

Subj: (no subject)
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From: GoghHyde
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Subject: Joseph Smith

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>> Dave Stump writes:

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>> WASHINGTON - It was a sight and honor that Joseph Smith -the often
>> persecuted, often jailed and eventually murdered Mormon prophet -
>> likely never imagined..

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>> But a crowd of Washington's elite - including diplomats from 20
>> countries, senators, House members and top business leaders -gathered
>> Wednesday to preview a new PBS documentary about him..

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>> And another Mormon prophet - current LDS Church President Gordon
>> B. Hinckley - thanked God that he lived long enough to see such
>> interest in Joseph Smith and a balanced national show about him,
which

>> is narrated by famed actor Gregory Peck..

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>> "I'm an old man now. I feel like the last leaf on the tree with the
>> wind blowing. I am just grateful to have lived to see this day,"
>> 89-year-old President Hinckley told the crowd..

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>> "American Prophet - The Story of Joseph Smith" is scheduled to air
>> nationally on PBS on Nov. 26. But the J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott
>> Foundation, which funded it, held a reception and preview for it
>> Wednesday at Washington's J.W. Marriott Hotel.

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>> The International Affairs Office of The Church of Jesus Christ of
>> Latter-day Saints invited ambassadors who were hosted by LDS

members

>> of Congress; apostles Dallin H. Oaks and M. Russell Ballard; and
>> well-known LDS members such as Brent Scowcroft (national security
>> adviser for Presidents Ford and Bush)..

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>> While President Hinckley noted that Smith suffered much persecution,
>> he said, "I'm just delighted that those times of great stress and

>> misunderstanding and persecution . . . have passed, that we live in a
>> new age and in a new time when there is . . . respect and there's a
>> measure of civility and there's an eagerness to understand the great
>> characters of the past, including this young man (Smith)."

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>> "He represents to me a magnificent man who did a magnificent
>> work. Joseph Smith's lengthened shadow extends through all the
history

>> of this church now and all across the world," President Hinckley
>> added.

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>> He noted that the church Joseph Smith started now has almost 11
>> million members. "I think by Dec. 31 of this year, we'll pass the 11
>> million mark. Maybe not quite, maybe. But if we don't make it this
>> year, we'll make it next year."

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>> He said it also has the largest missionary corps and building program
>> of any church. "I know of no other organization so vital, so alive, so
>> forward-moving as this church, which came of the genius of
inspiration

>> of the Prophet Joseph Smith."

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>> Dan Harvey with Vermont Public Television - sponsor of the program,
>> from the state where Joseph Smith was born - said the program about
>> Smith fascinates him, even though he is an Irish Catholic..

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>> "This was a man who was in equal parts celebrated and reviled, loved
>> and hated, welcomed and banished. I suppose you could say it is
>> symbolic of what is both good and bad about religious tolerance in
>> America," Harvey said..

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>> Lee Groberg, producer of the show, said the two-year project sought

- >> balance and includes views from LDS and non-LDS scholars about Smith's
- >> life..
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- >> Groberg, who is LDS, said he found it a "moving opportunity" to learn
- >> more about Smith and "to understand that a small, humble plowboy from

- >> Palmyra, N.Y., claimed to have seen God and his son Jesus Christ. I
- >> don't think he set out to do anything that would bring glory to him
- >> but rather felt compelled to share what he learned."
- >>
- >> President Hinckley said Smith "is a great character of the history of
- >> this nation and in this land. This church has become the largest, the
- >> most vital, the most viable, the strongest religious organization to
- >> ever come forward on American soil. To me that is a very remarkable
- >> and interesting thing."
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