

# Understanding Our Times Colloquia Series



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Family Education Center

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# Marion G. Romney, 1960

"We who hold the priesthood must beware concerning ourselves, that we do not fall into 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!***"

As Nehemiah 6:3 says...

[We are] doing a great  
work, so that [we]  
cannot come down.

## Joseph Smith, 1844

“Among the changes for the worse, which the world has witnessed within the last century, ***we include that specious, superficial, incomplete way of doing certain things which were formerly thought to be deserving of care, labor and attention.*** It would seem that appearance is now considered of more moment than reality. The modern mode of education is an example in point.

# Joseph Smith, 1844

“Children [and adults] are so instructed as to acquire a smattering of everything, and as a matter of consequence, ***they know nothing properly.*** Seminaries and academies deal out their moral and natural philosophy, their geometry, trigonometry, and astronomy, their chemistry, botany, and mineralogy, ***until the mind of the pupil becomes a chaos; and like the stomach when it is overloaded with a variety of food, it digests nothing, but converts the superabundant nutriment to poison.***

# Joseph Smith, 1844

This mode of education answers one ***purpose—it enables people to seem learned***; and seemingly, by a great many, is thought all sufficient. Thus we are schooled in quackery, and are early taught to regard showy and superficial attainments as most desirable. Every boarding school miss is a ***Plato in petticoats***, without an ounce of that genuine knowledge, that true philosophy, ***which would enable her to be useful in the world and to escape those perils with which she must necessarily be encompassed.***

# Joseph Smith, 1844

***"Young people are taught to use a variety of hard terms which they understand but imperfectly—to repeat lessons which they are unable to apply—to astonish their grandmothers with a display of their parrot-like acquisitions; but their mental energies are clogged and torpified with a variety of learned lumber, most of which is discarded from the brain long before the possessor knows how to use it. This is the quackery of education."***

The previous excerpt is taken from the inaugural address of Joseph Smith upon being elected mayor of Nauvoo. The prophet quotes from Alexander's Messenger.

# Educated Populace

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-zR2pM\\_S5U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-zR2pM_S5U)

# Reading Bills

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gW7m0aPnYYA>

4Ring

Research

Reason

Relate

Record

# Covenanting with the Lord Today

For behold, I say unto you that as many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord; and as many of the Jews as will not repent shall be cast off; for the Lord covenanteth with none save it be with them that repent and believe in his Son, who is the Holy One of Israel.

# Norman Vincent Peale

“There was a time when the American people roared like lions for liberty; now they bleat like sheep for security.”

# How Does One Declare One's Independence?

- Private Virtue
- Public Virtue
- Widespread Education
- Auxiliary Precautions

# Why Jefferson Was Chosen To Write The Declaration

"The sub-committee met. Jefferson proposed to me to make the draft. I said, "I will not." "You should do it." "Oh! no." "Why will you not? You ought to do it." "I will not." "Why?" "Reasons enough." "What can be your reasons?" "Reason first—You are a Virginian, and a Virginian ought to appear at the head of this business. Reason second—I am obnoxious, suspected and unpopular. You are very much otherwise. Reason third—You can write ten times better than I can." "Well," said Jefferson, "if you are decided, I will do as well as I can." "Very well. When you have drawn it up, we will have a meeting." John Adams, 6 August, 1776.

# The Declaration of Independence

When in the course of human events, it becomes **necessary** for one people to **dissolve** the **political** bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a **decent respect** to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which **impel** them to the separation.

"In every human society there is an essay continually tending to confer on one part the height of power and happiness, and to reduce the other to the extreme of weakness and misery. The intent of good laws is to oppose this effort, and to diffuse their influence universally and equally."

Marquis Beccaria



# The Declaration of Independence

We hold these truths to be **self-evident**, that all men are created **equal**; that they are **endowed** by their Creator with certain **unalienable** rights; that among these are **life, liberty**, and the **pursuit of happiness**;

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# Are We Equal?

- No two human beings are exactly alike in any respect.
- Exhibit different natural skills
- Acquire different tastes
- Develop along different lines
- Vary in physical strength, mental capacity, emotional stability, inherited social status, in their opportunities for self-fulfillment, and in scores of other ways.
- Equal in the sight of God
- Equal in the sight of the law
- Equal in the protection of our rights.

# Elder Oaks

“He established the Constitution of the United States **“that every man may act . . . according to the moral agency which I have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment”** (Doctrine and Covenants 101:78). In other words, the most desirable condition for the effective exercise of God-given moral agency is a condition of maximum freedom and responsibility — the opposite of slavery or political oppression. With freedom we can be accountable for our own actions and cannot blame our conditions on our bondage to another. This is the condition the Lord praised in the Book of Mormon, where the people — not a king — established the laws and were governed by them (see Mosiah 29:23–26). This popular sovereignty necessarily implies popular *responsibility*. Instead of blaming their troubles on a king or tyrant, all citizens are responsible to share the burdens of governing, “that every man might bear his part” (Mosiah 29:34).”

# The Declaration of Independence

that, to **secure** these rights,  
governments are **instituted** among  
men, **deriving** their **just** powers  
from the **consent** of the **governed**;

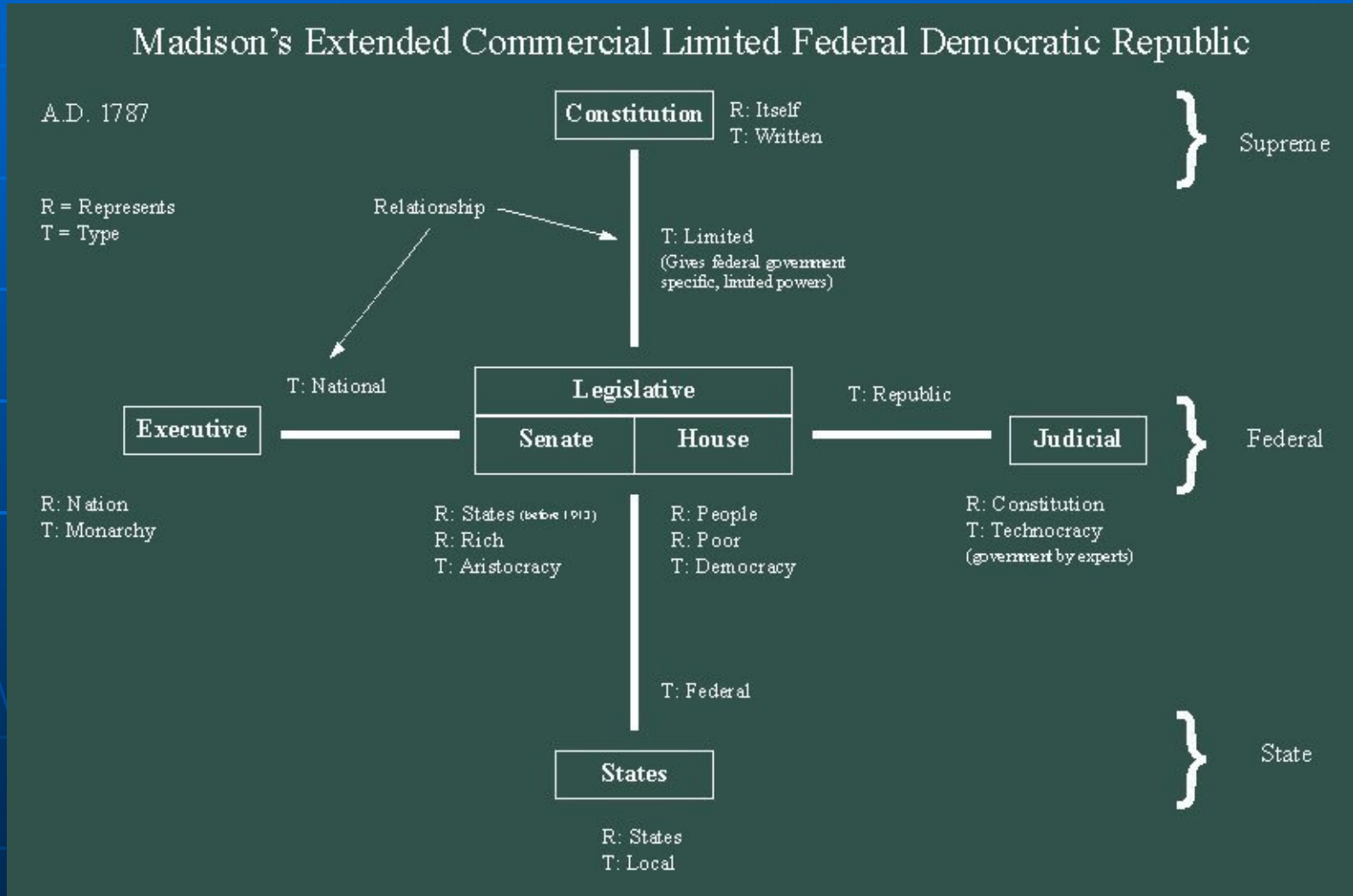
# The Declaration of Dependence

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSIkjNaICsg>

# The Law by Frederic Bastiat

“Life, faculties, production — in other words, individuality, liberty, property — this is man. And in spite of the cunning of artful political leaders, these three gifts from God precede all human legislation, and are superior to it. Life, liberty, and property do not exist because men have made laws. On the contrary, it was the fact that life, liberty, and property existed beforehand that caused men to make laws in the first place.”

# Just Powers



# Encouraging the Just Use of Power

“The way to have good and safe government, is not to trust it all to one, but to divide it among the many, distributing to every one exactly the functions he is competent to. Let the national government be entrusted with the defense of the nation, and its foreign and federal relations; the State governments with the civil rights, law, police, and administration of what concerns the State generally; the counties with the local concerns of the counties, and each ward direct the interests within itself.

(Thomas Jefferson, Works 6:543; P.P.N.S., p. 125)

# Encouraging the Just Use of Power

“It is by dividing and subdividing these republics from the great national one down through all its subordinations, until it ends in the administration of every man’s farm by himself; by placing under every one what his own eye may superintend, that all will be done for the best. What has destroyed liberty and the rights of man in every government which has ever existed under the sun? The generalizing and concentrating all cares and powers into one body.”

(Thomas Jefferson, Works 6:543; P.P.N.S., p. 125)

# What are Just Powers at the Local Level?

<http://www.globalnewspost.com/article.cfm?id=3226>

# The Declaration of Independence

that whenever any form of government becomes **destructive** of these ends, it is the right of the **people** to **alter** or to **abolish** it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such **principles**, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to **effect** their **safety** and happiness.

# Permission to Alter or Abolish?

## King Noah (Mosiah 11)

Now the eyes of the people were blinded; therefore they hardened their hearts against the words of Abinadi, and they sought from that time forward to take him. And king Noah hardened his heart against the word of the Lord, and he did not repent of his evil doings.

## King Limhi (Mosiah 21)

And now the afflictions of the Nephites were great, and there was no way that they could deliver themselves out of their hands, for the Lamanites had surrounded them on every side.

And it came to pass that the people began to murmur with the king because of their afflictions; and they began to be desirous to go against them to battle. And they did afflict the king sorely with their complaints; therefore he granted unto them that they should do according to their desires.

# Permission to Alter or Abolish?

## King Limhi (Mosiah 22)

And they did humble themselves even in the depths of humility; and they did cry mightily to God; yea, even all the day long did they cry unto their God that he would deliver them out of their afflictions.

And now the Lord was slow to hear their cry because of their iniquities; nevertheless the Lord did hear their cries, and began to soften the hearts of the Lamanites that they began to ease their burdens; yet the Lord did not see fit to deliver them out of bondage.

## Alma (Mosiah 24)

And Alma and his people did not raise their voices to the Lord their God, but did pour out their hearts to him; and he did know the thoughts of their hearts.

And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord came to them in their afflictions, saying: Lift up your heads and be of good comfort, for I know of the covenant which ye have made unto me; and I will covenant with my people and deliver them out of bondage.

And I will also ease the burdens which are put upon your shoulders, that even you cannot feel them upon your backs, even while you are in bondage; and this will I do that ye may stand as witnesses for me hereafter, and that ye may know of a surety that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions.

# On Such Principles....

## Luke 11

24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth *it* swept and garnished.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first.

# The Declaration of Independence

**Prudence**, indeed, will **dictate** that governments long established should not be changed for **light** and **transient** causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more **disposed** to **suffer**, while evils are **sufferable** than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are **accustomed**.

# The Declaration of Independence

But when a long train of abuses and **usurpations**, pursuing **invariably** the same object, **evinces** a design to reduce them under **absolute despotism**, it is their right, it is their **duty**, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future **security**.

# The Declaration of Independence

Such has been the **patient sufferance** of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of **repeated** injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute **tyranny** over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a **candid** world.

# Ether 8

25 For it cometh to pass that whoso buildeth it up seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries; and it bringeth to pass the destruction of all people, for it is built up by the devil, who is the father of all lies; even that same liar who beguiled our first parents, yea, even that same liar who hath caused man to commit murder from the beginning; who hath hardened the hearts of men that they have murdered the prophets, and stoned them, and cast them out from the beginning.

# Ether 8

- 26 Wherefore, I, Moroni, am commanded to write these things that evil may be done away, and that the time may come that Satan may have no power upon the hearts of the children of men, but that they may be persuaded to do good continually, that they may come unto the fountain of all righteousness and be saved.

# President Benson, Oct. 1988

“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.

# President Benson, Oct. 1988

“I testify that the church and kingdom of God is increasing in strength. Its numbers are growing, as is the faithfulness of its faithful members. It has never been better organized or equipped to perform its divine mission.

## President Benson, Oct. 1988

“I testify that as the forces of evil increase under Lucifer’s leadership and as the forces of good increase under the leadership of Jesus Christ, there will be growing battles between the two until the final confrontation.

As the issues become clearer and more obvious, all mankind will eventually be required to align themselves either for the kingdom of God or for the kingdom of the devil.

## President Benson, Oct. 1988

“As these conflicts rage, either secretly or openly, the righteous will be tested. God’s wrath will soon shake the nations of the earth and will be poured out on the wicked without measure. (See JS—H 1:45; D&C 1:9.) But God will provide strength for the righteous and the means of escape; and eventually and finally truth will triumph.” (See 1 Ne. 22:15–23.)

# D&C 123

12 For there are many yet on the earth among all sects, parties, and denominations, who are blinded by the subtle craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, and who are only kept from the truth because they know not where to find it—

13 Therefore, that we should waste and wear out our lives in bringing to light all the hidden things of darkness, wherein we know them; and they are truly manifest from heaven—

14 These should then be attended to with great earnestness.

# So What????

Why is this important?

What can I do now?

What should I do now?

**[rhaymond@ahsmail.com](mailto:rhaymond@ahsmail.com)**