakland, California (Tele. Higatte 4-876) called by appointment at his request on the First Presidency. He is very enthusiastic regarding the accomplishments of his organization. It would seem from what he says that they have done a good work. The Church has contributed a considerable amount in support of work that his organization has been doing in Central America. We referred him to President Ernest L. Wilkinson of the
9:30				Brigham Young University, to whom this matter of archaeological work has been assigned.
10:00				
10:15				9:30 to 11 a. m. - The regular meeting of the First Presidency continued.
10:30				11 a. m. Beneficial Life Insurance Company Director's meeting was held.
10:45				11:40 a. m. Virgil Smith of the Beneficial Life Insurance came into my private office for a short conference.
11:00				11:50 a. m. Superintendent George R. Hill called at the office regarding new members for the Sunday School General Board. I told him that the names had already been approved by the First Presidency.
11:15				11:55 to 12:30 p. m. - Read and signed mail
11:30				3:00 P. M. Conference with Pres. Joseph Fielding Smith re: Bruce R. McConkie's book, "Mormon Doctrine"
11:45				At the request of the First Presidency, I called President Joseph Fielding Smith, and told him that we are a unit in disapproving of Brother Bruce R. McConkie's book, "Mormon Doctrine", as an authoritative exposition of the principles of the gospel.
12:00				I then said: "Now, Brother Smith, he is a General Authority, and we do not want to give him a public rebuke that would be embarrassing to him and lessen his influence with the members of the Church, so we shall speak to the Twelve at our meeting in the Temple tomorrow, and tell them that Brother McConkie's book is not approved as an authoritative book, and that it should not be republished, even if the errors (some 1,067 of them) are corrected."
12:15				Brother Smith agreed with this suggestion to report to the Twelve, and "That is the best thing to do."
12:30				I then said that Brother McConkie is advocating by letter some of the principles as printed in his book in answer to letters he receives. Brother
12:45				

WEDNESDAY, January 27, 1960 continued(2)

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HOUR	Tel.	Appt.	Cont.	Names of Persons and Organizations
7:00 to 8:00				(continued--) Smith said, "I will speak to him about that." I then mentioned that he is also speaking on these subjects, and Brother Smith said, "I will speak to him about that also."
8:30				I also said that the First Presidency had decided that General Authorities of the Church should not publish books without submitting them to some member of the General Authorities, and President Smith agreed to this as being wise.
9:00				
3:30				3:30 to 4:00 p. m. Dictation to Clare.
				4:00 p. m. Rulon Tingey came in and I handed him some bills and checks.
3:00				4:30 p. m. Left for home.
3:15				
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3:45				
4:00				
4:15				
4:30				
4:45				
5:00				
5:15				
5:30				
5:45				
6:00				

HOURL	Tot.	Appt.	Cont.	Name of Person and Organization	Thursday, January 28, 1960	Department, The Church of Latter-Day Saints.
7:00 to 8:00				4 a.m. - Arose. Sister McKay	rose early and prepared my breakfast.	
8:30				8:15 a.m. - Arrived at the office		
9:00				8:30 to 9 a.m. Bruce R. McConkie's Book		
9:30				Was engaged in the meeting of the First Presidency. I reported to my counselors that I had talked with President Joseph Fielding Smith about the decision that the book "Mormon Doctrine" should not be republished and about handling the matter to avoid undermining Brother McConkie's influence. President Smith agreed that the book should not be republished, and said that he would talk with Brother McConkie. It was decided that the First Presidency should inform Brother McConkie before he learns of our decision from some other source, so Brother McConkie was asked to come into our meeting this morning.		
10:00				10:15	When he arrived I informed him of the desire of the First Presidency with reference to his book not being republished, to which he agreed. The recommendation was also made that he answer inquiries on the subject with care. Brother McConkie said, "I am amenable to whatever you Brethren want. I will do exactly what you want. I will be as discreet and as wise as I can." In answering letters he said that he would express no views contrary to views which the First Presidency has expressed. He said that he would conform in every respect.	
10:30				10:45		
11:00				11:15	Many other matters of importance were considered at our meeting this morning, and then we dismissed to attend the Council meeting in the temple.	
11:30				11:45	10 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Was engaged in the meeting of the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve in the Salt Lake Temple.	
12:00				12:15	At Council meeting I reported to the Brethren our decision regarding Elder Bruce R. McConkie's book "Mormon Doctrine," stating that it had caused considerable comment throughout the Church, and that it has been a source of concern to the Brethren ever since it was published. I said that this book had not been presented to anyone for consideration or approval until after its publication. I further said that the First Presidency have given it very careful consideration, as undoubtedly have some of the Brethren of the Twelve also, and that the First Presidency now recommend that the book be not republished; that it be not republished even in a corrected form, even though Brother McConkie mentions in the book that he takes all responsibility for it; and that it be not recognized as an authoritative book.	
12:30				12:45	I said further that the question has arisen as to whether a public correction should be made and an addendum given emphasizing the parts which are unwisely presented or misquoted or incorrect; but	
1:00						

THURSDAY, January 28, 1960

continued (2)

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OUR	Rel.	Appt.	Genl.	Names of Persons and Organizations
12:00 to 12:30				it is felt that that would not be wise because Brother McConkie is one of the General Authorities, and it might lessen his influence. The First Presidency recommend that the situation be left as it is, and whenever a question about it arises, we can answer that it is unauthoritative; that it was issued by Brother McConkie on his own responsibility, and he must answer for it.
12:30 to 1:00				I reported that the First Presidency had talked with Brother McConkie this morning, and he said he will do whatever the Brethren want him to do. He will not attempt to republish the book, nor to say anything by letter, and if he answers letters or inquiries that he will answer them in accordance with the suggestions made by the Brethren, and not advocate those things concerning which question has been raised as contained in the book.
1:00 to 1:15				The Brethren unanimously approved of this.
1:15 to 1:30				I then said that the First Presidency further recommend that when any member of the General Authorities desires to write a book, that the Brethren of the Twelve or the First Presidency be consulted regarding it. While the author need not get the approval of these Brethren, they should know before it is published that a member of the General
1:30 to 1:45				Authorities wants to publish a book. I said it may seem all right for the writer of the book to say, "I only am responsible for it," but I said "you cannot separate your position from your individuality, and we should like the authors to present their books to the Twelve or a Committee appointed." I asked the Brethren of the Twelve to convey this information to the other General Authorities. On motion, this became the consensus of the Council.
1:45 to 2:00				3 p.m. - Returned to the office
2:00 to 2:15				3 to 3:50 p.m. - Dictation to Clare
2:15 to 2:30				3:50 to 5 p.m. - Read and signed letters. Also went over several letters which needed my attention before answering.
2:30 to 2:45				5:10 p.m. - Left for home.