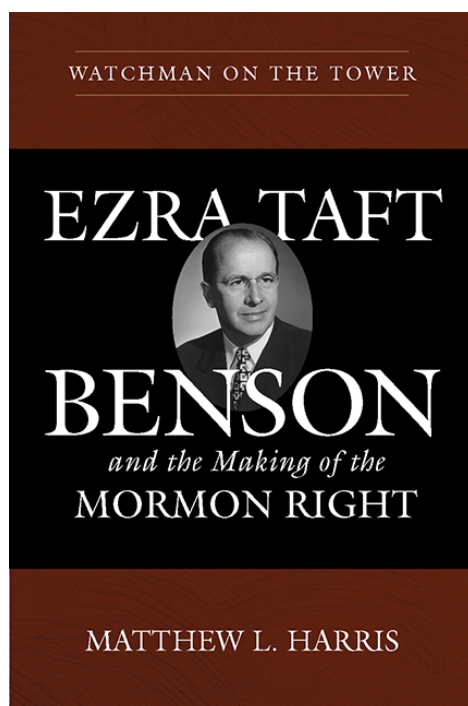


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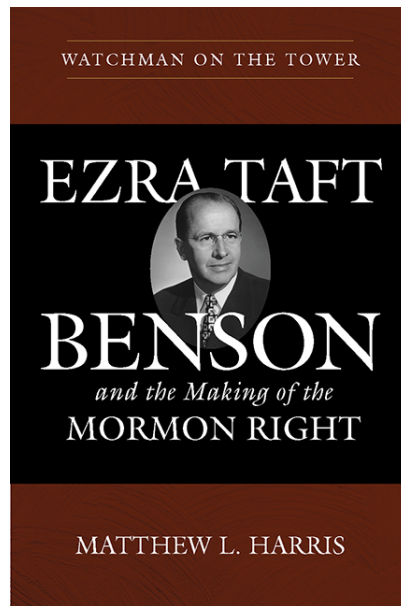
By Matthew L Harris



Ezra Taft Benson is perhaps the most controversial apostle-president in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. For nearly fifty years he delivered impassioned sermons in Utah and elsewhere, mixing religion with ultraconservative right-wing political views and conspiracy theories. His teachings inspired Mormon extremists to stockpile weapons, predict the end of the world, and commit acts of violence against their government. The First Presidency rebuked him, his fellow apostles wanted him disciplined, and grassroots Mormons called for his removal from the Quorum of the Twelve. Yet Benson was beloved by millions of Latter-day Saints, who praised him for his stances against communism, socialism, and the welfare state, and admired his service as secretary of agriculture under President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Using previously restricted documents from archives across the United States,

Matthew L. Harris breaks new ground as the first to evaluate why Benson embraced

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