

## Recovery Board

Strengthening the Members Committee strengthens case against lying LDS cult [new](#)

Posted by: ^ Date: February 15, 2016 02:09PM

Below is an article cited in another thread, under the general heading, "Friends of the Strengthening the Church Members Committee":

"The Commandments of Men, Matthew 15,"  
posted by tomirvine999 [Tom Irvine),  
August 3, 2015  
<https://scmcfriends.wordpress.com/2015/08/03/the-commandments-of-men/>

see also "Friends of the Strengthening the Church Members Committee," Posted by: anybody, Date: February 15, 2016,  
<http://exmormon.org/phorum/read.php?2,1769765,1769765#msg-1769765>

"[1] Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

"[2] Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

"[3] But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

"[4] For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

"[5] But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;

"[6] And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

"[7] Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

"[8] This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

"[9] But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

"Isaiah 29:13:

""Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men,"

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The following was posted by steve benson, RfM, October 2013):

"Outting the Mormon Cult on Its "Strengthening the Members Committee"

"Let's examine the sophistry spun by the Mormon Cult on its secretive spy agency, otherwise known as the "Strengthening the Members Committee."

"In a [previous] thread, RfM poster ]anagrammy' wrote:

"I think Steve Benson has posted here about a division among the leadership regarding correlation and centralization. I have hazy memories and would invite Steve to post about that because in my mind, what was called 'The Committee' operated in the shadows with Gordon B. Hinckley at its head. He was the equivalent of the head of the CIA in our federal government. Presidents/Prophets come and go but the guy in the know is the head of the CIA or, in the Mormon Church, the head of the Committee.'

("Re: Who was Gordon B. Hinckley?," posted by "anagrammy," on "Recovery from Mormonism" discussion board, 26 October 2013)

"That's actually not any committee to which I was referring. As to what I had in mind, the following post by RfM contributor, 'Stumbling,' reviews claims made by Mormon apostle Jeffrey Holland and Mormon Church public relations director Michael Purdy regarding the nature of the LDS Cult's murky "Strengthening the Members Committee":

"In the recent BBC TV program, "The Mormon Candidate," reporter Michael Sweeney gained two senior confirmations of the current existence of this secretive (oops, sacred) sub-organization within the Mormon Church.

"The two people directly asked about this secret Committee were Elder Jeffrey Holland and Senior Church PR Manager Michael Purdy.

"In both cases, their initial reaction was to deny knowledge of this Committee (known as "lying"), but when pressed subsequently

confirmed that it does exist (known as 'being caught out in a lie').

"When asked about its purpose and modus operandi, Michael Purdy (after breaking eye contact, visibly shrinking in his chair and his face turning bright pink) stated that he didn't know anything about what it did.

"Elder Holland, on the other hand, had to be led to the answer that its primary purpose was to protect the Saints against Polygamists.

"Sweeney picked up on that and followed up by asking what its secondary purposes were.

"Cue Holland shifting uncomfortably in his seat and waffling for a short while.

"He then confirmed that it did also observe and monitor other people/members who might be a risk to the faith of the other members but that he didn't sit on the Committee and so didn't know the details of what it did.

"So what did we learn for sure about this Committee?

"1. It exists and operates today, right now.

"2. It monitors members who it perceives as not towing the line to the extent their behaviour may affect others.

"3. It is secretive and shadowy.

"4. It's activities are such that senior Church leaders are uncomfortable talking about it and would be, initially, prepared to lie about its existence and purpose.

"We can also surmise that:

"5. Tithing pays the wages of the people working full time for the Committee.

"ne.

"7. People like Grant Palmer and Michael Quinn have been victims of this Committee.'

("The Strengthening the Members Committee," posted by "Stumbling," on "Recovery from Mormonism" bulletin board, 28 March 2012, at: <http://exmormon.org/phorum/read.php?2,456450,456450#msg-456450>)

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"More on this LDS Cult-created committee:

"--'What Mormon Apostle Dallin Oaks Privately Told Me About the 'Strengthening the Members Committee'--

"First, as background, Oaks had, in an on-the-record interview with reporter Paul Brinkley-Rogers of the "Arizona Republic" (the newspaper for which I work), described the "Strengthening the Members Committee" as follows (recapped by "Sunstone" magazine):

" . . . [I]n the 'Arizona Republic,' Elder Oaks called the Committee's actions a "clipping service."

"It's a way of keeping busy bishops informed,' he told the "News." 'But it is up to the bishop to handle it. Bishops don't report back.' He said the information comes with no instructions to take specific action. He compared it to his teaching judges how to be judges during his tenure as a Utah Supreme Court justice, but not telling them what verdict to reach."

("News: Six Intellectual Disciplined for Apostasy," in "Sunstone" magazine, November 1993, p. 69, at: <https://www.sunstonemagazine.com/pdf/092-65-79.pdf>)

"But then Oaks proceeded to let the cat out of the bag:

"In addition, Oaks acknowledged that the 'Strengthening the Members Committee,' which some members liken to an intelligence agency but which Oaks calls a "clipping service," may have monitored speeches, writings and activities of those suspected of apostasy and passed on material to Church officials."

("Mormon Inquisition?: LDS Leaders Move to Repress Rebellion," in "Salt Lake City Messenger" #85, November 1993, at: <http://www.utlm.org/newsletters/no85.htm>)

"I had my own questions, among other things, about the 'Strengthening the Members Committee' so, at the invitation of LDS apostle Neal Maxwell, arrangements were made for me to chat with some of the guys at the top.

"In September 1993, I met twice with Maxwell and his fellow Quorum colleague Dallin Oaks in the offices of the LDS Church Administration Building in downtown Salt Lake City. The conversations took place during the same month that the Mormon Church had publicly disciplined (through excommunication or disfellowship) a half-dozen outspoken LDS critics of the Mormon way of doing things--a group that quickly became known as the 'September Six.'

"During the course of those close encounters, I asked Oaks and Maxwell several questions about Mormon Church history, doctrine, policy and practice. In preparation, I sent Maxwell (at his request) a list, broken into categories, of the subjects I wished to cover.

Maxell, on his own, then shared the list with Oaks, whom Maxwell also then asked to participate in the meetings in order to assist Maxwell in answering the questions.

"One of the category had the following capitalized heading:

"DOES THE CHURCH BELIEVE ANY GROUP OF MEMBERS IS EXPENDABLE? SHOULD THE CHURCH, AS HUGH B. BROWN ASKED, BE 'A MUSEUM FOR SAINTS OR A HOSPITAL FOR SINNERS?' AS EXAMPLES, SO-CALLED INTELLECTUALS AND SCHOLARS, FEMINISTS, GAYS AND LESBIANS HAVE RECENTLY BEEN ACCUSED OF LEADING THE CHURCH ASTRAY. THEIR PAINFUL AND PERSONAL EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN AND NEED HAVE BEEN MINIMIZED BY SOME CHURCH AUTHORITIES.]

"Oaks responded by defining 'apostasy.'

"He described it to me as 'clear, deliberate and open opposition to the Church or its leaders.' He said it involved 'persisting in teaching as Church doctrine when corrected otherwise by Church leaders.'

"Oaks defended Mormon Church disciplinary action against apostates, arguing that 'any organization has to draw the line. You can't ignore apostasy."

"He added, however, that those accused of apostasy 'can appeal.' He said, 'There are limits,' but assured me that those limits 'are clear and fair.' Oaks insisted that 'people can disagree in good faith.' He said that 'we don't want "telephone justice' (referring to the practice of a ranking Church leader picking up the phone and ordering a subordinate to take action against a member considered to be an apostate).

"Oaks said, however, that a stake president can ask for a meeting with a General Authority and that the General Authority 'can't turn him down.' Oaks said the General Authorities can 'relay information to local leaders' through the 'Strengthening the Members Committee,' but that 'they don't tell them what should be done.'

"In defending the existence of the 'Strengthening the Members Committee,' Oaks said there have been cases where bishops and stake presidents have been so "busy" that they 'didn't read newspapers about crimes committed by their members.' Oaks said that 'Sunstone stuff' goes into 'this kind of traffic.' (roughly translated: reading and supporting 'Sunstone' is a crime).

"I asked Oaks if the General Authorities had issued any kind of instructions to stake presidents on how to deal with apostates.

"Oaks said that there were three different area presidencies. I asked him if any of the Quorum of the Twelve had leaned on him to take action against apostates. He replied, 'No, but we have been dealing with them (apostates) for a long time.' He complained that 'Sunstone' had become 'shrill,' 'more pointed' and 'more confrontational' and was 'the straw that broke the camel's back.'

"In the end, Oaks said, in matters of personal belief, 'you should act independently by the Spirit, based on your evidence.' He argued that 'people take themselves out of the Church long before action is taken' against them. Oaks described it as a "sift" that is 'self-sifting.'

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"--More Proof that Mormon Inc. is Lyin' About Its Spyin'--"

"Oaks's benign version of the 'Strengthening the Members Committee' (and the similiar spin offered up by Holland and Murphy) has been proven to be quite deceptive, as subsequently shown con by blogger 'Mormon Heretic,' who details how claims by Oaks and Company simply don't square with the facts:

"A few months ago, I received an advance copy of a new book by Philip Lindholm called 'Latter-day Dissent: At the Crossroads of Intellectual Inquiry and Ecclesiastical Authority.' . . .

"The most interesting topic to me (outside of the excommunications [of the September Six"] themselves) was learning about the 'Strengthening the Church [Members] Committee' (SCMC). I had never heard of it before. In describing it, ["September Six" member] Lynne Whitesides said on p. 6:

""There is a 'Strengthening Church Members Committee' that we didn't know about at the time, a Gestapo-like group which press-clipped everything anyone said who might be considered an enemy of the Church, meaning one who disagreed with Church policy."

"Footnote 4 on p. 181 further clarifies this:

""According to Apostle Dallin H. Oaks, the 'Strengthening Church Members Committee' is a 'clipping service' that 'pores over newspapers and other publications and identifies members accused of crimes, preaching false doctrine, criticizing leadership or other problems. That information is forwarded on to the person's bishop or stake president, who is charged with helping them overcome problems and stay active in the Church." (quoted in 'News: Six Intellectuals Disciplined for Apostasy,' 'Sunstone' 92, November 1993, p. 69)

"The First Presidency further clarified the nature and history of the 'Strengthening Church Members Committee' when it stated, "This committee serves as a resource to priesthood leaders throughout the world who may desire assistance on a wide variety of topics. It is a General Authority committee . . . . They work through established priesthood channels, and neither impose nor direct Church disciplinary action." (quoted in 'News: Church Defends Keeping Files on Members,' in "Sunstone" 88, August 1992, p. 63)

"Many of those called in for investigatory interviews or discipline have claimed that this Committee is responsible for compiling incriminating evidence against targeted members.

"Here is what Donald Jessee, former employee of LDS Church's Public Affairs Department said when asked about the Committee. From pp. 217-220:

"Donald: "It's a committee that seeks information that, in time, if the proper action is taken, does just that--it can strengthen Church members through proper discipline."

"Philip: "How so? Many excommunicants have claimed that it collected files on them in preparation for potential disciplinary courts."

"Donald: "They do it by caring about members of the Church. Discipline designed to help members who have gone astray. The Church from its beginning has gathered anti-Mormon literature and derogatory or false information about the Church. If the source of this information comes from Church members of record, then action is taken. The Church must be aware of its critics and enemies. Again, Church leaders must keep the Church morally clean and ethically straight."

"Philip: "Should academics avoid publishing research if it could be understood as contradicting the Church's position on a given topic?"

"Donald: "Members can publish whatever they want. There's no censorship. It depends on the context and the person's motives in doing what has been done. If a BYU professor, whose salary is paid with Church funds and who has signed an honor code of conduct to keep university rules, then publicly goes out and violates them, then that person is subject to discipline, but he or she is free to speak about any issue he or she wants to."

"Philip: "What about those topics not yet given much attention by Church leaders? Do members have free reign on those topics? Thomas Murphy was nearly excommunicated for doing genetic research that the Mormon Church had yet to conduct. How much freedom is one afforded on such controversial but relatively unaddressed topics? Mother in Heaven is another example of a controversial topic upon which people have published and been punished for doing so."

"Donald: "Well, in the case of Murphy, he says that because of DNA he has proven that the Book of Mormon is not true. How does he know? There were other groups of people here in America before Lehi arrived here....How could DNA prove or disprove the truthfulness of a book brought here under the hand of God?" . . . I do not know anything regarding those who have been disciplined for publishing on the doctrine of a Mother in Heaven. Chances are they presented their ideas in a way that ran counter to true religion and to the Church and its teachings. Speculation on such matters can lead members astray and destroy faith in God the Father. Praying to a Mother in Heaven is not a true doctrine, no matter how it is defined or presented. It undermines faith in the true process of offering prayers, which is to pray to Heavenly Father in the name of Christ. Members can believe anything they want. Church members may believe they have a Mother in Heaven, but to go out teaching that we ought to pray to her, or that we give details about her when both the prophets and the scriptures are silent--this violates the teachings of the Church..."

"If Church members go to their friends and start talking about practicing plural marriage, they are not in harmony with the Church. Yes, there are some things where common sense says, "Don't discuss it in private or in public." Otherwise, hey, I've got the freedom to think anything I want, but I need to be careful that I'm not trying to represent the Church with my point of view or convince others that a certain doctrine or practice represents true religion or is what the issue or is what the Church teaches. As an individual, I can speculate all I want on any issue or topic as long as I keep to myself those matters that are not in harmony with truth and the Church and its teachings. If I am a prominent or well thought of member of the Church, and I present a paper in the name of religious freedom that one might consider worshipping idols, I can expect Church discipline. That doctrine is contrary to true religion and the teachings of God. To bring up controversial topics in meetings such as sacrament meeting, Sunday School, priesthood meeting, Relief Society, etc., could raise questions and jeopardize one's standing in the Church."

"Philip: "Yet Janice Allred was excommunicated in 1995 for her insistence on publishing a clearly speculative paper entitled, 'Toward a Theology of God the Mother.' Why was she disciplined for asserting her opinion?"

"Donald: "I believe I have already established the fact that I can't comment on Church discipline, as that is confidential and would violate privacy issues. As a member of the church, I don't know. I wasn't involved there and don't know the facts. Such a doctrine has not been revealed through a living prophet, and it is not appropriate to be a member of the Church and teach to others in any setting doctrines or practices that run counter to true religion and the Church and its teachings, such as practicing plural marriage or other theories that are not mainstream teachings of the living prophets."

"Mormon Heretic" comments:

"I really thought Whiteside's 'Gestapo-like' comment was a wild exaggeration, but after hearing what Jessee had to say, I'm not so sure. According to 'Wikipedia':

"The committee was formed during the administration of church President Ezra Taft Benson, soon after Benson became president in 1985. The existence of the Committee became known in 1991, when a 1990 church memo from General Authority Glenn L. Pace referencing the committee was published by an anti-Mormon ministry. The Committee was one of the subjects discussed in the 1992 'Sunstone Symposium' in talks by Lavina Fielding Anderson and Eugene England (then a BYU professor) on August 6, 1992. Soon thereafter, the 'Salt Lake Tribune' published news stories on the subject ("Salt Lake Tribune' August 8, 1992 and August 15, 1992). England came to regret his impulsive comments and apologized to all parties individually. In response to this public discourse, the LDS Church spokesman Don LeFevre acknowledged the existence of the committee. LeFevre said that [if] the Committee 'receives complaints from church members about other members who have made statements that "conceivably could do harm to the church," then the Committee will "pass the information along to the person's ecclesiastical leader.' According to LeFevre, however, 'the committee neither makes judgments nor imposes penalties.' Discipline is 'entirely up to the discretion of the local leaders.'"

"After reading all this, I wonder how much the Apostles monitor blogs. I find it a little ironic that President Benson started it. He was quite a conspiracy theorist . . . I keep hearing in different settings that the Church is much more open now, but I'm not so sure."

"For example, at a . . . conference at BYU, professor Ronald Esplin said this is one of the best environments to study Church history since the 'Camelot' era of the 1970s. However, discipline for intellectuals still seems to occur. The "Wikipedia" article mentions that in 2004, the Committee put together a dossier on Grant Palmer, author of 'Insider's View of Mormon Origins.' (Palmer was disfellowshipped).

"In the introduction, Lindholm notes on p. xii, that excommunications of academics has continued beyond the notorious 1993 "September Six":

""--In 1994, Professor David Wright of Brandeis University and editor Brent Metcalf were excommunicated for their scripture studies in 'New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology.'

""--In 1995, author Janice Allred was excommunicated for her writings about Mother in Heaven.

""--In 2000, Professor Margaret Toscano was excommunicated for her theological reflections, and

""--In 2002, Professor Thomas Murphy was nearly excommunicated for his anthropological work on Mormonism.

"--In addition, many other unnamed intellectuals were called into disciplinary interviews that did not result in excommunication.

"I know Simon Southerton resigned under pressure from the Church following his publication of information on DNA and the Book of Mormon. . . . I learned that John Dehlin, founder of "Mormon Stories," "Mormon Matters" and "StayLDS" was summoned to a meeting with his Stake President. He said the meeting went well, and solicited comments to his website.

"From my point of view, it bears a lot of parallels with Lynne Whitesides experience in 1993. John has . . . been interviewed on ABC and other news organizations. Lynne was called in to talk to her bishop following an interview with Chris Vanocur on Channel 4, KTVX. Here's what Lynne said on p. 4:

""In May when my bishop called me to come in to talk, I thought, 'Wow, this is great. Maybe the system does work. Maybe this Church really is a place where I can get comfortable.' I was very excited. I left early from my feminism class up at the University of Utah to meet with him. When I walked in, he was with his two counselors, all in suits, and I'm thinking, 'Wow, they really want me back at church. This is great!' I sat down, and Virgil Merrill, the bishop, said, 'Elder Loren C. Dunn has asked us to meet with you to see if we need to take any ecclesiastical action against you.' I started to laugh and couldn't stop. 'Give me a minute,' I said, 'I thought you called me in here because you cared about me. Let me just have a quick moment to adjust.' Their faces . . . you could see that what I has said shocked them, but then we had a lovely talk. It was not confrontational at all; it was amazing. At the end, Virgil said he was going to tell Dunn that I was fine. So, when I received the summons letter I was shocked."

"Philip: "Your bishop gave you no warning at all that you were going to be tried by a Church court?"

"Lynne: "No, nothing. When I found out, I called Lavinia [Fielding Anderson] immediately. . . . We also wrote a letter to the bishop saying that if he went through with the Church court, then we were going to let the media know. Virgil wrote back saying that he wanted to hold it. He didn't realize what he was getting into. He didn't realize how much press coverage it was going to get. We heard through the grapevine, he was getting pressure from [Boyd K.] Packer and other leaders to excommunicate me."

"Philip: "Can you elaborate on 'the grapevine'?"

"Lynne: "One of the bishopric counselors involved in my court was related to a reporter I knew. Both were at a barbecue once, and the counselor told the reporter, not thinking it would ever get back to me, that they were getting pressure from Church leaders to 'do something' about Lynne Whitesides. Well, it did get back to me, and I knew this going into the trial."

"Mormon Heretic" concludes:

". . . Let me end with a quick summary of things the Church apparently doesn't like us discussing:

"--Lynne Whitesides was disfellowshipped for "why I thought it was all right to pray to a female deity."

"--Paul Toscano was excommunicated for defending his wife Margaret. Basically Margaret was the real target. To save her, Paul blasted Church leaders and was excommunicated for insubordination. . . .

"--Maxine Hanks was excommunicated for her book, "Women and Authority."

"--Lavinia Fielding Anderson was excommunicated for documenting ecclesiastical abuse in the Church.

"--Michael Quinn was excommunicated for writing a chapter in Hanks book, "Women and Authority," and for a "Sunstone" presentation in 1992 called "150 Years of Truth and Consequences in Mormon History."

"--Janice Merrill Allred was excommunicated in 1995 for discussing God the Mother.

"--Margaret Merrill Toscano was excommunicated in 1995 for discussing God the Mother. (Note: Janice and Margaret are sisters).

"--Thomas Murphy was "nearly excommunicated in December 2002, proceedings halted indefinitely on February 23, 2003." Murphy wrote about DNA and the Book of Mormon. "Wikipedia" says, 'On February 23, 2003, Latimer informed Murphy that all disciplinary action was placed on permanent hold.' . . .Lindholm quotes Armaund Mauss in the introduction. Mauss is a retired Mormon sociologist from Washington State University. From page xxii:

"Even the most careful and diplomatic comments will not be much appreciated by many Church leaders, perhaps by most Church leaders, whether general or local. We have to understand that much going in. Do not expect to appear on the short list for bishop or Relief Society president if you have been regularly commenting on local or general Church matters. If prominent Church

positions are important to you, keep quiet. If you're going to speak up, whether in oral or written media, first cultivate thick skin, then abandon your aspirations for important Church callings; you shouldn't have them anyway. Finally, don't whine when you're passed over or looked upon with some suspicion.'

"Footnote 45 quotes Mauss as saying:

""I have come to feel increasingly marginal to the Mormon community during my adult life, at least in a social and intellectual sense, despite my continuing and conscientious participation in church activity (including leadership) and despite my own deep personal faith in the religion itself."

"Lindholm goes on to say on p. xxiii that:

""Mormonism is not alone in its desire to censor. Most Christian traditions--Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant alike--have a long history of disciplining vocal dissent, which is a practice supported by a rather strong biblical basis.. The LDS Church, however, is different in that its leaders actively discipline select members in order to sustain the appearance of doctrinal purity for the sake of the Church's integrity and public image."

("Mormon Heretic: Stuff They Don't Talk About in Sunday School," in "Book Review: 'Latter-day Dissent,'" at: <http://www.mormonheretic.org/2011/05/09/book-review-latter-day-dissent/>)

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"--Trust Me: The 'Strengthening the Members Committee' is Really Just a "Clipping Service" That Doesn't Spy. I Know. I Worked for Them. (So Insists Mormon Apologist Daniel Peterson)--

"Ironically, word leaked out about the actual undercover ops of the "Strengthening the Members Committee" on none other than FAIR's faithfully-fiction-fabricating website.

"Here's the report:

"A poster on FAIR brought up the "Strengthening the Church Members Committee," apparently disquieted that such a thing even exists. During the course of the thread, most posters . . . tried to pooh-pooh away the [original post's] concerns, labeling them "conspiracy theory," and generally making fun of the whole thing. But what's interesting is that Prof. Peterson himself has actually functioned as an 'agent' (his own word) for this Committee. Daniel Peterson wrote:

""[I] . . . was once sent out, a number of years ago, as a kind of 'agent' of the "Strengthening Church Members Committee." My mission? To try to help a member of the Church whose apostasy was threatening his marriage and causing anguish to his very active wife, children, and parents. (The wife and parents, and his stake president, has asked for help). The weapons of choice? Talking with him for about four hours in Salt Lake City, in the presence of his wife and stake president, and recommending some readings."

"Four hours? In a confined space? And he wants to claim that the SCMC is some kind of innocuous "newspaper clipping service"? He's got to be kidding. Further, his denials on the matter are of the "he doth protest too much" variety. Daniel Peterson wrote:

""It's not much more than a (very) small clipping service. Trust me on this one. There is no spying or covert action. No trappings of 'Mission Impossible.' No non-Scientologist Tom Cruise. Some critics have severely overheated imaginations."

("Daniel C. Peterson Admits Being An 'Agent' of the 'Strengthening Church Members Committee,]" quoted by "Contributor," under "Have Things Changed?," on "Mormon Dialogue & Discussion Board," 16 October 2006, at: [http://www.mormondialogue.org/topic/46809-have-things-changed/page\\_\\_st\\_\\_180](http://www.mormondialogue.org/topic/46809-have-things-changed/page__st__180))

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"--The Role of the Strengthening the Members Committee in Conspiring Behind the Scenes with the LDS Apologist Outfit FAIR to Go After David Twede

"Twede explains it all, in a blog post on 'Mormon.Think.com,' where he called out FAIR (a California-based apologetic club for the LDS Church) for being behind the outing of him to the Mormon Church's Salt Lake City headquarters. After getting the head-sup from FAIR, the Mormon Church then notified Twede's Orlando-area bishop and stake president, who then rapidly set up an excommunication hearing.

"Twede continues:

". . . [A]fter having some sleep, and now that the 'New York Times' article came out, I read statements by Scott Gordon, a Mormon apologist, that indicated he was behind turning me into the Church authorities. One of his statements has resolved me back to my original gut feeling--that this is probably in part about the LDS Church squelching my political speech. The reason is a little complex. Let me start with his particular quote from the NY Times:

""It has nothing to do with [politics]," Mr. Gordon said. . . . It's about him posting on a blog that he was actively in there trying to subvert people's beliefs in the LDS Church," Mr. Gordon said . . .

""If you've read my 'The Mysteries of the Gospel' blog, you will know that the only case Gordon had against me was that I wrote about emailing with 'Pat' who I indicated was a questioning member. I wrote:

""I decided to send Pat two links: The first link to 'Mormon Infographics' on the Book of Abraham, and a second one to FAIR's explanation of one of the facsimiles."

""Links included in this were:

<http://www.mormoninfographics.com/search/label/Facsimile>

[http://en.fairmormon.org/Book\\_of\\_Abraham/Joseph\\_Smith\\_Papyri/Facsimiles/Facsimile\\_3](http://en.fairmormon.org/Book_of_Abraham/Joseph_Smith_Papyri/Facsimiles/Facsimile_3)

""The latter is directly from Scott Gordon's own group, FAIR. In other words, I gave someone information that FAIR wrote. I find it extremely unlikely that this is what got the LDS Salt Lake leaders' panties in a bunch. If that were true, Scott Gordon would also be called in for disciplinary court."

(David Twede, quoted in ""\*\*MEDIA ALERT) 'War Worn': In an Open, Honest & Brave Acknowledgement, David Twede Says the Mormon Church Excommunication Court Against Him Is, In fact, Related to Mitt Romney\*\*", by Steve Benson, "Recovery from Mormonism" board, 22 September 2012: at: <http://exmormon.org/phorum/read.php?2,646928,646928#msg-646928>)

""In the following post put up by Twede on RfM, he further fingers FAIR as a whistle-blowing lapdog for the Mormon Church--adding that FAIR went after him with assistance from the Strengthening the Members Committee:

""I believe everyone involved from FAIR, the GAs and the stake leaders know clearly that using my [Mormon-related political] speech as the basis for excom would be a PR disaster. So you would never expect them to bring it up. Instead they will dance around anything they can find to halt the voices at [MormonThink]."

""My feeling is the timing is very suspicious. The interrogation mostly focused on why I hid my identity, at the 'MT.com' site where my only activity in the past week was about LDS political history. And they talked about my blog of which 3 of seven entries during that week were in fact about Romney. Specifics were not given. I asked what specifically was wrong with what I wrote, and I was told the tone and bias against the church was clear. The stake presidency never had the courage to really talk directly about specifics.

""On the other hand, Scott Gordon did attempt to side-track us by the following from the 'NYTimes' article:

""Scott Gordon, president of the Foundation for Apologetic Information and Research, an organization in Redding, Calif., that defends Mormon theology, said that he had forwarded materials posted by Mr. Twede to Church officials in Salt Lake City."

""That FAIR outed me by name and sent my material to SLC officials I have no doubt. In fact, there is evidence it may not have been Gordon, initially, at least that spied. At least two other members of FAIR, acting as de-facto members of the Strengthening Members Committee had a hand in the activities surrounding these events."

("Re: The mormonthink fiasco \*is\* about Romney - Dave correct me if I'm wrong," by David Twede, "Recovery from Mormonism" bulletin board, 22 September 2012, at: <http://exmormon.org/phorum/read.php?2,646557,646711#msg-646711>)

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""So, there you have it in the real world: Proof of the Mormon Cult's real-world dishonesty, snooping and retribution--brought to you by the likes of Oaks, Holland, Purdy, Peterson and Gordon, all prime exhibits of overheated LDS lying for the Lord in the unholy name of Mormonism's 'Strengthening the Members Committee.'"

Recovery from Mormonism  
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