

# LATTER-DAY SAINT PROPHETIC COUNSEL AND CURRENT CANDIDATES

## ROMNEY AND PAUL

“ Every Latter-day Saint might well ask ... is the proposal, the policy, or the idea ... right as measured by the counsel of the living oracles of God? ... Is it right as measured by the Constitution? ”

Ezra Taft Benson, “Our Duty as Citizens,” general conference, Oct 1954



Mitt Romney



Ron Paul

### NATIONAL DEFENSE (see also Foreign Military Action below)

**Pre-emptive war.** We believe that international difficulties can and should be settled by peaceful means, and that America’s great mission in the world is to bring this about. ... We do not believe that *aggression* should be carried on in the name and under the *false cloak of defense*.

First Presidency, Letter to the U.S. Treasury, 11 Oct 1941

There are, however, two conditions which may justify a truly Christian man to enter—mind you, I say *enter, not begin*—a war: (1) An attempt to dominate and to deprive another of his free agency, and, (2) Loyalty to his country. Possibly there is a third, viz., Defense of a weak nation that is being unjustly crushed by a strong, ruthless one.

David O. McKay, “The Church and the Present War,” general conference, April 1942



Favored pre-emptive invasions of Iraq, Libya without Congressional declaration of war; would strike Iran to prevent their obtaining nuclear weapons



Opposes pre-emptive war; would only strike another nation if attack was imminent and with a Congressional declaration of war

### SOCIAL WELFARE

**Social Security.** I have had some ... condemning me for not being in favor of the Townsend Plan [which led to social security]. ... To my mind it is in *direct opposition* to everything I have quoted from Brigham Young and from the revelations of the Lord. The idea of allowing every man and woman who has reached the age of sixty years and wishes to retire from working to get two hundred dollars a month from the government!

Heber J. Grant, general conference, 1936; quoted in *Gospel Standards*, p. 137

Social security ... should have been ... carried out ... under a *private setup*. The plan becomes threatening when it is made a central government operation. ... The Constitution does not authorize it.

J. Reuben Clark, *Church News*, 25 September 1949; quoted in Jerreld L. Newquist, *Prophets, Principles, and National Survival*, p. 364–65



Would reform but continue social security, gradually increasing retirement age and lowering the SS interest growth rate for those with higher incomes



Would let elderly receive their benefits, but eventually phase out federal funding and privatize social security



Mitt Romney



Ron Paul

**Mandated Health Care.** I am unalterably opposed to Socialism, *either in whole or in part*, and regard it as an unconstitutional usurpation of power and a denial of the right of private property for government ... *to regiment owners* in the legitimate use of private property.

Ezra Taft Benson, "The Proper Role of Government," 1968



Would repeal federally-mandated healthcare; began state-mandated health care as a governor



Would repeal federally-mandated healthcare; against state-mandated healthcare, but would let states decide

**Social Welfare.** If you Congressmen would save this nation, ... *cease to appropriate the national funds* to meet local wants and problems of welfare.

J. Reuben Clark, "Some Factors of a Now-planned Post-war Governmental and Economic Pattern," 7 October 1943; quoted in Jerreld L. Newquist, *Prophets, Principles, and National Survival*, p. 355

"What is the attitude of the Church on taking food stamps?" The Church's view on this is well known. We stand for independence, thrift, and *abolition of the dole*.

Ezra Taft Benson, "A Vision and a Hope for the Youth of Zion," BYU devotional, 12 Apr 1977; quoted in *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p. 262



Would reform but continue federal programs such as Medicaid



Would phase out federal welfare programs

## CIVIL LIBERTIES

**Personal Liberty.** I have always felt that the United States Constitution's closest approach to scriptural stature is in the phrasing of our Bill of Rights. ... [And also] in the right to be secure against *unreasonable searches and seizures*, the requirements that there must be probable cause for an arrest and that accused persons must have a *speedy and public trial* by an impartial jury, and the guarantee that a person will not be deprived of life, liberty, or property without *due process of law*.

Dallin H. Oaks, "The Divinely Inspired Constitution," *Ensign*, Feb 1992, p. 68



Favored the Patriot Act and National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which removed citizens' unqualified right to a speedy and public trial



Opposed the Patriot Act and National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA); would abolish the TSA

**Marriage.** The power to make laws on personal relationships is one of those powers not granted to the federal government and therefore *reserved to the states*.

Dallin H. Oaks, "Fundamentals of Our Constitutions," Utah's Constitution Day celebration, 17 Sep 2010

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints favors a *constitutional amendment* preserving marriage as the lawful union of a man and a woman. ["The statement applies to a federal amendment, to a Utah amendment, and indeed to any amendment to the union."]

First Presidency statement, 10 Jul 2004, LDS Newsroom



Opposes same-sex marriage; would seek a federal amendment defining marriage as between one man and one woman for all states



Personally opposes same-sex marriage; would leave it to each state to decide; considers a federal amendment inadvisable but Constitutional



Mitt Romney



Ron Paul

## ECONOMY

**Federal Reserve.** The very beginning of our troubles can be traced to the day when the federal government overstepped its proper defensive function and began to *manipulate the monetary system* [through] the creation of the Federal Reserve.

Ezra Taft Benson, *An Enemy Hath Done This*, pp. 213–14



Would reform but continue the Federal Reserve



Would first audit the Federal Reserve, then work to end it

**Bailouts.** I am for the private competitive market and against *unnecessary government intervention*. I am for private ownership and *against government ownership and control* of the means of production and distribution.

Ezra Taft Benson, "Our Freedom Is Threatened," 22 Sep 1962; quoted in Jerreld L. Newquist, *Prophets, Principles, and National Survival*, p. 364–65

Socialists ... describe how the government-owned industries, operating with government credit behind them, will begin to *choke off private enterprise*. They say, "Afterwhile the private producers will disappear, not because there will be any law against individualist production, but because they will not pay."

Ezra Taft Benson, *An Enemy Hath Done This*, pp. 335



Supported TARP, giving tax money to failing companies and making the federal government part owner



Opposes bailouts in all forms

## FOREIGN MILITARY ACTION

**Nation Building.** Nor is war justified in an attempt to *enforce a new order of government*, or even to impel others to a particular form of worship, however better the government or eternally true the principles of the enforced religion may be.

David O. McKay, "The Church and the Present War," general conference, Apr 1942

The United States should ... *avoid political connection*, involvement, or intervention in the affairs of other countries.

Ezra Taft Benson, *An Enemy Hath Done This*, p. 163



Supports invasion of Syria to overthrow its president



Supports a non-interventionist policy for all countries in order to respect their sovereignty

**Militarily Defending Foreign Countries.** Nothing in the Constitution nor in logic grants to the President of the United States or to Congress the power to influence the political life of other countries ... or even *defend them against their enemies*.

Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p. 614



Would increase military assistance and intelligence-sharing with Israel against Iran; would continue providing foreign military aid



Would end all military aid to Israel (as requested by its Prime Minister); would end all military aid to foreign nations, including Israel's enemies



Mitt Romney



Ron Paul

## FOREIGN RELATIONS

**Foreign Alliances.** Every treaty of alliance [such as] the United Nations Charter ... impairs our sovereignty, because every alliance requires a *surrender of rights*, since mutual aid in strictly non-sovereign interests, is the purpose of the alliance.

J. Reuben Clark, *Church News*, 20 Feb 1952; quoted in Jerreld L. Newquist, *Prophets, Principles, and National Survival*, p. 364–65



Supports U.S. membership in the United Nations and in NAFTA



Would seek to end U.S. membership in the United Nations and in NAFTA

**Foreign Aid.** Nothing in the Constitution nor in logic grants to the President of the United States or to Congress the power to influence the political life of other countries [or] to *feed their people*.

Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p. 614



Would end federal foreign humanitarian aid; would encourage private charities/philanthropies to continue aid



Would end federal foreign humanitarian aid; would encourage private charities/philanthropies to continue aid

**Foreign Commerce.** The United States should ... *promote commerce with all peoples* and countries.

Ezra Taft Benson, *An Enemy Hath Done This*, p. 163



Supports sanctioning countries, including Iran and Syria



Encourages open trade and exchange with all countries

## OTHER ISSUES

*Many modern prophets have clearly taught the evils of elective abortion, recreational drug use, prostitution, gambling, etc., even specifying that they should be illegal. However, we did not find quotes that addressed whether that should happen at the state or federal level. Thus, we were unable to address those issues in this chart.*

This chart does not represent the official position of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but rather our personal good faith effort to summarize contemporary issues as we currently understand them. We recognize that no brief chart is a substitute for detailed, ongoing study. We tried our best to get the candidates' positions right. We have nothing personal against Mitt Romney; we assume he's a great guy and certainly don't think that questioning his politics should mean impugning his worthiness. We also understand that prophetic counsel is frequently time- and context-specific, and that there may be other quotes from LDS leaders that we simply haven't yet come across, which may qualify or modify some of these topics. We don't claim to be experts; our main hope in creating this chart is simply to do what we can to help ourselves and others become more aware of inspired principles and counsel.