

# The Uses and Abuses of Patriotism\*

Hugh Nibley

Chapter 8 in *Brother Brigham Challenges the Saints*

<http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu/publications/books/?bookid=49&chapid=308>

## The Magnanimous Patriot

The assigned title of our treatise could be misleading. Patriotism is what Aristotle calls a “good of first intent,” a thing good and desirable in itself, such as love, joy, or eternal life, whose value needs no argument. Hence to “use” patriotism, treating it as a tool rather than a precious jewel, is to abuse it. Yet like other goods of primary intent, it has a special function. The business of patriotism is to open doors; the *abuse* of patriotism shuts them.

Patriotism is devotion to the *patria*, the fatherland, one’s own people, the land of one’s birth. Thus the genius of patriotism is the sense of identification with *others*. And the greater the patriot, the wider is the circle of his familial affection. That handful of simon-pure patriots, the makers and saviors of nations who have merited the title of “the Great,” from Abraham, Alexander, and Alfred to Washington, Bolivar, and Lincoln, are remembered as the common heroes of all mankind, who “shine as lights in the world ... in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation” (Philippians 2:15), amazing all observers by their broad humanity, their concern for the weak and downtrodden, and the magnanimous treatment of their enemies. All acted in conscious imitation of those heroes of ancient epic tradition who toiled and suffered to relieve the burdens of weak and erring fellows. The Founding Fathers dedicated their labors to the benefit of the whole human race: “Our Cause,” wrote Franklin, “is the Cause of all Mankind. ... We are fighting for their Liberty in defending our own.” The magnanimous brand of patriotism is no more perfectly exemplified than in the person of the Prophet Joseph: “I am the greatest advocate of the Constitution of the United States there is on the earth. In my feelings I am always ready to die for the protection of the weak and oppressed in their just rights.”<sup>1</sup> To his mind that was the duty of the patriot, and his behavior confirmed his assertion: “Friendship is one of the grand fundamental principles of ‘Mormonism’; [it is designed] to revolutionize and civilize the world, and cause wars and contentions to cease and men to become friends and brothers. ... It is a time-honored adage that love begets love. Let us pour forth love—show forth our kindness unto all mankind.”<sup>2</sup> Brother Joseph opens all the doors:

There certainly is a tie to those who are of the same faith which is peculiar to itself, but it is without prejudice, gives full scope to the mind, and enables us to conduct ourselves with liberality towards those who are *not* of our faith; this principle, in our opinion, approximates the nearest to the mind of God and is God-like. [With this goes an explicit warning against closing doors:] We further caution our brethren, against the impropriety of the organization of bands or companies; ... pure friendship always becomes weakened the very moment you undertake to make it stronger by penal oaths and secrecy.<sup>3</sup>

Patriotism is an emotional surge, a “gut feeling,” the generous impulse of those “who more than self their country love and mercy more than life”; hence the moment it becomes calculating and contrived, its nature is perverted. Like the priesthood, it works through persuasion and affection, never through coercion. “While we therefore cheer the Constitution, ... let us remember that the perpetuity of our free institutions depends upon—” Let us stop here for a moment and ask, On what? A strong military posture?

But the most oppressed people on earth have enjoyed the protection of the greatest armed forces. An efficient police force? And who is to police the police—*quis custodiet custodes?* On what, then? Here is the Prophet’s answer:

There is a duty which we, in common with all men, owe to governments, laws, and the regulations in the civil concerns of life; these guarantee to all parties and denominations of religion, equal and indefeasible rights, all alike interested; and they make our responsibilities one towards another in matters relating to temporal affairs, and the things of this life; the former principles do not destroy the latter, but bind us stronger, and make our responsibility, not only one towards another, but unto God also: hence we say, that the constitution of the United States is a glorious standard, it is founded in wisdom, it is a heavenly banner.”<sup>4</sup>

The Constitution is to be defended by deference and courtesy toward others: the spirit of the thing is all.

## Militant Patriotism

Patriotism shows itself in times of crisis: “These are the times that try men’s souls!” is the refrain of the earliest purely patriotic odes—those of the Greek lyric poets, who describe the true patriot as one who stands shoulder to shoulder with his fellow citizens facing any odds. In this atmosphere of crisis, an attitude of defense and defiance naturally associates patriotism with the panoply of war. The classic trappings of patriotism have been inherited by the Western World along with the pageantry of chivalry from the ceaselessly warring tribes of the steppes of Asia. The flag is the bright rallying point that can be seen for miles by the mounted hordes on the open plains, where the trumpet’s message and the arrow’s flight carry unhindered for great distances. In jungle and forest it is another story, but the formal symbols of European patriotism belong to “the World of the Jaredites,” the polarized world of host against host on the darkling plain, of Shiz versus Coriantumr. But does the true patriot destroy his people in his own interests as that previous pair did? Under chivalry the essence of patriotism was to support one’s liege lord, who enriched one with a share of his ceaseless looting. There are no more touching stories of loyalty than are found in the literature of the Heroic Ages. Yet Roland, Beowulf, Blondel, etc., stand out precisely because they were those rare souls who remained true while others ran for cover.

There is something wrong with this patriotism, which is based on conflict. As Froissart tells us forcibly, under chivalry the only way to prove one’s nobility was by fighting somebody. The tradition survives, and to this day there are many whose patriotism is not a widening but a contracting circle, recalling the defensive-aggressive posture of the Roman *trux et minax* (dour and threatening), the walled towns and castles of the Middle Ages, the family shelter of the Jaredites in which “every man did cleave unto that which was his own; ... and every man kept the hilt of his sword in his right hand, in the defence of his property and his own life and of his wives and children” (Ether 14:2), and finally, the narrowest circle of all, with every man “walk[ing] in his own way,” seeking his own interests amid the rich offerings of Babylon (see D&C 1:16). The passion for security ends in total insecurity, with the would-be patriot fancying himself as a lone frontiersman, facing the world with his long rifle, his keen eyes searching the horizon for enemies and finding them everywhere; until one day as he draws his circle even smaller, we find him coolly keeping his next-door neighbor and fellow countrymen in

the sights of his trusty .22, lest the latter make a suspicious move in the direction of his two-years' supply. Can that be patriotism? Yet the sincerity of such people cannot be doubted, and Brigham Young with characteristic insight diagnoses the nature of their condition:

An individual ... with [an] abhorrence of evil [joins the Church]. ... He sets himself upon the watch to detect the failings of others, deeming that he is doing God a service in being so employed [for God and Country], and thus is he decoyed into the occupation of the great master of evil, to be the accuser of the brethren. And during the time thus occupied by him, he considers himself actuated by the purest of motives, arising from a detestation of sin. ... Yet mark the subtlety of Satan in thus leading men into a false position. Such a course, in the first place, probably arose from the purest of motives, and perhaps the individual was instrumental in rectifying some error; he feels a satisfaction for having done so, his self-esteem is gratified, and ere he is aware, he is seeking for another opportunity of doing the same, ... continually set[ting] himself up as being capable of sitting in judgment upon others, and of rectifying by his own ability the affairs of the kingdom of God.<sup>5</sup>

There is ample reason for being suspicious if one is so inclined, for "We do live in a devilish and wicked world where men busy themselves in watching for iniquity."<sup>6</sup> But need we join the watchers? "It is the doctrine of the devil to retard the human mind, and hinder our progress, by filling us with self-righteousness [Love it or leave it]. ... We are full of selfishness; the devil flatters us that we are very righteous, when we are feeding on the faults of others. ... Away with self-righteousness!"<sup>7</sup> Patriotism of this type was the principal weapon used against the Prophet and the Saints; the stock charge against them was treason—they were a danger to America. What was behind it? Brigham knew: "I wish this fact to sink into your hearts, that when men or women have doubts, they also have fear; and when they have fear, they are in danger of what? Of themselves. Want of confidence is the parent of moral imbecility and intellectual weakness."<sup>8</sup>

### Stereotyped Patriotism

Without being so grim, there is a stereotyped patriotism into which the less truculent easily subside. For most people, patriotism is a matter of forms and ceremonies. How far can we externalize a noble emotion? Like charity, it vaunteth not itself; the true patriot does not covet medals and badges to be seen of men, fearful lest his heroism go unrecognized and unrewarded. The classic display of stereotyped patriotism was the bowing down of the mighty host to the King's image in the Plain of Dura, while the bands played and the banners flew. But Daniel's three friends would not go along; though they were the King's most valued and trusty advisers and bowed down to his *person* every day, they drew the line at bowing to his image, a mere symbol. They rebelled, like Cordelia who retched at the superloyalist orations of her sisters, and protested, "I cannot heave / My heart into my mouth."<sup>9</sup> Daniel was not thrown to the lions because of his religion but because of a superpatriotic law passed by scheming officials who seemed to flatter the King while they betrayed him. Indeed the religious martyrs who died on the stake and the scaffold during the Reformation were executed not for their religion but on technical charges of treason to King and country—always the most convenient weapon for removing one's enemies great and small.

Clichés and heroics can lead to disastrous excesses. The young heroes Hippias and Aristogeiton murdered a tyrant of Athens and lost their own lives in the operation—they became forever after the perfect, nay, romantic, models of ancient patriotism. Result: a rash of terrorism in which no public official was safe from the assassin's knife. The tradition still reverberates in the Middle East, where millions ecstatically hail acts of the most brutal, cowardly, and underhanded terrorism as patriotism of the highest and holiest order. But patriotism, being a state of mind, cannot be equated to any specific pattern of behavior. "Aid and comfort to the enemy?" Every foolish thing we do gives aid and comfort to the enemy, but does that make us all traitors? Only a mind reader could discern the quality of another's patriotism, for which reason we are commanded, "Man shall not smite, neither shall he judge" (Mormon 8:20).

While military action sometimes demands of the patriot a high order of courage, we must not forget that patriotism requires at least all four of the Platonic virtues, and valor is only one of them. The one most likely to be overlooked and actually the most demanding of these virtues in the patriot is moderation—restraint and self-control: "We shall go on from victory to victory, and from conquest to conquest; *our* evil passions will be subdued, *our* prejudices depart; we shall find no room in our bosoms for hatred."<sup>10</sup> It is those who "reject milder counsels" who bring "death and sorrow upon the Church";<sup>11</sup> it is "the labors of fanatics" that make things hang by a thread;<sup>12</sup> the greatest danger to Church and State, according to the prophets, will come from the extremists.<sup>13</sup> "Some of the Elders would much rather fight for their religion than live it. If any one thinks to get into the kingdom by fighting, ... they will find themselves mistaken."<sup>14</sup> The worst disservice one can do to any country is to involve it in war, if we would follow the prince of military analysts, Karl von Clausewitz; for, he explains, "There is no other human activity that stands in such constant and universal contact with chance as does war"<sup>15</sup>—there is no guarantee whatever that superior fire-power will win; all that we can be sure of is that there will be waste and destruction, and the greater the victory, the greater the destruction on *both* sides.<sup>16</sup> But victory itself, says Clausewitz, is a completely illusory concept, being purely tactical (local and temporary) and never strategic.<sup>17</sup> The history of the Church illustrates the point—it is a long series of tactical setbacks and strategic gains made possible by the remarkable self-control and moderation exhibited by the Saints in the face of the most determined provocation. Clausewitz concludes that war is an act of moral and mental bankruptcy of those who have no other resources: it is the devil's "own dominion" (D&C 1:35).

And here we have perhaps the worst abuse of patriotism. While "enthusiasm for the cause ... does *not* constitute a necessary part of ... the military virtue of an army"<sup>18</sup> for officers, according to Clausewitz, it is indispensable for the "lower ranks." For "in the great combats ... there is usually no hostile feeling of individual against individual," so that the only way they can be induced to shed each other's blood is by cultivating "national hatred, which ... becomes a more or less powerful substitute for personal hostility of individuals."<sup>19</sup> The story of the Nephites and Jaredites is a moving demonstration of this principle at work, and of the horrible consequences to which it leads. Some may protest that Moroni under his title of liberty is a patriot exterminating conscientious objectors. But what did he do? He dispatched only a few Amalekites—a coalition of the very rich, the royalists, ambitious judges, those "who professed the blood of nobility"

(Alma 51:21), and some of the misguided members of the Church, all armed to the teeth for military action *against* the government (Alma 46:35,1–7; 45:23–24). On the other hand, Mormon, that greatest of patriots, “utterly refused to go up against mine enemies” in an unjust war (cf. Mormon 3:11–16). “I have been afraid to ask God to kill my enemies,” said Joseph Smith, “lest some of them should, peradventure, repent.”<sup>20</sup>

### The Self-Serving Patriot

The ancient king was the “gift-giver,” who ruled by virtue of being able with his followers to grab and distribute more wealth than other men. He was thus the “Cyning,” the man of ability, and as your liege lord who made you rich, he commanded all your loyalty and devotion—as long as he could pay. Thus an economic motive has not been alien to the concept of patriotism since the Age of Fable; *Ubi panis ibi patria*, said the Romans—you are loyal to whatever country feeds you. In a superb demonstration of religious and patriotic zeal (and remember that the ancient state was sacral, with the Ring as God on earth, so that to be pious was to be patriotic—God and country were inseparable), the Ephesians chanted “Great is Diana of the Ephesians” for two hours on end (cf. Acts 19:34), but Paul is good enough to tell us what was really behind it—the silver business (Acts 19:24–25). (One thinks of other silver businesses operating under the glorious name of the Constitution.) Cecil Rhodes was so great a patriot that he actually had a country named after him, and his motto was “Philanthropy plus five percent!” Is that so bad, he asks? And yet there is something disturbing about the five per cent.

We can never feel quite right about the commercializing of sacred things, including Christmas and the Flag, yet that is the sort of thing that really pays off. “Yes,” says Haley the slaveholder in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, “I consider religion a valeyable thing in a nigger, when it’s the genuine article, and no mistake,” for Haley “knew the price of everything,” and was quite sincere about it. Since the days of Nimrod, ambitious men have known that patriotism of *others* can be a gold-mine. Was there ever a more fervent American than Daddy Warbucks, or more stirring appeals to national sentiment than the advertising of those industries which loudly proclaim their self-sacrificing heroism in converting to wartime economy (with unlimited profits to themselves), or who describe their systematic looting of the most valuable and available of our national resources as a valiant conquest of the wilderness in the manner of the brave pioneers? Today the knack of getting rich by enlisting the willingness of others to make patriotic sacrifices, once a well-kept secret, is becoming common knowledge as we make increasingly heavy drafts upon a rapidly dwindling capital of national virtue. Breaking the rules can be profitable only if others are willing to keep them, for which reason those who exploit patriotism are the sincerest of its advocates—they would be nowhere without it. The idealistic youngster who volunteers for a dangerous mission in war goes out into the dark with the chorus of “So long, sucker!” ringing in his ears. He is the indispensable fall guy without whose heroism the rest would never get home to show their decorations.

“O what a skillful *argumentatrix* self-interest is!” cries Tertullian.<sup>21</sup> With what practiced skill it would convince us that the acquisition of private wealth is a patriotic duty, relieving the nation of the cost of one’s upkeep while exercising that independence of mind which the Constitution fosters. True enough, as long as we provide for our wants, which are few—“having food and raiment let us be therewith content” (1 Timothy

6:8); however, beyond that point the economy is reversed, with the individual taking as much as he possibly can and giving as little as he can (this is known as “maximizing profits”), and thus becoming a burden on the government, which he relies on to assist and protect him in the process. The patriot is Plato’s hero, one who can be trusted to do the right thing even with the ring of Gyges, which makes the wearer invisible; no rule or official puts restraints on his freedom of speech, press, or assembly, in appreciation of which he knows how to restrain himself from crowding the freedom of others. Everyone is perfectly free to eat twenty meals a day and wear twenty suits—why don’t those do so who can afford it? Is it any more sensible or moral to acquire unlimited wealth—a hundred or a thousand times more than one needs for subsistence—especially since money more than anything else empowers one to infringe on the liberty of others? The genius of the Constitution is not that it guarantees every man a chance to “succeed,” as we are often told (has there ever been a government under which clever, determined, and unscrupulous men could not get to the top?), but that it gives the same inviolable rights and immunities to rich and poor alike, the only qualification for their enjoyment being their humanity—they are *human* rights pure and simple; because it “guarantees to all ... *equal*, coherent, and infeasible rights,” says the Prophet Joseph; “... *hence* we say, that the Constitution of the United States is a glorious standard.”<sup>22</sup> It is the human appeal, not the fiscal, that inspired the Prophet’s patriotism.

### Unlimited Trust

It is all very well to be a trusting soul who believes in the integrity of others, but isn’t that both foolish and dangerous in the real world, human nature being what it is? You never know what some people may be up to; is it safe to leave people alone and unsupervised in their kitchens? How do you know they are not busy making bombs? Answer: You don’t. You simply have to trust them—a risky proposition, but worth the price: “Rather spare ten iniquitous among you,” said Joseph Smith, “than condemn one innocent one.”<sup>23</sup> And what is the alternative? Total surveillance—but that is possible only in a Soviet prison. But is the only alternative to *that* total liberty? What else? “Every man has a natural, and, in our country, a constitutional right to be a false prophet, as well as a true prophet.”<sup>24</sup> But a false prophet can do great mischief; does God approve of false prophets? Not of their behavior but of their liberty. He has commanded all men to worship him (Moses 7:33), but by his order, “If a man desired to serve God, it was his privilege; ... but if he did not believe in him there was no law to punish him,” for to pressure him into serving God would be “strictly contrary to the commands of God” (Alma 30:7, 9). “Men must not be constrained against their will to obey the will of God,” said President Joseph F. Smith. “They must obey it because they know it to be right, because they desire to do it, and because it is their pleasure to do it.”<sup>25</sup> To use the name of God to reinforce patriotism or to use patriotism in the interest of both is an abuse of both religion and patriotism; it is “strictly contrary to the commands of God” (Alma 30:7), to say nothing of the Constitution.

The cornerstone of all coexistence, as Brigham Young often reminded the Saints, is confidence, trust: “Wickedness has submerged the world, and confidence and good faith have fled.”<sup>26</sup> A hundred years ago he could say, “The kings on their thrones have to pay for their positions, for they cannot trust themselves in the hands of their attendants, without bribery. Only the semblance of honour, integrity, and confidence are to be found in the

world.”<sup>27</sup> Was he right? Where are those thrones today? The corridors of history are haunted by the ghosts of kings, magistrates, judges, rulers, and presidents who sought security in suspicion, regimentation, intimidation, surveillance, and coercion. The man who sends the leader of the opposition to the block or the firing-squad on Monday, sends his own chief counsellor or brother-in-law on Wednesday, and ends up there himself on Friday. Trust is indivisible. You cannot trust some and mistrust others without constantly rearranging the schedule. The Roman grandee quickly learned that the loyal retainer who murdered his rival one day would just as cheerfully murder him the next. As Joseph Smith said, if you distrust A you will distrust B. If you lie to one man you will lie to another; “the same principle which would trample upon the rights of Latter-day Saints would trample upon the rights of the Roman Catholics, or of any other denomination who may be unpopular and too weak to defend themselves.”<sup>28</sup> The Constitution is a bulwark against precisely this type of patriotism.

Granted that we must have trust, the question still remains, how can we be trusting when “he that will war the true Christian warfare against the corruptions of these last days will have wicked men and angels of devils, and all the infernal powers of darkness continually arrayed against him”?<sup>29</sup> Well, for one thing, we do *not* fight fire with fire: “Some pleaded our suffering from persecution and said they were justified in stealing from our enemies because *they* had robbed *us*, but such a course tends to destroy the kingdom of God”<sup>30</sup>—which is just what the enemy wants. No, we can afford the luxury of trusting our fellow man, only because we trust in God, who has assured us that if others let us down, he will make it up to us. Mormon denounced the patriotic fervor of the Nephites, resolved to “go up unto their enemies to battle, and avenge themselves of the blood of their brethren” (Mormon 3:14). What nobler motive? But God absolutely forbids it (Mormon 3:15). He refuses to accept it: when the inhabitants of the Promised Land seek blood and revenge for whatever reason, they must perish like the Jaredites and Nephites before them (Moroni 9:23). As for the wicked enemy, “Behold, the judgments of God will overtake the wicked; and it is *by the wicked* that the wicked are punished” (Mormon 4:5).

### The World Patriot

The Founding Fathers were convinced that their liberal teachings were for the benefit of all men, not only for their own times but for endless generations to come, ensuring the blessings of liberty not only to themselves but especially to their posterity, and not only to this land but eventually to the whole world. And indeed, throughout Europe the news of the Declaration of Independence was received by cheering crowds; great English lords refused commissions from their king to fight the Americans, and noblemen came from the Continent to give their active assistance to a cause which their own liege lords found abhorrent. Note the sweeping language of D&C 101:77–80:

The laws and constitution of the people ... I have suffered to be established, and should be maintained for the rights and protection of *all flesh*, according to just and holy principles; That *every man* may act ... according to the moral agency which I have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment. Therefore it is not right that *any* man should be in bondage one to another. And for this *purpose* have I established the Constitution of this

land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose.

“Every” and “all” are the key words:

We deem it a just principle, and it is one the force of which we believe ought to be considered by *every* individual, that all men are created equal, and that *all* have the privilege of thinking for themselves upon *all* matters relative to conscience.

Consequently, then, we are not disposed, had we the power, to deprive *any one* of exercising that free independence of mind which heaven has so graciously bestowed upon the *human family* as one of its choicest gifts.<sup>31</sup>

Trust lies at the root of everything. It is not for us to monitor the freedom of others: “Those who are valiant and inspired with the true independence of heaven ... will go forth boldly in the service of their God, *leaving others to do as they please*, determined to do right, *though* all mankind besides should take the opposite course.”<sup>32</sup> And so the great-hearted Joseph: “It is a love of liberty which inspires my soul—civil and religious liberty to the *whole of the human race*. ... I will lift them up, and in their own way too, if I cannot persuade them my way is better; and *I will not seek to compel any man* to believe as I do.”<sup>33</sup>

The principles of civil and religious liberty enunciated in the Constitution and now embodied in the constitutions of most nations carried recognition of man’s free agency to a point which was considered radically dangerous at the time; but without them the Church could never have been restored to earth; they are the franchise of the Saints. In any other country they might have found less persecution (“The inhumanity and murderous disposition of this people! ... cannot be found among the nations where kings and tyrants are enthroned”<sup>34</sup>), but in no other country would their actions be beyond the reach of all legal persecutions. “It was in this government, formed by men inspired of God, although at the time they knew it not, ... that the Lord sent forth His angel to reveal the truths of heaven as in times past.”<sup>35</sup> “Could that book [of Mormon] have been brought forth and published to the world under any other government but the Government of the United States? No.”<sup>36</sup> No people ever clung to the Constitution with greater fervor than the Latter-day Saints; they could not afford to do otherwise, and they knew it. They were convinced that they were “the only people who know the worth of the Constitution.”<sup>37</sup> An official statement issued in Nauvoo at the height of crisis illustrates that moderation and restraint which proved their unswerving patriotism and the sublime confidence in God which made it possible:

To show our loyalty to the institutions of our county and preserve peace in the county, as a people, we pledged ourselves to ... abide the decisions of the court, not taking vengeance into our own hands [the mob was at the time mortally afraid of the Mormons] ... or commencing prosecutions ... [which] would be construed into ... a desire to pick a quarrel on our part, which we were and still are determined to avoid, even every appearance of evil. ... We are decidedly for peace, and we ever have been.<sup>38</sup>

Such is the patriotism that heals. It was because they trusted in their Heavenly Father that these people could withstand the overpowering temptations to fight, which their enemies’ cunning placed in their way: “The plan of raising a battalion to march to California by a call from the War Department was devised with a view to the total overthrow of this kingdom.”<sup>39</sup> “I saw the whole

plan concocted as plain as I saw the faces then before me, and I felt within myself that my faith in God would outgeneral the wickedness of our enemies. Away went the battalion and the sword fell on the other side; if they had not gone, we would not have been in the valley now.”<sup>40</sup> Furthermore they realized that the Constitution, like the gospel, left the doors open to expansion in all directions:

The signers of the Declaration of Independence and the framers of the Constitution were inspired men from on high to do that work. But was that which was given to them perfect, not admitting of any addition whatever? No. . . . They laid the foundation, and it was for after generations to rear the superstructure upon it. It is a progressive—a gradual work.<sup>41</sup>

So also Joseph Smith: “The Constitution is not a law unto us, but it makes provision for us whereby we can make laws.”<sup>42</sup> The Latter-day Saints are in no position to despise the institutions of men but must recognize them as scaffolding.<sup>43</sup> For not only do those institutions embrace eternal principles, but the Saints themselves are still far from rising above them: “You hear men and women talk about living and abiding a celestial law, when they do not so much as know what it is, and are not prepared to receive it. . . . When can you abide a celestial law? When you become a celestial being, and never until then.”<sup>44</sup> Meantime, the Constitution, like the gospel, goes on opening doors. “I expect to see the day,” said Brigham, “when the Elders of Israel will protect and sustain civil and religious liberty . . . abroad *in connection with the Gospel* for the salvation of *all* nations.”<sup>45</sup> For “the cause of God is one common cause; . . . we are all members of one common body. . . . The advancement of the cause of God and the building up of Zion is as much one man’s business as another’s. . . . Party feelings, separate interests, exclusive designs should be lost sight of in the one common cause, in the interest of the whole.”<sup>46</sup>

Our thesis then is that patriotism identifies one’s interest with others in a common cause against outsiders; it is thus both inclusive and exclusive. But because it is a generous and spontaneous thing, it tends continually to expand, seeking to include ever greater numbers in its beneficent embrace. What makes it possible to risk extending unlimited credit to outsiders is faith in God. The difference between the inclusive and the exclusive types of patriotism may be best summed up in the words of Brigham Young:

Very closely allied to this party spirit is the national feeling that some exhibit. This national feeling is another feature of “Gentilism.” “Gentilism” breaks up the family of man, and divides them off into parties and nations, having contrary interests. “Mormonism,” on the other hand, . . . by drawing them from all nations . . . unites the family of man. . . . There are good and bad . . . qualities in all nations. . . . All real Saints, when they receive the Gospel, will readily relinquish party spirit and national feeling, and count such things as the distinctive ornaments of Satan’s kingdom.<sup>47</sup>

“Sustain those principles that do away with and destroy this feeling of nationality that is in the hearts of individuals.”<sup>48</sup> And the Lord himself lays down the law: “[I] have heard thy prayers concerning thy brethren. Be not partial towards them in love above many others, but . . . let thy love abound unto all men” (D&C 112:11).

\* Reprinted by permission from *American Heritage: A Syllabus for Social Science 100* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1977), 188–97.

1. *TPJS*, 326.
2. *TPJS*, 316.
3. *MS* 5:72 (emphasis added).
4. *MS* 5:72.
5. *MS* 6:165–66.
6. *TPJS*, 315.
7. *TPJS*, 241.
8. *JD* 10:20.
9. William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, act I, scene i, lines 93–94.
10. *TPJS*, 179 (emphasis added).
11. *TPJS*, 136.
12. *MS* 25:261.
13. Cf. *MS* 39:263.
14. *MS* 33:433.
15. Karl von Clausewitz, *War, Politics, and Power*, tr. and ed. Edward M. Collins (Chicago: Gateway, 1967), 79; cf. 117.
16. *Ibid.*, 108; cf. 96.
17. *Ibid.*, 70–72.
18. *Ibid.*, 182 (emphasis added).
19. *Ibid.*, 151.
20. *TPJS*, 340.
21. Tertullian, *De Spectaculis* II, 16.
22. *TPJS*, 147 (emphasis added).
23. *TPJS*, 239.
24. *TPJS*, 44.
25. Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1973), 65.
26. *JD* 11:256.
27. *JD* 9:316.
28. *TPJS*, 313.
29. *TPJS*, 259.
30. Elden J. Watson, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1846–1847* (Salt Lake City: Watson, 1971), 131–32 (4 December 1846; emphasis added).
31. *TPJS*, 49 (emphasis added).
32. *JD* 1:312 (emphasis added).
33. *TPJS*, 313 (emphasis added).
34. *TPJS*, 131.
35. *JD* 2:170–71.
36. *JD* 8:67.
37. *JD* 5:211.
38. *HC* 7:415–16.
39. *JH* (1 October 1848).
40. *JH* (1 October 1848).
41. *JD* 7:14.
42. *TPJS*, 279.
43. *WJS*, 62.
44. *JD* 7:142–43.
45. *JD* 11:262–63 (emphasis added).
46. *TPJS*, 231.
47. *MS* 16:210.
48. *MS* 31:572.