

Statements on Freedom

by Latter-day Saint Prophets



"Rights are either God-given as part of the divine plan, or they are granted by government as part of the political plan. If we accept the premise that human rights are granted by government, then we must be

willing to accept the corollary that they can be denied by government. I, for one, shall never accept that premise." (Ezra Taft Benson, BYU Devotional, 16 September, 1986)

"Today the devil as a wolf in a supposedly new suit of sheep's clothing is enticing some men, both in and out of the Church, to parrot his line by advocating planned government guaranteed security programs at the expense of our liberties. Latter-day Saints should be reminded how and why they voted as they did in heaven. If some have decided to change their vote they should repent -- throw their support on the side of freedom -- and cease promoting this subversion."(Ezra Taft Benson Conference Report, October 1961)

Socialism/Forced Charity (i.e. Social Programs) and Forced Morality

"No true Latter-day Saint or true American can be a socialist or support programs leading in that direction. These evil philosophies are incompatible with Americanism, with Mormonism, and with the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ" (Title of Liberty p. 190 **Ezra T. Benson**)

"In reply to the argument that a little bit of socialism is good so long as it doesn't go too far, it is tempting to say that, in like fashion, just a little bit of theft or a little bit of cancer is all right, too! History proves that the growth of the welfare state is difficult to check before it comes to its full flower of dictatorship. But let us hope that this time around, the trend can be reversed. If not then we will see the inevitability of complete socialism, probably within our lifetime."(The Proper Role of Government, **Ezra T. Benson**)

"As important as are all other principles of the gospel, it was the freedom issue that determined whether you received a body. To have been on the wrong side of the freedom issue during the War in Heaven meant eternal damnation. How then

can Latter-day Saints expect to be on the wrong side in this life and escape the eternal consequences? The War in Heaven is raging on earth today. The issues are the same: Shall men be compelled to do what others claim is for their best welfare or will they heed the counsel of the prophets and their freedom?

We believe that the gospel is the greatest thing in the world; why then do we not force people to join the Church if they are not smart enough to see it on their own? Because this is Satan's way, the Lord uses persuasion and love."

(God, Family, Country pg. 384/Teachings of **Ezra T. Benson** p. 658)

"Peace will come and be maintained only through the triumph of the principles of peace, and by the consequent subjection of the enemies of peace, which are hatred, envy, ill-gotten gain, the exercise of unrighteous dominion of men. Yielding to these evils brings misery to the individual, unhappiness to the home, war among nations."(*Gospel Ideals*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1953, p. 280. **President David O. McKay**)

The Proper Role of Government

"We believe that no government can exist in peace, except such laws are framed and held inviolate as will secure to each individual the free exercise of conscience, the right and control of property, and the protection of life."(**D&C 134: 2**)

"The sole function of government is to protect life, liberty, and property and anything more than this is usurpation and oppression."(**Ezra Taft Benson**, An Enemy Hath Done This, 1969)

"Next to being one in worshiping God, there is nothing in this world upon which this Church should be more united than in upholding and defending the Constitution of the United States."(**President McKay**, The Instructor, Feb. 1956, p. 34.)

Secret Combinations Today

"The secret combinations are a group of minds connected with a diabolical plan for the destruction of our liberties and freedom, and our divinely-inspired constitution and our original government our Fathers set up there under, and the wiping out of our constitutional guarantees and free lives."(**Elder J. Reuben Clark** Jan. 24 1945 "some elements of post-war life)

"Gadanton robbers fill the judgment seats in many nations. An evil power seeks to overthrow the freedom of all nations and countries. Satan reigns in the hearts of men; it is the great day of his power." (**Bruce R. McConkie**, "The Coming Tests and Trials and Glory," *Ensign*, May 1980, p.73

"Satan has control now. No matter where you look, he is in control, even in our own land. He is guiding the governments as far as the Lord will permit him. That is why there is so much strife, turmoil, confusion all over the earth. One master mind is governing the nations. It is not the President of the United States...it is not the king or government of England or

any other land; it is Satan himself.” (**Joseph Fielding Smith**, *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, pp. 314-315)

I testify that wickedness is rapidly expanding in every segment of our society. (See D&C 1:14–16; D&C 84:49–53.) It is more highly organized, more cleverly disguised, and more powerfully promoted than ever before. Secret combinations lusting for power, gain, and glory are flourishing. A secret combination that seeks to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries is increasing its evil influence and control over America and the entire world. (See Ether 8:18–25.) (**Ezra Taft Benson**, “I Testify,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 86)

Internationalism

“There is one and only one legitimate goal of United States foreign policy. It is a narrow goal, a nationalistic goal: the preservation of our national independence. Nothing in the Constitution grants that the president shall have the privilege of offering himself as a world leader. He is our executive; he is on our payroll; he is supposed to put our best interests in front of those of other nations. Nothing in the Constitution nor in logic grants to the president of the United States or to Congress the power to influence the political life of other countries, to ‘uplift’ their cultures, to bolster their economies, to feed their people, or even to defend them against their enemies.”(The Teachings of **Ezra Taft Benson**, p. 614; see also p. 682 & 704)

“The Constitution will never reach its destiny through force. God’s principles are taken by men because they are eternal and true and touch the divine spirit in men. This is the only true way to permanent world peace, the aspiration of men since the beginning. God never planted his Spirit, his truth, in the hearts of men from the point of a bayonet.”
(**J. Reuben Clark**, April 1957)

What Can We Do?

We are involved in an intense battle. It is a battle between right and wrong, between truth and error, between the design of the Almighty on the one hand and that of Lucifer on the other. For that reason, we desperately need moral men and women who stand on principle, to be involved in the political process. Otherwise, we abdicate power to those whose designs are almost entirely selfish. [**Gordon B. Hinckley**, “Stand a little Taller,”pg. 15, July 2001]

“As we have progressed the mist has been removed, and in relation to these matters, the Elders of Israel begin to understand that they have something to do with the world politically as well as religiously, that it is as much their duty to study correct political principles as well as religious, and to seek to know and comprehend the social and political interests of man, and to learn and be able to teach that which would be best calculated to promote the interests of the world.”(**John Taylor**, JD: 9:340)

“It is time, therefore, that every American and especially every member of the priesthood, become informed about the aims,

tactics, and schemes of socialistic-communism.”(**Ezra Taft Benson**, Conference, October 1961)

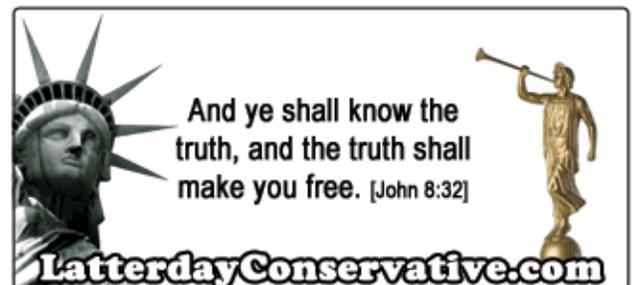
“Besides the preaching of the Gospel, we have another mission, namely, the perpetuation of the free agency of man and maintenance of liberty, freedom and the rights of man.” (**John Taylor**, *Journal of Discourses* 23:63)

“Many of the Latter-day Saints have surrendered their independence; they have surrendered their free thought, politically, and we have got to get back to where we are not surrendering the right. We must stay with what’s right and if we do so God will bless us.” (**Heber J. Grant**, Conference, October 1941)

“We who hold the priesthood must beware concerning ourselves, that we do not fall in the traps Satan lays to rob us of our freedom. We must be careful that we are not led to accept or support in any way any organization, cause or measure which in its remotest effort, would jeopardize free agency, whether it be in politics, government, religion, employment, education, or in any other field. It is not enough for us to be sincere in what we support. We must be right!”(**Marion G. Romney**, Conference, October 1960)

“I have faith that the Constitution will be saved, as prophesied by Joseph Smith. It will be saved by the righteous citizens of this nation who love and cherish freedom. It will be saved by the en-lighted members of the Church-among others-men and women who understand and abide the principles of the Constitution.”(October 1987 *Ensign* 17 6-7 **Ezra T. Benson**)

“**This is still God’s world.** The forces of evil, working through some mortals, have made a mess of a good part of it. But it is still God’s world. In due time, when each of us has had a chance to prove ourselves--including whether or not we are going to stand up for freedom--God will interject himself, and the final and eternal victory shall be for free agency. And then shall those complacent people on the sidelines, and those who took the wrong but temporarily popular course, lament their decisions. To the patriots I say this: Take that long eternal look. Stand up for freedom, no matter what the cost. Stand up and be counted. It can help to save your soul--and maybe your country.”(Teachings of **Ezra T. Benson** Chapter 5 P. 592)



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