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PUSHING THE CAR OF PROGRESS FORWARD: THE *SALT LAKE TRIBUNE'S*  
QUEST TO CHANGE UTAH FOR STATEHOOD, 1871-1896

by

Robert P. Mills

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirement for the degree

of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

History

Approved:

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David Rich Lewis  
Major Professor

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Michael S. Sweeney  
Committee Member

---

Robert Parson  
Committee Member

---

Byron R. Burnham  
Dean of Graduate Studies

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

2007

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## ABSTRACT

Pushing the Car of Progress Forward: The *Salt Lake Tribune's*

Quest to Change Utah for Statehood, 1871-1896

by

Robert P. Mills, Master of Arts

Utah State University, 2007

Major Professor: Dr. David Rich Lewis  
Department: History

The debate over Utah statehood involved several controversial issues that the United States government and the American public wanted resolved before admission would be granted. One strong advocate for such changes in Utah was the widely published newspaper, the *Salt Lake Tribune*, which continually published anti-statehood and anti-Mormon ideas in the final decades before Utah was finally admitted in 1896. This thesis studies and analyzes the *Tribune's* editorials and news stories to better understand which issues opponents of statehood worried the most over and what they wanted to accomplish with their protest. It finds that Mormon political domination was the paper's central concern throughout the last decade of the debate, even after developments showed change on the horizon.

This thesis also examines the *Tribune's* ability to reach Utah readers and a national audience through its connections with the Associated Press. By citing numerous newspapers from throughout the United States and members of Congress who were close

to the statehood debate, this thesis shows that the *Tribune* got its message out and that it played a strong part in the statehood struggle.

(116 pages)

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project's roots lie in a class I took at the University of Wyoming with Dr. Phil Roberts in the Spring 2005 semester called "History of the Nineteenth Century American West." In one April class, we were all assigned a particular western territory and asked to analyze how that territory eventually became a state. I was given California, which speedily achieved statehood only two years after gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in 1848. Watching another student present Utah's lengthy pursuit of admittance, which took nearly fifty years (1847-1896), I saw the tremendous contrast between the two states and my interest grew to learn more. Although I had never lived in Utah until coming to Logan for graduate school, Utah's statehood quest had particular interest for me because I am a member of the Mormon Church. I wondered how much the long delay could be attributed to the Mormons' way of life and how much to prejudice against the religious sect. In completing this thesis, I still do not have an answer to that query, but I certainly discovered that both sides can easily be credited with delaying statehood in their own particular ways.

I am grateful to many individuals for helping me complete this thesis project, but I have room to thank only a few. I offer a hearty thanks to my committee members: my advisor, Dr. David Rich Lewis, who has been extremely helpful and patient and who deserves much credit for helping me complete this project before I become history myself; Dr. Michael S. Sweeney, for helping me find a workable method to analyze the heavy amount of newspaper material; and Bob Parson, for opening possibilities for research and for always having an encouraging smile for a struggling graduate student. I also want to thank many of the professors I have had the pleasure of working and

associating with in the USU History Department, namely, Jennifer Ritterhouse, Mark Damen, Lawrence Culver, Bob Cole, Alice Chapman, and a handful of others. Fellow graduate students David Bigger, Adam Dunn, Jessica Rose Pedro, and others have been a delight and an inspiration to me and I thank them for always encouraging me.

I owe no greater debt than to my wife, Erica, who was sadly left at home on countless days and nights to fend for herself while I worked at the library or elsewhere. It's finally finished this time, dear.

Robert P. Mills

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION:

#### HISTORIOGRAPHY AND METHODOLOGY

For nearly fifty years and through seven constitutional conventions, Utahns struggled to gain statehood, a long and dubious period unmatched by U.S. territories in American history. The dreadfully long wait between 1847, when Mormons<sup>1</sup> first entered the Great Basin, and 1896, when Utah finally received statehood, occurred in large part because Mormon religious beliefs, political practices, and society radically differed from the rest of America. Plurality of wives, church political influence, and economic dominance over the territory were all central issues that complicated Utah's statehood hopes. As historian Howard R. Lamar explains, "nowhere else had the federal government ever faced the problem of turning a desert frontier theocracy into a standard democratic American state."<sup>2</sup>

Also during that time the Mormon faith and Utah endured numerous public relations battles that marred the image of Mormonism and made the idea of Utah statehood a farce. While much of this criticism came from outside the territory, some of it occurred within Utah itself. Non-Mormons, sometimes called "gentiles,"<sup>3</sup> living in the region were just as highly opposed to peculiar Mormon ways as their counterparts in the East. By the 1880s, a non-Mormon publication from Utah called the *Salt Lake Tribune* garnered a watchdog reputation throughout the nation by questioning every move the

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<sup>1</sup> Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were, and are, commonly known as Mormons, Latter-day Saints, or LDS.

<sup>2</sup> Howard R. Lamar, *The Far Southwest, 1846-1912: A Territorial History* (New York: Norton, 1970), 409.

<sup>3</sup> The term "gentile" is an insider term that was often used in the nineteenth century to mean non-Mormon, or someone who was not a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Although the *Salt Lake Tribune* and other papers frequently used the term, some regarded it as degrading. It is scarcely used today. Also see *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 29, 1887.

Mormon church made. Its editorials and news stories often labeled Mormons as “un-American” and ultimately cast a dark shadow over statehood hopes, forcing the American public to rethink Utah’s readiness for self-government. Because of the paper’s negativity, Utah’s admittance as a state took much longer to be fulfilled.<sup>4</sup>

Newspapers and literature collectively formed the public battleground throughout the struggle for statehood as Mormons and non-Mormons each had their various forms of media to present their sides of the argument. Countering the *Tribune*, for example, were pro-Mormon newspapers the *Deseret News* and the *Salt Lake Herald*. Day by day, week by week these papers stood for their views and criticized those of their rivals, making for a highly contentious debate that drew national interest. Utah newspaper historian J. Cecil Alter writes that, “no newspapers of any section of the country, or of any period in the Nation’s history, were more eagerly awaited or more closely read than those hailing from Utah during the anti-polygamy crusade of the last half of the Nineteenth Century.”<sup>5</sup>

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the *Salt Lake Tribune*’s editorial position regarding Utah statehood during the highly contentious period of the 1880s and 1890s. It seeks to discover which issues the paper’s editors discussed the most in order to evaluate their importance in the Utah statehood debate. This is done by canvassing the following arguments the paper made against statehood:

- political intervention by the Mormon church
- church economic control
- the practice of plural marriages
- the “un-American” nature of Mormonism
- treachery of church members

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<sup>4</sup> Gustive O. Larson, *The “Americanization” of Utah for Statehood* (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1971), 92, and Edward Leo Lyman, *Political Deliverance: The Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 19.

<sup>5</sup> J. Cecil Alter, *Early Utah Journalism: A half century of forensic warfare, waged by the West’s most militant Press* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1938), 9.

- LDS religious doctrine
- predictions of civil war in the event of Utah statehood

By examining these stories, it is plain that the paper's editors emphasized certain arguments by mentioning them more frequently and using them to convince the public that Utah had deep flaws to mend before it could be admitted as a state.

As this study suggests, Mormon political control was the top concern for those who opposed Utah's statehood bid, even over the highly controversial issue of polygamy. Many scholars have been captivated by the potency of the anti-polygamy message over the years, and this thesis sees it as an important part of the opposition's argument against Utah statehood. From analyzing the *Tribune's* content, however, it is clear that the argument opposing church political control received more attention in the paper than any other issue and was present in the vast majority of editorials and news stories.

Scholars have long pointed at the elimination of polygamy and the church's influence over politics as the two most important prerequisites to securing statehood, though more weight is given to one over the other depending on which history one reads. Gustive O. Larson's 1971 book, *The "Americanization" of Utah for Statehood*, for example, examines the efforts made by the federal government to make Utah more "American," both socially and politically. Larson views Mormon political domination as the central issue in the debate, arguing that polygamy was simply the hot-button topic of the day and that it only brought the theocracy issue into clearer light. Larson's perspective is based partly on Klaus J. Hansen's findings in *Quest for Empire*, which show that church political dominance in Utah concerned members of Congress more than

anything else on this matter.<sup>3</sup> While Larson also mentions some of the efforts made by the *Tribune* and the Liberal Party to prevent statehood, the central theme of his study is the political nature of the struggle and the establishment of “true democracy” as the necessary precondition to statehood.

Edward Leo Lyman’s 1986 book *Political Deliverance* meticulously analyzes all the key elements regarding Utah’s quest for statehood, including careful detail of the newspaper war between the *Tribune* and its Mormon-owned rivals the *Deseret News* and *Salt Lake Herald*. Lyman’s stand is that, “research for this work has convinced me that the practice of plural marriage among the Latter-Day Saints was the foremost obstacle to admission of Utah as a state.”<sup>4</sup> Although he concedes that Mormon political intervention played a strong part in delaying statehood, he contends that the American people and most of Congress opposed statehood because of the practice of polygamy, concluding that its eradication from Mormon practice ultimately made statehood possible.<sup>5</sup> In her recent book *The Mormon Question* (2002), Sarah Barringer Gordon leans toward Lyman’s reasoning, but concedes that Lyman, Larson, and Hanson are all “essentially correct” and that the two issues were “mutually dependant” in the opposition’s eyes.<sup>6</sup>

Lamar takes a view similar to Gordon’s, but his argument allows room to consider how the public viewed the conflict. On the relevance of polygamy and political intervention, Lamar states in *The Far Southwest* (1970) that “much of the political history

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<sup>3</sup> Larson, *Americanization*, 281, and Klaus J. Hansen, *Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1967), 170, point at the 1889 House Hearings before the Committee on Territories and statements made by Idaho Congressman Fred T. DuBois, which reveal the deepest concerns of government representatives—those who actually had the power to confer or deny Utah statehood.

<sup>4</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Sarah Barringer Gordon, *The Mormon Question: Polygamy and Constitutional Conflict in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 260-261.

of Utah from 1870 to 1896 centers around the two issues, and the coming of a two-party system to Utah after 1890 was in many ways as significant as the abolition of polygamy.”<sup>7</sup> In another publication, he contemplates the effect public opinion had on the debate and argues that “statehood was due in part to a deliberate change of the unpopular stereotype of the Mormon of the 1850s to that of the solid, energetic, conservative American citizen of the 1890s.”<sup>8</sup> This observation shows that at least part of Utah’s statehood hopes rested in the court of public opinion, which ruled against such hopes for decades before finally allowing the territory to become a state.

Negative public opinion of Mormons developed in the decades that preceded the *Tribune*’s inaugural issue in 1870, but by the 1880s, because of its unique position as a successful non-Mormon paper in Utah, the paper was at the forefront of the Mormon question and the statehood debate. Even after the church gave off the appearance of resolving its political rivals’ complaints, the *Tribune* continued to question, doubt, inquire, and prod at those topics, especially Mormon political power. “It is doubtful if most Americans would have given much thought to the marital or political activities of a group so geographically removed from the mainstream,” Lyman states, “had it not been for artificial stimulation, for whatever motives, by a segment of the nation’s clergy and press, often in collaboration with their counterparts in Utah.” As this thesis shows, the *Tribune* undoubtedly played a large role in the debate by rousing Utah’s non-Mormons to fight statehood bids and by disseminating its anti-statehood message for the rest of the country to contemplate. The removal of opposition from the public’s consciousness was,

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<sup>7</sup> Lamar, *The Far Southwest*, 379.

<sup>8</sup> Lamar, “Statehood for Utah: A Different Path,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 39 (Fall 1971): 325.

in Lyman's view, "perhaps the greatest challenge in the Mormon quest for Utah statehood."<sup>9</sup>

The church's attempts at displacing the *Tribune* also point to the paper's importance on Utah's political scene. Because it was influential to both non-Mormon Utahns and the American public at large, Mormon leadership made great efforts to undermine the paper's influence, including bribing media sources to post favorable stories about the church. Despite the great amount of effort and dollars put into the project, the *Tribune* was still a vital part of Utah politics in the 1890s. Statehood was still not guaranteed after the 1890 Woodruff Manifesto officially ended polygamy nor after the Mormon-run political People's Party dissolved in 1891, though these were undoubtedly important developments for the statehood effort to pass through.

Surprisingly little has been written concerning the objectives and purpose of the *Salt Lake Tribune* during this period in Utah history. The one major study completed on the *Tribune* and its content is O.N. Malmquist's 1971 book *The First 100 Years: A History of the Salt Lake Tribune*,<sup>10</sup> which chronicles the paper's history and its struggles with counterpart, Mormon-owned newspapers. Malmquist credits polygamy as the paper's "most strident battle cry in the controversy," but maintains that "it was economics and politics which really made the conflict irrepressible."<sup>11</sup> The book offers plenty of useful history regarding the paper's past and some insight into the *Tribune's* goals. As another Utah newspaper historian, Monte B. McLaws, states, Malmquist's study is mainly a "political history of Utah, a history too frequently based on secondary

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<sup>9</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 5.

<sup>10</sup> O.N. Malmquist, *The First 100 Years: A History of the Salt Lake Tribune, 1871-1971* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1971).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 9.

sources.”<sup>12</sup> Overall, the book still leaves questions open concerning the *Tribune*’s objectives on the statehood debate which this thesis seeks to answer.

This thesis reveals a few surprises about the *Tribune*’s position regarding statehood and its effectiveness toward spreading its message. Some *Tribune* editorials show it actually favored Utah statehood, just not the situation of Mormon political, social, and economic dominance the editors feared would result. Frequently, editorials praised the idea of “American Statehood,” in lieu of “Mormon Statehood,” and advocated serious reforms to Utah politics and society in order to accomplish that. Through its connections with the Associated Press, *Tribune* editorials found their way into many papers across the country, including the *New York Times*, the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, the *Chicago Times*, and the *Philadelphia Bulletin*. This thesis ultimately shows that *Tribune* was a strong political force in the territory and that it often had the country’s attention for exposing potential problems associated with Utah statehood.

The Utah statehood debate came at a time when newspapers were especially influential because of the manner in which they shaped people’s perceptions and understanding of the day’s issues. *New York Sun* editor Charles A. Dana, for example, stated in 1888 that the press “takes men when their information is incomplete, when their reasoning has not yet been worked out, when their opinions have not yet been fixed, and it suggests and intimates and insinuates an opinion and a judgment which often times a man—unless he is a man of very great force of character and intelligence—adopts as something established and concluded.”<sup>13</sup> Since most Americans, especially in the East,

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<sup>12</sup> Monte B. McLaws, *Spokesman for the Kingdom: Early Mormon Journalism and the Deseret News, 1830-1898* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1977), xii.

<sup>13</sup> Qtd. in Gerald J. Baldasty, *The Commercialization of News in the Nineteenth Century* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 9. Dana’s comment was taken from an address he gave before the



had never traveled to Utah nor knowingly came into contact with a Mormon, their most significant source of information regarding the region and people came through printed material. By the 1880s, many of the country's newspapers based their information on reports published by some of the most outspoken critics of Utah statehood: the editors of the *Salt Lake Tribune*. Because of its ability to dispense a skeptical message of Mormons, Utah historians Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton remarked that the *Tribune* was "the most effective organ of the territory's gentiles."<sup>14</sup>

After reading just a few *Tribune* stories about Utah statehood, it would be difficult to overlook the paper's anti-Mormon sentiment. Histories of Utah statehood, however, have taken little time to describe the *Tribune*'s objectives on this matter. This thesis seeks to fill this gap by explaining not only what these objectives were, but answer why the paper's editors adopted these anti-Mormon tactics. As much as the paper's editorial policies under chief editor C.C. Goodwin strongly represented non-Mormon concerns over statehood, they also advocated necessary changes in order for the territory to be prepared to accept admission. Only after its editors felt these changes secure did the *Tribune* discard its anti-Mormon flare, thus showing that its main goal for using such tactics was for the purpose of secularizing Utah. This thesis, therefore, takes the view that the *Tribune* acted primarily as an agent of change.

An important point to make here is that the *Tribune* and other papers nationwide did not necessarily *create* people's opinions regarding statehood, rather they were influential in *shaping* and *reinforcing* what people already believed about Mormons and

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Wisconsin Editorial Association and was reported in the *St. Louis Republic* on July 25, 1888. This same quote also appears in communications scholar Hazel Dicken-Garcia's bedrock study *Journalistic Standards in Nineteenth-Century America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), pg 162.

<sup>14</sup> Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints*, 2d ed. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 176.

Utah.<sup>15</sup> Journalism scholar Rodger Streitmatter echoes this idea with his conviction that, “journalistic coverage can *shape*—and profoundly so—an issue.” Streitmatter goes on to state that “the news media can place an issue on the public agenda...can move it to the front burner...can get people talking about the issue. And once an issue has been moved to into the spotlight, other institutions can cause real change to occur.”<sup>16</sup> The *Tribune* followed this model exactly by keeping negative material about statehood on the front burner of its agenda so that outside influences could further change Utah society and politics. It consistently reminded people of the reasons not to admit Utah. Even while controversial issues were apparently being resolved, the *Tribune* editorial staff relentlessly reiterated its concerns, speculated about them, and accused Mormon leadership of foul play. As this study shows, the *Tribune* often had good reason to remain skeptical and its unremitting attitude invited the American public to doubt Mormon claims of reform. Political scientist James B. Lemert calls this tactic “mobilizing information,”<sup>17</sup> or giving the public information that helps them act on attitudes they already have. It also points at the “agenda-setting” theory outlined by Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald Shaw, which is built on a statement by Bernard C. Cohen that the

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<sup>15</sup> Studies regarding the influence of the press in people’s lives avoid phrasing such as “create” and “manufacture” because of the great difficulty of proving people’s thoughts and decisions were so directly affected by media outlets. One set of sociologists confirmed that “individuals do not slavishly follow the framing of issues presented in the mass media. Rather, people frame issues in a more visceral and moralistic (and sometimes racist and xenophobic) style. They actively filter, sort, and reorganize information in personally meaningful ways in the process of constructing an understanding of public issues.” William A. Gamson, et al. “Media images and the social construction of reality,” *Annual Review of Sociology*, 18 (1992): 373-393, quoted in David Scott Domke, “The Press, Social Change, and Race Relations in the Late Nineteenth Century” (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 1996), 13.

<sup>16</sup> Rodger Streitmatter, *Mightier than the Sword: How the News Media Have Shaped American History* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 2.

<sup>17</sup> James B. Lemert, *Does Mass Communication Change Public Opinion After All?: A New Approach to Effects Analysis* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1981), 118.

media “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.”<sup>18</sup>

In the decades before the *Tribune* became a major paper in Utah, the American public received depictions of Mormon practices through novels, stories, government reports, and other forms of communication which played a large role in developing negative stereotypes of the territory and its inhabitants. Some of these sources contained elements of Utah’s true story, especially the first-hand accounts that came through government reports. Some sources, however, such as early books and newspaper stories, were not as accurate. This was so because many novelists and newspaper writers had never been to Utah and speculated about the territory’s living conditions and social norms. Of these stories, historian Sarah Barringer Gordon reminds us that, “the fact that they were ‘wrong’ does not mean they were ineffective.”<sup>19</sup> Regardless of the truthfulness of these early reports, the American public was drawn into the Utah situation and its statehood controversy primarily through media sources that helped them develop ideas of what it was like to live around Mormons in Utah. Concerning the construction of perceptions and stereotypes, Walter Lippmann wrote in his classic study *Public Opinion* (1922) that:

Each of us lives and works on a small part of the earth’s surface, moves in a small circle, and of these acquaintances knows only a few intimately. Of any public event that has wide effects we see at best only a phase and an aspect. . . Inevitably our opinions cover a bigger space, a longer reach of time, a greater number of things, than we can directly observe. They have, therefore, to be pieced together out of what others have reported and what we can imagine.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw, “The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass-Media,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36 (Summer 1972): 177. Also see McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2004).

<sup>19</sup> See Gordon, *The Mormon Question*, 30. Her second chapter, in particular, discusses media perceptions of polygamy, Mormons, and Utah during the second half of the Nineteenth Century, illustrating how effective such imagery was to the American public.

<sup>20</sup> Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922), 79.

Given the public's abhorrence for polygamy, political corruption, and other controversies surrounding Utah, it was not difficult for newspaper publishers to predict that such depictions would feed the public's imagination.

An important element to understanding newspaper persuasiveness lies in scholarly theory and methods. The works of four communications authors—namely Hazel Dicken-Garcia, James W. Carey, Gerald J. Baldasty, and Richard L. Kaplan—form the theoretical and methodological foundations used in this thesis. Dicken-Garcia's highly regarded 1989 study *Journalism Standards in Nineteenth-Century America*, in particular, provides a solid understanding of the methods practiced by newspapers during this time period and is especially important for establishing the media's influential role in society. Of this role, Dicken-Garcia explains that the nineteenth century newspaper was not just “a receptacle of information that people could read and store with detachment on a shelf. It intruded into their lives and involved readers—provoked feelings [and] represented something used in daily life.”<sup>21</sup> Her study also offers numerous examples of individuals who believed the press guided public opinion and shows the importance of the press in people's lives as a source of information and entertainment. One press critic from the time, she quotes, stated that “people had to learn from newspapers everything they needed to know ‘to make up their mind about every question.’”<sup>22</sup> Her findings and methodological structure are both essential to this thesis.

Carey's 1989 book *Communication as Culture*, which is really a series of essays that discuss how people make meaning of the people, places, and events in their lives through communication, is another source that provides theoretical background for this

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<sup>21</sup> Dicken-Garcia, *Journalistic Standards*, 225.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

subject. Carey explains that “communication is a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed.”<sup>23</sup> Mass media, in Carey’s view, play an important role in this process by forming collective definitions of people, places, and events, all of which are shaped by experiences, or rather by representations of experience. Carey states that “if one tries to examine society as a form of communication, one sees it as a process whereby reality is created, shared, modified, and preserved.”<sup>24</sup> Since the most popular and farthest-reaching form of communication in the late nineteenth century was newspapers, this theory fits the story of the *Salt Lake Tribune* and its position regarding statehood.

Baldasty’s 1992 work *The Commercialization of News in the Nineteenth Century* uses a method similar to Dicken-Garcia’s foundational study. In his book, Baldasty examines the evolution of nineteenth-century newspaper objectives, finding that newspapers, in general, became more business-oriented and less politically biased as the century wore on. Despite the trend, nonetheless, he allows room for exceptions by asserting that not all newspapers withdrew from their exclusively political roles.<sup>25</sup> Judging from its frequent political discourse, it is easy to see that the *Salt Lake Tribune* was one such paper, refusing to relinquish its political leadership during the debate over Utah statehood and maintaining its stance against admission for what its contributors believed were valid, moral reasons. “Partisan editors,” Baldasty states, “viewed their readers as voters” and “helped shape news to reflect their own needs and interests.”<sup>26</sup> On

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<sup>23</sup> James W. Carey, *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 23.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>25</sup> Baldasty, *Commercialization*, 7. Baldasty mentions William Randolph Hearst and the *New York Journal*’s extensive coverage of the 1897 mayoral election, in which it made perfectly clear its political preferences.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

the whole, however, Baldasty maintains that the market and advertising bumped political bias out of the country's newspapers before the century's end.

Countering Baldasty's conclusion, Kaplan's *Politics and the American Press* shows that objectivity took much longer to develop than in Baldasty's model. Looking at Detroit newspapers over a fifty-five-year time period, from the closing year of the American Civil War to the years following the First World War, Kaplan demonstrates that the press leaned away from political biases in the twentieth-century more than in the nineteenth.<sup>27</sup> Before this transition took place, Kaplan explains that nineteenth-century newspapers were "explicit organs of particular political communities. Their mission: to articulate the unique perspective of their community; to operate as a forum for debates and dialogues within the group; and, more typically, to enhance the strategic interests of their party organization."<sup>28</sup> The *Salt Lake Tribune* exemplified all three of these roles by articulating non-Mormons' political perspective, using its pages to formulate debate, and advancing the non-Mormon Liberal Party's interests for decades. Yet, once its party ceased to exist in 1893, the *Tribune's* content started to move away from political leanings and, eventually, took on a more objective role in Utah politics.

The content analyses in Dicken-Garcia's, Baldasty's, and Kaplan's books examine shifts in content, tone, and practices—a method this thesis seeks to duplicate in order to analyze the *Tribune's* goals during the statehood debate and its perceptions of Mormons as a whole. When the *Tribune* was at the height of its influence from 1886 to 1894, over one-thousand stories<sup>29</sup> opposing statehood appeared in the paper. Looking

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<sup>27</sup> Richard L. Kaplan, *Politics and the American Press: The Rise of Objectivity, 1865-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 190.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 188.

<sup>29</sup> The term "stories" signifies both editorials (or opinion pieces) and news articles.

particularly at the paper's editorials and news stories that contain information about statehood, this thesis notes the frequency of given topics to show which objections the *Tribune* addressed most often during various time periods. Sometimes stories brought up only one complaint against statehood, but they often complained about more than one issue, so the study shows how many *stories* brought up specific complaints, not the overall quantity of column space dedicated to each point of issue. This method has been selected in order to show how frequently readers of the *Tribune* were exposed to these various issues brought up by the paper. Considering media scholar Allan Bell's statement that "the tendency with media language is to collect too much, not too little, and so run the risk of drowning in data,"<sup>30</sup> this study also does not comb over every single *Tribune* article within the nine-year timeframe, rather it empirically analyzes three separate three-month samples within the years 1886 to 1894.<sup>31</sup> This approach simplifies the analysis and follows patterns set forward in the scholarly works mentioned.<sup>32</sup>

Content analyses are effective ways to examine features and patterns found in large bodies of text, such as the *Tribune*'s immense body of news stories and editorials during the statehood controversy. Choosing the most useful topics is an important feature of such studies. Composition scholar Thomas Huckin, however, states that, "critical discourse analysis is an *approach*, a way of looking at texts, not a rigorously systematic method of analysis." Huckin also states that, like a literary critic, "a critical discourse analyst should use his or her best judgment as to which concepts are most appropriate to

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<sup>30</sup> Allan Bell, *The Language of News Media*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 22.

<sup>31</sup> The samples collected run from June-August 1887, October-December 1890, and September-November 1893. These periods surrounded political events that were critical in Utah's statehood quest, thus making them the most vital periods for analysis.

<sup>32</sup> Baldasty, *Commercialization*, 149-157, 190; Kaplan, *Politics and the American Press*, 28, 31, 148.

an insightful understanding of the text at hand.”<sup>33</sup> After searching numerous historical studies regarding Utah statehood and after examining a large number of *Tribune* stories, it became obvious that these seven categories outlined on page two formed the basis of the *Tribune*’s argument against statehood, which is why they have been selected for this study.

The organization of this thesis follows chronological chapters: Chapter Two briefly describes the origins of the *Tribune* in the early 1870s and how it came to be the largest circulated newspaper in Utah by 1886.<sup>34</sup> This chapter details the early actions of the *Tribune*’s main contributors, including C. C. Goodwin and William Nelson, whose witty editorials and Eastern connections earned them space in many well-known publications, including *Harper’s Weekly* and the *North American Review*.

Chapter Three is in many ways the heart of this study, incorporating a narrative of the topics along with empirical data to examine what issues the *Tribune* emphasized most often. Doubts and accusations were consistent in the *Tribune*’s stories during this time period from 1886-1890—In order for Utah to have any hope for statehood, these issues needed to be resolved. This section also shows the paper’s influence by looking at articles from other publications throughout the country. This chapter details what many people said about the *Tribune* at the time, including Utah territorial delegate John T. Caine. The chapter concludes with the *Tribune*’s doubts concerning the sincerity of the Woodruff Manifesto at the end of 1890 and its continued opposition to Utah’s admission.

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<sup>33</sup> Thomas Huckin, “Critical Discourse Analysis and the Discourse of Condescension.” in *Discourse Studies in Composition*, eds. Ellen Barton and Gail Stygall, Creskill, N.J.: Hampton Press, 2002, 163. Quoted in Andrea Ludlow Christensen, “The Rhetoric of Newspaper Rivalry in the Face of Image Restoration and Transformation” (M.A. Thesis., Brigham Young University, 2005), 14.

<sup>34</sup> McLaws, *Spokesman*, 179.



Chapter Four discusses the *Tribune*'s resistance from 1891 to 1894 following the Manifesto and the dissolution of the Mormon-run People's Party. Of special note in this chapter is the *Tribune*'s growing reluctance to attack the statehood question and finally the paper's full support of Utah's admission as a state. Also particularly interesting is the great attention shown by Utahns and U.S. congressmen to whether the *Tribune* supported statehood in the beginning of the post-Manifesto period.

In sum, this thesis seeks a greater understanding of territorial Utah history, showing the importance of the *Tribune* in the statehood debate as a principle advocate for non-Mormon interests. This work explores the paper's goals, methods, and accomplishments and looks at the far reach of the *Tribune* both inside and outside Utah. It shows that the *Tribune* was much more than just another Western newspaper; it operated as the Liberal Party's trumpet for the rest of the country to hear. "Mass media are powerful institutions," Baldasty states, "they do not just provide 'the facts'...but can impart a broader set of judgments about what is right or wrong, good or bad."<sup>35</sup> The *Salt Lake Tribune* passed such judgments by telling the public what was right and wrong, what was good and bad, and what needed to happen for territorial Utah to become the State of Utah.

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<sup>35</sup> Gerald J. Baldasty, *Vigilante Newspapers: A Tale of Sex, Religion, and Murder in the Northwest* (Seattle: University of Washington, 2005), 72.

## CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE *SALT LAKE TRIBUNE*, 1870-1885

*The Tribune has been aiming to do the State some service, by contending against its admission into the Union until the people of Utah are fully prepared and the danger of Utah passing back under a complete priestly rule shall no longer exist.*

-Salt Lake Tribune, January 12, 1872.

*The polygamous Apostle [George Q.] Cannon was nominated a third time for Congress, thus affording additional evidence to the country that as long as these law defying priests are encouraged in evil doing, no internal prompting in their own minds can be looked to to repair a wrong or set them right with an entraged [sic] public sentiment. It has been made manifest by sworn testimony to the present Congress and the one preceding, that Cannon is ineligible to take his seat on account of his being an unnaturalized alien and because of his adulterous and felonous cohabitation with four wives.*

-Salt Lake Tribune, October 11, 1876.

The top excerpt from the *Salt Lake Tribune* could easily be called the newspaper's mantra throughout the Utah statehood controversy. During the decades that preceded Utah's admission, the paper's editors believed they were serving the public interest in opposing statehood at the time, because to them it meant church political rule of the region. Notice that the editors wanted to hold back on statehood until the people of Utah were "fully prepared," an objective the *Tribune's* editors strived to fulfill in their own way throughout the entire controversy. The second quote, meanwhile, shows how bitter and contentious the paper's editorial section became against Mormons—especially church leaders. There is little unique in this segment, as the paper unleashed similar criticism against church leadership and policies for many years. By the late 1880s, the paper made such statements almost daily. While the *Tribune* was ripe with opposition to the church, so were many Utahns. The paper acted as a rallying point for those individuals to voice their complaints and attempt to bring further change to the territory. These quotes also show two of the most prominent complaints about statehood: political

power and polygamy. At the *Tribune*'s outset, few in Utah believed the paper would go on to become a strong political force, helping to hold back the long-awaited statehood bid.

### **The Tribune's Beginnings**

When the *Salt Lake Tribune* staff organized in 1870, Utah was a territory split, as Gustive O. Larson explains, “between those *of* the Kingdom and those *outside* the Kingdom.”<sup>1</sup> Those “*of* the Kingdom” were Mormons, who made Utah their refuge in the late 1840s and worked to create a utopian civilization they called Zion. Non-Mormons, meanwhile, were on the outside looking in. They trickled into the territory in search of mineral and commercial interests and were widely outnumbered by the LDS majority. Between these two groups were dissident Mormons, or “apostates,” who left the church generally because they either became disenchanted with it or because they had been excommunicated for their social behavior or doctrinal heresy. The *Tribune* originated out of this latter group. Its founders, the “schismatic elders” as *Tribune* historian O.N. Malmquist calls them, fought church leadership and the quest for Utah statehood from their very first edition.<sup>2</sup>

The church saw statehood as a way not only to gain self-governance but freedom from outside interference to live as they saw fit. Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton observe that Mormons believed “that in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains they had at

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<sup>1</sup> Gustive O. Larson, “Government, Politics, and Conflict,” in *Utah's History*, eds. Richard D. Poll, Thomas G. Alexander, Eugene E. Campbell, and David E. Miller. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1989), 247.

<sup>2</sup> O.N. Malmquist, *The First 100 Years: A History of the Salt Lake Tribune, 1871-1971* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1971), 20-21, 25, 33.

last found a land where ‘none shall come to hurt or make afraid.’<sup>3</sup> Early Mormon history shows that the Saints were radically different politically, socially, economically, and certainly religiously than their Protestant counterparts.<sup>4</sup> From the intense persecutions they endured during the 1830s and 1840s in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois—and the failed petitions for help from government leaders—Mormon leadership saw that as long as they did not have political autonomy they would not have control over their own destiny. Statehood, therefore, was the Mormons’ political holy grail because it offered legal protection for the church and its members to do as they pleased in the place they chose to live. Church president Brigham Young hoped that Mormon political control would ensure that outside forces could never again displace church members from their homes or from their way of life.<sup>5</sup>

The church’s quest for political control ignored the other side of the coin, however, as Mormon political power became so overwhelming in the region that most non-Mormons fought against Utah statehood. Feeling they had been left entirely out of the territory’s political structure, they argued that Mormon domination would only become worse if the government granted Utah its statehood petition. A few years before the *Salt Lake Tribune*’s inaugural issue, one group of non-Mormon businessmen went so far as to form their own small party and nominated a congressional candidate, deciding

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<sup>3</sup> Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints*, 2d ed. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 113.

<sup>4</sup> Numerous Mormon histories discuss these differences, including Dean L. May *Utah: A People’s History* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), Klaus J. Hansen, *Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1967), Sarah Barringer Gordon, *The Mormon Question: Polygamy and Constitutional Conflict in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), Leonard J. Arrington *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1830-1900* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1958; reprint, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005), Arrington and Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, and Thomas G. Alexander *Utah: the Right Place* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 1995), to name a few.

<sup>5</sup> Monte B. McLaws, *Spokesman for the Kingdom: Early Mormon Journalism and the Deseret News, 1830-1898* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1977), 61.

that they needed to find a way to challenge the church's political grasp if they planned to stay in Utah.<sup>6</sup> Such early attempts to gain a voice in Utah politics, however noble, were essentially unsuccessful until the Liberal Party organized in 1870—and even then it took nearly two decades for the Liberals to gain any semblance of control in the territory.<sup>7</sup>

Church political dominance, on the other hand, was only one of the objections raised by opponents at the time. The polygamy issue found frequent mention in Congress and the nation's press whenever the Mormon question came up for discussion. Historian Sarah Barringer Gordon points out that throughout the second half of the nineteenth century “almost 100 novels and many hundreds of magazine and newspaper stories...built on the market for antipolygamy fiction.”<sup>8</sup> Varied accounts of polygamy conjured up a mixture of fact and fiction regarding conditions in Utah, but undoubtedly helped stir the pot of anti-Mormon fervor and made the controversial practice a key point of contention for much of the statehood debate. Polygamy, according to Richard Olson Cowan, first appeared in national publications in the 1850s, but was not covered extensively until the 1870s.<sup>9</sup>

It was over the issue of church economic control, however, that the *Tribune* founders rallied. As the transcontinental railroad neared completion in 1868 and 1869, Mormon leadership labored to implement a cooperative communalism to ensure that gentile economic domination would not accompany the iron horse to Utah. Even before this time, Mormons already had experience with church-run economics. Back in the

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<sup>6</sup> Edward Leo Lyman, *Political Deliverance, The Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 14.

<sup>7</sup> In 1889, the Liberal Party finally won the majority in Salt Lake City and Ogden after many years of consistent Mormon control. See Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 110-111.

<sup>8</sup> Gordon, *The Mormon Question*, 29.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Olsen Cowan, “Mormonism in National Periodicals” (PhD Thesis, Stanford University, 1961), 25.

1830s, LDS church founder Joseph Smith put a radical system of consecration, redistribution of wealth, and stewardship into practice to help the society's poor and to mitigate social inequality.<sup>10</sup> The system failed because of poverty and apostasy, but from the time Mormons entered the Salt Lake Valley new church president Brigham Young made efforts to re-implement these ideals and take them even further. In the summer of 1847, church leadership determined not to trade with non-Mormons.<sup>11</sup> Young's push to bring back the law of consecration in 1854 failed,<sup>12</sup> but the church's price-fixing of agricultural products in 1864 and Young's encouraged boycott of all non-Mormon goods in 1866 showed that the church was essentially in control of Utah economics.<sup>13</sup> Trying again to bring back the church's old system, Young stated in the 1860s that "the day is coming and is near at hand, when the Latter-day Saints will give their wages every week to the bishop of the Church, and they will give them back what they think is right for the support of their families."<sup>14</sup> By 1869, the church established Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institute (ZCMI), a network of Mormon-owned businesses at which church members were pressured to purchase goods instead of at businesses owned by non-Mormons. This program later extended to the United Order, which Young established in 1873. These economic controlling programs led some Mormons to separate from the church and bothered the territory's non-Mormon population so that some considered the Mormon church a threat to the federal government's power over the region.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Alfred A Knopp, 2005), 154-155, 182-183, and 414.

<sup>11</sup> Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 47.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 146-147.

<sup>13</sup> Dean L. May, "Economic Beginnings," in *Utah's History*, eds. Richard D. Poll, Thomas G. Alexander, Eugene E. Campbell, and David E. Miller. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1989), 206.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in Edward Tullidge, "The Godbeite Movement," *Tullidge's Quarterly Magazine*, October 1880, 32.

<sup>15</sup> Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 294-297, 315, 341.

One group that sought to bring the government's wrath on the Mormons during the 1860s was Colonel Patrick Edward Connor and his California Volunteers. Sent to Utah during the Civil War, their orders were to maintain a military stronghold on the region and to keep an eye on the Mormon enterprise. Connor's relations with the Mormons, however, quickly went sour after his force occupied Fort Douglas overlooking Salt Lake City in 1862. He soon protested Mormon leadership's political and economic grasp over Utah and labeled the Mormons treasonous murderers in an 1862 report.<sup>16</sup> Resolving to use a non-violent method to subvert LDS control, he promoted mining the region's untapped mining potential. With experience in the California and Nevada mining rushes of the 1840s and 1850s, the men stationed at Fort Douglas prospected valuable mineral resources southwest of Salt Lake City. Before long, Connor established an anti-Mormon, pro-mining newspaper called the *Union Vedette*, advertised Utah's abundant mineral wealth to Eastern papers,<sup>17</sup> and even granted prospecting furloughs to his army regulars.<sup>18</sup>

Church leaders looked down on mining for several reasons. Agriculture, for one, was the church's primary economic objective because it was supposed to nourish the territory, whereas minerals would be sold to those outside Utah, leaving the Saints destitute. "Gold is not wealth. Wealth consists in the multiplication of the necessities and comforts of life," President Young argued. "Instead of hunting gold, go and raise wheat, barley, oats, get your bread and make gardens and orchards and raise vegetables and fruits that you may have something to sustain yourselves and something to give to the

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<sup>16</sup> Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1985), 296.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 298, and May, *People's History*, 115.

<sup>18</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 12.

poor and the needy.”<sup>19</sup> In addition, mines were generally owned by non-Mormons and would eventually bring them, not the church, economic prosperity. Also, the church did not want Salt Lake City to become another mining camp to be abandoned once mineral resources had been exhausted. Church members who wanted to prospect did so only when their local bishops approved it. If Mormons were to go mining, therefore, it was to be done only under strict priesthood direction.<sup>20</sup>

Three prominent church members, whose skepticism and disenchantment over the prophet’s political and economic ideals had brewed for years, decided to break with the faith in 1869 after being excommunicated for publishing anti-establishment content in the *Utah Magazine*. These three men, William S. Godbe, E.L.T. Harrison, and Edward W. Tullidge, formed the leadership for the “New Movement,” or the “Godbeites,”<sup>21</sup> to oppose Mormon economic and political control in order to “save the Mormon people from the provoked wrath of the Government.” In opposing church leadership, Godbe, Harrison, and Tullidge sought to “infuse Mormondom with new ideas” of openness and reconciliation with gentiles that would bring about a “peaceful revolution” which they believed “the country desired to see in Utah.”<sup>22</sup>

In 1869, Tullidge wrote to the popular *New York Herald* to outline the Movement’s platform and convince them that the schism was really just a way for Mormons to work out their issues. The *Herald* agreed with Tullidge that the wisest path

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<sup>19</sup> Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 299.

<sup>20</sup> Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 241-242.

<sup>21</sup> Ronald W. Walker, “The Commencement of the Godbeite Protest: Another View,” *Utah Historical Quarterly*, vol. 42 (Summer 1974): 216-244. This article details the Godbeites’ protest against the church, showing it was not merely a reform movement bent on economic and political restructuring in Utah, but one that demanded social and religious change. Also see Ronald W. Walker, *Wayward Saints: The Godbeites and Brigham Young* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), and McLaws, *Spokesman*, 176-177.

<sup>22</sup> Tullidge, “The Godbeite Movement,” 56.



was to leave the situation in Utah alone. “Thus was the Mormon people saved,” Tullidge wrote, “from a National crusade against them; for the temper of the country had never been so strong to ‘wipe out Mormonism’ since the period of the ‘Utah war,’ as at that moment.”<sup>23</sup> Whether Tullidge’s efforts really had such a dramatic effect on the *Herald* and the rest of the nation is difficult to say, but Tullidge and his associates felt galvanized by their success and decided to continue publishing their newfound cause’s philosophy. Having already failed with publications *Peep O’Day* and the *Utah Magazine*—which were quite critical toward Mormon ways and which the Church ordered members to boycott<sup>24</sup>—the estranged elders began publishing the *Mormon Tribune* in January 1870 to further promote the New Movement.

Like Connor’s *Union Vedette*, the *Tribune* provided Salt Lake City residents with an alternative to the Mormon-run newspapers the *Deseret News* and the *Salt Lake Herald*. The *Herald* was as new as the *Tribune* and the two sparred aggressively over Utah’s political scene. The *Deseret News* tended to be more subtle in the debate, concentrating most of its material on promoting Mormon interests, advocating self-sufficiency and supporting home industry. It discussed Mormon theology, attempted to present a patriotic and morally upright image of church members, and, as Monty B. McLaws points out, “played down the mineral resources of the Great Basin.”<sup>25</sup> The reasoning behind this last goal was to deflect non-Mormon immigration interests and keep Utah as Mormon as possible.

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<sup>23</sup> Tullidge, “The Godbeite Movement,” 56-57. The Utah War of 1857-58 was an effort by the United States military to supplant Brigham Young as governor of Utah Territory with Alfred Cumming. Mormons perceived the action as religious persecution and prepared for a siege, but diplomacy settled the matter before military conflict broke out between the U.S. Army and Mormons. For more information on this, see May, *Utah: A People’s History*, 96-99.

<sup>24</sup> Walker, *Wayward Saints*, 64. *Peep O’Day* condemned the church through excessive praise and began discussing the issues that worried non-Mormons and those on the fringes of Mormon faith.

<sup>25</sup> McLaws, 6, 63, 142.

The *Tribune*, on the other hand, stressed accommodation over isolation, promoted Utah's mining interests, and criticized the church's continuous role in territorial politics and economics. Before long, the paper's owners removed "Mormon" from the masthead to appeal to non-Mormon readers and later changed its name to the *Salt Lake Daily Tribune*. In the first edition under the new name on April 15, 1871, the paper declared that it "will oppose all ecclesiastical interference in civil or legislative matters, and advocate the exercise of a free ballot."<sup>26</sup> This prospectus effectively began the *Tribune's* fight against church policies and the editors soon found a following in Utah that rabidly opposed Mormonism in all its facets. Anti-Mormons, moderate non-members, and many dissidents and excommunicated Mormons joined political forces in 1870 to create a political body they called the Liberal Party—organized to challenge the church's political power. The church soon responded with the creation of their own political arm—the People's Party. Though only mildly critical of church policies at the time, the *Tribune* quickly became the Liberal voice of Utah. True to what Malmquist writes, the paper was "a product of and very much a part of the conflict."<sup>27</sup>

Not long into the *Tribune's* existence as Utah's "independent" newspaper, a conflict arose between the owners and managing editor, Oscar G. Sawyer, who was brought to Utah from New York because of his experience and to lend the editorial staff some much-needed credibility. Seeing polygamy as the issue upon which to attack the church, Sawyer used the "irrepressible conflict" to inflame public opinion against Mormons. As Malmquist points out, Sawyer was "an experienced journalist trained on

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<sup>26</sup> "Our Programme," *Salt Lake Daily Tribune*, April 15, 1871, pg. 2. The editors originally printed this prospectus on December 24, 1870, just before the paper went on a four-month printing hiatus. Malmquist, *First 100 Years*, 18, and McLaws, *Spokesman*, 177.

<sup>27</sup> Malmquist, *First 100 Years*, 6.

James Gordon Bennett's *New York Herald*" and Bennett was "the era's master in newspaper sensationalism."<sup>28</sup> Like the apostate elders, he had the same goal of ending church domination of politics and economics and felt that the only way to do this was to break Brigham Young's control over the people and territory. Believing that the New Movement alone could not accomplish this, Sawyer increasingly attacked the church through his editorials, hoping that the federal government would notice the topic's repeated mention and decide to intervene more directly.

But these were not the publishers' objectives. They wanted to preach accommodation and secularization, not further separation. Instead of an anti-Mormon journal, they wanted a voice of reform that advocated the removal of Mormon political and economic dominance to pave the way for eventual statehood. One example of this can be seen in a November 1871 editorial pushing for a secularized press and a spirit of reconciliation in Utah:

Both Mormon and anti-Mormon organs are of the past, and not of the future in their character. Neither class can do much to bring about the proper state of things to which we all are so anxiously looking. That work belongs to independent and opposing secular journals; for they alone can lead the way into the future and find the State economy, in which there will stand neither Mormon nor Gentile, but American citizens united in one commonwealth. Therein is the solution to the Utah problem.<sup>29</sup>

As Malmquist writes, Tullidge and the other *Tribune* owners at this time "regarded themselves as missionaries seeking to bring the church into conformity with the laws of the land and thereby save it from destruction and its membership from hardships more severe than those they had already suffered."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 20-21.

<sup>29</sup> "The Utah Press," *Salt Lake Daily Tribune*, November 27, 1871, pg. 2.

<sup>30</sup> Malmquist, *First 100 Years*, 20.

In addition to such aims, however, these excommunicated elders were also polygamists and refrained from open attempts to reform the church from its most famous principle. Godbe himself traveled to Washington in 1870 to persuade President Ulysses S. Grant and Representative Shelby Cullom (R-IL) to soften a bill orchestrated to punish and prohibit polygamy.<sup>31</sup> Noting the *News*' optimism for securing statehood in the event of polygamy's abandonment, the *Tribune* actually criticized the Mormon paper and the church itself for even considering such a move. "Talk about apostates indeed!" a *Tribune* article shouted. "If this bartering off a command of the Lord for the sake of Statehood isn't apostasy we would like to know what the Saints call it."<sup>32</sup> This argument is much different than what the *Tribune* later published about polygamy, but shows that this issue formed a key point for contention between the *Tribune* owners and their principal editor.

### New Ownership

Due to economic difficulties, the founders sold the *Tribune* in 1873 to three Kansas journalists: Fred Lockley, George F. Prescott, and A.M. Hamilton, who maintained and added to the arguments that had already been raised against the church and statehood. These editors began an era in which readers identified the *Tribune* with strong anti-Mormon content. Writing in 1886, Tullidge explained that, "it was Mr. Fred Lockley...that gave the marked and pungent anti-Mormon character to *The Salt Lake Tribune*, for which it has become famous in the gentile mind, infamous in the Mormon mind."<sup>33</sup> The new editors approved of articles that criticized polygamy and ran them alongside criticism of the church-owned ZCMI. Higher taxes, social inequality, and

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>32</sup> "The Mormon God," *Salt Lake Daily Tribune*, June 5, 1872, pg. 2.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

limited economic opportunities for non-Mormons also made abundant material for criticism. But what most turned Mormon opinion against the paper were the frequent sex scandals and defamation of sacred church services that the paper printed. In his 1893 *History of Utah*, Mormon historian Orson F. Whitney wrote scathingly of Lockley's *Tribune*.

Its only principle, apparently, was hatred of everything Mormon... Its columns were not only filled habitually with falsehood, but often with vulgar and obscene scandals. Many who helped to sustain the paper... were careful to have it delivered at their down-town offices, and would not have it in their homes for their wives and daughters to read, so filthy at times were its contents.<sup>34</sup>

This critical content, as exemplified in the chapter heading's second quotation, separated the *Tribune* even further from the church's position and earned the new editors the nickname "border ruffians."<sup>35</sup>

More heavily anti-Mormon than what the *Tribune*'s original owners wanted, these editorial policies reverberated back to Sawyer's goal to attract the federal government's attention toward bringing down the Mormon theocracy. "A vigorous fight," Malmquist writes, "had to be waged in the local arena to inflame national sentiment to a point which would compel effective federal intervention."<sup>36</sup> At the same time, the *Tribune*'s economic survival hinged on its ability to appeal to the territory's Mormon and non-Mormon readership, seeing that the paper's former owners failed because they were too soft on Mormon policies and because of a church boycott on the *Tribune*. Throughout their tenure, the Kansas editors showed they held very strong and bitter opinions of the Mormon church, which they frequently expressed.

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<sup>34</sup> Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah*, Vol. II (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons Co., Publishers, 1893), 380-381.

<sup>35</sup> Whitney, *History of Utah*, Vol. II, 382, and Malmquist, *First 100 Years*, 31.

<sup>36</sup> Malmquist, *First 100 Years*, 35.

### Judge Goodwin Comes to Utah

In May 1880, a Nevada judge, mining entrepreneur, and newspaper editor named Charles C. Goodwin (generally called C.C. or Judge Goodwin) joined the *Tribune* staff. Before long, Goodwin became the strongest and most widely respected figure contending against Utah's statehood hopes. He also became the territory's premiere mining promoter. Moving from Pioche, Nevada, soon after the town's mining interests dried up, Goodwin hoped his editorial prowess would prove useful in Utah. The *Tribune* hoped for the same result, exclaiming that, "his coming to this field is, we trust, but a signal of an exodus of Nevada miners soon to pour into our mining camps and bring Utah her rightful position as a mineral producing region."<sup>37</sup> Given Utah's larger population and the Mormon church's reluctance to promote mining, the move seemed like a good business decision. Like his new *Tribune* colleagues, Goodwin did not think highly of Mormons. Well before leaving Nevada, he showed his disgust for the "Mormon Situation" in a speech comparing Nevada's remaining fertile land to Utah's and jibed that, "one is cultivated, the other is left in native barbarism."<sup>38</sup>

Upon Goodwin's arrival, the *Tribune* focused on mining and politics and continued its assault on Mormon practices and Utah statehood. Nearly a year and a half after arriving in Utah, Goodwin saw a chance to advance the *Tribune*'s position outside the territory by writing articles for the *North American Review* and the widely known magazine *Harper's Monthly*. It is evident in these articles that he saw himself as a leader

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<sup>37</sup> "A Word Personal," *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 23, 1880, pg. 2, also quoted in Malmquist, *First 100 Years*, 56-57 and in James H. Hulse, "C.C. Goodwin and the Taming of the *Tribune*," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 61 (Spring 1993): 168.

<sup>38</sup> *Washoe Weekly Times*, February 18, 1865, quoted in Hulse, "Taming of the *Tribune*," 167.

of the people—a voice representing Utah’s disgruntled non-Mormon population. “I can tell what I know, what ten thousand people around me know,” Goodwin stated, “and while knowing that it is all true, often find it impossible to support the statement with the proofs which a legal or prejudiced mind would demand.”<sup>39</sup> What Goodwin lacked in solid evidence for his claims, he made up in prose, eloquently voicing what many Utahns before him sometimes had trouble putting into words. Gerald J. Baldasty states that editors in towns and small-market cities took on a leadership role in their communities by “primarily providing their views rather than a dispassionate rendering of the facts.”<sup>40</sup> Goodwin’s passionate criticism of Mormon ways was just what the territory’s non-Mormons and what people throughout the country wanted to read about and rally around.

Both of these articles essentially played to the same tune, attacking church members as superstitious, lustful, fanatical, and altogether unfit for statehood. “One is grieved over the welding of such superstition upon the thousands of people incensed at the degradation of poor women,” Goodwin exclaimed, “and indignant that in the United States a system is being encouraged and strengthened annually which kills the clear sense of right in young minds, and taints childhood with errors that can never be eradicated.”<sup>41</sup> Such writing was clearly designed to incite the reader with disgust and anger at the apparent situation in Mormon Utah. As shown here, Goodwin verbally attacked church members as much as he did leadership and the church “system” during his early years in Utah. This tactic faded away in later years, as his attacks later focused mostly on church leaders and policies.

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<sup>39</sup> C. C. Goodwin, “The Mormon Situation,” *Harper’s Monthly Magazine*, October 1881, 756.

<sup>40</sup> Gerald J. Baldasty, *Vigilante Newspapers: A Tale of Sex, Religion, and Murder in the Northwest* (Seattle: University of Washington, 2005), 40.

<sup>41</sup> Goodwin, “The Mormon Situation,” 756.

In the *Harper's* article, Goodwin separated the idea of being “American” from any description of the Mormons or their way of life. “It is a kingdom, or rather a despotism, so all-embracing that intelligent Americans at a distance do not believe the truth about it when it is told,”<sup>42</sup> he wrote. His “un-American” and “un-Christian” labels often included comparisons of Utah with Islamic nations and Mormons with Muslims—both widely unappealing notions to nineteenth-century Americans. The Mormons’ purpose, Goodwin claimed, was “aggressive” and meant “to destroy free government in the United States.”<sup>43</sup> He played up the idea that Mormons had prayed for both the North and the South to be destroyed by the Civil War and that it was dangerous to live in Utah without being loyal to the Mormon theocracy. According to Goodwin, most Mormons were un-American not only because, in his eyes, their society resembled those of Islamic countries, but also because a large number of church members were actually poor, transplanted Europeans who had migrated to Utah in search of land and opportunity. “It is an institution so absolutely un-American in all its requirements that it would die of its own infamies within twenty years, except for the yearly infusion of fresh serf blood from abroad,” he wrote.<sup>44</sup> Such imagery of the “un-American” Mormon system was a favorite weapon used by the *Tribune* in later years.

As polygamy was the hot-button topic of the day regarding Utah, Goodwin also felt no reluctance to comment on it in his articles. “They have again forged the chains of an ignominious slavery on the wrists of women; what they call their religion offers a perpetual premium for men’s lusts; their teachings kill the germ of chastity in the hearts of childhood before it is ever warmed into life, and destroy the honor and sacredness of

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 759.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 762.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 759.



the home.”<sup>45</sup> This falls in line with the national assessment of Mormon plural marriages. As historians have noted, newspapers and magazines throughout the country often depicted polygamy as a slave institution, coupled in public imagination with Southern slavery as the “twin relics of barbarism.”<sup>46</sup> Having eliminated one “relic” with the Civil War, polygamy was next.

Of all Goodwin’s objections in this article his primary concern was clearly

Mormon political attitude:

Ask nine out of every ten men in the country what there is objectionable in the Mormon faith and in Mormon practices, and the answer will be that polygamy is preached and practiced. [But] behind polygamy there is in the Mormon creed a deadly menace to free government few suspect. And yet it is true. The Mormons have a ‘celestial kingdom of God,’ and a ‘kingdom of God on earth.’ This latter means the rule of its people in temporal things; and the dream of the Mormon leaders is, that under the rule the governments of the earth will one by one be brought, until the whole world shall be subjugated.<sup>47</sup>

Mormon political control disturbed Goodwin the most because he believed Mormonism “hostile in all its features to a republican form of government.”<sup>48</sup> If Mormons ruled Utah as a state, its leadership would be empowered to force all non-Mormons out of Zion. Such a move, he was certain, would cause civil war in Utah. Referring to the American Civil War that had ended a decade and a half earlier, Goodwin concluded, “there will come a time, if this monster in Utah is left to grow, when there will be another call for volunteers and for money; and as before, tens of thousands of brave young men will go away, never to return...the country will be hillocked with graves, and the whole land will be moistened by the rain of women’s tears.”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 763.

<sup>46</sup> McLaws, 76, and Gordon, *The Mormon Question*, 1.

<sup>47</sup> C. C. Goodwin, “The Political Attitude of the Mormons,” *North American Review*, March 1881, 276.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 283.

<sup>49</sup> Goodwin, “The Mormon Situation,” 763.

Many of the themes Goodwin emphasized in these articles had already been heard by the general public, but he left his mark on people's minds because he was a resident of the territory and lived among the Mormons. Nationally, readers considered him an eye-witness to the situation and took his words as truth, which worried church leadership and its principle newspaper the *Deseret News*. In fact, *News* editor Charles W. Penrose attempted to have his response to Goodwin published in *Harper's*, but the magazine's editors rejected his story, leaving him to rebut in his own paper's columns. "[Goodwin] is a comparative stranger to this Territory," Penrose wrote, "having been here but a short time, is densely ignorant of the system which he undertakes to assail, knows nothing of the people he so shamefully reviles, and follows the business of writing against them and their religion for pay."<sup>50</sup> Penrose's responses to his editorial rival broke the *News*' longstanding silent treatment regarding the *Tribune*,<sup>51</sup> but as aggravated as statehood proponents were at these and other anti-Mormon content there was little they could do to reverse their momentum. According to Hulse, Goodwin "undoubtedly had an impact well beyond Utah Territory."<sup>52</sup>

### **William Nelson and the Associated Press**

While Goodwin was long seen as the face and voice of the *Tribune*, especially after he and Patrick Lannan took over ownership of the paper in 1883, Associated Press reporter William Nelson also helped put Utah's Liberal voice on the national map. Of Nelson, Edward Leo Lyman writes that he "played a significant role as the sole source of Utah news launched into nationwide circulation through his Associated Press

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<sup>50</sup> "The Mormon Situation," *Deseret News*, September 22, 1881, pg. 2.

<sup>51</sup> McLaws, *Spokesman*, 180-181.

<sup>52</sup> Hulse, "Taming of the *Tribune*," 170.

dispatches,” even before Goodwin stepped into the *Tribune*’s lead editorial position. He undoubtedly frustrated Mormon leaders, who wanted to promote a positive image of Utah and the church. During his term in Washington, Mormon apostle George Q. Cannon called Nelson a “champion liar,” and complained that his associates daily had to neutralize the “batch of inflammatory and lying dispatches.” By 1887, congressional representative John T. Caine insisted that church officials contact AP representative William Henry Smith to replace Nelson with a writer who did not hold strong biases against the Mormon church.<sup>53</sup>

Nelson further exhibited his ability to embarrass church members through the *Tribune* on September 13, 1885 when the homes of three prominent federal officials—the unpopular Charles S. Varian and W.H. Dickson among them—were vandalized. Because the police failed to identify the perpetrators, and because the Mormon population strongly disliked these officials, Nelson assumed the vandals were “parties of Mormons” in his AP article. The *Tribune* then went on to state, “We wonder how much more it will require to give those in authority in Washington a clear idea of the spirit which rules here, and cause them to take effective steps to have the laws enforced and respected in this region.”<sup>54</sup> Earlier that summer, Nelson reported events surrounding the church’s move to leave the American flag at half-mast on Independence Day, calling the move “the Mormon method of expressing their hatred of the Nation and their contempt for its power.” Other sources said it was merely a gesture mourning the difficult times Mormons

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<sup>53</sup> See Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 33, 70.

<sup>54</sup> “The Latest Outrage,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, September 15, 1885. This article is attributed to Nelson in Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah*, Vol. III (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons Co., Publishers, 1893), 413.

and Utah experienced over the years.<sup>55</sup> Regardless of the church's true intentions, the coverage of these incidents shows the *Tribune*'s tendency to assume the worst about Mormons.

Overall the *Tribune* appealed to a wider variety of people in Utah by publishing more diversified content than its rival papers. It printed more news and mining reports, printed on Sundays, and drew a much wider readership with Utah's growing non-Mormon population. According to McLaws, the combined circulation of the *Tribune* passed the *News* by about one-hundred subscriptions in 1883. Only three years later, *Tribune* circulation was already three times larger than its arch-rival, easily making it the most widely circulated newspaper along the Wasatch Front.<sup>56</sup> With its growing popularity came growing influence, which the *Tribune* used effectively in subsequent years.

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<sup>55</sup> Whitney, *History of Utah*, Vol. III, 399. Also see Gustive O. Larson, *The "Americanization" of Utah for Statehood* (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1971), 139-142.

<sup>56</sup> McLaws, *Spokesman*, 179.

## CHAPTER 3

“TO THE PRESS OF THE COUNTRY”:  
NATIONAL REACTION TO THE *TRIBUNE*, 1886-1890

*Let the men of all the States reflect how they will be affected, if a vast region of this Republic shall be given up to polygamy and priestly rule. Let them reflect what happened in Missouri and in Nauvoo when the men who are in majority here obtained control. Let them remember that Constitutions are not binding unless public opinion supports them, and then let them estimate, if they can, how much a Constitution of a State would be worth if the people of that State, holding all the offices, all the courts and the ballot, were determined it should be ignored.*

-Salt Lake Tribune, July 12, 1887.

*Within the past week we have seen, in the columns of some of our exchanges, ordinarily sensible and always meaning well, but too careless or forgetful to deal rightly with the Mormon question, evidence that the false promises and lying statements of the Mormon lobbyists are more or less believed.*

*But there is one faithful, able, constant and fearless witness against all these lies and deceptions, The Salt Lake Tribune, which daily denounces and exposes the nest of traitors and polygamists who are trying to lie Utah into the Union.*

-New York Mail and Express, May 6, 1888.

As the *Salt Lake Tribune*'s circulation grew, its coverage of statehood increased as well. In 1886, the *Tribune* printed forty stories about this subject. The total in 1887, however, dwarfed the previous year with 153 stories, an average of approximately three per week on the subject. As was true in other years, virtually all of these stories took a negative view of Utah's bid to become a state. Thereafter, until statehood passed in 1896, the *Tribune* consistently produced well over one hundred stories every year about this topic, topping out with a high of 281 stories in 1892. As the *Tribune* committed more stories to the Statehood debate, its message to distrust Mormon promises came out with greater frequency. Several articles, such as the first quotation included above, not only addressed Utahns but the American public in general. Newspapers across the country took the *Tribune*'s side in the statehood debate by reprinting its stories or reproducing its position.

The mid-1880s proved critical to Utah politics, not only to the statehood effort, but to Mormon hopes of maintaining a political theocracy and the practice of plural marriage as well. Dissatisfied with previous legislation that failed to uproot polygamy, Congress took off its gloves and passed more stringent laws. Having already disfranchised polygamists with the Edmunds Bill of 1882, the Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887 made unrecorded marriages felonies, took away women's voting rights, and threatened to escheat church property. The Liberal Party and the *Tribune* watched and supported such legislation every step of the way, sending representatives to Washington D.C. and elsewhere to lobby politicians with reasons to oppose statehood.<sup>1</sup> With the *Tribune's* growing popularity in Utah and elsewhere, plus the ever-tightening clamp the federal government put on Mormons, the statehood topic became more relevant in the general public's eye.

Despite these developments, Mormons and sympathetic gentiles had high hopes for Utah's admission in the mid-1880s. Assisted by Democratic Party leaders and President Grover Cleveland's staff, LDS political leaders in the territorial legislature drafted a constitution that prohibited polygamy. Any violation of this law would result in a misdemeanor punishable by a \$1,000 fine and up to three years in prison.<sup>2</sup> To outside observers, the church made all appearance that it was ready to comply with this proposed law, giving some congressmen and many Utahns hope that statehood was likely to pass in

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Leo Lyman, *Political Deliverance, The Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 22-23, 34, 41-48; O.N. Malmquist, *The First 100 Years: A History of the Salt Lake Tribune, 1871-1971* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1971), 112; Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy: A History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989), 133.

<sup>2</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 41-48 and Kenneth W. Godfrey, "Charles W. Penrose and His Contributions to Utah Statehood," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 64 (Fall 1996): 361. See also Constitution of the State of Utah, and memorial to Congress asking admission into the Union, 1887, Historical Pamphlets, PAM 9290 Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Congress by 1887. With the government's vigilant attempt at ending plural marriages at hand, Mormons finally looked willing to conform to the rest of the country's standards.

This move, however, did not impress non-Mormons and the *Tribune's* position opposing statehood became even more adamant in the mid-1880s. The paper's editors brought up several points of contention and repeatedly emphasized them in the *Tribune's* pages in hopes of halting the pro-statehood message.

### **Tribune Objections to Statehood**

The first content analysis sample for this study draws from the June through August 1887 editions of the *Salt Lake Tribune* by collecting data on the number of stories that addressed each complaint made by the paper. Seventy-three stories in those three months opposed Utah's admission as a state, while none favored it for the near future. Some articles focused on only one reason not to admit Utah as a state, such as the July 5 story "The Celebration," which spoke of un-American Mormon ways at an Independence Day parade.<sup>3</sup> But most stories complained about more than one issue. The June 19 editorial titled "Not Quite Yet" is a good example. The author of this piece viewed Mormon leaders as liars, planting the statehood scheme so they could rule supremely over Utah and maintain polygamy. "While the forms of a republic might be carried on," the *Tribune* writer complained, "every bill that [church president John Taylor] ordered to be given the sanctity of law would be passed; no bill which he disapproved would pass." The end result, he complained, would either be a massive emigration of all non-Mormons from Utah or internal war between the two factions.<sup>4</sup> Church political rule is the central

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<sup>3</sup> "The Celebration," *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 5, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> "Not Quite Yet," *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 19, 1887, p. 2.

**Table 2-1**

<b>Reasons Given by the <i>Salt Lake Tribune</i> for Opposing Utah Statehood (1887)</b>		
Reason	Number of Articles That Mentioned Reason	Percentage
Political Control	52	70.27 %
Civil War	10	13.5 %
Un-American	27	36.49 %
Religious Doctrine	4	5.41 %
Polygamy	39	52.70 %
Treachery	46	62.16 %
Economic Control	2	2.70 %
Others	4	5.41 %
<i>Total Sampled</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>--</i>

complaint of this article, but the sample gives it the same weight as the other topics because they are all clearly stated as reasons to oppose and fear Utah statehood.

According to the data, church political control was a vital part of the *Tribune*'s overall argument, finding its way into fifty-two of the seventy-four total sample articles. While much of the debate focused on the struggle over polygamy, this statistic of the newspaper's content indicates that church rule was the *Tribune*'s main concern. "The [*Salt Lake*] *Herald* assumes that polygamy is the chief bugbear with Gentiles here, and the nation at large," one *Tribune* editorial stated. "It is by far the lesser crime. It is merely the nasty cement in the wall of Mormonism; the solid matter in that wall is church rule, the utter vassalage to which the state is subjected, making the abject prostitution of the ballot a natural result."<sup>5</sup> After analyzing these and over one thousand other *Tribune* articles relating to statehood, it is likely that if weight for the sample was given on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis or according to column inches, it would show that this issue received far more attention from this newspaper than any other complaint.

<sup>5</sup> "Prepared to Swallow Anything," *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 23, 1887, p. 2.



Church political rule troubled non-Mormons for several reasons. One concern the *Tribune* often pointed out was that the church could rule despotically over Utah if it was a state. As a territory, Utah remained under the purview of Congress, so local politicians and Mormon leaders were ultimately still answerable to the federal government. All this would change, the *Tribune* asserted, were Utah placed in the family of states because the church would then have free rein over the state government. One *Tribune* editorial in May 1886 warned that Mormon apostle George Q. Cannon would be ruler of Utah, surmising that “he would nominate every officer in the State; he would dictate what laws should be passed and what repealed; he would say who should have offices and who should not; he would dictate what property should be taxed; he would direct the passage of laws which kill free speech and a free press—he would, in short, be the absolute dictator in Utah.”<sup>6</sup> Anti-Mormons commonly targeted Cannon because of his great popularity among church members and his position in the First Presidency, which earned him the nickname “the Mormon Richelieu.”<sup>7</sup> Church president John Taylor was also subject to such editorial attacks, including one that said he could “dictate life and death in this community.”<sup>8</sup>

Another reason non-Mormons worried about political control was LDS voting power. With the exceptions of Salt Lake City and Ogden, Utah’s growing gentile population still did not come near the Mormon majority, even with male polygamists and all women disfranchised. Since church leaders relied on the Mormon community for political power, the *Tribune* considered them slaves of the kingdom, not fit for being part

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<sup>6</sup> “As A State,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 11, 1886, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Klaus J. Hansen, *Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1967), 173.

<sup>8</sup> “Not Quite Yet,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 19, 1887, p. 2.

of the United States and, hence, not real citizens. One editorial called Utah “a more merciless despotism than is known in either Russia or Persia.”<sup>9</sup> Priests, teachers, and bishops told church members who and what to vote for, demanded members’ absolute allegiance, and, the *Tribune* alleged, controlled their consciences. Because such a politically and mentally controlling system was entrenched in Utah, the *Tribune* argued that the territory could not be trusted with statehood overnight. The people needed not only to make promises for change, but actually prove their reform with years of demonstration. The *Tribune* nevertheless remained confident that the rest of America was keen to this aspect of Utah political life. “Politicians may scheme never so deeply,” an editorial intimated, “but the [American] people are so well posted now that they will never place a State in the hands of the Mormon power until that power shall surrender its claim to the right to dictate the opinions of men in temporal matters.”<sup>10</sup>

Political control was an important topic for non-Mormons, not just because they wanted to live and vote like normal American citizens, but also because they feared never obtaining any political power in Utah. “Mormon statehood,” the paper argued, would force them to emigrate from Utah. Predictions even went so far as to suggest that not just one but several states would be controlled by the church within a few years of Utah’s admission, thus making Mormons a political threat to the rest of the United States. As with C.C. Goodwin’s article in *Harper’s*, these concerns prompted apocalyptic claims that civil war would quickly spark in Utah. Evidently this was a serious concern for Goodwin and the *Tribune* editorial staff, because the sample shows this subject came up in ten different stories during these turbulent three months in 1887. Some editorials

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<sup>9</sup> “Statehood, What Is Really Wanted,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 21, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> “The Proposed Amendment,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 23, 1886, p. 2.

predicted war would come within six months of statehood, another predicted within just one month.<sup>11</sup> As nobody in Utah wanted such a conflict, the rest of the nation had even more reason to be concerned about such claims, still haunted by the war over secession that had claimed over 600,000 lives two decades earlier. The *Tribune* saw itself as an institution working to prevent such calamity:

The conflict will be continued until these pretensions shall be abandoned and nullification ceases, or the nascent treason shall be stamped out. It will cease when the Mormons are made to know and understand that a church organized for political purposes and claiming temporal power on American soil is a public nuisance and a standing threat against our institutions, and that any Church in control of the State is an enemy to human liberty and a sufflamen [sic] on Civilization and progress.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to claims of treason and threats to human liberty, the *Tribune* asserted that the Mormon system created a constitutional crisis. The paper labeled church leaders the “authorized agents of omnipotence” and insisted that under statehood, “free government and free speech would be dead.” Put plainly, the *Tribune* asserted that “the highest fealty of a good Mormon is not and can never be to the Government of the United States.”<sup>13</sup> Such claims made Mormons appear un-American to the general public. The church had already been embarrassed by countless cartoons and publications distributed by various media outlets over the decades that depicted them as either foreigners or enemies to the state.<sup>14</sup> The *Tribune*’s position only fueled more resentment. Like the half-

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<sup>11</sup> See the following *Salt Lake Tribune* stories: “As A State” May 11, 1886, p. 4; “What Mormon Statehood Would Be,” May 25, 1886, p. 2; “With the Cat Away, The Mice Do Play,” February 8, 1887, p. 2; “Not Quite Yet,” June 19, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> “Conflict to Be Continued,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, August 6, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>13</sup> See the following *Salt Lake Tribune* stories: “Obedience to Laws and Citizenship,” December 31, 1886, p. 2; “Not Quite Yet,” June 19, 1887, p. 2; “Statehood Conspiracy,” January 27, 1886, p. 2.

<sup>14</sup> Sarah Barringer Gordon, *The Mormon Question: Polygamy and Constitutional Conflict in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 3, 136, 143, 179, 184, 193, 205, 223; and Ken Verdoia and Richard Firmage *Utah: The Struggle for Statehood* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1996), 105, 124, 136, 187, reproduce numerous anti-Mormon cartoons that were published in *Puck*, *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated*, *The Daily Graphic*, and *Harper’s Weekly*, which

most incident in 1885, these assertions show the paper's tendency to assume the worst about Mormon loyalty to the United States.

The paper continued this rhetoric by making editorial statements that Mormonism was unpatriotic and rebellious to the laws of the land: "We charge that the Mormons are disloyal to the Government of the United States, that they daily in their homes teach their children disloyalty and pray for the overthrow of the Republic."<sup>15</sup> Goodwin often quoted one particular talk given by Brigham Young during the Civil War, in which the Mormon prophet declared, "The men of the South pray for the destruction of the men of the North; the men of the North beseech God to bring destruction upon the men of the South; I say amen to both prayers."<sup>16</sup> This concern over Mormon patriotism appeared in twenty-seven sample articles, showing that although it was mentioned only half as often as worries of political control, it was still an important aspect of the *Tribune*'s overall argument.

The *Tribune* considered Mormons un-American and commonly tagged them "aliens." The paper dehumanized church leaders as "alien leaders," while labels such as "alien host" and "alien at heart" described the people. Under statehood, Utah would become an "alien state."<sup>17</sup> This terminology also helped forge the image of Mormons as less than American and entirely unable to sustain statehood under American terms.

Publications throughout the nation portrayed this idea so widely that, as historian Jean Bickmore White points out, "it was easy for prominent politicians in both national parties

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presented Utah, the church, and its members as enemies to America and progress. Another good source is Gary L. Bunker and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Graphic Image, 1834-1914: Cartoons, Caricatures, and Illustrations* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1983). Also, Walter L. Atkinson's "The Barbarism Exposed: An Interpretive Analysis of Newspaper Coverage of Mormonism, 1887-1888," (PhD Diss., University of Utah, 2003) and Thomas K. Hafen, "City of Saints, City of Sinners: The Development of Salt Lake City as a Tourist Attraction, 1869-1900" *Western Historical Quarterly* 28 (Autumn 1997): 342-377, discuss negative portrayals of Mormons in newspapers and literature.

<sup>15</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 26, 1886.

<sup>16</sup> C. C. Goodwin, "The Mormon Situation," *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, October 1881, 758.

<sup>17</sup> "Conflict to Be Continued," *Salt Lake Tribune*, August 6, 1887, p. 2.

to picture the territory as some kind of alien intrusion on the national polity and the majority of its people as *sub*-American if not actually *un*-American.” One federal official she quotes went to Utah in the 1880s with “all the prejudices and hates that had been engendered against Mormonism,” but was surprised to discover that Mormons were little different than any other American he had come across.<sup>18</sup>

Occasionally, the *Tribune* took a jab at Mormon religious doctrine in its opposition to statehood. Though this type of content was not frequently used, at times the *Tribune* used bits of scripture or poked at readers’ understanding of the Bible to contrast Mormon ways or even interrogate church members’ faith.<sup>19</sup> The lengthiest of these was written, not by a *Tribune* writer, but by Protestant minister Elliot Shepard of New York, whose comments ate up more than half the editorial page on June 29, 1887, and bashed church polygamy, leadership, and desire for statehood:

The Mormon leaders grasp worldly political power, and rule in every department of human government. This proves that they are not the “Church of Jesus Christ,” as they call themselves, for “Jesus Christ...declared that his kingdom is not of this world!” and when he was offered, by the god of this world, who had it in his power to fulfill his offer, “all the kingdoms in this world,” he refused them. (Matthew iv., 8-11)

But the unfortunate Mormons are engaged in the hopeless work of trying to convince Jesus that he was mistaken, and that his kingdom is of this world, and they will get it for Him!<sup>20</sup>

Shepard’s religiously minded letter also reveals that he believed Mormonism was completely devoid of American and Christian characteristics, illustrating in some way

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<sup>18</sup> Jean Bickmore White, “Prelude to Statehood: Coming Together in the 1890s,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 62 (Fall 1994): 304-305. Testimony of Judge John W. Judd in *Arguments Before the Committee on Territories of the United States Senate in Favor of the Bill (S1306) for the Local Government of Utah Territory, and to Provide for the Election of Certain Officers in Said Territory* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1892), Historical Pamphlets, PAM. 1933, Utah State Historical Society Library.

<sup>19</sup> “Close of Conference,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, August 10, 1887, p. 4. See also “Is It Boycott, Apostle Grant?” *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 19, 1887, p. 2; “Admission of New States,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 26, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> “A Cure for Mormonism,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 29, 1887, p. 2.

what people from other regions of the country believed about the religion and its people. Shepard placed his faith in American virtues and nationalism, stating his “Cure for Mormonism” was simple: “When they give up their religion, when they become Christians, there will be no doubt about their becoming loyal citizens, for the American constitutional government is so wise, good, strong, and safe, that they will choose it forth with.”<sup>21</sup>

One cornerstone complaint of the *Tribune* in the 1870s that was hardly a factor by 1887 was church economic control. Part of the reason this fell to the wayside was that church cooperative programs that had excelled in the 1870s declined during the mid-1880s. Some survived on private bases, but the anti-polygamy raids hampered church-sponsored economic efforts and made this issue little trouble to non-Mormons in comparison to church political control by this point. The sample shows this issue only came up twice in the three months analyzed in the first sample.<sup>22</sup>

Although the *Tribune* worried more about church political control, polygamy also saw plenty of coverage in the paper and certainly throughout the country. The sample shows polygamy’s appearance in thirty-nine of the stories sampled—more than half of the seventy-four total. In general, the *Tribune* refrained from reporting on or romanticizing about polygamous lifestyles or the condition of women in polygamy. Indeed, as religious-minded as the anti-polygamy crusade was, the *Tribune* seemed more offended by LDS voting practices. “Never have men or women so violated a holy trust as have the Mormon men and women in Utah in the use they have made of the ballot,” one

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1830-1900* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1958; reprint, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 293-333.

editorial stated.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, polygamy appeared in the paper because editorials commonly mentioned its necessary eradication in order to secure statehood. The *Tribune*, therefore, took a political approach to this aspect of Mormon life, generally refusing to dwell on polygamy's details and simply arguing for its elimination.

Although polygamy was commonly detested throughout the feud, it often appeared during the mid-1880s in connection with the Utah constitution that outlawed polygamy. Months before the Constitution reached the convention stage in June 1887, the *Tribune* frequently called the polygamy clause a fraud and contended that “the shield of Statehood in the hands of this people would constitute polygamy, Constitution or no Constitution.” A week after that piece another editorial explained “[Mormons] have no purpose in giving up plural marriage, except temporarily. Once shielded by State lines and they would snap their fingers in the face of the Government.”<sup>24</sup> Simply put, the *Tribune* argued that once Utah achieved statehood, the Mormon-run government would find a way to keep polygamy alive. The paper brought up scenarios such as amending the law against polygamy or church members being lax to enforce penalties on their own people. One condition attached to the anti-polygamy clause made amending that law possible only through Congressional approval,<sup>25</sup> but the *Tribune* persisted that even this was not enough. The paper also contended that since cohabitation was not outlawed in this new constitution, polygamy could easily be concealed by neglecting to register marriages civilly.

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<sup>23</sup> “The Prospect,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 1, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> “The Prospect,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 1, 1887, p. 2; “With the Cat Away, The Mice Do Play,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 8, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> “Constitution of the State of Utah,” with the proceedings to the Constitutional Convention, abstract of vote on ratification and memorial to Congress asking admission into the Union, 1887, Historical Pamphlets, PAM 14026, Utah State Historical Society, Art. XVI.

Considering some of the rumors that surrounded the amendment, it is no surprise the *Tribune* was so quick to speculate against Mormon sincerity on this issue.<sup>26</sup> Church president Wilford Woodruff stated that “in a State capacity we would...possess the powers and independence of a sovereign State, with authority to make and execute our own laws.”<sup>27</sup> Lyman points out a major difference between LDS religious leaders and political officials. As nearly all political officials were non-polygamist, they could approve of and be subject to the world’s laws, but religious leaders lived by a higher law and managed to maintain leadership positions while neglecting to sanction worldly laws.<sup>28</sup> To the *Tribune*, this was a transparent scheme designed to lull the American public into thinking the church approved the ban on plural marriages. Because they only saw Mormon politicians approving the polygamy clause, the *Tribune* called for church general authorities to do the same.<sup>29</sup>

This was certainly not the first time the *Tribune* accused church leaders of dishonesty and deception. From Goodwin’s *Harper’s* article, and even before then, the common assertion was that Mormons felt they could deceive those outside the faith and be in perfect harmony with their religious convictions. After all, this was apparently one of the ways polygamist families justified escaping prosecution from federal authorities.<sup>30</sup> Occasionally, the *Tribune* brought up the tragic Mountain Meadows Massacre, an incident in the summer of 1857 in which over one-hundred California-bound immigrants

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<sup>26</sup> Godfrey, 361, shows that sometime before 1887 Penrose suggested to church leaders that the amendment could be repealed following Utah’s admission. He also points out that Mormons were more willing to be punished by their fellow Saints under their own state laws than by non-Mormon federal appointees.

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy*, 135.

<sup>28</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 44.

<sup>29</sup> “Political Power Wanted,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 23, 1887, p. 2; “Specious New Falsehoods,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 19, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>30</sup> Goodwin, “The Mormon Situation,” 757. See also Gordon, *The Mormon Question*, 87.



were murdered,<sup>31</sup> to remind readers of dark times in the church's past. But the paper usually talked of Mormon treachery and corruption in terms of dealing with congressional representatives for statehood and creating the superficial constitutional amendment against plural marriage. This argument came up in forty-six sample articles, second only to political control. Part of the reason is that this complaint often linked with other issues. Deception over the polygamy amendment is one example, but the *Tribune* also connected such dishonesty with political power. "Never, up to this time," the paper complained, "have the Mormons kept any covenant with the Government which in the slightest manner interfered with their determination to continue their power and their nastiness."<sup>32</sup> In the case of the Utah constitutional amendment, the *Tribune* asserted that it was made "to lull the [American] people into a false sense of security regarding the Mormon question, and to give the Political brokers in Washington a seeming excuse to say, 'it is all fixed; we will give the Territory Statehood, and the Mormon question will be removed from debate and anxiety forever.'" The paper continued to call this measure a "falsehood" and indicated that the amendment "would be to Utah what the Wooden Horse was to Troy."<sup>33</sup>

### **National Reaction to *Tribune* Rhetoric**

The *Tribune* often asserted itself as a voice that could rally gentile support by calling attention to whatever trickery the Mormons were up to at the time. The editorial staff believed that if it blurted out Mormon intentions, confirmed or speculative, people

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<sup>31</sup> Dean L. May, *Utah: A People's History* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 99-100.

<sup>32</sup> "With the Cat Away, the Mice Do Play," *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 8, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> "Constitutional Sovereignty," *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 26, 1887, p. 2; "That Proposed Amendment," *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 4, 1886, p. 2.

in Utah and elsewhere would react. Not quite a year before Utah's Constitutional Convention in the summer of 1887, the *Tribune* blew its trumpet that "the friends of free government can not sound the alarm too soon. Unless the people of the Northern States exert themselves as they never have before, Statehood will be given to Utah next winter. We are not talking theories now, but facts."<sup>34</sup>

Newspaper publications show that the *Tribune's* continual rants against statehood and concerns over church political power, un-Americanness, polygamy, and deception made ripples throughout the nation. The widely known *New York Times* quoted the *Salt Lake Tribune's* suspicion concerning the proposed amendment to the Utah constitution:

All that a Mormon would need to do in order to live up to his religion would be to quietly marry polygamously and keep the knowledge of the fact from obtrusively offending a Mormon Prosecuting Attorney for three years, and thereafter he could live in the most shameless and indecent polygamy with neither law nor constitution to say him nay. He would also be backed by the church and dominant sentiment, and the constitution would be laughed to scorn, as the church programme contemplates.<sup>35</sup>

The day before this article appeared, the *Times* mentioned that it would have been useless for Utah to submit a bid for statehood without a clause in its constitution forbidding polygamy. With the *Tribune's* position out the next day, the same New York editor mirrored the Salt Lake City paper's more stringent stance, by requiring official church action. "Utah should not be admitted to the Union until the Mormon Church formally renounces the doctrine of polygamy and the people have abandoned the practice for a period sufficient to guarantee that both doctrine and practice have been absolutely given

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<sup>34</sup> "Utah's Hour of Trial," *Salt Lake Tribune*, August 14, 1886, p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> "The Utah Constitution," *New York Times*, July 7, 1887, pg. 1. See also Gustive O. Larson, *The "Americanization" of Utah for Statehood* (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1971), 219.

up,” the *Times* stated.<sup>36</sup> Why Mormons, who had been so stubbornly attached to the principle before, would give up their fight and favor such legislation sparked suspicion and wonder from the *Times* and other newspapers—a vastly different result than what church officials calculated.<sup>37</sup>

The *Tribune*'s suspicions over the previously accepted constitutional clause spread like wildfire over many of the country's newspapers. Because Associated Press reports out of Utah originated from the *Tribune*, numerous other newspapers quoted its views as well. Utah Congressional delegate John T. Caine, for one, kept several such stories in his personal belongings that he received through the National Press Intelligence Service. One clipping from the *Philadelphia Bulletin* stated the following:

The general belief that the Mormons of Utah had finally decided in good faith to relinquish their polygamous practice yesterday received a blow that was quite unsettling in its efforts at the hands of the Salt Lake City *Tribune*. [This] journal has served the general interests of the country in times past by exposing Mormon hypocrisy, and it will receive general consideration now that it declares the anti-polygamous provision of the proposed Utah constitution a fraud.<sup>38</sup>

This article then quoted the same *Tribune* excerpt included in the *Times*. Moreover, this story also shows that the *Tribune*'s statements made a considerable shockwave to Utah's statehood effort, seeing that the “general belief” trusted Mormon sincerity, but the *Tribune*'s views gave it an “unsettling” blow that would “receive general consideration.” Aside from this story, sixteen other newspaper stories that either directly quoted the *Tribune* or paraphrased the opinions of the “Gentiles of Utah” on this topic are in Caine's collection. The fact that he collected these articles shows that he took a particular interest

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<sup>36</sup> “Utah's Claim to Statehood,” *New York Times*, July 7, 1887, p. 4; see also “Polygamy A Misdemeanor,” *New York Times*, July 6, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>37</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 72.

<sup>38</sup> “The Mormon Ruse,” *Philadelphia Bulletin*, July 7, 1887, John Thomas Caine Papers, 1854-1893, box 1, folder 5, Mss B 104 Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

in newspaper depictions of Utah's struggle for statehood. Most of the clippings he saved came from Eastern newspapers in cities such as New York, Boston, and Chicago. The inclusion of western papers, namely the San Francisco *Chronicle* and the Omaha *Republican*, indicate that publications across America were not only interested in this debate but interested in what the *Tribune* had to say about it as well.<sup>39</sup>

Although these newspapers showed extra concern over the polygamy situation, they did not neglect the *Tribune*'s other allegations, especially church political control since it supported polygamy. One clipping found in Caine's collection from the Rochester (N.Y.) *Herald* points out that the Eastern press was not overlooking this complaint and mentions alleged un-American practices by Mormons. Notice also that *Tribune* editor C.C. Goodwin was the "recent writer" mentioned.

A recent writer on this subject, whose long residence in Utah and familiarity with the polygamous institution give weight to his words, says that if the legislation by Congress had been thorough enough to disarm the priesthood at once of all civil power, and the civil affairs of the territory had been put entirely in the hands of the patriotic friends of the government, as should have been done, Mormons by the thousand would have come over to the American side. Now, they are obliged to wait still longer for such an opportunity. Of the new Federal law this writer says:--"Patriotic Americans who have been carrying on the conflict in behalf of free government here, for years, are greatly disappointed because the new law provides no remedy for the one, main, central evil which has cursed the territory for forty years, namely, *the merging the State into the church by a polygamous priesthood that bitterly hates all our most sacred American institutions.*" These words show what is apparently so little appreciated at the east, that Mormonism is

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid. Newspapers that took the *Tribune*'s position that were found in the Caine collection include *Herald* Rochester, NY July 11, 1887; *Times* New York, June 5, 1887; *Globe* Boston, April, 1887, "Mormons At Home," *Times* New York, May 27, 1887 "Mormonism Just As It Is" and "The Scum of Other Lands;" *Avalanche* Memphis, July 17, 1887; *Journal* Providence, RI, Aug. 6, 1887; *Inter-Ocean* Chicago, Ill. Jan. 10(?), 1887; *Journal* Syracuse, NY, July 11, 1887; *Globe-Democrat* St. Louis, Mo., July 16, 1887(?); *Times-Union* Jacksonville, Fla., July 6, 1887; *Times* Chattanooga, Tenn., July 10, 1887; *Republican* Omaha, Neb., May (?), 1887, *Chronicle* San Francisco, May (?), 1887 "The Mormon Lobby;" *Journal* Lockport (?) NY, May 11, 1887; *Dispatch* York, Pa., July 9, 1887; *Bulletin* Philadelphia, July 7, 1887 "The Mormon Ruse;" *Standard* Syracuse NY, July 8, 1887.

a “moral plague spot” not only, but a dangerous political lever [emphasis included in original].<sup>40</sup>

As much as Caine, a prominent political church member, took interest in what the nation’s press was saying on this topic, the *Tribune* showed even greater interest. In the weeks that followed the paper’s July 6 article, quotes from across the country mimicking the Liberal position against statehood filled *Tribune* columns. Newspapers from Minnesota, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Georgia, as well as others, opposed Utah statehood until the church officially took public action to eradicate polygamy. Some called for an end to church rule, but mostly these newspapers spoke out against plural marriages. Headlines read, “The Country is Awake,” “Something About the Tribune,” and “The Voice of the Press.”<sup>41</sup> Goodwin and the editorial staff were proud that their complaints had reached such a wide audience. “The response from the press of the country on the Mormon plot to steal Statehood by false pretenses is all that could have been desired,” one article stated. “It is prompt, intelligent and emphatic. The tricks of the Saints deceive nobody.”<sup>42</sup> Such negative content was replayed in the country’s newspapers throughout July. One paper, the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, bashed Utah’s statehood hopes for six straight days and called the efforts of the “crafty Mormons” a “barefaced swindle.”<sup>43</sup> Evidence even points to *Tribune* correspondent William Nelson authoring some of the *Globe-Democrat*’s material at the time.<sup>44</sup> The *Tribune*, it seemed, had turned the nation’s attention back to the question of whether Mormon reform claims really were reliable.

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<sup>40</sup> *Herald Rochester*, NY July 11, 1887, John Thomas Caine Papers, 1854-1893, box 1, folder 5, Mss B 104, Utah State Historical Society.

<sup>41</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 8, 10, and 14, 1887, respectively.

<sup>42</sup> “The Country is Awake,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 8, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup> “The Crafty Mormons,” *Saint Louis Globe-Democrat*, July 22, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>44</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 81, explains that the dispatch sent to the *Globe-Democrat* was signed with the letter “N” to indicate William Nelson.

In the middle of the *Tribune*'s festive show of support from other newspapers, the paper repeated its position in a long editorial: "The loyal hearts in Utah turn to the press of the country and ask the help of the newspaper power with more earnestness and seriousness than ever before."<sup>45</sup> Only days later, the *Tribune* bragged that Utah's statehood hopes had temporarily been dashed, crediting the nation's press with thwarting the Mormons' latest scheme. This same editorial then went on to give rousing, albeit long-winded, support for Utah statehood:

In the meantime, we wish to call attention to the fact that no soil is richer than that of Utah, no mines are more rich or reliable, no climate is worth more to the front foot and no spot offers better returns for investment. It is just the place out of which Statehood ought to be forged, real American Statehood, where there will be no clashing of creeds, no rule of a creed, but where...her citizens can, when the time shall be right, knock for admission, not with fear and trembling, and with the consciousness of having a sinister motive in view in making the demand, but with a proud consciousness of being worthy to join the richest and proudest and most beautiful sister in the Union, because of our own dowry of beauty and wealth and honest patriotism.<sup>46</sup>

This excerpt shows that although the *Tribune* actively opposed Utah's bid for admission at that time, it strongly favored the vision of Utah's potential to become a thriving economic and religiously inclusive state. This article can also be seen as one calling for more change in the form of miners, entrepreneurs, businessmen, farmers, and, of course, non-Mormons to immigrate to Utah and undercut Mormon political strength.

There is no question the paper generated plenty of anti-Mormon content, but clearly its ultimate goal was for Utah to transform from a theocratic territory into an "American" state. More than just another anti-Mormon voice, the *Tribune* was an advocate for change in Utah. As with the above article, this attitude can also be seen in a June 26 editorial titled "How to Secure Statehood," in which the paper spelled out that

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<sup>45</sup> "To the Press of the Country," *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 12, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> "Our Way Up to Statehood," *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 14, 1887, p. 2.

only when the church renounced its political dominance, polygamy, and followed the law could the statehood situation reach a solution. “Let this be continued for three or four years and the Gentiles will join in asking for Statehood,” the *Tribune* writer declared. Until the right time came, however, the paper remained staunchly opposed to Utah’s statehood hopes.<sup>47</sup>

### **The Church’s Response to the *Tribune***

Mormon leaders were not unaware of the *Tribune*’s impact on public opinion and devised plans to counter its criticisms. Considering the heavy load of petitions against Utah statehood that Congress received from constituents nationwide, the church recognized public opinion as a key to congressional approval of statehood. LDS officials attempted several methods to alter public attitudes about the church, such as sending free subscriptions of the pro-Mormon *Deseret News* to congressmen, the president, as well as newspaper editors, judges, and military officers throughout the country.<sup>48</sup> The church also sent people such as Brigham Young’s son, John W. Young, and the church’s leading attorney, Franklin S. Richards, out East to work with Caine at convincing government officials and newspaper editors of Utah’s readiness to enter the Union as a state. Additional connections in California also developed for the same purpose. The *Tribune*, however, was also not unaware of the church’s efforts at gaining statehood by influencing politicians and media outlets. After catching wind of Young’s and Richards’ efforts, the

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<sup>47</sup> “How to Secure Statehood,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 26, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>48</sup> Monte B. McLaws, *Spokesman for the Kingdom: Early Mormon Journalism and the Deseret News, 1830-1898* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1977), 171.

*Tribune* deduced that “it means that Mormon money is being poured out without stint wherever a corruptible newspaper or a corruptible knave in public life can be found.”<sup>49</sup>

*Tribune* estimates of the situation were not far from the truth. Caine and his associates targeted the Associated Press and over three-hundred newspapers connected with it, including the *Tribune* and twenty-six of the nation’s largest newspapers. Figuring that the best way to change these papers’ content was to pay them off, the church spent an estimated \$140,000 on newspaper “bribes.” Church officials also pleaded for Nelson’s AP post to be filled by someone who did not hold such strong antagonism against the church.<sup>50</sup> These were strong, expensive measures for the church. It is interesting to consider if the Liberal Party and the *Tribune* had not pursued such a bitterly negative publicity campaign whether such efforts would have been necessary.

Though impossible to fully analyze, Lyman considers the church’s efforts to turn public opinion in its favor moderately successful. Many newspapers, such as the *Chicago Times* and the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, later published stories of Mormon loyalty and acceptance of prerequisites to statehood. They also continued to insist that statehood could only be achieved once those prerequisites were fully met. “When polygamy is dead,” the *Chicago Times* stated, “it will be time to admit her, if she wants to come in.”<sup>51</sup>

The *Times* later backed down, however, and argued that non-Mormon complaints of

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<sup>49</sup> “The Scheme in Washington,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 29, 1887, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 33, 69, 74-77, explains that bribes were not altogether uncommon in that day. Some people even argued they were necessary in order to meet political objectives. Thomas K. Hafen’s “City of Saints” article, 360, indicates that the Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce, a Mormon/Gentile organization that included *Salt Lake Tribune* publisher Patrick Lannan, also paid eastern newspapers to favor Salt Lake City’s image in 1890, which may help answer why the *Tribune*’s accusations of church corruption and treachery decreased in that year’s sample.

<sup>51</sup> “The Principle of the Thing,” *Chicago Times*, January 20, 1888, pg. 4.



suppression were just fabrications.<sup>52</sup> Some New York papers moved in the church's favor, but others, including the *Times*, *World*, and *Tribune*, refused to back down from their anti-statehood position and continued to publish negative stories. California papers, meanwhile, were generally optimistic about Utah's chances. While negativity to Mormon goals remained in several newspapers, the overall attack lightened considerably. "Never again prior to Utah's admission as a state," Lyman states, "would there be any appreciable barrage of anti-Mormon press coverage, and that was certainly an impressive change from the previous situation."<sup>53</sup> Although that statement holds partially true for the national press, efforts made by the *Tribune* to continue thwarting statehood undermine that statement.

Throughout 1888 and 1889, the *Tribune* continued covering the opinions of several papers from various parts of the nation and following congressional proceedings with more earnestness as well. One of the *Tribune*'s favorite senators was Fred T. DuBois of Idaho, who frequently contested Utah's bid. DuBois quickly opposed a statehood bill brought to the Senate Committee on Territories on January 1, 1888, making the same arguments that the *Tribune* used to fight statehood up to that time: church political rule and distrust of Mormon intentions to end polygamy.<sup>54</sup> Over a month later, the *Tribune* gleefully announced that DuBois "has become convinced that there is no possible show for the Territory to become a State at this session of Congress."<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> "Utah Statehood," *Chicago Times*, December 27, 1888, pg. 4, used by Richards in "The Admission of Utah," Arguments in Favor of the Admission of Utah as a State, Made before the House Committee on Territories, Second Session, Fiftieth Congress, January 12-22, 1889, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889, Historical Pamphlets, PAM 1929, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah, 15. The *Salt Lake Tribune* also branded the *Times* staff liars following this article, January 3, 1889.

<sup>53</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 92.

<sup>54</sup> Larson, "Americanization," 222.

<sup>55</sup> "Statehood," *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 15, 1888, p. 3.

While the *Tribune* continued to fight statehood efforts in its pages, Mormon leaders continued the fight through their newspaper organs and in the halls of Congress. Church-owned newspapers, the *Deseret News* and *Salt Lake Herald*, defended statehood ambitions and the church's unique practices back in Utah. The *News*' principal editor, Charles W. Penrose, spearheaded these efforts but spent much of his time in Washington and elsewhere in the East assisting Caine and writing for Eastern papers, which were now more likely to accept his stories.<sup>56</sup> His staff often censored coverage of the statehood situation, leaving the *Herald* to sponsor the People's Party and respond to the *Tribune*'s continual punches.<sup>57</sup> The *Herald*'s role in politics came naturally as Utah Congressional delegate John T. Caine was its principal owner. Caine often spoke publicly against the *Tribune* and refused to give the rival paper any interviews.<sup>58</sup>

In August 1888, Caine delivered a speech pronouncing polygamy a dead issue in the House of Representatives. Though polygamy was the central concern of his discourse, he also attempted to bury the *Tribune*'s three other main concerns. Caine made abundant reference to Mormon patriotism, trustworthiness, political unity to America—not church rule—and acceptance of anti-polygamy legislation. While Caine talked of polygamy's elimination, his comments indicate that there were still a few who refused to comply. "I honestly believe there are to-day in Utah less than 2,000 males who can be termed polygamists, and of this number there are very few if any who are violating the law against unlawful cohabitation," he said.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> McLaws, *Spokesman*, 190.

<sup>57</sup> Ken Verdoia and Richard Firmage, *Utah: The Struggle for Statehood*, 135.

<sup>58</sup> "Delegate Caine Interviewed," *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 12, 1891, p. 5.

<sup>59</sup> "Polygamy in Utah—A Dead Issue," Speech of Hon. John T. Caine of Utah, in the House of Representatives, August 25, 1888, Washington D.C., 1888, Historical Pamphlets, PAM 5616, Utah State Historical Society, 9.

According to Caine, Utah's prospects for statehood appeared bright, as he saw no practical reason to doubt Mormon sincerity. The *Tribune*, meanwhile, thought otherwise and countered Caine's comments by repeating earlier arguments that domineering church rule continued to exist.

[Caine] knows that enterprise among his people is cowed by the overshadowing ecclesiastical power that controls everything here; he knows that as men are curbed cowed and ruled by the creed here, their best energies are neutralized and their best hopes paralyzed; and, knowing this, he does not go to Washington to seek to lift this people up, but to try to weld the fetters which will keep them perpetually, even as he himself is, the obedient serfs to do the will of those who rule over them.<sup>60</sup>

Rumors that Utah had no chance for statehood in 1889, the *Tribune* claimed, originated from Caine and Richards "to quiet Gentiles here."<sup>61</sup>

Indeed, the *Tribune's* persistent opposition bothered Caine and Richards as much as it bothered the American public and government officials. In January 1889, Caine, Richards, and other politicians met before the House Committee on Territories to argue that their opponents had no proof of church political control or of newly formed polygamous marriages. Repeating Mormon claims of sincerity, Richards asked the committee, "why should a community of over 200,000 law-abiding people, acknowledged to possess all the qualities that constitute good citizenship, be kept in political serfdom because of a noise made over the by-gone doings of a small fractional part of the population?" When Utah Territorial Governor Caleb B. West, present at the hearing, asked them what caused Utah's non-Mormons to think this way, Richards and Caine immediately named the *Tribune* and the anti-Mormon ring.<sup>62</sup> Responding to these statements, an editorial in the *Tribune* stated that "Mr. Caine is perfectly aware that not

<sup>60</sup> "When Did He Represent Utah?" *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 30, 1888, p. 2.

<sup>61</sup> "General Items," *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 27, 1888, p. 2.

<sup>62</sup> "The Admission of Utah," 16.

one percent of the Gentiles of Utah favor Statehood...And the fact that the 45,000 Americans in the Territory are opposing statehood unanimously ought to be sufficient notice to Congress that there is something here which should close all debate in Congress upon Statehood at once.”<sup>63</sup>

Interestingly, these Mormon representatives then went on the offensive by using tactics similar to what the *Tribune* had used for years to fight statehood. The *Tribune* long asserted that regular Mormons were held in economic, political, social, and spiritual slavery by their religious leaders. In this committee hearing, however, Caine and Richards asked for their people to be released from the government’s political “serfdom.” The argument then came that the Liberal Party kept the opinions of Utah’s non-Mormons hostage by way of *Tribune* editorial threats. “If it were not for the effects of these agitators, and the misrepresentations made by them,” Caine argued, “the great mass of the non-Mormons would take no part or lot in the matter; but they are let to believe their interests are at stake, and hence their opposition.” He then used a quote from the *Tribune* that threatened to “taboo” any non-Mormons who might favor statehood or hold sympathy for the church’s cause.<sup>64</sup>

One week later, Congressman Jeremiah M. Wilson (R-IN) made similar charges before the committee. After reading another *Tribune* editorial that encouraged black-listing congressmen who supported Utah statehood because they were “deficient in the moral attributes essential to good citizenship,” Wilson asked, “will anybody pretend that when that kind of abuse is heaped upon such men as these they would spare a Gentile in

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<sup>63</sup> “Poor Caine,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 18, 1889, p. 2.

<sup>64</sup> “The Admission of Utah,” 39-40.

Utah who would open his mouth in favor of admission?”<sup>65</sup> These arguments not only turned the tables on the *Tribune*, they deflected the concerns over statehood to a different topic, at least for a short while.

Later that year, the pro-Mormon *Salt Lake Herald* hammered the same point in Utah by popularizing a song titled “If the Weather Permits.” Much of the song talked of Patrick Edward Connor and Liberal Party chief O.W. Powers controlling non-Mormon voting and opinion, but it included a verse about the *Tribune* and its principal owner Patrick Lannan:

They call us priestridden, but what shall we say  
Of that tyrant, the tripod they obey?  
They’ll vote as they’re told when the *Tribune* ring sits  
And they wont vote at all unless *Tribby* “permits.”  
Hurrah, hurrah for the People! Three groans  
For the Party whose conscience Pat Lannan still owns.  
Perhaps it is “treason” to talk in such tones;  
But they live in glass-houses and shouldn’t throw stones.<sup>66</sup>

As much as Mormon representatives and newspapers pushed back at their opponents, their efforts mattered little to the statehood situation. In early February 1889, only weeks after Caine and his associates made their arguments for statehood, the U.S. House Territorial Committee chose not to advance Utah’s admission hopes. With Republican president-elect Benjamin Harrison preparing to enter the White House and Republican majorities ready to occupy both houses of Congress in March, the *Tribune* elated that Mormon statehood hopes had effectively been thwarted for yet another four years, at least as long as Harrison’s veto

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<sup>65</sup> “The Admission of Utah,” Argument of Hon. Jeremiah M. Wilson, Argument for the Admission of Utah Made Before the House Committee on Territories, Jan. 19-22, 1889, Washington D.C., Government Printing Office, 1889, Historical Pamphlets, Vault PAM 20556, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>66</sup> Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah*, Vol. III (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons, Co., Publishers, 1893), 689-690. The name “If the Weather Permits” originated from a Liberal parade that was scheduled in mid-October, but postponed due to inclement weather. The *Tribune* rescheduled the event for November 2, “if the weather permits.”

hung over any congressional attempt to bring Utah in as a state. As much as the *Tribune*'s editors expressed joy over the crumbling of this latest statehood endeavor, they saw those four years as a window of opportunity for non-Mormons to nose their way into Utah's admission plans and advocate their vision of what the territory should be. Upon reporting the committee's decision on February 7, 1889, the *Tribune* writer went on to state that, "this leaves Utah out of the Union for the next four years, and perhaps by that time the Gentiles will be able to push for Statehood. The Mormons are laid out, and it is time now for the Liberals to take the aggressive and push forward the car of progress."<sup>67</sup> To the *Tribune*, Mormon statehood efforts were like a bad locomotive that could not move its cars, or progress, forward. They symbolically insisted that the church needed to make way for an engine that would finish the task. For the paper's editors, the Liberal Party was ready to push that car of progress forward and accomplish the statehood dream the church had not yet been able to achieve. This is yet another indication of the *Tribune*'s genuine interest in gaining statehood for Utah on the conditions that non-Mormons could be involved and lead the project.

### **The *Tribune* Responds to Polygamy's Demise**

Aside from the *Tribune*'s ongoing efforts to prevent Mormon statehood, events from 1888 to 1890 proved costly both to the church's immediate statehood plans and Mormon hopes to maintain polygamy, as Utah's non-Mormons and the rest of the country remained bent on ending the practice of plural marriage and church political rule. Raids continued to place a heavy burden on the people and church leadership and hundreds of polygamists wound up in prison. Apostle Rudger Clawson's defense of

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<sup>67</sup> "Judge Baskin Feeling Better," *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 7, 1889, p. 4.

polygamy in the April 1888 General Conference did not help the situation either, further exposing the duality between church political and religious leadership.<sup>68</sup>

By 1889, church religious leaders appeared reluctant to grant more plural marriages. In October, the *Tribune* quoted President Wilford Woodruff saying that he had not solemnized any plural marriages since he became church president in April of that year.<sup>69</sup> A week later, the *Herald* reported that Woodruff and the First Presidency intended to follow the law.<sup>70</sup> But by May 1890, the church suffered two major setbacks, both rooted in U.S. Supreme Court decisions. The church's case to halt escheatment of its property resolved in the government's favor. Soon after that, the court sustained Idaho's test oath disfranchising the state's Mormons. The latter case proved especially damaging because identical legislation called the Cullom-Strubble Bill loomed over Utah. Just as the church seemed cornered on the polygamy issue, the annual Utah Commission report hit with the checkmate in August 1890, implicating church leaders in performing forty-one polygamous marriages since June 1889. By this point, church leaders knew perfectly well they could no longer sustain their famous principle in the face of such opposition.<sup>71</sup> Before long, the church made the action many thought would never come, and which the *Tribune* had long pushed it to do, by publicly renouncing the practice of plural marriage through a manifesto issued by church president Wilford Woodruff. In this manifesto, Woodruff repeated his denial of any knowledge of polygamous marriages performed

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<sup>68</sup> Van Wagoner, 135, explains that President Woodruff instructed church apostle Lorenzo Snow to avoid the appearance of polygamy at the conference and to throw a hat at anyone who spoke at all about it. Snow evidently did nothing to stop Clawson.

<sup>69</sup> "A Strange Interview," *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 20, 1889, p. 2.

<sup>70</sup> "Interview With Pres. Woodruff," *Salt Lake Herald*, October 27, 1889, p. 2.

<sup>71</sup> Van Wagoner, 135-140; Lyman, 137.

**Table 2-2**

<b>Reasons Given by the <i>Salt Lake Tribune</i> for Opposing Utah Statehood (1887, 1890)</b>				
Reason	Number of Articles (1887)	Percent (1887) %	Number of Articles (1890)	Percent (1890) %
Political Control	52	70.27	55	70.51
Civil War	10	13.5	1	1.28
Un-American	27	36.49	37	47.44
Religious Doctrine	4	5.41	3	3.85
Polygamy	39	52.70	45	57.69
Treachery	46	62.16	25	32.05
Economic Control	2	2.70	9	11.54
Others	4	5.41	2	2.56
<i>Total Sampled</i>	74	--	78	--

during his presidency and advised church members “to refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the law of the land.”<sup>72</sup>

The second content sample taken for this study comes from the October to December 1890 issues when the church revoked the practice of plural marriage, but it shows only moderate change from the 1887 data. Church political rule was still the most highly mentioned issue concerning statehood in the *Tribune*. Tallying fifty-five appearances in the seventy-eight stories sampled, this issue appeared with basically the same consistency as it did three years earlier, showing that it remained the *Tribune*'s main concern. Polygamy also continued to receive considerable attention, appearing in forty-five stories, several of which doubted whether the Woodruff Manifesto really brought an end to polygamy. Talk of Mormons' un-American actions and nature likewise remained on the forefront of the *Tribune*'s overall argument. Interestingly, however, talk of treachery and corruption dropped nearly in half, from forty-six to twenty-five. The

<sup>72</sup> May, *Utah: A People's History*, 128.



reason for this change is difficult to explain, especially with the paper's continual gripe that the Manifesto was not sincere and that polygamy lived on. The complaint, nevertheless, remained an oft-repeated subject, whereas predictions of civil war were almost completely abandoned.

When the Woodruff Manifesto hit the press in late September and early October 1890, the *Tribune* immediately went to work questioning its sincerity. The October 1 issue alone yielded seven stories concerning the Manifesto, all skeptical of whether this move would bring an end to the controversy. The following day, a *Tribune* editorial asserted that the document was really just advice from the president to the people, not to be mistaken for a commandment. "It is not promulgated in a way that the commands of the Church go to the people," the *Tribune* stated.<sup>73</sup> The fact that it was originally sent East was also reason to doubt its sincerity. Beyond these points, the paper's editors contended that Woodruff was not telling the truth, accusing church leaders of continuing to perform polygamous marriages under everyone's noses. Reports from other newspapers were mixed on whether to believe Mormon leadership. The church's upcoming general conference suddenly turned into a highly anticipated event to see whether church leaders would maintain the same position and whether members would sustain their leadership.<sup>74</sup>

Even after Mormon leaders confirmed the church's official end to polygamy and members showed their support, the *Tribune* remained skeptical over whether the practice had really been eliminated. "We are willing to take the declaration of the President of the

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<sup>73</sup> "The Manifesto," *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 2, 1890, p. 4.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. Also see Thomas G. Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 269. Alexander insists that the *Tribune's* skepticism effectively forced church leaders to work toward convincing Mormons and gentiles that the church really was abandoning plural marriages and was willing to share political power with non-Mormons.

Church that there will be no more polygamous marriages,” a *Tribune* article stated in late October. “We are willing to assume that it is true, even while we do not believe it.”<sup>75</sup> A November editorial asserted that polygamy was still alive in Utah, that more plural marriages were made every day, and that the church had deceived the country. Instead of throwing charges at the church, however, the paper insisted that it was actually the church that had been deceived. “It was meant as a preliminary to universal amnesty,” the *Tribune* asserted, “and the intention was that with Statehood secured, the suspension would be suspended and the whole business would go on as usual. That was the one miscalculation...they never will again publicly proclaim that polygamy is an ordinance of God which their people must live up to.”<sup>76</sup>

In the end, however, the Woodruff Manifesto of 1890 marked a turning point to Utah’s statehood petition because it showed the rest of the world that polygamy was on the way out in Utah. Because some Mormons persisted in the practice and many non-Mormons doubted whether the church would actually comply with the proclamation, the issue lingered for years.<sup>77</sup> Not surprisingly, the *Tribune* stood among these cynical critics. Evidence dug up by historians in recent decades shows that these doubters were not just harboring ill feelings, since they correctly indicated that church leaders approved new plural marriages and that the practice continued, albeit to a lesser degree, even after the church issued the Manifesto.<sup>78</sup> On the large scale, however, church members complied

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<sup>75</sup> “The Kingdom,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 27 1890, p. 4.

<sup>76</sup> “Will It Be Statehood?,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 7, 1890, p. 4.

<sup>77</sup> The church eventually issued a second Manifesto in 1904 to ensure there was no question where the church officially stood on polygamy. Today, fundamentalist groups preserve the practice in some corners of the western United States, but the LDS church no longer practices this principle.

<sup>78</sup> D. Michael Quinn, “LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Spring 1985): 9-104. Julie Hemming Savage, “Hannah Grover Hegstead and Post-Manifesto Plural Marriage,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26 (Fall 1993): 101-117. These

with the law and the country applauded the Manifesto, seemingly convinced that the end of polygamy really had come, or at least was near.<sup>79</sup>

Having leapt this enormous hurdle, the statehood effort still faced several challenges before it could reach the finish line. Though many considered polygamy an important hurdle to overcome in the quest for statehood, the *Tribune* and other papers maintained that the bigger problem in Utah was still church political rule. “It is the Mormon temporal government that has made all the trouble from the first,” the *Tribune* reminded its readers, “and which will continue to keep that trouble alive until it shall be surrendered.”<sup>80</sup> The Boston *Traveler* later produced an identical opinion. “The head of the Mormon Church has ostensibly relinquished the doctrine of plural marriages, so long held by the Church, but there is yet no sign that he proposes to yield in any degree the grip which the Mormon hierarchy has upon the politics of Utah.”<sup>81</sup>

Looking at the *Tribune*’s insistence that the church drop its political reign, it is clear the paper’s editors used their anti-Mormon role mainly to advocate political change in the territory. With the exception of polygamy, they devoted very little effort and very few stories to Mormon religious doctrines. When the paper criticized church leadership, it did so only because its editors sought political change, not the destruction of the church. One editorial stated, “We wish the Mormon chiefs had honesty enough and thought enough of the welfare of their people to come honestly forth and say, ‘We are only concerned in the salvation of our flock. We do not care to mix with politics except as

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studies show that church leaders continued to sanction polygamous marriages after the Manifesto, though not as frequently as in preceding years.

<sup>79</sup> Gustive O. Larson, “*Americanization*,” 274-275, indicates that polygamous relationships declined steadily in the years following the Manifesto, falling by 1903 to one-third the 1890 total.

<sup>80</sup> “The Manifesto,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 2, 1890, p. 4.

<sup>81</sup> Quoted in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 11, 1890, p. 2.

individuals. The divinity of our system extends to religion alone and does not enter politics or trade.”<sup>82</sup> Of course, the *Tribune*’s editors believed Mormon leaders were unlikely to do that. Also, despite this article’s obvious bitterness towards Mormon leadership, it plainly calls for a political Manifesto—an upfront declaration from the church to end its political and economic role, to recast itself solely as a religious organization. This is exactly what the *Tribune* editors got in the first half of 1891.

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<sup>82</sup> “The Kingdom,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 27, 1890, p. 4.

## CHAPTER 4

“ON WITH STATEHOOD”: THE *TRIBUNE* SOFTENS ITS STANCE, 1891-1896

*Why is Utah still a Territory? Why have States grown up all around it? Why with all its people and all its resources do both parties shrink from giving it Statehood? Let the Mormon press answer that! Certainly it does not give us credit for making this public sentiment in the United States, which convinces the country that the Mormon people cannot be trusted with Statehood because they, innately, constitutionally, by birth, by training, by natural instincts are aliens under the Government of the United States.*

-Salt Lake Tribune, February 4, 1891.

*We favor the measure with all heartiness...the people here expressed their fixed determination to accept that trust in good faith and to so use it as to give the greatest progress to this Territory. After the recent election in the country in this Territory we believe they will begin with that purpose, and if they will, certainly it is better to have Statehood than to be kept in a Territorial condition.*

-Salt Lake Tribune, November 17, 1893.

The above excerpts show the great change in editorial position that the *Tribune* experienced within only a few years. In early 1891, the *Tribune* still strongly protested the idea of statehood and even took a fair share of credit for keeping Utah's admission at bay. Within only two years, the *Tribune*'s position turned around entirely to support Utah's hopes for statehood. This chapter details this dramatic change by the paper and the events that led up to it.

With polygamy officially abandoned in late 1890, the fight for statehood focused more clearly on altering the territory's political situation. Implementation of national political parties in place of the non-Mormon Liberal Party and the church-run People's Party was the first step in this process. However, as the LDS Church worked to dissolve its People's Party, *Salt Lake Tribune* editors yet again saw a Mormon ruse. They believed it was an attempt to appear reformed on the outside, while maintaining the same political control on the inside. Much like their skepticism regarding the 1887 constitution and the 1890 Manifesto, the editors had good reason to suspect foul play. But in doing so, the

*Tribune* drew more questions to its own motives, rather than the church's. It only seemed natural that they would embrace the church's move to separate. After all, the paper's editors had fought for church separation from politics for decades.<sup>1</sup> Many questioned whether their skepticism was really a sign of bigotry, or if Goodwin and Lannan just felt the Liberal Party's power slipping. Over time, the church's move to end the People's Party helped bring an end to the Liberal Party and influence the *Tribune* to drop its opposition to statehood. Although the 1890s saw great change come over the *Tribune's* editorial position and the Liberal Party that it supported, the paper continued to be a powerful force in Utah politics.

### **Mormon Political Division**

When John T. Caine and Franklin S. Richards made their arguments before the House Committee on Territories in 1889, they countered claims that the church would dominate politics as much as they countered charges of polygamy's continued presence. Quoting Utah territorial Governor Caleb B. West's report of that year, which figured Utah's four-fifths Mormon majority would dominate the non-Mormon minority, Caine argued that West overstated the church's ability to dominate politics. "[West], of course, knows that this is a gross exaggeration," Caine argued, "but it suits his purposes, and [it] is popular to talk in this way."<sup>2</sup> Such statements failed to give the church any advantage in advancing statehood. For his part at the hearing, Salt Lake City judge J.R. McBride

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<sup>1</sup> Jean Bickmore White, "Prelude to Statehood: Coming Together in the 1890s" *Utah Historical Quarterly* 62 (Fall 1994): 312.

<sup>2</sup> "The Admission of Utah," Arguments in Favor of the Admission of Utah as a State, Made before the House Committee on Territories, Second Session, Fiftieth Congress, January 12-22, 1889, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889, Historical Pamphlets, PAM 1929, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah, 45.

stoutly remained opposed to Utah's admission. "It is the great power which the Church exercises over the people which I regard as a fundamental objection to a State Government,"<sup>3</sup> he said. The end result was that the *Tribune*, Congress, and the American people continued to demand official church action to resolve this matter. "We would be glad for the sake of the Saints themselves and for the sake of the Territory if the chiefs of the Mormon church would take away that obligation which they hold their people up to, to obey them in political matters," a *Tribune* editorial stated in January 1891. "It would save any amount of trouble in the future; it would give them Statehood very soon; it would give them control of that State; with that thing eliminated from their creed there would be nothing objectionable to it."<sup>4</sup>

Following the controversy over polygamy, church officials directed their efforts to removing this concern over politics from the statehood debate. They saw their chance in February 1891, when the Ogden Liberal Party dissolved itself to make way for the Republican and Democratic parties to take over the city's politics. Church officials soon approved Ogden's People's Party to disband as well, but insisted that local church leaders work to divide the party's membership equally between Democrats and Republicans. This was exactly what the *Tribune* feared: a formal breakup of the Mormon party, yet strong representation in both national parties so that non-Mormons would be outnumbered in both. Countering its original intentions, the church's insistence to stay involved in politics persisted as a central issue in the statehood debate.

In the months that followed the Ogden branch's disbandment, the People's Party met the same end in other cities across Utah until it fully dissolved in June 1891. George

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 55. See also Gustive O. Larsen, *The "Americanization" of Utah for Statehood* (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1971) 280-281.

<sup>4</sup> "Past and Present," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 31, 1891, p. 4.

Q. Cannon's son Abraham H. Cannon, who was present at a meeting of high church officials, recorded in his journal that, "the brethren feel that these National Party organizations now taking place in our midst will eventually bring us great relief, whereas if we do not give them our support the Liberal or *Tribune* gang will finally rule and ruin our fair country."<sup>5</sup> Judging from this comment, this was still a fight over who would dominate Utah's political future. With voter disfranchisement, the seizure of church property, and Liberal political control in Salt Lake City, it is not difficult to see why the church would be so concerned about a possible non-Mormon takeover. The *Tribune's* feisty stance had much to do with this fear. Edward Leo Lyman notes that, "it is striking, in reviewing the most detailed accounts of political discussions among Mormon leaders at the time, how often mention was made of the *Salt Lake Tribune*." From this evidence, Lyman concluded that the church's concern over the *Tribune's* intentions "must be placed high on the list of causes for bringing about the dissolution of the People's party."<sup>6</sup> Mormon leadership eventually decided that their party no longer filled the church's political needs, and that a switch to national parties would help stifle the *Tribune's* opposition and lead Utah to the ultimate objective of statehood.

Although Mormons argued that this was proof of Utah becoming more "American" and of the church removing its hands from politics, the movement to convert to national parties quickly received negative coverage in the *Tribune*. Seeing the numerical disparity between Mormons and non-Mormons, the editors saw this as a scheme cooked up by the church and disagreed that church political control would cease

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<sup>5</sup> Abraham H. Cannon journal, May 25, 1891, pg. 151, vol. xiv, Manuscript Collection, Mss B 105, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>6</sup> Edward Leo Lyman, *Political Deliverance: The Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 164.



after the breakup, arguing instead that church control would actually increase because it sought to gain a Mormon majority in both national parties in Utah. “With the dream of Statehood before them what course would seem to be the best to secure that end?” the *Tribune* asked. “Would it not be to pretend to separate on political issues? They can by calling out their vote—and that will always come on call—outvote the Gentiles by 13,000 to 15,000 in the Territory.”<sup>7</sup>

As the breakup of the People’s Party unfolded, church leaders worked on another way to thwart the *Tribune*’s influence when they found an opportunity to take over management of the *Salt Lake Times*, a local newspaper with Republican leanings. It was a widely known fact that the *Deseret News* and the *Salt Lake Herald* held sympathy for and worked closely with Mormon leadership, but the church sought interest in this paper for more clandestine reasons. “Newspapers were recognized by the Mormon hierarchy as essential in any effort to transform the political scene,” Lyman observes.<sup>8</sup> More than a paper to promote national parties, the *Times*’ purpose was to bypass the *Tribune*’s influence by appearing to have no connections with the church—hence, an alternative non-Mormon newspaper. In his journal, Cannon reported that the feeling among church leaders at their March meeting “was universal that it is best to conceal the fact from the public that this purchase has been made, otherwise the influence of the paper would be greatly lessened. The aim will be to have the *Times* work against the *Tribune* and try to break its influence, and to sustain Republicanism.” Although he doubted this tactic would bring the church its desired result, Cannon remained hopeful that it somehow might

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<sup>7</sup> “Just a Question of Fealty,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 20, 1891, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 154.

work.<sup>9</sup> Even though the *Times* never quite reached the prominence of the *News* or the *Tribune*, it provided the church with another publication by which to defend its policies and attack its strongest critics. This also shows that the church certainly believed the *Tribune* was a vital player in the statehood debate. Had it not, it would not have sought to subvert the paper's political weight through an expensive venture to buy yet another newspaper.

As the *Tribune* continued to complain about Mormon political control in reference to the shift to national parties, it became the subject of great criticism. The *Deseret News*, for example, called the *Tribune*'s arguments mere "local animosities" and "strifes which hinder progress of the Territory." Such statements were nothing new for the *News*, but they carried more weight in light of the church's recent efforts to reform. A *News* editorial exclaimed that the *Tribune*'s staff writers were "so warped with anti-Mormon fanaticism that they cannot perceive the high motives that actuate men like the [News contributor], nor sense the fact that their bigotry and bile are sickening the better elements of the so-called party which they desire to perpetuate."<sup>10</sup> The *News* essentially argued that the *Tribune*'s points were really just antagonistic rhetoric, designed to stir doubts in readers' minds about Mormon sincerity and Utah's statehood hopes. Cannon recorded in his journal that, "The *Tribune* ring are laboring very energetically to prevent the division of the people in this Territory on party lines. They desire to continue the old antagonisms until the 'Mormons' are robbed of every vestige of right, and control of the

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<sup>9</sup> Abraham H. Cannon journal, March 16, 1891, p. 65-66, vol. xiv.

<sup>10</sup> "Sam Small's Pugnacity," *Deseret News*, April 11, 1891, p. 4.

Territory is given into their corrupt hands. I hope the Lord will thwart their vile schemes.”<sup>11</sup>

The *Tribune*'s own pages even included articles criticizing its own point of view. One Calvin Reasoner criticized the paper's editors for failing to recognize the unity and egalitarianism of Mormon members and recommended national organizations, like the Republican and Democratic parties, as exactly what Utah needed to bring Mormon and non-Mormon factions together. Reasoner proposed that “there is a portion of the reformation that needs to be reformed,” and concluded to *Tribune* editor C.C. Goodwin, “it seems to me that with all the ability displayed by your pen upon the columns of the *Tribune*, you fail to recognize the persistence of certain conditions upon which moral changes and reforms depend.”<sup>12</sup> Organizations such as the Utah Commission and others handed out similar disapproval of *Tribune* comments and dispatches.<sup>13</sup> In previous years, Mormon reaction expectedly followed *Tribune* editorials, but the large volume of negative responses from non-Mormon outsiders was far from the norm. The tables had turned, and it was the *Tribune* that now had to respond to criticism.

In response, the *Tribune* maintained its position—that the situation had not really changed in Utah. The paper contested that the president of the church was the only one with real voting power and that the members still voted as their leaders commanded, regardless of political affiliation. Undoubtedly, the editors wanted Americanization, but remained opposed to the manner of the political transfer because they did not want to see their political power erased and because they still saw the scenario favoring Mormon

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<sup>11</sup> Abraham H. Cannon journal, May 27, 1891, p. 153, vol. xiv.

<sup>12</sup> “The Situation,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, March 16, 1891, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> “The Utah Delegation,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 25, 1891, p. 4. This article responds to a letter sent by E. P. Feby and T. G. Webber of the Trans-Mississippi Commercial Congress, who considered the *Tribune*'s article from two days earlier both misleading and unrepresentative of Utah.

political control. “There is no American here that is not anxious for a change,” the *Tribune* asserted. “There is no American here that would not be glad if politics could be the same in Utah as it is in other Territories and States.”<sup>14</sup> The paper saw no reason to trust the Mormons just because Utah politics were on the verge of switching to national parties. “There is no substantial change,” another *Tribune* editorial contended. “The same Mormon tendencies exist; the same dangers threaten.”<sup>15</sup>

While *Tribune* columns maintained their cynical approach to Mormon reform claims, they continued to promote the territory’s economic and political advancement in preparation for statehood. Ever the promoter of Utah’s wealth and potential, the paper took every advantage to advertise the territory’s mineral and agricultural resources. In March of 1891, for example, the paper produced an article regarding Utah’s need for self-promotion at the upcoming World’s Fair in Chicago. “We think the State or Territory that does not exert itself to make a magnificent display at Chicago will simply harm itself,” the *Tribune* stated. “If Utah’s exhibit at the World’s Fair is not as fine as any ever made by any Western State or Territory...then we shall be disappointed, and we shall feel that Utah has lost one more opportunity to give herself pronounced attention in an important place.”<sup>16</sup> The *Tribune* was not just trying to bring more people and business to Utah, however. Its goal was to prepare the territory to someday be ready to accept American statehood. Until that time, the editorial staff refused to support Utah’s bid for admission.

The *Tribune* also saw itself as the harbinger of change in Utah. The paper’s editors argued that the *News* and *Herald* did little to help Utah’s situation. One February editorial encouraged readers to read back issues of the *Tribune*’s two rivals to see what

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<sup>14</sup> “The Situation,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, March 16, 1891, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> “It Means Statehood,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 22, 1891, p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> “The World’s Exposition,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, March 28, 1891, p. 4.

they had done to support “good government on one hand and the boom of this city on the other.”<sup>17</sup> Although the church publicly renounced plural marriage and was being pushed by the country to end its role in politics, the *Tribune* boldly argued that it had been the one institution responsible for bringing actual changes to the territory, having advocated such reforms years before they ever occurred. “Whatever progress has been made in Utah, from the start, has been made on the lines marked out by the *Tribune*,” the paper insisted during an editorial fight with the *News* and *Herald*. “And where there has been failure it has been where those lines have been wandered from.”<sup>18</sup>

The 1890s also marked the beginning of the *Tribune*’s reconciliation with Mormons. During the 1890 election, the paper walked both sides of the line dividing anti-Mormonism and moderate conservatism. The reason for this duality was editor C.C. Goodwin’s candidacy for the territorial delegate’s seat in Washington D.C. Still vastly outnumbered politically by Mormons in 1890, Liberals had to reach out to Mormon interests while insisting they were still tough on controversial LDS policies. “Either this year or next, or ten or fifty years hence,” an April 4 editorial exclaimed, “the chiefs of the [Mormon church] will realize that all the time the fight against the Republic and the attempt to supplant it with a barbarous despotism has been a mistake, and that henceforth the best Mormon will be the best American.”<sup>19</sup> Rarely before did the *Tribune* link the possibility of Mormons being good Americans in its pages, but this editorial still pushed a tone of reform and for the church to act more American. Although he lost by an overwhelming margin, Goodwin’s drive to settle differences with Mormons was a significant shift from his earlier criticism and it began to split Liberal ranks. He even

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<sup>17</sup> “Carry It Through,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 1, 1891, p. 12.

<sup>18</sup> “The Slaves,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 4, 1891, p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> “The Conference,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 4, 1890, p. 4.

conceded that declarations regarding Mormon abandonment of polygamy were probably sincere, but he was still not completely convinced.<sup>20</sup> Goodwin was not the only one who treated the situation differently following the Manifesto and the People's Party dissolve. From Washington D.C., Frank J. Cannon reported a friendlier attitude toward Mormons in general.<sup>21</sup> While these developments did not guarantee statehood, they certainly improved Utah's chances.

### The Question of *Tribune* Support or Opposition to Statehood

By 1892 the statehood situation, and the *Tribune's* opinions of it, were both steadily improving. In January, church leaders collaborated with *Tribune* owners Patrick H. Lannan and C.C. Goodwin and Utah Governor Arthur L. Thomas to discuss statehood, politics, and amnesty for polygamists who complied with authorities. "To our astonishment," Cannon wrote, "[they] are in favor of amnesty for the Mormons, and of their political division which is now taking place. It will not do, however, for the *Tribune*, which these men control to change its position suddenly, or it would result disastrously for the Republican cause, but they will gradually work to assist in the great work of making this a Republican State."<sup>22</sup> This meeting marked a significant event for both the statehood campaign and Mormon-gentile relations. Not only did it show cooperation between the two sides, it also indicated that these antagonists to statehood were willing to start preparing for the inevitable switch to national political parties. Specifically whose

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<sup>20</sup> James W. Hulse, "C.C. Goodwin and the Taming of the *Tribune*," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 61 (Spring 1993): 172-173.

<sup>21</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 185 and Larson, "Americanization," 274-275.

<sup>22</sup> Abraham H. Cannon journal, January 13, 1892, vol. xvi, p. 15.

“political division” Cannon meant in his journal is unclear,<sup>23</sup> but seeing that he indicated the gathering was for making Utah into a Republican state, it is safe to assume the Liberal Party and *Tribune* chiefs were ready for the change. As Cannon noted, the *Tribune* was not ready to completely favor statehood the following day, but the paper’s content signaled that change was coming.

The day before this meeting, the *Tribune* printed a typical editorial that questioned whether Mormons should be trusted with statehood. The day after the meeting, however, the editorial page talked of gathering a constitutional convention in the future and that “the change is going on, the Territory is prospering.”<sup>24</sup> From this point on, the *Tribune*’s language became more subtle, speaking less of outright opposition and more in terms of grudging opposition to what its editors believed was inevitable admission. Their only hopes now were to delay its passage a little longer. The question of when it would happen was all that remained for the paper’s editors. Some interpreted the *Tribune*’s comments as supporting statehood at this point—and to a certain extent it did—but the paper and the Liberal Party remained hopeful that Utah’s admission would come years later, hopefully after the Mormons had proven by their actions that things had changed.

Confusion came in the wake of the Faulkner Bill that Congress debated at the beginning of 1892. This bill proposed giving Utah “Home Rule,” or an interim period that operated much like statehood, in order for Utahns to prove their ability to maintain

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<sup>23</sup> Kenneth W. Godfrey, “Charles W. Penrose and His Contributions to Utah Statehood,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 64 (Fall 1996): 369-370. Both Mormons and non-Mormons were trying to adjust to national parties at this time. Godfrey illustrates the political tension between the First Presidency, which leaned toward the Republican Party, and *Deseret News* editor Charles W. Penrose’s Democratic sympathies.

<sup>24</sup> “That Bill and Congress,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 12, 1892, p. 4; “They Do Not Like It,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 14, 1892, p. 4.

an American system of government.<sup>25</sup> Non-Mormons opposed this because they felt that this measure would effectively give Mormons political reign, defeating the purpose of their protest.<sup>26</sup> With all the gains the Liberal Party had achieved in previous years, they were not ready to give all that away to the home rule bill, seeing statehood as the better alternative. Liberals were ready to choose what they saw as bad over what was worse. At least then, they felt, they could try to hold on to some of their political gains, whereas the Faulkner bill seemed to give it all away.

That was as far as the *Tribune*'s support for statehood went in 1892. Afterwards, the paper's editors immediately went to work dispelling reports that its position had completely changed. "The *Tribune* will try to make itself understood perfectly plain," one editorial exclaimed.

It thinks as it has all the time past that Statehood for Utah would be a misfortune for the present. Giving credit to the men in the church for full sincerity, we still think, knowing as we do how utterly national politics has been ignored by them through all the past, that there ought to be time given for their people to become fully conversant with both the principles on which the Government rests and the policy of the different great parties, and also the handling of the machinery of politics.<sup>27</sup>

While it gave the church credit for sincerely advocating change, the *Tribune* held back full support for statehood until its editors felt the Mormon people were fully prepared to live up to the country's democratic standards. Considering past opinion pieces, this editorial's tone is much more subdued, casually considering statehood "a misfortune for the present." Surely that January meeting with church leadership had an effect on the paper's editorial staff.

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<sup>25</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 191-193 and Larson, "Americanization," 293.

<sup>26</sup> "Satan Quotes Scripture," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 19, 1892, p. 1; "The Situation," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 20, 1892, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> "Frank and Square," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 17, 1892, p. 12.



To the Liberals' chagrin, however, rumors of the *Tribune* favoring statehood went much further than Utah's borders. Word from Capitol Hill was that Mormon lobbyists used the apparent switch to try to convince Congressmen that even the opposition now favored admission. The paper's correspondent included in his dispatch that "a comparison with the files of the *Tribune* shows that it is only a part of an editorial, in which the editor says that Statehood is preferred to the Faulkner bill,"<sup>28</sup> which might help explain the confusion. News that the *Tribune* did not really want immediate statehood surprised Wyoming senators Francis E. Warren and Joseph M. Carey. "They appeared greatly surprised when informed that such was not the case," a Washington correspondent reported. "Senator Warren stated that...he was in favor of the admission of all the Territories just as soon as they could make a showing that they were prepared for the change."<sup>29</sup> Days later, the paper quoted Senator Carey as saying that Utahns were trying to confuse everyone in Congress and that "they ought to agree among themselves first before they come and ask us to ratify their wishes here."<sup>30</sup> Adding to the frustration, Senator Henry M. Teller (R-CO) proposed a different statehood bill in the Senate. This bill never got very far, however, as the Senate Territorial Committee found the time for Utah statehood was not right. Of the Faulkner and Teller bills, the *Tribune* declared that "one may kill the other" and reported that since neither Republicans nor Democrats in the Senate supported the bills, there was "no chance of the passage of either measure."<sup>31</sup>

The year 1892 saw an accelerated amount of material in the *Tribune* concerning statehood. With the downfall of the Ogden Liberals and increased talk in other Utah

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<sup>28</sup> "Satan Quotes Scripture," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 19, 1892, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> "One May Kill the Other," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 25, 1892, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

papers of moving to national parties, the *Tribune* wanted to show that the Liberal Party still had strong support. Some stories outlined reasons to keep the party going, which usually reiterated the need to combat Mormon political rule and trickery. Rallies from throughout Utah commonly emphasized the party's strength, so the *Tribune* often included speeches and minutes from these meetings in its columns. It also tried to show that the territory's economic situation was in good shape and that statehood would bring higher taxes—a new complaint on the *Tribune*'s list.<sup>32</sup> The bottom line was that the *Tribune* continued to resist Utah's statehood bid.

### **From Stubborn Opposition to Enthusiastic Support**

Judging from February's election results in Salt Lake City, which returned a Liberal majority to the city council, the Liberal Party and its paper had not lost non-Mormon confidence. One individual from Mount Pleasant wrote to the paper that "Every true Liberal is enthusiastic over the glorious victory of last Monday. Hurrah for the *Tribune* and [O.W.] Powers and all the other Liberals of Salt Lake! Your work is appreciated."<sup>33</sup> Liberal political power, however, only went so far into 1892. As strong as the *Tribune* claimed the Liberal Party's branches were in places outside Salt Lake City, the tree's limbs soon fell, leaving only the trunk to contend with. "It is understood," an October editorial stated, "that all that stands in the way of Mormon Statehood for Utah is the Liberal Party. In outside counties, where the Liberals were few, a great proportion, weary of the long fight, have divided on party lines. But in Salt Lake, Weber and Summit

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<sup>32</sup> "About the Revenues," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January, 28, 1892, p. 4.

<sup>33</sup> "Mount Pleasant Liberals," *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 12, 1892, p. 3.

counties, almost all the old column stands firm.”<sup>34</sup> Occasionally a skeptical story on statehood appeared from a paper outside of Utah,<sup>35</sup> but as Goodwin and other prominent Liberal Party members found out through their attendance at Republican conventions in Chicago and Minneapolis, few in the country still took the Liberal Party’s cynicism of Mormon reforms seriously anymore.<sup>36</sup> Given the confusion in January over whether the *Tribune* supported statehood and the church’s ongoing campaign to promote Utah, it is not difficult to see why people outside grew to favor Utah’s statehood.

The *Tribune*’s opposition to statehood carried into 1893, but its tone became more deflated with every passing day. With church leaders already having publicly renounced polygamy and political rule, the paper could do little more than demand guarantees from the church that these issues would no longer be problems in Utah. Still, the paper’s editors saw themselves as the territory’s last bastion for American principles. Sensing statehood’s approaching passage, Goodwin wrote in a May editorial, “we suspect that statehood will be given in the next two years. We expect in the meantime to do our duty as it is given to us to see our duty, and we have this satisfaction, that whatever we may do it will not be for self-aggrandizement...it will be for the good of this Territory as we see what ought to be good for it.”<sup>37</sup>

Reconciliation between the church and non-Mormons reached new heights in the early part of 1893, but there was still work to be done. With the completion of the Salt Lake LDS Temple in April, church leaders invited hundreds of citizens, Mormons and gentiles, to view the highly anticipated building inside and out. The once acerbic

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<sup>34</sup> “For the Convention,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 11, 1892, p. 4.

<sup>35</sup> “Statehood for Utah,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 12, 1892, p. 4.

<sup>36</sup> “Why the Liberal Party,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 25, 1892, p. 4, and Lyman, 198.

<sup>37</sup> “The Question in Utah,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 25, 1893, p. 4.

Goodwin raved about the temple's aesthetic beauty in the *Tribune's* pages. "The Temple is indeed a gem, and if it were possible to throw it open from time to time, under proper restrictions, for the gratification of the public taste and the edification of visitors to the city, we are sure that this great building would soon win world-wide renown,"<sup>38</sup> he stated. As Goodwin and the *Tribune* decreased their negativity toward the church and statehood, they gained more respect from the LDS community. In his second volume of *History of Utah*, published in 1893, Mormon historian Orson F. Whitney wrote, "though fighting Mormonism as fiercely and sometimes as unfairly as ever, the *Tribune* is much more conservative than it once was, and does not admit into its columns the filthy scandals that disgraced it formerly. Much of this gratifying reform is probably due to the presence on its staff of Judge C.C. Goodwin, the editor-in-chief, a brilliant journalist, and one of national repute."<sup>39</sup> Whitney repeated this respectful sentiment in his fourth volume that was published eleven years later.<sup>40</sup>

As much as Goodwin and other non-Mormons lightened up on their criticism, the *Tribune* obstinately refused to support statehood outright. Comments in a June editorial show the paper's efforts to uphold its opposition while avoiding offense to the body of church membership. "We have never charged [the Mormon community]...with trying by

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<sup>38</sup> "The Inner Temple" and "The Temple Dedication," *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 6, 1893, p. 4 & 5. Goodwin mentions the idea of opening the temple to others because Mormon doctrine limits temple attendance only to faithful church members once a temple has been "dedicated" or sanctified by the First Presidency of the church. The church invited Goodwin and other non-Mormons to view the temple before its dedication. Luther L. Heller, "A Study of the Utah Newspaper War, 1870-1900 (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 1966), briefly mentions this visit by Goodwin as evidence of the *Tribune* softening its attacks on the church, 70.

<sup>39</sup> Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah*, Vol. II (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons Co., Publishers, 1893), 383.

<sup>40</sup> Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah*, Vol. IV (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons Co., Publishers, 1904), 341.

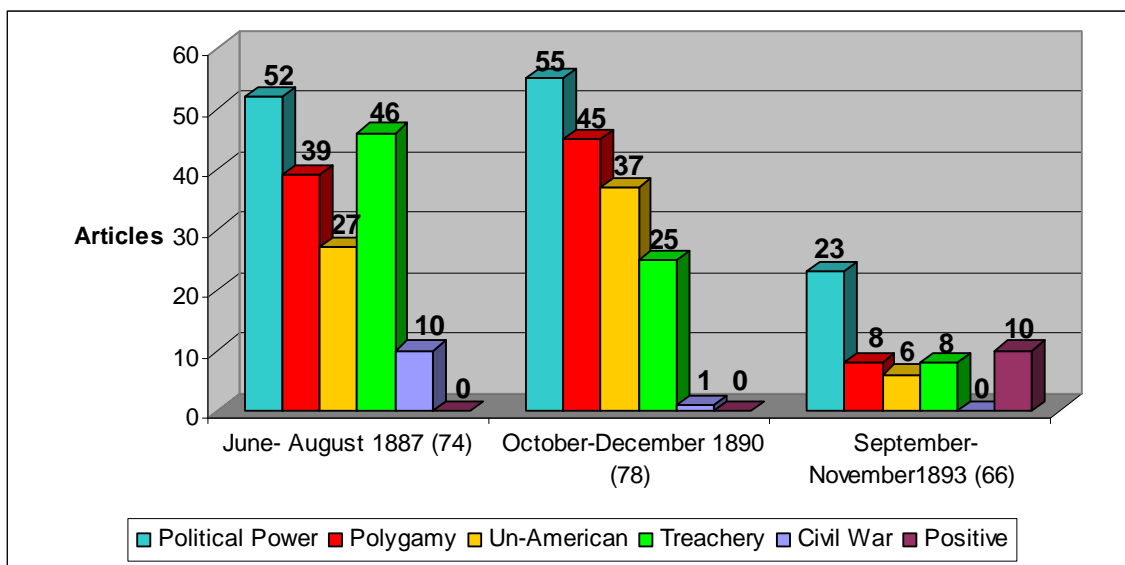
**Table 3-1**

<b>Reasons Given by the <i>Salt Lake Tribune</i> for Opposing Utah Statehood (1887, 1890, 1893)</b>						
Reason	Articles (1887)	Percent %	Articles (1890)	Percent %	Articles (1893)	Percent %
Political Control	52	70.27	55	70.51	23	34.85
Civil War	10	13.5	1	1.28	0	0
Un-American	27	36.49	37	47.44	6	9.09
Religious Doctrine	4	5.41	3	3.85	0	0
Polygamy	39	52.70	45	57.69	8	12.12
Treachery	46	62.16	25	32.05	8	12.12
Economic Control	2	2.70	9	11.54	0	0
Others	4	5.41	2	2.56	0	0
<i>Total Sampled</i>	74	--	78	--	66	--

any unfair means to attain Statehood or anything else. But the masses of the Mormon people do as they are counseled to do by some fifteen men, generally counseled by three men. Those fifteen men want Statehood in order to place the rule of this region in their hands, and the people are anxious in every way to ratify their desires.”<sup>41</sup>

Given this and many similar comments made throughout the years, it comes as no surprise that the 1893 sample of the *Tribune*'s reasons for opposing Utah statehood still shows church political control as the paper's most cited complaint. The great difference between this and the 1887 and 1890 samples, however, is the paper's decreased volume of articles that negatively portrayed Utah's admission hopes. The frequently mentioned political power complaint diminished from previous years, appearing in only twenty-three of sixty-six stories (thirty-five percent) sampled from September to November

<sup>41</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 21, 1893.



**Figure 3-1 Results from Newspaper Content Samples**

1893. Indeed, the volume of negative stories dwindled considerably to just less than half of the statehood stories sampled (thirty-one of sixty-six), a stark contrast to the other two samples which both showed one-hundred percent negativity to statehood. Almost as many stories in the sample were neutral to statehood (twenty-five) limiting themselves solely to reporting what was happening in the debate, while ten articles actually supported statehood outright.

Another glaring difference between this and the two earlier samples is the dramatic decline in negativity from the other major concerns the *Tribune* held. Church polygamy and trickery each showed up only eight times during these critical three months, down significantly from fifty to sixty percent to only twelve. The same can be said for the argument that Mormons were un-American; that concern tallied only six appearances. While the paper continued to mention these complaints, there is no question that *Tribune* editors were slowly preparing to abandon them. They did not even bother to mention threats of civil war or church economic control.

Throughout September and October, *Tribune* stories remained either negative or neutral about statehood. The real change came when the Liberal Party fared poorly in the November elections. Before the election, the *Tribune* continued to attack the notion of Utah's readiness to become a state. Addressing Utah's citizenry, the *Tribune* explained:

If they have any eyes at all they can see how the Mormon people, by both the *Herald* and the *News*, are being whipped in to vote a solid ticket this year. The cry in the city is for a pure government; the cry about the Legislative ticket is for Statehood, and we wish to point out that that will happen every year, even after Statehood shall have been secured, until every office in the State shall be filled and controlled by Mormons. On one excuse or another the people will be instructed in a roundabout way how to vote.<sup>42</sup>

After bringing in only about half the votes from the previous election, and keeping only eight seats in the assembly—compared to fifteen for the Republicans and thirteen for the Democrats<sup>43</sup>—Liberal Party chiefs announced through the *Tribune* that the fight was over and the party was ready to disband. Disliking the idea of dissolving his party, president O.W. Powers said it had accomplished its purpose to prepare the territory to become an American state. He now believed more might have been accomplished had the Liberals accepted Mormon sincerity back in July the previous year. Before long, sentiment among party members generally favored breaking into national parties, believing the church could no longer control Utah's politics. Some Liberals quoted in the *Tribune* said they had anticipated this move for years, seeing it as a sign that Mormon and non-Mormon leaders had finally resolved their differences.<sup>44</sup> Cannon jubilantly wrote in his journal, “this is a very good move, and one which we can be thankful to the Lord. It can now be

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<sup>42</sup> “Only Their Flag is Changed,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 3, 1893, p. 4.

<sup>43</sup> Larson, “*Americanization*,” 295.

<sup>44</sup> See the following stories in the *Salt Lake Tribune*: “Shall the Liberals Quit?” and “Concurring Opinions,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 11, 1893, p. 8; “Discussing the Situation,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 12, 1893, p. 8.

hoped that all acrimonies of the past will be buried, and a reign of peace and prosperity be established in this Territory.”<sup>45</sup>

Scholars have noted multiple reasons for the Liberal breakup, aside from the party losing political influence. Gustive O. Larson credits the Liberals’ acknowledgment that their ongoing argument over local concerns was futile and they needed to move on to dealing with national issues in order to be part of the country’s politics.<sup>46</sup> Jean Bickmore White concedes that non-Mormon abandonment of their grievances played a large role in bringing about statehood, but that was due partly to “the acceptance by Utah’s gentiles of the fact that Utah would never be exactly like other states; the political and social culture of Utah would always be unique.”<sup>47</sup> Certainly the political turnover nudged Liberals toward dropping their case, but it is not a stretch to state that these leading non-Mormons, particularly on the *Tribune* staff, also had higher motives to resolve differences with Mormons and help create a unified society. Indeed, the sampled data supports this view. Once the Liberals felt satisfied that their demands had been met and that Mormons were sincere in their promises to uphold the laws of the land, they dropped the anti-Mormon, anti-statehood rhetoric and supported the territory’s statehood efforts. Following the November election, the *Tribune* no longer published articles opposing statehood. It abandoned its rants about church political control and trickery to obtain statehood. Occasionally, the paper brought up polygamy, but only because it had not been fully removed. Gone were long-winded editorials about Mormon un-American nature and practices. The editors decided to “trust” that Mormons would act according to their

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<sup>45</sup> Abraham H. Cannon journal, November 10, 1893, p. 113, vol. xvii.

<sup>46</sup> Larson, “*Americanization*,” 295.

<sup>47</sup> White, “Prelude to Statehood,” 315.



promises. From that point, the paper's statehood articles either favored the measure or happily relayed news concerning its progress.

Days after the unofficial Liberal dissolve, a Goodwin editorial announced, "We must all get ready to second the efforts of Mr. [Joseph L.] Rawlins [D-Utah] to secure statehood. We must all waive our prejudices in order that the wise and distinguished gentlemen of the Democratic Party may have their way and may give to Utah the Statehood which they covet for her." Such words were like fresh air to Mormon leaders and newspaper editors. The article continued, "and we trust that our friends on the other side will press on in their laudable efforts to see that this Territory shall be consecrated to the worship of that god called Democracy."<sup>48</sup> The tone of this editorial carries a level of caution, because the word "trust" could easily be replaced with "demand," "require," or even "hope."

Interestingly, the *Herald* assumed that the *Tribune* would not forfeit its long-guarded position so easily, remembering the fiasco that happened the previous year over the Faulkner bill.<sup>49</sup> A *Tribune* editorial under the title "Let Statehood Come" on November 17 assured both readers and the *Tribune*'s competitor that the paper solidly favored Utah's admission "with all heartiness"<sup>50</sup> and promised that Utah's legislators would find no opposition from the *Tribune* on this matter. Part of the professed reasoning behind the *Tribune*'s change was that the people voted Republican despite warnings from the *Herald* that doing so would risk losing statehood. As described by Goodwin, "they gave the clearest evidence of their capacity for self-government that has ever been

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<sup>48</sup> "On With Statehood," *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 15, 1893, p. 4; "Let Statehood Come," *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 17, 1893, p. 4.

<sup>49</sup> "The Tribune," *Salt Lake Herald*, November 16, 1893, p. 4.

<sup>50</sup> "Let Statehood Come," *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 17, 1893, p. 4.

displayed in Utah, and dispersed the fears of thousands of persons that with that trust imposed upon them they would use it unworthily.” In later weeks, the paper indicated that things had changed and that Mormons had responded favorably to the call to be Americans.<sup>51</sup>

This change in favor of statehood was a turning point, not only for the history of the *Tribune*, but in Utah’s bid for admission as well. Territorial representative Joseph L. Rawlins used the *Tribune*’s switch to his favor when arguing for Utah’s readiness to become a state. Only one month separated from the *Tribune*’s editorial shift, Rawlins’ proposed bill for Utah statehood found its way to the U.S. House of Representatives floor for debate on December 12. Elijah A. Morse (R-Mass.) offered strong opposition to the bill on the grounds that Utah was not yet reformed—remaining a polygamous territory full of superstitious, un-American, licentious murderers. Morse charged that he had no confidence in Mormon claims to honesty and sincerity and wanted proof that they had changed before he would accept any petition for statehood. Embarrassed that he could not quote directly from his *Tribune* clipping, which he forgot in his hotel room, Morse found himself forced to work off hearsay evidence and the old Republican rally cry from the 1850s to put an end to the other twin relic of barbarism—polygamy. “My argument is based upon my want of confidence in the honesty and integrity of the Mormons. I have no confidence in their professions, and I have already pointed out the danger of the Federal Government losing control of this Territory and turning the non-Mormons and Gentiles over to the tender mercies of that Mormon Legislature.”<sup>52</sup> He brought up the old *Tribune* arguments against statehood: Mormon political power, persistent practice of

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<sup>51</sup> “Making Things Clear,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 19, 1893, p. 4; “The Devilry Intended,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 26, 1893, p. 4.

<sup>52</sup> *Congressional Record*, 53<sup>rd</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 1893, 174-176.

plural marriage, un-Americanness of the church, and trickery by church leaders.

Ultimately, he argued, he wanted to see clear evidence of Mormon “repentance” before he would concede.

Rawlins responded to Morse’s arguments by saying that his complaints were ancient history, that the territory had progressed since those accusations had any real bearing on the matter. He reminded those present that the people who previously opposed statehood had turned around to favor admission. Unlike Morse, Rawlins did not forget to bring his copy of the *Salt Lake Tribune* and was able to use excerpts from that edition. “The Salt Lake Tribune...which has long been supposed to always give expression to the most violent and hostile sentiments against the Mormon people...published an editorial in which they said they approved of my conduct here and what I proposed to do,” Rawlins proudly exclaimed. Quoting a portion of the November 17 editorial, titled “Let Statehood Come,” Rawlins concluded that opposition to statehood from within Utah was essentially gone.<sup>53</sup> The bill passed with barely any opposing votes the following day.

Some have pointed out that most of the House members had likely made up their minds regarding Utah’s statehood petition well before the debate. The *Tribune*’s own Washington correspondent W. E. Annin reported that before the bill reached the floor for debate several congressmen who had previously opposed Utah’s statehood bid wanted time to explain why they had changed their minds regarding this bill, not wanting to upset their constituents, who even up to this time continued sending petitions against a statehood bill.<sup>54</sup> While there is no reason to doubt Annin’s report, it is interesting that Rawlins even bothered to use the *Tribune* at all. Had Morse not spoken of the *Tribune*,

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 178-179.

<sup>54</sup> Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 215.

Rawlins likely would have used the article anyway. He was prepared to use it. It was a key element to his argument that there was no longer any opposition in Utah to statehood. Judging from the text, he appears proud that he took the time to be with his constituency to gather such information, unlike the Massachusetts representative who forgot to bring his old clipping. In many ways, Morse represented the old cynical arguments against statehood, while Rawlins was the face of progress in Utah. Though the *Tribune's* announced support for statehood certainly was not the sole determining factor for securing its passage, it showed any leftover doubters that Utah was no longer divided on this issue and that Mormons and non-Mormons had a newfound unity with which to build a state. It was not just the absence of opposition, it was the change of a once-loud voice of opposition to one proudly standing on the affirmative—provided certain conditions could be kept.

In later months, the *Tribune's* position was remarkably different toward Mormon lifestyles, and church members gave the *Tribune* more respect. Soon after 1894 began, Cannon expressed great surprise at the *Tribune's* editorial section, which insisted that some polygamists were neglecting their plural families. The editorial stated,

To such men we beg to say that there has never been a time, even in the extreme bitter days of the past, when both the *Tribune* and the Gentiles of this region, would not have cried out against injustice of that kind, and now we beg to say that we do not believe there is a man, woman, or child in Utah, of any race, color or condition, that would not condemn such work; that would not insist that every obligation of manhood requires men so involved to do their utmost, within the law, to secure the comfort, happiness and peace of mind of those involved with them; to support their former wives, and to watch over, provide and educate, to their best ability, their children by such wives.<sup>55</sup>

Cannon recorded his astonishment in his journal: “This paper now demands that they support and care for their families, and raise their children as they should be,” Cannon

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<sup>55</sup> “Do the Right Thing,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 3, 1894, p. 4.

wrote. “The sentiments are quite different to what were formerly entertained by this organ, when men were arrested and imprisoned for merely meeting their wives in public places or at private sociables.”<sup>56</sup> Of all people, Cannon knew full well how bizarre this changed position was, having been accused in *Tribune* pages only months earlier of housing extra wives.<sup>57</sup>

The paper’s shift to support statehood did not completely remove the paper from its watchdog role, however. Concerned in April 1894 that political Mormons might not live up to their promise to keep church separate from politics, the *Tribune* reminded its readers that the paper could easily return to its former opposition, if necessary.

When the Tribune last fall announced that it believed that it was time to divide on party lines, it at the same time said that if any of the wrongs which were perpetuated in the old days should be re-attempted, it would denounce [support] and call upon its contemporaries to help in the work. We call on those contemporaries now to tell these new-fledged officials that they are to do a certain work in the interest of all the citizens of this city and that the matter of creed at least does not enter into consideration.<sup>58</sup>

The *Tribune*’s staff never saw the need to pull back its support for statehood, but it certainly stood willing to use its influence to try to further delay statehood until the people were ready. The *Tribune* criticized the church on other occasions as well, such as when apostle Moses Thatcher’s name was left off the church’s list of general authorities in April 1896 because of affiliation with the Democratic Party.<sup>59</sup>

For the most part, however, the *Tribune* and Goodwin gave the church greater respect, continued to support statehood, and won that same respect from church members. During the drafting of the state constitution, Goodwin served as a delegate to

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<sup>56</sup> Abraham H. Cannon journal, January 3, 1894, p. 2-3, vol. xviii.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, September 11, 1893, p. 15-75, vol. xvii. Also see *Salt Lake Tribune*, September 11, 1893.

<sup>58</sup> “Look to It,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 12, 1894, p. 4.

<sup>59</sup> Thomas G. Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 310-315.

the convention. His first-hand observations seem to have satisfied him that delegates were not forming a separate Mormon faction. As James W. Hulse recalls, “[Goodwin] could never have been chosen as a delegate from Salt Lake City unless he had received some Mormon Republican votes.”<sup>60</sup>

With the admission bill already passed in the House by a wide majority, the Senate took little time to pass it once it came up in July 1894. During the interim leading up to January 1896, the *Tribune* promoted and defended statehood as much as it could, even shooting down accusations from an obscure outside source that Mormon political domination would rise again in the advent of statehood.<sup>61</sup> In the inaugural 1896 issue, just days before statehood became official, the *Tribune* looked back on the great struggle it endured to survive as a non-Mormon newspaper in Mormon Utah.

For many years, The Tribune had a hard struggle for existence, because, having espoused the cause of the Gentiles of Utah, there was so much hostility to it on the part of the dominant church here. During the history of The Tribune it has always been credited by both friends and foes with being true to its colors, and of never having shirked its duty or been false to its convictions and principles. Even its enemies in the hours of greatest bitterness between factions here looked to The Tribune for the news, and to its editorial columns for expressions on all important matters or events, whether in Utah, the States or in foreign countries. But the days of bitterness having passed it is useless to refer further to them, now that The Tribune has such a hold on the friendship of the masses, including all factions and classes, and it is so warmly received into the homes of so many people.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Hulse, “C.C. Goodwin and the Taming of the *Tribune*,” 174. Also see O.N. Malmquist, *The First 100 Years: A History of the Salt Lake Tribune, 1871-1971* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1971), 161-162.

<sup>61</sup> Abraham H. Cannon journal, December 27, 1895, p. 211, vol. xix. The front page of the *Salt Lake Tribune* on December 27, 1895 tells of an alleged interview in a Topeka, Kansas newspaper of a Mormon bishop ranting about the continuation of plural marriages and church control of politics in Utah once statehood was granted. The *Tribune* titled the piece “Earmarks of a Fake” and indicated that he “made assertions that no sane man would make, even if they were true.” Pleased by the *Tribune*’s refusal to believe this, Cannon wrote that there was no bishop by that name and that the Associated Press had already put together a message to counter the claim.

<sup>62</sup> “The Tribune,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 1, 1896, p. 12.

By 1896, the changes Utah had experienced left little for the *Tribune* to complain about regarding Mormon culture. As the paper's historian O.N. Malmquist concludes, "the tone of the newspaper at this juncture revealed an expectation on the part of the management and editors that the columns of space previously devoted to the problems arising directly from the 'irrepressible conflict' could in the future be devoted to more general issues."<sup>63</sup>

Now the paper focused on topics such as silver coinage, tariffs, and Republicanism. The *Tribune*'s days of grumbling about Mormons were essentially over. At times, the paper took issue with the church, but only when it seemed that the policies associated with the struggle over statehood were returning to their former condition. In serving as the voice of Utah's non-Mormons, the *Tribune* accomplished its objective of making sure that when Utah entered into the brotherhood of American states, it would be established on terms of non-sectarian democracy that conformed to American law.

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<sup>63</sup> Malmquist, *First 100 Years*, 166.

## CHAPTER 5

## CONCLUSION:

THE *SALT LAKE TRIBUNE*'S EFFECT ON THE STATEHOOD CONTROVERSY

*The larger issue here is the tremendous power of the press—as an advocate, teacher, and interpreter of the day's events. U.S. newspapers long have offered strong opinions on the issues of the day, and have long influenced public policy and individual beliefs. Early nineteenth-century newspapers were saturated with ardent political advocacy; that advocacy was their reason for existence...[E]ditorials have continued to provide national and local leadership on a wide variety of issues...In addition, through both their own commentary and that of sources, the newspapers defined what was good or bad, what was admirable or despicable, what was appropriate or inappropriate.*

-Gerald J. Baldasty, *Vigilante Newspapers*<sup>1</sup>

As can be seen from the story of the *Salt Lake Tribune* and Utah Statehood, newspapers had the ability to make significant contributions to the ways in which nineteenth-century American communities developed. This was so because newspapers were the most visible media source available at the time. They were a source whereby people could learn what was happening and what other people were saying about important events. A politically active, well-circulated newspaper like the *Tribune* was hard to ignore. Like Baldasty's statements above imply, nineteenth-century newspapers were critical pieces to local and national politics. Much like Streitmatter's comment used in the Introduction to this thesis, the *Tribune*'s position on statehood affected the debate because the paper continually put controversial issues up for discussion, or on the "front burner"<sup>2</sup> for this debate.

The printed media has shaped and influenced numerous events in American history, but the *Tribune*'s story shows that papers could operate on their own as a

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<sup>1</sup> Gerald J. Baldasty, *Vigilante Newspapers: A Tale of Sex, Religion, And Murder in the Northwest* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 4.

<sup>2</sup> See page 5 of Chapter 1.



political force in addition to its news-gathering function. In his journal, Abraham H. Cannon considered the Liberal Party and the *Tribune* synonymous with each other.<sup>3</sup> That observation might lead one to believe the two were intertwined, yet the *Tribune* continued to thrive long after the Liberal Party's demise in late 1893. The paper, therefore, carried a powerful voice that was not entirely dependant on its political party's success. The *Tribune* grabbed people's attention because it consistently represented Utah's non-Mormon population and made important political and societal stands that forced its rivals to pay attention to its columns. Although it did not carry any governmental authority, the *Tribune* was a leader for bringing forth change. This finding calls part of Richard L. Kaplan's argument that newspapers were weak instruments for the political parties to use into question.<sup>4</sup> The *Tribune* came before the Liberal Party, provided a voice for its agenda, and continued to represent non-Mormons after the party dissolved.

A countless number of forces affected Utah's admission into the Union. For the three that are briefly illustrated here, this thesis shows that the *Tribune* impacted all of them. One part of the story was party structure in Congress and how Utah would potentially affect it. Through its editorial role, the *Tribune* consistently questioned the stability of Utah's party system, arguing that the Mormon church would go on running the show regardless of whether a switch to national parties ever occurred. Another part was the laborious job of convincing senators and representatives of Utah's readiness. As much as Mormon lobbyists worked hard to convince congressional representatives that Utah was ready to become a state, the *Tribune's* editors worked just as hard to negate

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<sup>3</sup> See page 71.

<sup>4</sup> Richard L. Kaplan, *Politics and the American Press: The Rise of Objectivity, 1865-1920* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2002), 3.

their advances, either through editorials or by visiting Capitol Hill itself. Yet another element was public opinion on the matter. Through its connections with the Associated Press, the *Tribune*'s opposition echoed throughout American cities. Though it is impossible to determine how many people across America these newspaper stories convinced, it is easy to see that for a time many editors bought in to the *Tribune*'s message by reprinting and supporting it in their own newspapers.

This thesis contributes to the understanding of Utah's statehood controversy by detailing exactly what the opponents of Utah's admission bid argued. With the many points brought forward by the *Tribune*, its top concern was clearly church political domination. All three content samples show this as the most mentioned argument against Utah statehood. Even in the waning days of their opposition in the autumn of 1893, the *Tribune*'s editors continually fretted about this issue—more than all the other issues combined. This analysis, therefore, calls into question any assessment that says the practice of plural marriages was the principle worry. O.N. Malmquist asserted that “week after week and year after year *The Tribune* devoted more space to polygamy than to all the other issues of the battle combined.”<sup>5</sup> While polygamy certainly played a dramatic role in the debate, it was clearly not the top concern for the *Tribune*'s editorial staff.

Another aspect of the *Salt Lake Tribune*'s story that this thesis focuses on is the paper's role as an agent of change. This theme forces any reader of Utah's territorial history to reconsider the *Tribune*'s objectives during the statehood controversy. From the empirical data and the many articles quoted here, it is clear that the *Tribune* was a bitter opponent of Mormon policies and leadership for many years. But the third sample shows

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<sup>5</sup> O.N. Malmquist, *The First 100 Years: A History of the Salt Lake Tribune, 1871-1971* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1971), 81.

a dramatic reduction in the paper's negativity toward the church and statehood, and even praise and support for church actions in 1893. This was so because the *Tribune's* editors, for the most part, felt satisfied that the necessary changes they had advocated for so long to bring American statehood to Utah had occurred. It is no secret that the paper held on to some skepticism afterwards, but only when it feared that those changes were being threatened. This shows that the paper's principle objective was to maintain what it believed to be American principles, such as the separation of church and state and the strict limitation of marriages to only monogamous relationships. C.C. Goodwin and the rest of the *Tribune* staff cared little about the Mormon church's beliefs or policies, as long as they did not violate these essential principles.

Further proof that the *Tribune's* main objective was change can be seen in Goodwin's 1900 article "The Truth About The Mormons," published in the nationally circulated *Munsey's Magazine*. In this piece, Goodwin briefly scoffs at early Mormon history, but goes on to congratulate changes made by church leaders, asserts that those same leaders would no longer allow plural marriages, and compliments Utah's rising generation. He wrote that, "the changes wrought in the second and third generations of those people are wonderful. Some of the young women are most beautiful and thoroughly accomplished. The young men, as a rule, are not different from young Americans in other States."<sup>6</sup> Though somewhat bitter of the church's past and wary of church members' absolute commitment to anti-polygamy laws, the language in this article is completely different from his *Harper's* and *North American Review* stories written nearly twenty years earlier. It shows what James W. Hulse describes as a "warm respect for the

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<sup>6</sup> C.C. Goodwin, "The Truth About The Mormons," *Munsey Magazine* 23 (June 1900): 324, Book Collection, 13, Number 298, Vol. 2 No. 21, Utah State University, Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

dedication and endurance of the Mormon people whom he no longer regarded as mere slaves or pawns of their leaders.”<sup>7</sup> Goodwin concluded by stating that “Utah is a great State. The troubles that she has suffered, and is still suffering, will by and by refine, chasten, and exalt her people, and the beautiful State will become one of the most significant factors in the Union.”<sup>8</sup>

This thesis also makes a useful contribution to the telling of Utah’s statehood history. While it does not attempt to dramatically change the overall paradigm, it provides more detail about a critical element of that story. It suggests rethinking the *Tribune*’s importance in the statehood debate and contemplation on how important newspapers were, are, and can be in any politically charged situation. Love it or hate it, the rhetoric of the *Salt Lake Tribune* helped shape Utah’s identity on the national map and influence how others saw it then and how others see it today.

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<sup>7</sup> James W. Hulse, “C.C. Goodwin and the Taming of the *Tribune*,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 61 (Spring 1993): 176.

<sup>8</sup> Goodwin, “The Truth About The Mormons,” 325.

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## APPENDIX

### INTRACODER RELIABILITY

In order to establish the reliability of the author's empirical data of the *Salt Lake Tribune's* stories, an intracoder reliability test was performed. This not only tests the consistency of the original coding, but it also gives the coder another opportunity to objectively view the data. The original coding for the first content analysis sample took place during the time period of May 11-18, 2007 and the reliability coding was conducted during the week of June 23-27, 2007, thus allowing time away from the data and reducing the chances of researcher bias. The test was performed by re-reading and coding a portion of the stories from the first content analysis sample, or 25 of the 74 total stories in the sample.

Results from the intracoder reliability test showed six disagreements and 169 agreements from the original coding, out of 175 total concepts, or 96.6%. The chart below outlines the results of that test. The first column shows the newspaper story, date published, and the page number on which it is located. The numbers in the subsequent columns represent the following: (1) Mormon political power and domination, (2) polygamy, or plural marriage, (3) "un-American" nature of Mormonism, (4) arguments of Mormon treachery, deception, or corruption, (5) Mormon economic control, (6) Mormon religious doctrine, (7) predictions of civil war. If the original coding indicated that an argument was made in the story, it is indicated by an "x," a "y" when indicated in the intracoder reliability test.

**Table A-1**

<b>Newspaper Stories</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
6/9 Dirt in Houses of Pretended Friends, pg. 2	x,y	x,y		x,y			
6/19 Not Quite Yet, pg. 2	x,y	x		x,y			x,y
6/21 Oppressed and Oppressors, pg. 2	x,y	x,y					
6/21 Statehood, What is Really Wanted, pg. 2	x,y			x,y			
6/21 Fraud of the Business, pg. 2	x,y	x,y		x,y			
6/22 Keeping Up the Joke, pg. 2	x,y	x,y	x,y	y			
6/23 General Items, pg. 2	x,y			y			
6/23 Political Power Wanted, pg. 2	x,y	x,y		x,y			
6/23 Prepared to Swallow Anything, pg. 2	x,y	x,y		x,y			
6/23 What Gentiles Should Do, pg. 2	x,y						
6/23 What Would be Feared, pg. 2	y	x,y		x,y			x
6/24 All Right, pg. 2	x,y			x,y			
6/24 From the Underground, pg. 2	x,y	x,y	x,y	x,y			x,y
6/24 The News Takes the Medicine, pg. 2		x,y		x,y			
6/25 Not Very Nervous, pg. 2	x,y		x,y	x,y			
6/25 The Mendacity of the News, pg. 2	x,y	x,y	x,y	x,y			
6/26 How to Secure Statehood, pg. 2	x,y	x,y					
6/26 Statehood for Utah, pg. 4	x,y	x,y	x,y				
6/26 The Fourth of July business, pg. 2	x,y						
6/26 The Mormon Convention, pg. 4							
6/26 The White Wings, pg. 2				x,y			
6/28 General Items, pg. 2	x,y	x,y	x,y	x,y			
6/29 Gentiles Drawing Out, pg. 4	x,y						
6/29 Who They Are, pg. 2			x,y	y			
6/29 A Cure for Mormonism, pg. 2	x,y	x,y	x,y				