

# The First Presidency Statement on MX in Perspective

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On 5 May 1981 the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints issued a statement on basing of the MX missile.<sup>1</sup> Although it took many people by surprise and simultaneously evoked widespread national criticism and praise, the statement was neither considered hastily nor did it lack precedent. Since the earliest days of the Restoration, Church leaders have exercised their rights and responsibilities in speaking out consistently on the moral issues of war, arms, and peace. Their persistent pronouncements, consonant with Christ's teachings, have always demonstrated deep, spiritual concern for mankind.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of love and peace. While on the earth, the Savior pleaded with mankind to preserve peace, making it clear that contention among men or nations arises from the rejection of his teachings. He indicated that peace and happiness, yearned for by man, will come about only when humanity follows the teachings and principles embodied in the gospel. Apostle John A. Widtsoe once said, "There is no other way."<sup>2</sup> The gospel of peace has been preserved and promulgated in this dispensation by the First Presidency and other Church authorities,<sup>3</sup> who have explicated how the gospel comprises the solutions to the fundamental causes of conflict and disharmony.

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<sup>1</sup>"First Presidency Statement on Basing of the MX Missile," The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 5 May 1981. Reprinted in the *Ensign* 11 (June 1981): 76.

<sup>2</sup>John A. Widtsoe, "Is War Ever Justified?" *Improvement Era* 55 (July 1952): 502.

<sup>3</sup>Wilford Woodruff said, "The Lord will never permit me or any other man who stands as president of the Church to lead you astray" (G. Homer Durham, ed., *The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969], pp. 212-13). Marion G. Romney said of the First Presidency, "What they say as a presidency is what the Lord would say if he were here in person . . . and it is scripture" ("Thus Saith the Lord," in Conference Report, April 1945, p. 90). Joseph Fielding Smith said, "Neither the President of the Church, nor the First Presidency, nor the united voice of the First Presidency and the Twelve will ever lead the Saints astray or send forth counsel to the world that is contrary to the mind and will of the Lord" ("Eternal Keys and the Right to Preside," *Ensign* 2 [July 1972]: 88).

The MX statement is another historically important link in a chain of long-standing Church declarations on arms, defense, and the general issue of war in all its stages. In order for one to understand better its importance, the First Presidency's MX message must be placed in a historical context with similar Church authority statements.

“RENOUNCE WAR AND PROCLAIM PEACE”

The renunciation of the idea that belligerency is justification to reconcile disputes and the proclamation of the belief that peace will be attained only through adherence to gospel principles have proven the nexus of nearly all Church pronouncements on war and peace since the Church's organization in 1830. During periods of international tensions, Church leaders have urged long-suffering, restraint and negotiation, while delineating the limitations and conditions whereby the righteous are justified to wage war. They have explicated also fundamental causes of war.

Struggling through a period of mob violence and consequent dejection at Kirtland, Ohio, in 1833, the Prophet Joseph Smith received and recorded a revelation to “renounce war and proclaim peace” (D&C 98:16). The Lord also indicated that persecution and even physical abuse should be endured patiently, with resultant exponential blessings, to a point wherein the righteous use of force is justified. The Lord said that before he would give a commandment to justify battle against one's enemies that a “standard of peace” should be lifted several times to those who would fight his own, and then “the Lord would fight their battles” (see D&C 98:23–44). Immediate retaliation or revenge exonerates the original injustice. Only under such conditions as specified in this revelation can war be justified.

Two instances characterize Joseph Smith's faithful resolve during those troubled times. On one occasion he wrote that a mob was “armed with weapons of war, . . . whereupon the Elders, led by the Spirit of God . . . [to] stop the effusion of blood, entered into a treaty with the mob, to leave the county within a certain time.”<sup>4</sup> A few years later, a letter to the Brethren in Missouri from the Prophet and his counselors said, “We advise that you be not the first aggressors. . . . If the people will let you, dispose of your property, settle your affairs and go in peace. You have thus far had an asylum,

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<sup>4</sup>Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vols., 2d ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1932–1951), 1:394.

and now seek another, as God may direct. . . . Preserve peace with all men . . . show yourselves men of God.”<sup>5</sup>

President Brigham Young, distressed by the senseless waste in the Civil War, said that each side was destroying the other, “all to satiate their unhallowed and hellish appetite for blood,”<sup>6</sup> and he later reaffirmed that peace would come only when the people turned to God and ceased “to do wickedly.”<sup>7</sup> After the war, he observed, “Of one thing I am sure: God never institutes war; God is not the author of confusion or of war; they are the results of the acts of the children of men. Confusion and war necessarily come as the results of the foolish acts and policy of men; but they do not come because God desires they should come.”<sup>8</sup>

In 1898 and again at the outbreak of World War I, the First Presidency made similar statements renouncing war and proclaiming peace through conformity to Christ’s standards.<sup>9</sup>

President Heber J. Grant, during World War I, requested the *Improvement Era*, a Church publication, to publish several articles on war to express his sentiments as he felt they would “be of great value to the youth of Israel who are trying to follow the teachings of the Prince of Peace.” President Grant said he was grateful to the Lord for the impressions these stories made upon him in his youth because they “gave me a loathing and a horror of war which has never left me.”<sup>10</sup> Apostle James E. Talmage said this war was Lucifer’s belated attempt to renew the issue of enforcing unrighteous domain and despotism upon mankind.<sup>11</sup> George Albert Smith, as an Apostle, agreed, stating the adversary was whispering, “This is the thing to do.”<sup>12</sup>

In 1941 President David O. McKay referred to the rejection of Christ’s gospel of love, which brought on the war in 1914 and the subsequent smouldering hatred in German hearts against other nations for imposing perceived “unjust terms of peace,” as the root cause of World War II.<sup>13</sup> Throughout World War II, the First

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 2:455. On another occasion the Prophet passed near a wooded area where he “felt much depressed in spirit,” for “there had been a great deal of bloodshed in that place. . . . [He remarked that] whenever a man of God is in a place where many have been killed, he will feel lonesome and unpleasant, and his spirits will sink” (Ibid., 2:66).

<sup>6</sup>*Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter Day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854–1886), 10:256.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 10:295.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 13:149.

<sup>9</sup>James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1975): 3:298–99; 5:52.

<sup>10</sup>“War and Peace,” *Improvement Era* 18 (July 1915): 777.

<sup>11</sup>James E. Talmage, “‘Mormonism’ and the War,” *Improvement Era* 21 (October 1918): 1030.

<sup>12</sup>George Albert Smith, in Conference Report, April 1918, p. 41.

<sup>13</sup>David O. McKay, “Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled,” *Improvement Era* 44 (December 1941): pp. 715, 764.

Presidency reiterated formally the admonishment to “renounce war.”<sup>14</sup> They recognized that the Saints’ only course of action was to “support that government to which they hold allegiance” and to pray that God would turn their leaders to peace, for “God is not pleased either with war, or with the wickedness which always heralds it.”<sup>15</sup> President McKay told Church members that they could not perform any single act to eradicate global hate and war but that they could individually promote peace by living the gospel. He explained the controversy between “interventionists” and “isolationists,” and their different approaches to terminate war, saying, “My message . . . today is to keep hate and enmity out of the controversy.”<sup>16</sup>

During the period from Korea to pre-Vietnam, a number of Church leaders explained that the causes of war were men’s desires for personal power,<sup>17</sup> their hatred and their hunger for revenge,<sup>18</sup> their disobedience of the first two commandments,<sup>19</sup> their desire to rule by force and not by love,<sup>20</sup> and their “world-wide lack of trust,” making it possible to “change the ‘cold war’ into a contest of actual physical war.”<sup>21</sup> Apostle Ezra Taft Benson said that peace “can come only by following the teachings and the example of the Prince of Peace.”<sup>22</sup>

During the Vietnam era, Apostle Boyd K. Packer reviewed the admonition to “renounce war and proclaim peace,” calling war “a heinous, hideous, ugly thing!”<sup>23</sup> He referred to the 1942 First Presidency statement on war, stating: “The Church is and must be against war. . . . It cannot regard war as a righteous means of settling international disputes; these should and could be settled—the nations agreeing—by peaceful negotiations and adjustments.”<sup>24</sup> On Memorial Day in 1971, President Harold B. Lee stated that the 1942 First Presidency statement was just as valid in our time as it was then. He concluded, “The true Christian’s position on war is clearly set

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<sup>14</sup>See James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6:116–19, 139, 140–41, 148–63 (passim), 182–83, 189, 216–17, and 219.

<sup>15</sup>“To a World at War,” *Improvement Era* 43 (December 1940): 712, from General Conference, 4 October 1940.

<sup>16</sup>McKay, “Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled,” p. 764. Elder Stephen L Richards stated, “When . . . men’s minds are enlightened, . . . [they will] not permit themselves to be poisoned by the most deadly virus in all the world—hate and enmity. Let us never forget that love is ordained as the saving grace for all mankind.” (Stephen L Richards, *The Church in War and Peace* [Independence, Mo.: Zion’s Printing and Publishing Co., 1943], p. 181.)

<sup>17</sup>Widtsoe, “Is War Ever Justified?” p. 503.

<sup>18</sup>Spencer W. Kimball, “To You . . . Our Kinsmen,” *Improvement Era* 62 (December 1959): 939.

<sup>19</sup>Joseph Fielding Smith, “War and the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” *Improvement Era* 63 (January 1960): 16.

<sup>20</sup>David O. McKay, “For a Better World,” *Improvement Era* 63 (October 1960): 702.

<sup>21</sup>Alvin R. Dyer, *The Fallacy* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964), p. 85.

<sup>22</sup>Ezra Taft Benson, “A World Message,” *Improvement Era* 64 (June 1961): 433.

<sup>23</sup>Boyd K. Packer, “The Member and the Military,” *Improvement Era* 71 (June 1968): 58.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 60; “Message of the First Presidency,” *Improvement Era* 45 (May 1932): 348.

forth by a declaration in which the Lord says, ‘Therefore, renounce war and proclaim peace.’ ’’<sup>25</sup>

#### SUBJECTION TO PRESIDENTS AND KINGS

The twelfth article of faith states LDS belief in being obedient and subject to civil authority.<sup>26</sup> The Church also believes “in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land” (D&C 98:6); the Lord will hold “men accountable for their acts in relation” to their civil government (D&C 134:1). In light of the Savior’s teachings regarding warfare, military service is necessarily an important, moral issue. In the past, where a formal “call to arms” was issued, Church authorities have urged members to serve their respective countries, if required.

In both the Mexican–American War (1846) and the Spanish–American War (1898), when the United States government asked for volunteers, the First Presidency gave its consent to those Mormons who desired to serve.<sup>27</sup> During World War I, President Joseph F. Smith urged those who would serve to remain “men of honor,” without a “blood-thirsty desire to kill and to destroy.”<sup>28</sup> After the war, Utah’s “brave sons” were praised for their “patriotic devotion.”<sup>29</sup> During World War II, the First Presidency praised Church members for their generous, charitable contributions in support of the government’s war efforts.<sup>30</sup> A formal, constitutional call to armed service was felt by Church leaders to be an obligation of the “highest civic duty” and was acceptable as long as men remained “men of honor.”<sup>31</sup> Elder Packer, after quoting the previous statement, added, “A man does not necessarily have to volunteer.” It was hoped that the Church’s youth would have the “strengthening, stabilizing development of missionary service” and schooling before they entered, “if indeed they are required to do so at all.”<sup>32</sup> This stand remained unaltered through the Korean and Vietnam conflicts.

Although the “honorable” soldier who wages war in defense of his country and on behalf of his government is guiltless, nevertheless there is accountability for warfare. The First Presidency has said:

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<sup>25</sup>Harold B. Lee, “From the Valley of Despair to the Peaks of Hope,” *New Era* 1 (August 1971): 4 and 5.

<sup>26</sup>Joseph Smith, Jr., “The Articles of Faith of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” in *History of the Church*, 4:541.

<sup>27</sup>See James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 1:294–304; and 3:29, 298–99.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 5:52.

<sup>29</sup>“Special Notice,” James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 5:171; and James E. Talmage, “Mormonism and the War,” p. 1029.

<sup>30</sup>“The Church’s Part in Defense,” James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6:163–64.

<sup>31</sup>“Message of the First Presidency,” *Improvement Era* 45 (May 1942): 348–49.

<sup>32</sup>See Packer, “Member and the Military,” pp. 58–61; and Gordon B. Hinckley, “A Silver Thread in the Dark Tapestry of War,” *Improvement Era* 71 (June 1968): 48–50.

That sin, as Moroni of old said, is to the condemnation of those who “sit in their places of power in a state of thoughtless stupor,” those rulers in the world who in a frenzy of hate and lust for unrighteous power and dominion over their fellow men, put into motion eternal forces they do not comprehend and cannot control. God, in His own due time, will pass sentence upon them.<sup>33</sup>

#### “UNHOLY RULE OF FORCE”

Church leaders have warned that wartime activities and militarism should not affect postwar attitudes and behavior in working for peace, or war could break out again. Elder Widtsoe noted that “man’s unappeased greed” and selfishness cause war, and with its subsequent defeat, “greed is transmuted into hate,” and wars recur again. “Such is the ungodly, downward sequence.”<sup>34</sup> The First Presidency, disappointed with continuing European hostilities after World Wars I and II, said, “The sword has not been fully sheathed; the voice of suspicion and strife has not been entirely stilled.”<sup>35</sup>

Following World War II, nearly eighty percent of the American people supported a one-year “universal military training” program.<sup>36</sup> Opposing this proposition, the First Presidency warned, “The possession of great military power always breeds thirst for domination, for empire and for a rule by might not right. . . . By building a huge armed establishment, *we shall belie our protestations of peace and peaceful intent and force other nations to a like course of militarism.*”<sup>37</sup>

President J. Reuben Clark, a counselor to Church presidents, a brilliant statesman<sup>38</sup> and “spiritual leader,” said, “This is the unholy rule of force, the unholy rule that ‘might makes right.’ This is the rule that has lain behind every great empire.”<sup>39</sup> President McKay proposed that in order for peace to come the world “must supplant the rule of force by the rule of love.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>“The Church’s Part in Defense,” James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6:160–61.

<sup>34</sup>John A. Widtsoe, “Foundations of Peace,” *Improvement Era* 43 (February 1940): 125.

<sup>35</sup>James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 5:185.

<sup>36</sup>George H. Gallup, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935–1971*, 3 vols. (New York: Random House, 1972) 3:723–24.

<sup>37</sup>James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6:241–42. (Italics added.)

<sup>38</sup>James E. Talmage said J. Reuben Clark “possessed the brightest mind to ever leave Utah” (see *Brigham Young University Studies* 13 [Spring 1973]: 425). Marion G. Romney referred to President Clark’s spiritual greatness in his foreword to J. Reuben Clark, *Stand Fast by Our Constitution* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1962), pp. v–vii.

<sup>39</sup>J. Reuben Clark, Jr., “In Time of War,” *Improvement Era* 42 (November 1939): 657.

<sup>40</sup>McKay, “For a Better World,” p. 702. Elder Widtsoe said the weapons for fighting a “righteous war should be the teaching of truth and right and the exclusion of the unrighteous from association with the righteous. The bloody wars in which we have engaged on earth are really a type of murder unacceptable to the Lord of Heaven.” (“Is War Ever Justified?” p. 503).

Church leaders recognized that militarism, with its consequent propensity for war and enmity, is not a valid gospel approach to secure peace. Postwar behavior dictates the nonantagonistic pursuit of peaceful solutions. Recognizing that partisan rivalry and hard-line opposition to the post-World War I treaties and League of Nations threatened future peace, President Heber J. Grant said he regretted the utilization of the standard works by some to oppose the treaty, for such use had nearly polarized the Church.<sup>41</sup> He felt the pursuit of world peace should not be superseded by politics or other less important considerations.

#### “INSTRUMENTS OF DEATH”

Invariably arms are employed; their peacetime buildup encumbers men’s progress. Their use, both threatened and real, must be limited by moral constraints. This is especially true for nuclear weapons.

President Brigham Young said, while civil war loomed, “From the authority of all history, the deadly weapons now stored up and being manufactured will be used until the people are wasted away.”<sup>42</sup> Nations which manufacture “instruments of death” eventually use them. A year later he added, “A large share of the ingenuity of the world is taxed to invent weapons of war. What a set of fools!”<sup>43</sup> President Lorenzo Snow in 1901 urged world leaders to disband their armies and “turn their weapons of strife” into implements of industry.<sup>44</sup> In 1937, while Europe prepared again for war, the First Presidency warned the nations they were “sitting on a mountain of explosives accumulated in defiance of Christ’s teachings.”<sup>45</sup>

During World War II, the First Presidency noted that the war could no longer be settled peaceably (although they renewed their hopes for such a solution) but that it would end only with “superior armed forces, by increased number of swifter planes, by more shattering bombs and other weapons of destruction; but *Peace will be maintained only by nobler men and by more Christ-like nations.*”<sup>46</sup> In

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<sup>41</sup>Heber J. Grant, “The Treaty of Peace—Restoration of the Gospel,” *Improvement Era* 23 (December 1919): 109.

<sup>42</sup>*Journal of Discourses*, 8:157.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, 8:324.

<sup>44</sup>James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 3:334.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, 6:39. During this time, Elder Widtsoe said, “It is folly to build great armaments of steel, for defense or offense, and fail to build the mightier weapons that issue from obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of Peace. Warships, airships, or diplomacy may end a war, but warfare . . . will not cease until men obey His word, and seek unselfishly and in might to love one another.” (“Foundations of Peace,” p. 125.)

<sup>46</sup>James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6:183 and 189. (Italics in original.)

the post-World War II era, the attention of Church leaders to questions of nuclear warfare and development were most clearly articulated by President J. Reuben Clark, who saw nuclear weapons as part of the ongoing abandonment of humanizing principles:

We have been among the leaders in developing the great principles of the laws of war, that went to the humanizing of war, most of which went into the discard when we entered World War I, and most that were left went when we entered World War II. We had developed since the time of Grotius, the doctrines that tended to control and limit the destruction of noncombatants, old men, women, children. All that went by the board at Hiroshima.<sup>47</sup>

Nuclear weapons were considered “the greatest potential curse that man has yet known.”<sup>48</sup> None of the General Authorities of the Church during the 1960s and 1970s modified President Clark’s observations.

#### THE FIRST PRESIDENCY AND MX

Since the time Joseph Smith copied into his journal an article on the British–Chinese War and wrote, “Oh, the horrors of Christian warfare!” the Church has demonstrated consistency in opposing war and arms proliferation. Most recently, President Spencer W. Kimball said:

When enemies rise up, we commit vast resources to the fabrications of gods of stone and steel—ships, planes, missiles, fortifications— . . . When threatened, we become antienemy instead of pro-kingdom of God; we train a man in the art of war and call him a patriot, thus, in the manner of Satan’s counterfeit of true patriotism, perverting the Savior’s teachings.<sup>49</sup>

Since the proposed MX plan was announced, the First Presidency has twice denounced the nuclear arms race. Their 1980 Christmas message expressed dismay at growing international tensions and the “unrestricted building of arsenals of war, including huge and threatening nuclear weaponry.”<sup>50</sup> They expressed confidence in the

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<sup>47</sup>J. Reuben Clark, Jr., “Our Dwindling Sovereignty,” address delivered at the 4th Annual Pi Sigma Alpha Lecture at the Institute of Government, University of Utah, 13 February 1952, p. 22.

<sup>48</sup>As quoted in Edwin Firmage and Christopher Blakesly, “J. Reuben Clark, Jr., Law and International Order,” *BYU Studies* 13 (Spring 1973): 306n. The article contains many of Clark’s statements (pp. 273–346).

<sup>49</sup>Spencer W. Kimball, “The False Gods We Worship,” *Ensign* 6 (June 1976): 4. In 1900, Heber J. Grant said, “How natural it is for us to bow down and almost worship the warrior! But with humble and faithful men like the brethren referred to, a warrior, who is such not from a high sense of duty and patriotism, but simply from an ambition to be great in the eyes of his fellows, or to make a name for future generations . . . is a pigmy in comparison.” (“Humble Devotion vs. Military Glory,” *Improvement Era* 3 [February 1900]: 301–302.)

<sup>50</sup>“Christmas Message from the First Presidency,” *Church News, Deseret News*, 20 December 1980, p. 3.

negotiating process of conflict resolution, which could “save the world from a holocaust.” Their 1981 Easter message warned of increasing global tensions and the escalation of arms. They urged U.S. and other world leaders to resolve their differences through negotiation.<sup>51</sup>

The MX statement was issued after the Brethren had spent considerable effort examining the “secular” issues of the MX basing mode while reaching a “spiritual” consensus. This statement warned of the inevitable consequences of arms proliferation, even when defensive in intent. Its fundamental thrust, however, was concern over the physical, socio-economic, and human survival problems inherent in the current MX plan. The First Presidency stressed that it would be “ironic” to base these weapons of mass destruction in the same general area where the Church carries forth “the gospel of peace to the peoples of the earth.” They concluded:

With the most serious concern over the pressing moral question of possible nuclear conflict, we plead with our national leaders to marshal the genius of the nation to find *viable alternatives* which will secure at an earlier date and with fewer hazards the protection from possible enemy aggression, which is our common concern.<sup>52</sup>

The arms race is of intense concern to the Brethren, and they deplore nuclear weapons proliferation. They stress the dangers of MX to U.S. national security.<sup>53</sup> Placed in historical perspective, the First Presidency statement on MX clearly advocates an end to the arms race, urges reconsideration of alternatives (not necessarily alternative modes of MX), and emphasizes negotiation.

#### “VIABLE ALTERNATIVES”

A number of alternatives to MX can be conceived; these fall within three general areas. Each presupposes certain assumptions which the reader must consider. Each set of assumptions possesses its own unique prospects and problems.

The first area, embodied by the dictum “peace through strength,” includes all aspects of coercive persuasion. In the international environment “persuasion . . . long suffering . . . and love unfeigned” (see D&C 121:30–43) are not often mentioned. This area includes all forms of nuclear, nonnuclear, and conventional

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<sup>51</sup>“Easter Message—A Plea for Peace,” *Deseret News*, 18 April 1981, p. 3.

<sup>52</sup>“First Presidency Statement on Basing of the MX Missile,” p. 76. (Italics added.)

<sup>53</sup>Jerry Cahill, LDS church spokesman, Church Office Building, Salt Lake City, Utah, telephone conversations on 6, 13, and 27 May 1981.

deterrence, in addition to any nonmilitary compulsory modes of pressure.

The second area includes arms control and disarmament efforts. These seek to reduce through stability in the balance of power the chance of war. In earlier years, President J. Reuben Clark said, "We are being generously dosed with that sovereign narcotic, which designing militarists have in the past always administered to their peoples, the doctrine that to ensure peace we must maintain a great army and gigantic armaments."<sup>54</sup>

The third area, the gospel of peace, is best summarized in the context of this article by three statements. President McKay stated that "the most ominous threat to the peace of mankind . . . is not the probable misuse of the atomic bomb, but the dwindling in men's hearts of faith in God."<sup>55</sup> President Clark said, "You cannot bring the millennium by negotiating a treaty," but only by placing "the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the hearts of all mankind."<sup>56</sup> Marion G. Romney, as an Apostle, similarly remarked, "This is the way peace comes in this world. It can be obtained in no other way. The promised peace of our text emanates from Christ. He is the source of it. His spirit is the essence of it."<sup>57</sup> True and permanent global security can neither be purchased with force, nor can it be negotiated. It will come only in following Christ. Only obedience to gospel principles will resolve the fundamental causes of war and bring about true and permanent global security.

## CONCLUSION

As the Church expands, rolling forth "as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands . . . until it has filled the whole earth" (D&C 65:2; see also Daniel 2:34), so shall the eyes of an increasingly troubled world turn, searching for peace, a peace ultimately to be found only in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Church will emerge as the standard of Christ's gospel and will "stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world" (D&C 78:14). Individually, as citizens of Church and state and world, we must remember to

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<sup>54</sup>J. Reuben Clark, Jr., *Stand Fast by Our Constitution*, p. 71. He also referred to "the excess burden of armaments which is now bowing our backs to the breaking point" (Ibid., p. 131).

<sup>55</sup>David O. McKay, "Faith Triumphant," *Improvement Era* 50 (August 1947): 507.

<sup>56</sup>Clark, "Dangers of the Treaty Pointed Out," quoted in James B. Allen, "J. Reuben Clark, Jr., on American Sovereignty and International Organizations," *BYU Studies* 13 (Spring 1973): 353.

<sup>57</sup>Marion G. Romney, "Peace in This World," *Improvement Era* 70 (June 1967): 79.

keep hate and enmity out of the controversy. . . . [There is] no better way to bring about harmony . . . [and] peace in our country and in the world than for every man and woman first to eliminate from his or her heart the enemies of harmony and peace such as hatred, selfishness, greed, animosity; and envy.<sup>58</sup>

Certainly, the First Presidency had every right prophetically and historically to make this official statement on MX. That statement is but one more prophetic warning among many such warnings and admonitions. It is completely consistent in tone and message with all that the preceding prophets have said.

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<sup>58</sup>McKay, "Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled," p. 764.