

Document 7: Deseret News Article

Source: Part of an article published in the Desert News on December 27, 1882. Revised using ChatGPT for easier reading.

A BILL FOR THE STATEHOOD OF UTAH

Senator A. Saunders, from Nebraska, has introduced a bill (according to the news) on Wednesday to make Utah a state in the Union. We can expect that newspapers across the country will get very worked up and once again say for the 999th time that polygamy will never be accepted by the United States. Senator Saunders will probably be attacked as someone who supports polygamy just because he introduced a bill for Utah's statehood.

But actually, polygamy doesn't really have anything to do with this issue.

After a long time, maybe reporters will finally realize that the big scary issue of the marriage practices of the Latter-day Saints (Mormons) doesn't really belong in the political discussion about whether Utah should be a state or not. Polygamy is not part of Utah's political system, it's not in their laws, and it doesn't ask to be treated as a government matter. It's completely a religious issue, based on church ceremonies and guided by spiritual beliefs.

The polygamy issue is brought into the debate about Utah's statehood by people who want to keep Utah as a territory so they can use it for political favors and keep jobs for people who want to work in government just to make a living.

Original

A BILL FOR THE STATEHOOD OF UTAH.

SENATOR A. SAUNDERS, of Nebraska, so the dispatches inform us, introduced a bill on Wednesday for the admission of Utah into the Union as a state. We may naturally expect that the press of the country will become very much excited and lay down the proposition for the 999th time that polygamy will never be recognized by the United States. Senator Sanders, too, will doubtless be assailed as the champion of polygamy, for introducing a measure looking to Utah's statehood. And yet polygamy has nothing really to do with the question. ...

After the space of many days, it may dawn upon the minds of journalists that the great bugaboo of the marriage relations of the Latter-day Saints does not properly enter into the political status of Utah as a territory or a state of the Union. It forms no part of her political organization, does not enter into her laws, asks for no recognition as a secular system, but is wholly and entirely an ecclesiastical question, regulated by sacerdotal rites and governed by religious motives. The

polygamy question is lugged into the consideration of Utah's statehood, by those who desire to keep this territory in a condition which offers an opportunity or rewards to political hangers-on, and a chance for a living to the professional office holder and office seeker.

Original found at

https://newspapers.lib.utah.edu/details?id=2640705&q=Utah+statehood&sort=rel&year_start=1882&year_end=1885