

Recovery from Mormonism (RfM) discussion forum.

How Mormon General Authorities Are Paid (2 Parts)

Posted by: ^ ()
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(posted by Steve Benson, RfM, Jan. 2013)

The Money Machine Behind the Mormon Myth: How the LDS Church Has Paid Its Top Leaders While Lying About the Supposed "Lay Clergyness" of It All

Part 1

A RfM poster posed the question, "[Is] Thomas S. Monson . . . an employee (i.e. salary)?," then adds the following details about Monson's book deal earnings:

"Below is the info from the Library of Congress from one of Thomas S. Monson's book.

"As an author myself, I am aware that a 'work for hire' does not require an employer-employee relationship, but an 'employer for hire' on a copyright application often (not always) does.

"It's interesting to note that he doesn't hold the copyright, but TSCC [The So-Called Church] does through its IP arm. Typical book deals have the author holding the copyright, and they license it to the publishing house or whatever for a period of time.

"There are other books that Monson has written where he holds the copyright and Deseret Book published it, so he, like other GAs, probably still draws royalties from said books. But for this project below, it appears he was acting as an employee.

?Nothing earth-shattering here, but it was intriguing to me as I know this process from registering my own works with LOC.

"Type of Work: Text

Registration Number / Date: TX0005330861 / 2001-05-29

Title: Three gates to open / by Thomas S. Monson.

Description: 1 v.

Series: CES fireside for young adults

Copyright Claimant: Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

Date of Creation: 2001

Date of Publication: 2001-01-14

Authorship on Application: Corporation of the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, employer for hire."

("Thomas S. Monson is an employee (i.e. Salary)?," by poster "Oh Tommy Boy..." on "Recovery from Mormonism" bulletin board, 10 January 2013, at:

<http://exmormon.org/phorum/read.php?2,757272,757272#msg-757272>)

Below is a broader examination of the long history and recent practice of paid Mormon Church leaders in acquiring wages and other income through their “service” in behalf of LDS Inc. This bears paying attention to, as it is important to separate the myth peddled by the Mormon Church from the reality revealed by the research,

--General Authorities and Their Sources of Money--

The following is from "General Authority (GA) Salary, Stipends, Living Wages, Stock, Loan Payments, That Have Solid Sources"--which starts off with examples of foundational-fact-twisting fiction from the Mormon Church itself about money making its way into the hands of its upper echelon leadership:

“[Quote from Mormon Apostle Bruce R. McConkie]:

“The calling [to be a Mission President] is not a regular remunerative position, . . . The family involved gives of its time and energies with out salary, though there is a modest allowance for living expenses.”

(Bruce R. McConkie, 'Mormon Doctrine,' p. 914)

“[Quote from McConkie]:

“Because the Church has no professional clergy, it is administered at every level through LAY PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP, and officials other than the General Authorities contribute their time and talents without remuneration. . . . Because the General Authorities are obliged to leave their regular employment for full-time Church service, they receive a modest living allowance provided from income on Church investments.”

(McConkie, '(Mormon Doctrine,' p. 510, emphasis added)

“This is backed up by scripture:

“And if ye desire the glories of the kingdom, appoint ye my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and uphold him before me by the prayer of faith.

“And again, I say unto you, that if ye desire the mysteries of the kingdom, provide for him food and raiment, and whatsoever thing he needeth to accomplish the work wherewith I have commanded him.

("Doctrine & Covenants," 43:12-13)

“And also that bishops should receive a living wage:

“And the elders or high priests who are appointed to assist the bishop as counselors in all things, are to have their families supported out of the property which is consecrated to the bishop, for the good of the poor, and for other purposes, as before mentioned;

“Or they are to receive a just remuneration for all their services, either a stewardship or otherwise, as may be thought best or decided by the counselors and bishop.

"And the bishop, also, shall receive his support, or a just remuneration for all his services in the church. "

("Doctrine & Covenants," 42:71–73)

"Now, Thomas S. Monson has a small house still, to be sure, but:

"In the 'Salt Lake Tribune,' Dec. 8, 1988, we read:

"The \$1.2 million condominium at 40 N. State that is home to the president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will be exempt from property taxes, Salt Lake County commissioners ruled Tuesday.'

"This is also backed up by scripture:

"And it shall be for a house for boarding, a house that strangers may come from afar to lodge therein; therefore let it be a good house, worthy of all acceptations. . . .

"And now I say unto you, as pertaining to my boarding house which I have commanded you to build for the boarding of strangers, let it be built unto my name, and let my name be named upon it, and let my servant Joseph and his house have place therein, from generation to generation.'

("Doctrine & Covenants," 124: 23, 56)

"[Quote from Mormon Church leader Gordon B. Hinckley}:

"What of the Mormon clergy? . . . There is no paid or professional ministry. 39 general officers and the presidents of missions are given living allowances."

(Prophet Gordon B. Hinckley, "What of the Mormons?," p. 4)

"For several decades only the Patriarch had a set compensation, while other General Authorities depended on haphazard donations from the rank-and-file or ad hoc appropriations from general Church funds. In 1835 the Presiding Patriarch was authorized a salary of \$10 (\$200+ in today's currency) a week, plus expenses.

"Both the Presiding Patriarch and local stake patriarchs charged a fee. In the 1840s the fee was \$1 per patriarchal blessing at Nauvoo; by the end of the nineteenth century it had increased to \$2 per blessing. Joseph Smith, Sr., gave patriarchal blessings without payment of a fee, but would not record them. 'Uncle' John Smith commented that he "lived very poor ever since we left Kirtland Ohio" in January 1838 until January 1844. Then his nephew Joseph Smith ordained him a patriarch "through which office I obtained a comfortable living."

"In addition, patriarchs received fees for giving unrecorded blessings of healing to the sick. In fact, Apostle Francis M. Lyman commended Patriarch Elias Blackburn for "doing a great deal of good among the sick, without receiving very much pay for his services."

"Patriarchal blessing fees ended in 1902, although patriarchs were allowed to accept

unsolicited donations. Not until 1943 did church authorities prohibit patriarchs from accepting gratuities for giving blessings.

“So how much is a living allowance? . . .

“[Figures from] Canada, where finances for non-profits have to be reported:

“Compensation: In 2009, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Canada had 248 part-time workers who earned a total of \$1,807,140 for the collective. They also had 184 full-time workers who split a total of \$15,237,479, of those full-time workers, two of them made between \$80,000–\$119,999; six of them made between \$120,000–\$159,999; and two others made between \$160,000–\$199,999.

(“Registered Charity Information Return,” T30303 form, 2009, for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Canada, at: <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/ebsci/haip/srch/t3010form21-eng.action?b=1192237...>)

“The two who made between \$160k to \$199k were probably the regional authority Seventies in the area, although it is POSSIBLE that those are high tech jobs.

“Now the rumor that some GAs give back the living stipend started with Joseph F. Smith when Bishops no longer received wages. Back in the 1920’s and before the Bishops were paid a tenth of the total tithe, and Stake presidents one-fifth of the remaining tithe. But the Church cut that payment and as part of the cost-cutting measure, Joseph F. Smith said he would forgo his living allowance. He had over \$1.25 million. (sourced from Church Archives minutes of First Presidency meetings) . . .

“In 1884 Church president John Taylor limited bishops to 8% of tithing they collected (now primarily cash), while stake presidents got 2% of tithing collected by all the bishops of the stake. In 1888 Wilford Woodruff established set salaries for stake presidents and provided that a stake committee would apportion 10% of collected tithing between the bishops and the stake tithing clerk. At April 1896 General Conference, the First Presidency announced the end of salaries for local officers, in response to the decision of the temple meeting 'to not pay Salaries to any one but the Twelve.'”

(D. Michael Quinn, “Extensions of Power;” [for more on Mormon Church use of member tithing to pay General Authority living expenses, see the following also excerpted from Quinn, “Extension of Power,” Chapter 6, as found at]: “LDS Church History--A Topical Tour through LDS history. Current topic: The Life of George Albert Smith,” at: <http://lds-church-history.blogspot.com/2010/12/lds-history-summary.html>)

“In addition to this living stipend the Church has 14 (15 if you include the \$3 billion City Creek Mall) for-profit organizations:

“City Creek Mall:

(“City Creek Center,” at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_Creek_Center)

“The Prophet is automatically chairman of the board of all 14 corporations, with various apostles sitting on the boards of various corporations (Russel M. Nelson is only over one,

all the others are over two or more). They are paid as boards of directors both an amount in money as well as in stock.

"In addition to that, all of the Quorum of the Twelve's children get free educations at BYU:

("Mormons.talk: Friends Working Toward understanding")

"More information here:

("Finances of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints")

"In addition to all of this, the [Mormon] Church has paid General Authorities' personal loans:

". . . [O]n occasion Church presidents have personally benefited from Church finances by simply canceling their indebtedness to Church funds. On 23 April 1834 a revelation ended the Kirtland United Order and distributed its real estate assets among Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, Frederick G. Williams, Martin Harris, Newel K. Whitney and John Johnson. The revelation said, "It is my will that you shall pay all your debts" (D&C 104:78). However, Joseph Smith privately required Whitney to balance "in full without any value received." The \$1,151.31 Whitney had loaned to the prophet, as well as \$2,484.22 of the other men's debts to Whitney. Bishop Whitney had to personally absorb this loss "because Joseph said it must be done."

"The next two Church presidents did likewise. Three weeks before he died in August 1877, Brigham Young obtained a cancellation of his debts in Ogden, Utah, extending back to 1849. Despite the previously stated objections of his own counselor, John Taylor also persuaded the Quorum of Twelve Apostles in 1880 to allow him a \$10,000 claim for sugar machinery, which claim Brigham Young had refused since 1853." By contrast, Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, and Joseph F. Smith did not use their office as Church president to cancel their personal indebtedness, yet they allowed tithing funds to serve as a loan pool for prominent Mormons. In a sharply-worded report in 1911, the Church auditors noted:

"If certain members of the Church are entitled to borrow money for private ends, is this not a right of all members, for the same purpose? If this policy is admitted, would it not result in confusion, jealousy, loss and consequent wrong?" The committee observed that "the debtors frequently look upon their obligations as being due to a rich and indulgent relative, to be paid (if at all) at their own convenience." Among the debtors was Apostle Heber J. Grant for a "cash loan of \$34,000." In 1913 the committee renewed the subject of Church loans to individuals, and commented that "it is not within the purview of the Trustee-in-Trust to make advances of this kind . . . And any loans made on plain notes are legally uncollectible."

"It is important to recognize that General Authorities borrowed from the Church's general fund because their living allowances were insufficient to meet their needs. In 1910 Apostle Anthony W. Ivins recorded that the following members of the Twelve were in debt: Francis M. Lyman, George Albert Smith, Heber J. Grant, Rudger Clawson, Hyrum M. Smith, George F. Richards and David O. McKay. Grant was the most candid about his apostolic indebtedness: "A president of the stake begged and pleaded with me to quit

paying tithing. He said I did not owe any tithing until I got out of debt. Would not that have been a fine record for a man who now stands as president of the Church, not to have paid tithing for 32 years?"

(Quinn, "Extensions of Power," from Church Archives Notes [of] First Presidency)

(The above sourced as following website: "General Authority (GA) Salary, Stipends, Living Wages, Stock, Loan Payments, That Have Solid Sources," under "General Authority Pay," posted by "Mithryn," 1 February 2012, on "Exmormon Related")

Below is information on Mormon Church General Authority pay assembled from further data searches:

--Misleading the Mormon Masses & the Mainstream Media: How LDS Inc.'s Leaders Have Historically Siphoned Money from Their Members to Support Their Own Lifestyles & Cover Their Debts--

Anyone who claims that leaders of the Mormon Church have not, as a matter of historical LDS practice, raided member wallets and dipped into Church funds in order to (among other things) cover their personal expenses or to receive a Church salary is either:

(a) deliberately not telling you the truth; or

(b) not up to speed on the truth.

The following comes from D. Michael Quinn, "The Mormon Hierarchy--Extensions of Power," Chapter 6, "Church Finances" [Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, in association with Smith Research Associates, 1997], see pp. 198-225 and footnotes for Chapter 6, pp. 502-513); also, from Richard N. Ostling and Joan K. Ostling, "Mormon America: The Power and the Promise," Chapter 7, "Mormon, Inc." [San Francisco, California: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999], pp. 119, 127:

--Mormonism's Badly-Kept Secret of a Paid Clergy: LDS Scriptural Excuses for Putting Joseph Smith and Subsequent General Authorities on the People-Provided Payroll--

"Before the Church even had a tithing requirement, it had a paid ministry. In November 1831 a revelation declared: 'He who is appointed to administer spiritual things, the same is worthy of his hire . . .' (D&C 70:12). This was the doctrinal basis for giving financial support to Joseph Smith, and later to a hierarchy of General Authorities."

(Quinn, "Paid Ministry and Voluntary Service," p. 204)

--But Wait There's More!: Mormon Church Justification for Pay-Outs to the First Presidency, the General Authorities and Other High-Ranking Officers--

"In May 1835 an official Church council voted that the Quorum of Twelve Apostles and First Council of Seventy 'have particularly to depend upon their ministry for their

support, and that of their families; and they have a right, by virtue of their offices, to call upon the churches to assist them.' When Bishop Edward Partridge gave the first definition of tithing in December 1837, part of the tithing was for 'remunerating the officers of the Church for the time which they were necessarily employed in doing the business of the same.' Six months later the stake high council voted 'to instruct the Bishop to pay the First Presidency, J. Smith, & Sidney Rigdon, whatever sum they agree with them for.' However, there was 'such an uproar' over this decision that the First Presidency dropped its request for a fixed annual salary."

(ibid., p. 205)

--The Laying On of the Wallet: Mormon Church Patriarchs Get Cash and Donations for Giving Blessings--

"For several decades only the Patriarch had a set compensation, while other General Authorities depended on haphazard donations from the rank-and-file or ad hoc appropriations from general Church funds. In 1835 the Presiding Patriarch was authorized a salary of \$10 a week, plus expenses.

"Both the Presiding Patriarch and local stake patriarchs charged a fee. In the 1840s the fee was \$1 per patriarchal blessing at Nauvoo; by the end of the nineteenth century it had increased to \$2 per blessing. Joseph Smith, Sr., gave patriarchal blessings without payment of a fee, but would not record them. 'Uncle' John Smith commented that he 'lived very poor ever since we left Kirtland Ohio' in January 1838 until January 1844. Then his nephew Joseph Smith ordained him a patriarch 'through which office I obtained a comfortable living.'

"Financial incentive is another explanation for the fact that individual Mormons received more than one patriarchal blessing in the 19th century, often at the invitation of the patriarch. In October 1877 John Taylor criticized the monetary motivation of some stake patriarchs. He said they were using their patriarchal office as 'a mere means of obtaining a livelihood, and to obtain more business they had been traveling from door to door and underbidding each other in the price of blessings.'

"In addition, patriarchs received fees for giving unrecorded blessings of healing to the sick. In fact, Apostle Francis M. Lyman commended Patriarch Elias Blackburn for 'doing a great deal of good among the sick, without receiving very much pay for his services.'

"Patriarchal blessing fees ended in 1902, although patriarchs were allowed to accept unsolicited donations. Not until 1943 did church authorities prohibit patriarchs from accepting gratuities for giving blessings."

(ibid.)

--Also Eating from the Tithing Table: Local Mormon Church Leaders--

"In the 19th-century American West, local officers of the LDS church obtained their support from the tithing they collected. As early as 1859 Brigham Young wondered 'whether a Stake would not be better governed when none of the officers were paid for their services.' During Young's presidency, ward bishops drew at will from the primarily

non-cash tithing Mormons donated. He complained at October 1860 General Conference 'against a principle in many of the Bishops to use up all the Tithing they could for their own families.'"

(ibid., p. 206)

--Tracing the Tithing-Takers to the Tracters: Funding Full-Time Mormon Missionaries--

"Even full-time missionaries benefited from tithing funds in the 19th century. The senior president of the First Council of Seventy commented in 1879 that the families of married missionaries should be supported from tithing funds. However, at best that practice barely kept struggling wives and children out of abject poverty while their husbands and fathers served two-year missions."

(ibid.)

--Bellying Up to the Tithing Trough: The Quorum of the Twelve Gets Its Turn, While the Local Leaders Feed Bag Gets Turned Off--

"In 1884 Church president John Taylor limited bishops to 8% of tithing they collected (now primarily cash), while stake presidents got 2% of tithing collected by all the bishops of the stake. In 1888 Wilford Woodruff established set salaries for stake presidents and provided that a stake committee would apportion 10% of collected tithing between the bishops and the stake tithing clerk. At April 1896 General Conference, the First Presidency announced the end of salaries for local officers, in response to the decision of the temple meeting 'to not pay Salaries to any one but the Twelve.'"

(ibid.)

--Tithing-Funded Salaries of Stake Presidents: Put on Hold (Temporarily)--

"Nevertheless, ending salaries to stake presidents in 1896 was temporary. For a while stake presidents and their counselors were allowed to draw 'from the tithing fund . . . no more than the limit which had been previously specified, and not to entertain the idea that a stipulated compensation attached like a salary to certain offices in the Church.' By April 1897 the First Presidency spoke about 'the subject of compensation to presiding men' in a meeting with stake presidents and other local officers. The First Presidency urged 'the brethren to give their services so far as possible to the church without remuneration.' In 1898 'the regular 10% of tithing [was] allowed Bishops and clerks for handling the same,' but the First Presidency balked at allowing even more to cover expenses for supplies.

"By 1904 set salaries were back again for stake presidents, who were allowed \$300 per year. As late as 1910, local officers continued to receive 10% of locally-collected tithing 'for handling tithes.' Recently a Mormon said that his father received a cash allowance as bishop in the 1920s, which was a later period of such compensation than my own research has verified."

(ibid.)

--Raking It in for Retirement: Church Allowances Given to Stake Presidents and Bishops--

"In addition, since the 1880s stake presidents and bishops of long tenure had received retirement allowances in monthly or annual payments. In 1901 even the parsimonious Church president Lorenzo Snow said that a financially-struggling stake president 'ought to receive his remuneration after he was released as well as before.' Retirement allowances for stake presidents continued into the early 1900s."

(ibid., p. 207)

--Regular Payouts for General Authorities: Complaining Rank-and-File Church Members Told to Quit "Whining"--

". . . [F]inancial compensation for Church officers began with the General Authorities in the 1830s but did not become systematic until 1877. During these decades there was evidence of rank-and-file dissatisfaction with the Mormon hierarchy's financial privileges. In 1847 Brigham Young told a public meeting: 'Be contented with your lot and station and stop whining and babbling about the Twelve, saying that Brigham oppresses the poor and lives off their earning and that you can't see why you can't have some of his good living, and so on. Did Brigham Young ever get anything from you, did you ever help him to any of his fine living, you poor curses, or was it through Brigham's influence that thousands of the poor have been fed?' After Young and the Apostles spent the next 12 years directing the expanding settlements of the Great Basin, 'Erastus Snow spoke Concerning the feelings of many of the people against seeing the Twelve prosper in temporal things.'"

(ibid.)

--Mormon Church Leaders Eventual Cave to Protests and Lower Their Demands for Member Money: (They Resume Taking More Soon Enough)--

"Following discussion of this criticism in February 1859, the First Presidency and Apostles restrained their financial activities. For the next five years Salt Lake County's annual assessments showed a steep decline in the wealth of Brigham Young, his Counselors, and the Apostles. By contrast the assessed wealth of the Presiding Bishop and his counselors initially increased and then only gradually tapered off during the same period. The rank-and-file expected the Presiding Bishopric to have extensive financial activity. In fact, the pendulum had swung so far that in December 1865 Apostle John Taylor '[p]rophesied that the Twelve should be delivered from the bondage of poverty under which they have been weltering for years.'"

(ibid.)

--Making Out Like Bandits: Brigham and His Inner-Circle Buddies Hit the Jackpot--

"Although the rate of this financial decline had been equivalent for the First Presidency and Apostles, the burden was far less on Brigham Young and his Counselors who had massive personal wealth compared to the Apostles. In 1859 Young's own property assessments were only slightly below those of the entire Church for Salt Lake County.

Young's totaled \$100,000, while the Trustee-in-Trust's was \$102,250.

"First Counselor Heber C. Kimball 'observed that Mormonism had made him all that he was: he was worth \$20,000 now; and if he had remained in the States he would have been a poor man to this day.' Brigham Young estimated his personal wealth at about \$600,000 in a legal deposition of 1875. That was three years after he paid \$100,000 in 'the tithing of his own personal means.' By contrast, during Young's presidency the Twelve's average assessed wealth reached a high of \$6,672 in 1874, and several apostles individually had only \$500 to \$2,000 in assessed wealth annually from 1860 to Young's death in August 1877."

(ibid., pp. 207–08)

--Ringing the Dinner Bell: General Conference Announcement of General Authority Compensation (Overdrafts Follow)--

"At the October 1877 General Conference, the hierarchy announced a policy of 'reasonable recompense for their services' to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and to the First Presidency, when organized. In John Taylor's view, this was actually a way of stopping the previous abuses in the personal use of tithing funds. 'Some of my brethren, as I have learned since the death of President Brigham Young, did have feelings concerning his course,' Apostle George Q. Cannon wrote. 'It is felt that the funds of the Church have been used with a freedom not warranted by the authority which he held.' Of General Authorities still living, Joseph F. Smith wrote in December 1877: 'One man, for instance, who has drawn \$16,000 per year from the tithing office for his support, has been cut down to 2,000 per year. Thus some of the leaks are plugged up and we hope to be able by and by to build the temple.' Smith was apparently referring to Brigham's son John W. Young, who served as his father's Counselor for 13 years (first secretly and later with public acknowledgment).

"However, Taylor's 'reasonable recompense' of 1877 did not cover the needs of the Apostles. At an Apostles' meeting on 3 May 1880, '[t]he question of over-running salaries was brought up. Several of the brethren had overdrawn their allowance . . . ' They voted to forgive the overdrafts and to increase their annual allowance. In addition, the Apostles decided to give an allowance to the Presiding Patriarch in addition to his per-blessing fee."

(ibid., p. 208)

--Setting Up a Salaried System of Siphoning: Members, and Even Apostles, Complain That It's Getting Out of Hand--

"In September 1887 this became fixed allotments, which one Apostle opposed Twelve draw a salary.' In April 1888 the First Council of Seventy also began receiving financial allowances, to which one council member replied: 'I would prefer to receive no salary.' A 'permanent' allowance to members of the First Council of Seventy was not established for another decade."

(ibid.)

--Pangs of Conscience?: Mormon Church Presidents Start Feeling Guilty About the Gluttony--

"Nevertheless, LDS presidents themselves expressed discomfort about using their allowances. When the First Presidency and Twelve discussed the salary system again in 1896, President Wilford Woodruff said that he had not drawn money from the church until after 1877. Apostle Lorenzo Snow, Woodruff's presidential successor, said that despite the allowance system, he had not drawn from Church funds for 40 years. This resistance to making personal use of Church funds reached its climax in President Heber J. Grant, who rode public street cars rather than use tithing funds to have an automobile and chauffeur for the First Presidency."

(ibid., pp. 208-09)

--Mormon General Authorities Put Aside Their Guilt: Member Money Is Kept Flowing Their Way--

"Despite discomfort over receiving tithing funds for living allowances, a salary system for LDS General Authorities continued without significant interruption from 1882 on. As indicated by Joseph F. Smith's 1877 letter and by Wilford Woodruff's diary, the Apostles received \$2,000 to \$2,500 annually during the first five years of the salary system. Then significant financial stratification occurred, with the senior apostle receiving \$5,000 annually, Apostles of middle seniority \$3,000, and junior Apostles \$2,000. In September 1887 the Apostles adopted a uniform compensation, with each receiving \$3,000. Although there was not yet a fixed allowance for the First Council of Seventy, in 1888 the Presiding Patriarch's 'annuity' increased from \$1,000 to \$1,250."

(ibid., p. 209)

--Power and Seniority Rankings: Setting of Salary Levels for Mormon Top Leadership--

"By the turn of the 20th century, the hierarchy's allowances were stratified by ecclesiastical position and seniority. In 1890 the monthly allowances of the Quorum of the Twelve and Presiding Bishop were identical, with the counselors in the First Presidency receiving \$50 more a month and the church president receiving another \$100 monthly. By 1907 the monthly allowances were stratified into a six-tiered system: (1) the lowest allowance for junior members of the Seventy, (2) the next higher allowance to mid-level members of the Seventy and the Presiding Patriarch, followed by (3) the eight junior members of the Twelve, (4) the Presiding Bishopric, two senior members of the Seventy, and four senior members of the Twelve, (5) the counselors in the Presidency, and (6) the president of the church. In those 1907 allowances, \$100 monthly separated the top two tiers, and only \$50 monthly separated each of the lower tiers. By 1932 there were only four strata in the monthly allowance system: (1) the lowest allowance was for counselors to the Presiding Bishop and for the entire Seventy, (2) an extra \$50 monthly allotment for the Presiding Bishop, the Presiding Patriarch, and all members of the Twelve, (3) an additional increase of \$100 monthly for counselors in the First Presidency, (4) and a \$150 monthly bonus for the Church president. David O. McKay's presidency (1951-70) adopted uniform allowances for all General Authorities, regardless of quorum or seniority."

(ibid.)

--More Riches for the Rulers: Fees Charged for Divorces, Cancellations of Sealing and Setting Apart of Missionaries--

"There were also miscellaneous fees which the General Authorities collected for ecclesiastical services. Brigham Young charged men 'ten dollars for each divorce' or cancellation of sealing, which policy continued until the end of the century. In addition, until 1899 the General Authorities charged a fee for setting apart all departing missionaries."

(ibid.)

--Wanting More, More, More: Mormonism's Highest Keep Insisting on Competitive Compensation--

"Periodically the Mormon hierarchy has made a significant increase in monthly allowances to General Authorities. In 1950, for example, there was a 30% increase. Nevertheless, in view of the financial empire administered by the LDS General Authorities, their compensation from Church funds has always been paltry compared to the salaries and perks of corporate America. In 1949 First Presidency Counselor J. Reuben Clark wrote that 'the General Authorities of the Church get precious little from the tithing of the Church. They are not paid as much as a first-class, stenographic secretary of some of the men who run industry.' That disparity was probably the reason for the next year's increase in allowances to the General Authorities.

"For example, as a newly-appointed Assistant to the Twelve in 1941, Marion G. Romney found that his Church 'allowance amounted to less than half of what he was earning from his law practice when he was called as a General Authority.' Appointed an Apostle that same year, Harold B. Lee found that his financial allowance was less than the salary of some staff members at LDS headquarters. As was true in the 19th-century hierarchy, a significant drop in income and personal wealth occurred when a man accepted the calling of LDS General Authority."

(ibid., pp. 209-10)

--Big General Authority Bonuses: The Book Business

"Although not a formal salary, General Authorities can also receive significant income from the books they publish. When he published 'The Way To Perfection' in 1931, Joseph Fielding Smith specified that all its future royalties would go to the LDS Genealogical Society. However, he was not as generous with the royalties from his dozens of other books. For example, when President Smith died in July 1972, his royalties from Deseret Book Company totaled \$9,636 for the previous six-month period. Presiding Bishop (and later Apostle) LeGrand Richards set a remarkable example by accepting no royalties for his 'Marvelous Work and a Wonder' which had sold 2 million copies by the time of his death in 1983. However, a president of the LDS church's publishing company has observed that very few General Authorities have declined royalties for their books. Mormons purchase books written by General Authorities primarily because of the church office the author holds, rather than for the book's content. Although many General

Authorities do not write books, such royalty income is a direct consequence of being an LDS leader."

(ibid., p. 210)

--Hiding the Financial Facts: Gordon B. Hinckley Fudges on the Extent of General Authority Living Allowances--

"Speaking of LDS Church-owned businesses and stock-portfolio in 1985, First Presidency Counselor Gordon B. Hinckley said that 'the living allowances given the General Authorities, which are very modest in comparison with executive compensation in industry and the professions, come from this business income and not from the tithing of the people. However, tithing was the source of these 'living allowances' from the 1830s until the Church's corporate success in recent years.

"Moreover, President Hinckley's description of the hierarchy's income as 'very modest' depends upon one's own concept of wealth. For example, when Joseph Fielding Smith died at age 95 in 1972, he had worked nearly all his adult life at LDS headquarters, first as a paid employee in the Historian's Office and then as a General Authority with a Church living allowance. At his death, President Smith had \$245,000 in bank deposits, \$120,000 in cash, \$120,574 in stocks/bonds, and \$10,688 in uncashed checks (including Deseret Book royalties of \$9,636). Even 25 years after his death, few rank-and-file Mormons have such 'modest' amounts of cash and liquid assets available to them in old age."

(ibid., pp. 210-11)

--Wiping Out Personal Debt with Mormon Church Money: Another LDS Presidential Perk--

"The LDS ministry is still a volunteer, lay ministry. In the 20th century, Church offices have become unpaid to a degree they never were in the 19th century. Of more than 160,000 ecclesiastical leaders at the beginning of 1996, fewer than 500 were authorized a living allowance from church funds. Many of these LDS officials decline to use their authorized allowances.

"However, on occasion Church presidents have personally benefited from Church finances by simply canceling their indebtedness to Church funds. On 23 April 1834 a revelation ended the Kirtland United Order and distributed its real estate assets among Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, Frederick G. Williams, Martin Harris, Newel K. Whitney and John Johnson. The revelation said, 'it is my will that you shall pay all your debts' (D&C 104:78). However, Joseph Smith privately required Whitney to balance 'in full without any value recd.' the \$1,151.31 Whitney had loaned to the prophet, as well as \$2,484.22 of the other men's debts to Whitney. Bishop Whitney had to personally absorb this loss 'because Joseph said it must be done.'

"The next two Church presidents did likewise. Three weeks before he died in August 1877, Brigham Young obtained a cancellation of his debts in Ogden, Utah, extending back to 1849. Despite the previously stated objections of his own counselor, John Taylor also persuaded the Quorum of Twelve Apostles in 1880 to allow him a \$10,000 claim for

sugar machinery, which claim Brigham Young had refused since 1853."

(ibid., p. 211)

--Presents to the Prominent: Floating Church Loans to Big-Name Latter-day Saints--

"By contrast, Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, and Joseph F. Smith did not use their office as Church president to cancel their personal indebtedness, yet they allowed tithing funds to serve as a loan pool for prominent Mormons. In a sharply-worded report in 1911, the Church auditors noted: 'If certain members of the Church are entitled to borrow money for private ends, is this not a right of all members, for the same purpose? If this policy is admitted, would it not result in confusion, jealousy, loss and consequent wrong?' The committee observed that 'the debtors frequently look upon their obligations as being due to a rich and indulgent relative, to be paid (if at all) at their own convenience.' Among the debtors was Apostle Heber J. Grant for a 'cash loan of \$34,000.' In 1913 the committee renewed the subject of Church loans to individuals, and commented that 'it is not within the purview of the Trustee-in-Trust to make advances of this kind . . . And any loans made on plain notes are legally uncollectible.'

"It is important to recognize that General Authorities borrowed from the Church's general fund because their living allowances were insufficient to meet their needs. In 1910 Apostle Anthony W. Ivins recorded that the following members of the Twelve were in debt: Francis M. Lyman, George Albert Smith, Heber J. Grant, Rudger Clawson, Hyrum M. Smith, George F. Richards and David O. McKay. Grant was the most candid about his apostolic indebtedness: 'A president of the stake begged and pleaded with me to quit paying tithing. He said I did not owe any tithing until I got out of debt. Would not that have been a fine record for a man who now stands as president of the Church, not to have paid tithing for 32 years?'"

(ibid., pp. 211-12)

--Bankruptcy: A General Authority Way to Get Around Paying Off Personal Debts--

"Many General Authorities repaid their debts after long years of effort, while others died in debt. On the other hand, some chose to declare legal bankruptcy. In 1842 Joseph Smith, his counselor Sidney Rigdon, Presiding Patriarch Hyrum Smith, and Presiding bishop-designate Vinson Knight sought relief from their indebtedness by filing for bankruptcy. Seventy's president J. Golden Kimball was the next current General Authority who filed for bankruptcy. In 1899 he had \$11,126 in debts but only \$2,031 in assets. By 1902 the First Presidency was unwilling for a member of the Presidency or Twelve to declare public bankruptcy, and Apostle Reed Smoot quietly persuaded the creditors of John W. Taylor to settle the Apostle's \$140,000 debts at ten cents on the dollar."

(ibid., p. 212)

--Putting the Squeeze on Church Finances: General Authorities Accept Stock to Cover What They Owe--

"On 27 December 1919 recently sustained Heber J. Grant obtained the approval of his

Counselors to accept \$30,000 worth of his stock (at par) in the Utah-Implement Vehicle Company to cancel loans he received as an Apostle from the Trustee-in-Trust. However, accepting stock to cancel personal loans caused enormous losses to the Church during Grant's administration. In 1930 First Counselor Anthony W. Ivins computed that the Church lost \$900,000 in personal loans to Presiding Bishop Charles W. Nibley. Upon his appointment as Second Counselor in the First Presidency in 1925, Nibley had used stocks and bonds to repay his indebtedness to the Church."

(ibid.)

--Mormon Church Volunteer Work: It Only Goes So Far--

Richard N. Ostling and Joan K. Ostling, in their book. "Mormon America: The Power and the Promise, " write that "in the Mormon system there is that large amount of free administrative and mundane labor from lay volunteers at the lower levels, which remains a huge-costing saving factor."

(p. 119)

Note that the Ostlings confine that observation to the unpaid Mormon worker bees at "the lower levels." No mention is made of the long and significant payment history of Church members at other levels--from bishops, stake presidents, patriarchs and missionaries up to the highest LDS leaders in the General Authority ranks.

The Ostlings do mention, however, that "Mormon Inc.'s" administration of member welfare services includes the operation of "[f]acilities [by] paid professionals as necessary"

(ibid., p. 127)

What's really "necessary" is for informed critics to get past the Mormon Church's false claims of serving the Lord free of charge and to the fleecing the flock freely while in charge.

-Misleading the Mormon Masses & the Mainstream Media: How LDS Inc.'s Leaders Have Historically Siphoned Money from Their Members to Support Their Own Lifestyles & Cover Their Debts--

Anyone who claims that leaders of the Mormon Church have not, as a matter of historical LDS practice, raided member wallets and dipped into Church funds in order to (among other things) cover their personal expenses or to receive a Church salary is either:

(a) deliberately not telling you the truth; or

(b) not up to speed on the truth.

How Mormon General Authorities Are Paid (Part 2)

Posted by: ^ ()
Date: January 22, 2016 01:13AM

Part 2

--The Bleat Goes On, Even as We Speak--

Lying-for-Jesus Jeffrey Holland recently blew more unholy smoke when he falsely claimed that LDS Inc.'s only revenues come from individual member offerings.

Crunching the numbers decidedly proves otherwise.

Speaking with a lei around his lie, apostle fossil Holland told his Hawaii campus Mormon student-body audience:

"There is no money in the Church except what our members offer."

(Jeffrey R. Holland, Laie, Hawaii, 17 December 2011, in "BYU-Hawaii: Ground Broken for Campus Expansion Project," by Kelsey Royer, BYU-Hawaii University Communications, published in "Church News," Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 13 December 2011, at: <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/61847/BYU-Hawaii-Ground-broken-for...>)

Really? Then please answer RfM poster "lulu's" question:

"So, how are they building the SLC mega mall and apartments?"

(posted by "lulu," on "Recovery from Mormonism" bulletin board, 19 December 2011, at: <http://exmormon.org/phorum/read.php?2,371249>)

In pretending to answer such basic inquiries, the Mormon Church, as a matter of purposely deceptive and disingenuous habit, claims that the bulk of its booty comes from money extracted from the faithful--an approach undertaken, of course, in the name of faith.

This is how the Mormon Church plays the numbers--and its members:

"Gordon B. Hinckley, prior President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, said:

"Our major source of revenue is the ancient law of the tithe. Our people are expected to pay 10 percent of their income to move forward the work of the Church. The remarkable and wonderful thing is that they do it. Tithing is not so much a matter of dollars as it is a matter of faith. It becomes a privilege and an opportunity, not a burden. Our people believe in the word of God as set forth in the book of Malachi, that the Lord will open the windows of heaven and pour down blessings that there will not be room enough to receive them (Malachi 3:8-10). Moving and touching is the testimony of Latter-day Saints throughout the world concerning this, the Lord's law

for the financing of His work.”

("How Does the [Mormon] Church Finance Its Operations?," complete with parroted Mormon responses, at: <http://mormon.org/faq/church-operations/>)

That's not the whole story, of course--not by a long shot. But the Mormon Church doesn't like telling the whole story and has not been providing any meaningful accounting of its earnings sources and earnings amounts for decades.

RfM poster "Jesus Smith" exposes hide-'n'-seek Holland's antics:

"He's playing semantics and he knows it. [It] [s]hows his dishonesty.

"'Church' = only the religious wing of the corporation. He is excluding the Corporation of the COJCOLDS [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] and of the presiding bishop[rics].

"Holland just showed his hand, once again, that he is a corporate man through and through."

("There is no money in the Church except what our members offer," posted by "Jesus Smith," on "Recovery from Mormonism" bulletin board, 19 December 2011, at: <http://exmormon.org/phorum/read.php?2,371249,371265#msg-371265>)

Simply put, the Mormon Church is a hardcore business employing softsell b.s.

Over a half-century ago, Mormon Church expenditures reported for the year 1958 (as provided by LDS historians Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton in their book, "The Mormon Experience," were \$72,794,306.

Arrington and Bitton acknowledge that "the [Mormon] Church does not give a detailed accounting of its annual revenues and expenditures" and that what it does dribble out amounts to "occasional summaries."

That's putting it mildly.

Since 1958, LDS Inc. revenues and expenditures have exploded astronomically. Trouble is, LDS Inc. has steadfastly refused to release the numbers. Indeed, in the face of ongoing outside questions about Mormon Church money-changing in its temporal world of business ventures, Arrington and Bitton admit that "the Church has only intermittently published data on revenues and expenditures."

In that regard, Arrington and Bitton cite "a study of its [the Mormon Church's] economic activities suggest[ing] that in the first half of the 20th century it accumulated a considerable reserve that invested conservatively in real estate, bonds and saving deposits." They also report that LDS Inc. now has a "portfolio of securities," as well as "some income from its investments." But they add that "the basic cash flow still comes from its members in the form of tithes and other donations," noting that "

[t]he Church is able to carry out its extensive programs only because its members contribute regularly and liberally to its treasury."

Arrington and Bitton outline (as of 1979) what is described as Mormonism's "income-earning properties" (income which, by that time, had reached into the multi-millions of dollars):

--Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution (ZCMI). This enterprise is described as a "wholesale and retail firm" in which "[t]he Church (through Deseret Management) owns a controlling 30% of the stock (the remainder lies in private hands)."

--Deseret National Bank, Zion's Savings Bank & Trust Company, Utah First National Bank and Utah Savings & Trust. Arrington and Bitton report that after creating a dominating bank business in the Great Basin through a series of territorial mergers, acquisitions and branch creations, the Mormon Church eventually received a favorable purchase offer and "sold its controlling interest in Zion's First National to a syndicate of persons friendly to the Church."

--Utah-Idaho Sugar Company. Arrington and Bitton report that, as of their writing, the Mormon Church "own[ed] about half the common stock and four-fifths of the preferred stock in certain Mountain West sugar manufacturing ventures, the annual sales of which were in the hundred of millions of dollars.

--Beneficial Life Insurance Company and Utah Home Fire Insurance Company. At the time of their book's publication, Arrington and Bitton reported that the company was wholly owned by the Corporation of the Mormon Church President and that it had "written over \$2 billion in policies." The company was later restructured to include "an investment program that enable[d] it to compete with Prudential, Metropolitan and other national companies." Utah Home Fire Insurance Company--which was organized by, among others, "Heber J. Grant (described as having a "genius for business")--was identified by Arrington and Bitton as "Utah's largest domiciled casualty company."

--Utah Hotel Corporation. The Mormon Church partnered with a group of non-LDS businessmen to organize this profit-making entity which, through Deseret Management, eventually built "the 530-room Hotel Utah, [the] 189-room Temple Square Hotel and [the] 156-room Utah Motor Lodge--all of which adjoin [ed] Temple Square in Salt Lake City."

--Beehive Clothing Mills. Arrington and Bitton write that this monopoly is a "wholly-owned subsidiary of the Corporation of the President . . . [with] plants in Utah, England and Mexico and is the exclusive manufacturer of articles of temple clothing for Latter-day Saints."

The Mormon Church also set up Zion's Securities Corporation, which Arrington and Bitton describe as a "commercial real estate arm of the Church [which] pays property taxes and corporation taxes on its net income." They note that "it has grown steadily as its profits and gains have been reinvested." Calling its activities "ambitious," the authors write that Zion's Securities "hold[s] nearly all the real estate on the four sides facing Temple Square and Administration Square, and many other blocks and lots in Salt Lake City and County [I]t has cooperated with owners of neighboring parcels

in developing modern business and shopping areas in downtown Salt Lake City. . . . Zion's Securities has built the 20-story Beneficial Life Office tower, the 8-story J.C. Penney Building, the 18-story Kennecott Building, a modern Prudential Federal Savings Branch, a 400-hundred-car parking terrace for the Temple Square Hotel, a 200-car underground garage for Hotel Utah, the Hotel Utah Motor Lodge, the ZCMI Center or Mall, a 1,000-car parking terrace on Regent Street and a 900-car parking garage near Deseret Gymnasium. [Millions of dollars] has been expended . . . by the Church, local government and businesses in 'sprucing up' the downtown area of Salt Lake City.

"Zion's Securities has continued to acquire new properties that will be useful to the Church in its building projects. On a site acquired adjacent to Temple Square a large new auditorium with 35,000 seats was once planned for Church and community use. Civic dialogue and deliberation resulted in the donation of this land to Salt Lake City and County to construct the Salt Palace and Performing Arts Center. The company acquired a thousand acres on 21st South and Redwood Road, Salt Lake City, after World War II and developed plans for the construction of the Latter-day Saint Distribution Center and Beehive Clothing Mills. Zion's Securities owns the ZCMI building and lot in Salt Lake City, which was [eventually] enlarged into the largest department store in the Mountain West. It also assisted in the location of a new \$10 million federal office building on 1st South and State, close to Temple Square. Further afield, the company also owns property in Hawaii, Los Angeles, Wyoming, Florida and in Price and Cedar City, Utah."

Arrington and Bitton further mention that "[i]n January 1977 the First Presidency announced the formation of a sister corporation--Beneficial Development--to manage all development formerly done by Zion's Securities and the Church. Beneficial [was structured to serve] as a vehicle for Church mortgage-loan funds . . . [and to operate] through private developers throughout the West and concentrate on the acquisition and creation of industrial parks."

Arrington and Bitton also detail the fact that "for long years the Church has operated ranches in several states and in addition furnished capital and encouragement for the construction of canals and irrigation projects. . . . [T]he Church has acquired a number of ranchlands on which it has pioneered in the adoption of new practices. Under the Deseret name the Church now operates two large ranches in southern Alberta; a large ranching complex in Florida; a 10,000-acre hay and grain farm near Pecos, Texas; a 5,000-acre farm producing walnuts and almonds near Sacramento, California; and an 11,000-acre general agricultural ranch at Elberta, Utah.

"The largest of these ventures is in Florida. In 1950 the Church acquired for ranching and development purposes approximately 220,000 acres of swampland not far from Cape Canaveral (and Disney World). . . . Running over 30,000 head of young cattle on land once described as worthless for the cattle business, these 20th century [Mormon] pioneers converted a Florida wasteland into a center of cattle feeding Additional ranches and properties were subsequently acquired by the Church and the program of development continues. In 1977 some 100,000 head of Aberdeen Angus and Hereford cattle were being raised on 360,000 acres of Church land in Florida."

Given LDS Inc.'s significant business investments over time and place, Arrington and Bitton acknowledge that its proclivity for super secrecy in handling its books does not

create a positive image of Mormon Church money-making:

"Mormonism's wealth . . . is often thought of as enormous and this impression may be strengthened by the policy of not releasing precise figures."

Still, these two Mormon historians insist that the LDS Church is managing its mountains of money in an appropriate manner, despite hiding from public view meaningful details on how that management is said to be taking place:

"One gathers that its liquid assets are being managed with responsibility and efficiency . . . [and] there is a careful annual audit by a professional accounting firm and a brief report is made at annual conferences."

Uh-huh. Way too brief.

(Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, "The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints" [New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979], pp. 263, 280-83)

More determined digging into how LDS Inc. amasses and spends its dough has since been done by non-Mormon authors/investigative journalists Richard N. and Joan K. Ostling, who report the following in their book, "Mormon America: The Power and the Promise" (published in 1999 but employing statistical methodologies that make their findings relevant today):

"Broadly speaking, the [Mormon] Church derives income from two sources: tithing, which [Presiding Bishop/LDS chief financial officer David] Burton said provides by far the largest share; and income from Church investments, including both stocks and bonds passively held and direct investments in ranching, media, financial, real estate and other interests the the Church owns. We were able to work from some individual numbers, such as the the \$172 million in revenue made by Bonneville Corporation. But there was no easy way to get at some of the other corporate revenue. . . .

". . . Figuring [Mormon] church income from investments could . . . be taken according to [Burton's] ratio. If \$5.3 billion in member contributions is 90 percent of revenues, by the reckoning provided us by Presiding Bishop Burton, total revenues would be around \$5.9 billion. Or by the more cautious reading of tithing income, it would be just under \$5 billion. In either case, the numbers are . . . within the correct order of magnitude.

"Estimating annual investment income at a total of \$600 million allows us in turn to make at least a general stab at estimating the size of [the Mormon Church investment] portfolio.

"If we assume Mormons are competent enough managers to make a 10 percent return on assets after taxes (in the 1990s its stock portfolios would almost certainly be doing double that, balancing out whatever shortfalls there might be among the Church's corporate investments), then a reasonable estimate for invested assets would \$6 billion. That estimate was corroborated by an informed source. . . .

"We estimated ranches, farms and accompanying real estate at \$5 billion, though considering the amazing scope of such Mormon investments in the United States, that number is probably too low. Again, we have obtained independent corroboration of this estimate.

"Of course, it is hard to separate out land value from commercial value (of ranches, for example), and it is also hard to keep track, year in and year out, of how many farms and ranches are in the welfare system--and therefore non-profit and non-taxed--rather than in the church's commercial realm. . . .

"Our estimates for the value of LDS schools and miscellaneous other holdings is based on the insider number obtained in the early 1980s by [John] Heinerman and [Anson] Shupe ['The Mormon Corporate Empire,' Boston: 1985] They estimated this number, the largest portion which is BYU, at \$836 million, which includes church and archival holdings as well as genealogical and historical properties. . . .

"Now for the big numbers We have estimated the value of the Church's meetinghouses, temples and land they are on at \$18 billion. Once again, we have used 'comparables' in our statistical database. In this case, a very close comparable to the LDS Church is the Chicago-based Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

"The [Mormon] Church does not release the exact number of meetinghouses, but Heinerman and Shupe estimated 6,802 in 1983, and the Church says that it has been building about 350 new ones every year. This would mean that more than 12,000 additional meetinghouses have been built 15 years later. Factoring in 1980s growth rates and considering that global commercial real estate has vastly outpaced inflation, the average value could be \$1.5 million, for a total asset value of \$18 billion. Of course, as President Hinckley correctly noted . . . , all these properties are revenue-consuming, not revenue-producing. But it is also true that the construction of more temples and meetinghouses is an investment that reaps increased tithing revenue. Like the religious-use properties of any denomination, one can know what a facility cost at the time of construction, but it is hard to convert that to any true market value.

"To be very conservative, since we do not have access to inside accounts and inventories, we would conclude that the total LDS assets [in 1999 dollars] are in the range of \$25-30 billion."

As to tithing income, the Ostlings note the challenge in getting at precise numbers, given Mormon Church thickly-shrouded finances on the subject, but have nevertheless provided a reasonable estimate:

". . . [T]here was no direct way at all to get at tithing figures. . . .

"[However, using financial and membership statistics from a similarly-sized religion, the Seventh-Day Adventists, for comparison] . . . the projected annual worldwide LDS membership contributions would . . . be roughly \$5.3 billion as of 1995. Interestingly, in 1991, the 'Arizona Republic' [the newspaper for which I work], ran similar equations based on giving in the Church of the Nazarene and came up with \$4.3 billion which, adjusted for inflation, is not far from our numbers."

How does Mormon, Inc. manage to achieve such massive wealth? The Ostlings explain:

"Several factors underlie the LDS Church's prosperity. It has a form of sacred taxation like no other: Members are obliged to give a tithe (10 percent of their income to the Church in order to gain access to temples and to participate in the holiest ordinances of salvation and exaltation).

"The salaried staff is not large and the performance of most duties by part-time unpaid volunteers cuts operating expenses to the bone.

"The highly centralized control and flexibility of the system enable leaders readily to modify money flow and later policies so that current income matches programs.

"Finally, by all accounts the businessman-apostles maintain effective administrative controls that minimize waste and maximize efficiency.

"The strict secrecy with which the hierarchy guards the financial facts is unique for a church of this size. Officials refuse to divulge routine information that other religions are happy to provide over the phone to donors or inquirers. Outsiders' money estimates always raise disclaimers from officialdom, presumably because of the danger that fat-looking figures might weaken members' tithing compliance. This had led to a cat-and-mouse game with various journalists who have attempted over the years to unveil the vast empire of corporate Mormonism. . . .

"If the LDS Church were a U.S. corporation, by revenues it would rank number 243 on the 'Fortune' 500 list. (Revenues are the best standard of measurement. Ranking a religious body by assets has little meaning since so much is locked into purely religious real estate). Mormons, Inc., lands somewhere between Paine Webber . . . and Union Carbide, a tad smaller than Continental Airlines and about twice the size of 'Readers Digest' [again, 1999 dollars and business circumstances]. The Church's gargantuan assets dwarf anything in that revenue class. If one were to add in the gross revenues of all Church-controlled business entities (more in keeping with the 'Fortune' 500), the total would be vastly higher. . . .

"[Moreover],[t]he Church has handled [its membership] growth by, in effect, retooling itself as though it were a multinational corporation. . . .[[L]ocal-level financial decision-making, including especially building projects, [has been shifted] to headquarters in Utah. More recently part of the burden of local maintenance funding has been returned to the wards.

"The global growth, of course, transfers much Church wealth from the developed world to the developing world, especially Latin America, where the expansion is particularly successful. . . .

"[As far as cash donations to non-Mormon humanitarian aid] . . . [a]ll churches, of course, perform charity and mercy work . . . [but] the LDS Church no longer maintains hospitals and its short-term missionaries concentrate on proselytizing for converts."

The Mormon Church has amassed its vast sums of unreportable and reportable wealth

(depending on the category into which it falls: donation-collected or investment-driven), by following a bluntly basic two-prong approach:

". . . [A]s it invests in temples and meetinghouses, the Church shores up tis potential tithing base income. And then there's that investment portfolio."

In perhaps the most stunning no-brainer regarding how it's makin' the bacon, the Mormon Church's ranking revenue manager Burton says simply:

"Do we net to zero? No, we don't net to zero."

(Richard N. Ostling and Joan K. Ostling, "Mormon America: The Power and the Promise," Chapter 7, "Mormon, Inc." and Appendix B, "How the Income and Wealth Estimates Were Made" [San Francisco, California: HarperSanFranciso, a division of HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.], pp. 113-129, 396-400)

Here is some further information (with a bit of overlap) exposing LDS, Inc.'s misinformation, from another RfM poster:

". . . Based on the best information I can find, the following is a summary of the business of selling God. Sources include the following books and publications. 'Mormon America,' 'Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power,' 'Mormon Corporate Empire,' 'Time' magazine, and 'Arizona Republic,' in addition to various on-line sources. No one really knows, because the Morg stopped reporting income in the late 1950's when they were at the point of bankruptcy due to gross mismanagement. I would like to know any data that others have available.

"Corporate Structure

"The Corporation of the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is a Corporate Sole with succession being the subsequent next President. That means he is the sole shareholder and owner of all businesses and holdings. Any legally required reporting would be to the President of the Church. Other than taxes, there is no legal obligation for reporting, other than to the owners. At [the time of this writing] . . . GBH [Gordon B. Hinckley] [was] the sole owner.

"The Morg is tax exempt, so other than an annual information return, nothing is required. Real property is held by The Corporation of the Presiding Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

"This is a separate non-profit corporation for the buildings, farms and raw property. I would guess that other than a few people at the top, no one knows the combined worth of the two main corporations.

"In addition to these corporations, there are a series of nonprofits that own BYU, Ricks and other holdings. There is also the for profit businesses which are owned by the nonprofits or select members. There are also the foreign corporations for each regional office. It is a very large and complex organization.

"Income

"While the tithing amount is not disclosed, there have been several attempts to determine the world-wide collection of tithing by the Mormon Church. D. Michael Quinn ('Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power') and the Ostlings ('Mormon America') both attempt to put a dollar value on tithing. The consensus between these and other authors is that it is between \$4.5 and 6 billion per year.

"Other offerings are relatively minor by comparison and are generally used for charitable purposes. In addition, businesses that are in line with the core purpose of the Morg can be owned and operated on a tax exempt basis. Businesses that are not tax exempt can donate to the Morg without either entity paying tax on the donations. Below is a link to a partial list of Morg owned businesses.

<http://www.exmormon.org/mormon/mormon410.htm>

"Here is an older document about holdings:

<http://www.algonet.se/~daba/lds/cworth.htm>

"Quinn reported that the known holdings included 48 banks, 34 lumber companies, 60 newspapers and magazines, 55 mining firms, 55 railroads and 9 hotels. There is also the \$16 billion insurance company and a chain of radio and TV stations.

"In addition there are a number of related businesses that are indirectly owned by the Morg, having been sold or turned over to key members or groups. Quinn reported that ranking General Authorities were partners, officers and directors of over 900 different businesses. It is estimated that the gross revenues of these businesses is in excess to 6 billion dollars per year. The net income or cash which would make its way into the coffers of the Morg would likely be in the 10%-12% range. Add here an additional \$720,000 in cash.

"Holdings

"In addition to the \$1.5 [billion] being spent on the SLC malls, the Morg holds 6,000 acres on the North Shore of Oahu from a purchase over 100 years ago. They more recently purchased 600 acres to be developed. This includes houses that will be sold and a luxury hotel. They hold over 300,000 acres of land in Florida close to Disney World and 95,000 acres in Alberta Canada. The Mormon Church owns in excess to 925,000 acres in North America. The appreciation of the property is probably the greatest hidden value in the Mormon Church.

"The total was estimated at conservative \$30 billion 10 years ago. (Ostling, Quinn). This was using conservative land and asset valuation. A former stock broker of the Morg reported that approximately \$200,000,000 was added to their investment portfolio each year.

"The for-profit real estate is very significant as well.

"The real estate division of the Church conducts brisk dealings in land. Zion's Security

Corporation, the church's commercial real estate arm, controls numerous office buildings in Salt Lake City, including regional headquarters for Kennecott Copper Company, J.C. Penney, Prudential Federal Savings and Loan, and many church facilities. It also owns the sprawling ZCMI (Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution) Mall in downtown Salt Lake as well as a controlling interest in the ZCMI store chain.

"Since 1977 a sister corporation, Beneficial Development Corporation, has taken over development work for the church, and has established several industrial parks in association with private developers in Florida, Arizona, Los Angeles, Hawaii and Utah.

<http://www.algonet.se/~daba/lds/cworth.htm>

"The current worth would be conservatively above \$60 billion, and if the current market value of holdings was added, it would likely be closer to \$100 billion.

"Charity

"Now a comparison of Morg charity and humanitarian aid. Ostling (in 'Mormon America') compared the Morg to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). They had a similar number of reported members in 1997. At that time, the ELCA had \$152 Million in assets that was primarily the pension fund for the employees. This is compared to the assets of the Morg as reported above. In 1997 the ELCA raised \$11.8 Million for humanitarian aid and \$3.64 Million for disaster relief for a total of 15.44 Million in cash donations for charity. In the 14 year period from 1984–1997 the Morg reported cash donations for non–Mormon charity at \$30.7 Million, or an average of 2.19 Million per year. This translates to ELCA donating a little over 10% (.10) of its holdings in 1997 and the Mormon Church donating approximately .2% (.002) of its holdings. Most businesses in the US have higher percentage charitable contributions than does the Mormon Church.

"Foreign Entities

"There is a number of ways that the Morg can shift income away from foreign subs to the main Corporation or vice versa. The information reported in foreign countries is most likely manipulated to show what TSCC wants to show. By selling books, temple clothing, magazines and equipment to the foreign entity at inflated or deflated prices, the income can be managed and changed significantly. The reporting from foreign subs, such as England does not give much of an indication of the health or wealth of TSCC.

("Mormon Finances and Charity," posted by "nao crer")

Finally, more recent information on how the Mormon Church is becoming one of Nebraska's biggest for–profit cattle–ranching land holders:

"Bison baron Ted Turner may own more private land in Nebraska than anyone else, but a cattle–ranching church is hot on his heels.

"Last month, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter–day Saints bought nearly 87,700

acres of the 126,200-acre Eldred Ranch in Garden and Morrill counties. The church, commonly known as Mormon, paid nearly \$16 million, said Garden County Assessor Janet Shaul.

"Although the Eldred family retains ownership of the remaining 38,500 acres, it is expected those acres will be sold to the Church as well.

"When the sale is finalized, the Church will own nearly 270,000 acres of ranchland in five Sandhills counties. Turner, who raises bison on his Nebraska ranches, owns about 320,000 acres in the state.

"But don't expect buffalo to roam the Mormons' land, said Robert Lamoreaux, vice president of livestock at Farm Management Co., the department of the church in Salt Lake City that oversees its extensive farm and ranch holdings.

"We run cattle ranches. We are the largest cow-calf operator in the nation.'

"Lamoreaux declined to discuss specifics about the Church's latest Nebraska acquisition to honor the Eldred family's desire to announce details at a future time. . . .

"The 87,700 acres sold to the Church was held by the Eldred family foundation, a charitable trust that benefits western Nebraska community projects. Attempts to reach a foundation representative were unsuccessful.

"The Eldred Ranch surrounds the Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge and is near one of Turner's largest bison ranches in Nebraska.

"While Lamoreaux avoided discussing the Eldred purchase, he said the church's other ranches in Nebraska raise cattle while taking care of the land.

"That's one of our objectives, to enhance the resource over time. If it doesn't get better, we're not doing our job,' he said.

"The Church bought its first Nebraska ranch 20,500 acres south of Whitman in Grant County in 1990. It has since bought additional properties in Garden, Hooker and Sheridan counties. The church, operating under the name Farmland Reserve Inc., manages its ranches to produce a return on its investment. Those returns help support global spiritual missions.

"Although its management structure may resemble a private corporation, the church's non-profit status earns it an exemption from the state ban on corporate farming/ranching.

"Still, the consolidation of such large tracts of land by a single entity should cause concern, said John Hansen, president of the Nebraska Farmers Union. The law seeks to protect the state's interest in having a diversity of resident landowners who live on and work their properties.

"It's hard for local folks to outbid an outside investor who has unlimited money,' Hansen said.

"In fact, the church always pays cash, Lamoreaux said, eschewing loans and debt."

("Mormon Land Holdings Rise," by Joe Duggan, "Lincoln [Nebraska] Journal Star," 2 October 2004, at:

http://journalstar.com/news/state-and-regional/article_5de7826d-51cb-5b5...)

And this:

"The LDS Church has become one of Nebraska's largest landowners with the purchase of 88,000 acres in the western part of the state that it will use to raise cattle.

"The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints paid \$17.6 million last month for the land south of Alliance, about 60 miles from the Nebraska-Wyoming border.

"Through its investment arm, Farmland Reserve Inc., the Church began buying land in Nebraska in the early 1990s and held more than 140,000 acres before its most recent purchase, said Robert Lamoreaux, vice president of livestock for Farmland Management Co., which manages the church's land holdings.

"We're in business for profit, and of course the profits go to the Church,' Lamoreaux said. . . .

". . . [T]he Mormon church--which is exempt from a state ban on corporate farms and ranches because of its nonprofit status-- is now a major player among Nebraska landowners.

"Church President Gordon B. Hinckley sees farm land as a safe investment that carries the potential of feeding people in a time of need, Lamoreaux said.

"John Hansen, president of the Nebraska Farmers Union, said deep-pocket out-of-state interests put smaller landowners--who need to borrow money to buy land--at a disadvantage.

"Smaller ranches are not able to make as much of a profit while paying off debt. That leads to some ranches being consolidated and ultimately the disappearance of rural communities, Hansen said.

"Lamoreaux said ranches owned by the Church aim to have a high quality product produced under environmentally sensitive conditions.

"Anybody can be big,' Lamoreaux said. 'We try and be good.'"

("LDS Church Buys 88,000 Acres in Nebraska," by "Associated Press," 7 October 2004, at: <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/1,5143,595096557,00.html>)

So, there you have it, brothers and sisters:

Forget about following the Messiah and His Prophet. Just follow the Money and Its Profit.

Yes, the Money.

You know, that "as-necessary" commodity in the supposedly "we-work-for-free" LDS Church. Now, what were you saying about that non-paid, non-professional Mormon thing

[Re: How Mormon General Authorities Are Paid \(2 Parts\)](#)

Posted by: danr ()
Date: January 22, 2016 05:03PM

My BIL that was an MP was paid \$35,000 a year for him to cover his expenses from his overhead, not counting what he was given in the mission home. Of course he and his family received free housing and food, with all travel paid.

He said that it all depended upon how much debt and how much money each MP had at the time they were called.