

JOHN BOOZMAN

3RD DISTRICT, ARKANSAS

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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

Washington, DC 20515

August 17, 2007

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The Honorable Gordon Hinckley  
President  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints  
35 North West Temple Street  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-9717

Dear The Honorable Hinckley,

I am writing to express my support for the Mountain Meadows Monument Foundation (MMMMF) and its efforts to secure federal protection for the Mountain Meadows Massacre site. It is very important to many of my constituents in Arkansas that the location be recognized and cared for in a respectful and historically significant way.

Victims of this Massacre were from at least three counties in my Congressional District: Carroll, Johnson, and Benton. Thoughts of this event remain in the hearts and minds of those families, as well as others in my District and our State.

As we approach the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this tragedy, I appreciate your consideration of the MMMF's request.

Sincerely,



John Boozman  
Member of Congress

JB: cb

MARK PRYOR

ARKANSAS

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## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 17, 2007

Honorable Gordon Hinckley, President  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints  
35 North West Temple Street  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150-3400

Dear Sir:

I write to express support of the Mountain Meadows Monument Foundation's efforts to secure protection for the Mountain Meadows Massacre site, which, as I understand it, is located on grounds owned by the Church. As you are aware, September 11, 2007, marks the one-hundredth and fiftieth anniversary of this tragedy. The victims were from Arkansas and the events that occurred at the site will forever remain inextricably tied to our State and its People.

In fact, there are many relatives of the victims that remain in our State and are my constituents. For them, the respectful remembrance and treatment of their ancestors' memories and graves has always been critically important. Specifically, the descendants desire access and protection of several sites that are currently unavailable to them because it is not on federally protected lands. I am asking for the Church's support in maintaining this historical site.

I am aware that the Church has a tradition of preserving and honoring the past. This is evident by the allowance of the designation of certain sites on Church property as National Historic Landmarks. I hope you will agree with me and the Arkansas descendants that the site of the Mountain Meadows Massacre is historically significant and deserves similar recognition and protection.

The upcoming anniversary presents a unique opportunity for finally obtaining closure on this tragedy. For many of the descendants, such closure cannot be had until they know the grave sites will be appropriately remembered and respected. I ask that you allow me to continue this dialogue with the Church to ensure meaningful protection for this site. I thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

Respectfully,



Senator Mark Pryor



## FIRST PRESIDENCY MOUNTAIN MEADOWS MASSACRE ANNIVERSARY STATEMENT IS THIS AN APOLOGY?

Dear Friends-

I speak today, by assignment, on behalf of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In so doing, I express their appreciation for the invitation to participate on this program.

It is important and appropriate that we meet together on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Mountain Meadows Massacre. We gather as relatives of the massacre victims and perpetrators and as unrelated but interested and sympathetic parties. We gather to remember and to honor those whose lives were taken prematurely and wrongly in this once lush and pastoral valley.

We believe it is our obligation to understand and learn from the past. For this reason, the Church responded favorably several years ago to the request of three experienced and able historians, Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Glen M. Leonard, to cooperate with their researching of a book about the awful event that occurred here a century and a half ago. The book they are writing is nearly complete and will be published in coming months by Oxford University Press under the title "*Massacre at Mountain Meadows.*"

Although they are Church employees, the authors have retained full editorial control and have drawn their own conclusions from the exhaustive body of historical material they assembled. They have been given full access to all relevant materials held by the Church. Two of the significant conclusions they have reached are (1) that the message conveying the will and intent of Brigham Young not to interfere with the immigrants arrived too late, and (2) that the responsibility for the massacre lies with local leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the regions near Mountain Meadows who also held civic and military positions and with members of the Church acting under their direction.

Although no event in history can fully be known, the work of these three authors has enabled us to know more than we ever have known about this unspeakable episode. The truth, as we have come to know it, saddens us deeply. The gospel of Jesus Christ that we espouse, abhors the cold-blooded killing of men, women, and children. Indeed, it advocates peace and forgiveness. What was done here long ago by members of our Church represents a terrible and inexcusable departure from Christian teaching and conduct. We cannot change what happened, but we can remember and honor those who were killed here.

We express profound regret for the massacre carried out in this valley 150 years ago today and for the undue and untold suffering experienced by the victims then and by their relatives to the present time.

A separate expression of regret is owed to the Paiute people who have unjustly borne for too long the principal blame for what occurred during the massacre. Although the extent of their involvement is disputed, it is believed they would not have participated without the direction and stimulus provided by local Church leaders and members.

We know, too, that many of those who carried out the massacre were haunted all their lives by what they did and saw on that unforgettable day. They and their relatives have also suffered under a heavy burden of guilt. No doubt Divine Justice will impose appropriate punishment upon those responsible for the massacre. Nevertheless, our continued prayer for their relatives is that knowledge of a God who is both just and merciful will bring a measure of peace to their souls.

In 1999, President Gordon B. Hinckley returned and joined with many of you in dedicating the monument that stands near our place of assembly today. The Church has worked with descendant groups since then to maintain the monument and surrounding property and continues to improve and preserve these premises and to make them attractive and accessible to all who visit. We are committed to do so in the future.

Having reflected and commented on both the past and future of this hallowed meadow, we conclude by expressing our love and desire for reconciliation to all who have in any way been affected by what occurred at Mountain Meadows 150 years ago today. May the God of Heaven, whose sons and daughters we all are, bless us to honor those who died here by extending to one another the pure love and spirit of forgiveness which His Only Begotten Son personified, is our prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

## *ODE TO MASSACRE VICTIMS*

*Poem read by Burr Fancher at 150<sup>th</sup> Commemoration*

*We come to this hallowed place,  
To honor those who went before;  
They were the pioneers of our race  
and creators of our family lore.  
Cattle, gold and earthly life,  
gone with the blink of an eye;  
Entire families brutally slain,  
amid the sound of the orphan cry.*

*From Spadra Landing and Beller Spring  
The wagons headed West;  
To seek new homes and better lives  
and then they stopped to rest.  
This quiet meadow in Utah  
seemed the perfect place;  
But evil walked this sacred ground  
to shame the human race.*

*Do your duty was the cry  
of sixty fiends from hell;  
They not only did their grisly task,  
they did it oh so well.  
Leaving seventeen sobbing orphans  
too young to tell the tale;  
What can we do as descendants  
to make it all seem well?*

*Bodies were stripped of clothes and gold  
And left scattered across the plain;  
Wolves and ravens did their part  
to desecrate those from the train.  
For 18 months they were treated  
Like garbage tossed to the wind;  
A Christian burial denied them  
without presence of kith or kin.*

*Major Carleton came to bury the dead  
And construct a Christian cross  
He investigated the cause of death  
And reported on the loss.  
Justice almost came here  
With a man named Cradlebaugh;  
But the politics in Salt Lake  
Forced him to withdraw.*

*There is the story of the orphans  
Stuck in the killer's lair  
Waiting for Dr. Forney and Captain Lynch  
To end their long despair*

*Old Jim Lynch found them  
And brought them across the plains  
To join their loving relatives  
All casualties of the wagon train.*

*I heard the story long, long ago  
as I sat at Grandma's knee;  
She shared her frontier philosophy  
of "what is to be will be."  
Grandma spoke of Colonel William Dame  
And a Bishop named Isaac Haight  
She recalled the name of John D. Lee  
And how he met his fate.*

*The human remains we honor today  
Have been ravaged by nature and man;  
Their grave torn down in 1861  
on the order of an upturned hand.  
Magotsu Creek also took it's toll  
When it washed the grave away;  
A backhoe incident in recent years  
was a further price to pay.*

*Many things remain undone  
the full story must be told;  
Its time to step up to the plate  
and with the truth be bold.  
We all know who did the awful deed  
and where the gold and cattle went;  
Making it part of a history class  
is time much better spent.*

*What was done so many years ago  
should now be left behind;  
What lies ahead for these tortured souls  
should be the challenge for our minds.  
Each of us has a viewpoint  
of where we need to go;  
It is time to reach consensus,  
our dead would want it so.*

## **I AM THE ROCK**

**Poem read by Diann Fancher at 150<sup>th</sup> Commemoration**

I am the Rock that has been from the foundation of the earth.  
I have felt the wind's breath.  
I have felt the sun's warmth.  
I have felt the rain's strength.  
I have felt the grass' growth.  
I am the Rock that cries out.

I have felt the warmth of the innocent blood that fell on me in September of 1857.  
I felt the tears of the children.  
I felt the footprints of the murders.  
I felt the footprints of the innocent.



I am the Rock that was moved in 1859, to cover up the broken flesh of those that lost their future.  
I am the Rock that cries out.

I am the Rock that held up that cedar cross.  
I am the Rock that was thrown aside with vengeance,  
by Brigham Young in May of 1861.  
I have not found the rest that is needed to heal all that I have witnessed.  
I am that Rock that still has the bloodstains of the innocent from Arkansas.  
I am that Rock that needs to be put in place after 150 years of unrest.  
I am that Rock that cries out.

I am the Rock that needs to hear the words that they are sorry for shedding innocent blood.  
I am the Rock wet with tears from then to now.  
I am the Rock that needs to see the seeds of those children that were returned home in September of 1859.  
I am the Rock that calls out for peace for all generations to come.  
I am the Rock that seeks words from the Mormons asking forgiveness that will allow my innocent blood to be at rest.  
I am the Rock that cries out.

I am the Rock that desires to see the seeds of today to be at peace.  
I am the Rock that has felt the wind, the sun, and the rain from the foundation of this earth.  
I am the Rock that desires to lay in this meadow by a quiet stream.  
I am the Rock that needs to give an account, that on this day  
September 11, 2007 peace was made.  
I am the Rock that knows the desires and dreams of this generation of descendants, must put to rest the pain  
and their losses.  
I am the Rock that cries out.

I am the Rock of Mountain Meadows.

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**Membership Application**  
**Mountain Meadows Monument Foundation, Inc.**  
**8002 Wind Rock Lane**  
**Harrison, AR 72601**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Connection to Mountain Meadows** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues: \$20 per family**  
**\$250 lifetime membership**

**PLEASE GIVE THIS TO A FRIEND AND HELP EXPAND OUR MEMBERSHIP**