

All Worthy Male Members

Priesthood of LDS Opened to Blacks

By Charles J. Seidin
Tribune Staff Writer

Acting on what they said was a revelation from God, members of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints said Friday all worthy male members of the priesthood may be ordained to its priesthood without regard for race or color.

The edict, issued to all church

officers, by President Spencer W. Kimball along with his counselors, N. Eldon Tanner and Marion G. Romney, thus lifts the ecclesiastical ban on blacks holding leadership positions within the church.

In a terse, four-paragraph message to officers throughout the four-million-member church, the First Presidency said the revelation came after they had pleaded long and earnestly in behalf of

these, our faithful brethren, spending many hours in the upper room of the temple supplicating the Lord for divine guidance.

"He has heard our prayers, and by revelation has confirmed that the long-promised day has come when every faithful, worthy man in the church may receive the holy priesthood, with power to exercise its divine authority, and enjoy with his loved ones every blessing that flows therefrom, including the blessings of the temple.

'Makes Will Known'

"Accordingly, all worthy male members of the church may be ordained to the priesthood without regard for race or color," the communication read in part.

The First Presidency also declared "with soberness that the Lord has now made known His will for the blessing of all His children."

The exclusion was based on a teaching of church founder Joseph Smith, with reference to the Book of Abraham that people of African lineage bore the "Curse of Cain" and could not hold the priesthood until the Lord spoke through revelation.

When racial tensions erupted into violence during the 1960s, the church, through its institutions, mainly Brigham Young University, was the subject of repeated protests, particularly at athletic events.

The last three years have also seen repeated attempts by church dissidents to subpoena Mormon leaders into court proceedings, with the central issue often related to the church's belief about blacks.

Although the communication was the only information released by the LDS Church, President Kimball, in an interview after assuming the leadership in 1973, said he had given the restriction regarding blacks "a great deal of thought, a great deal of prayer."

'Matter of Revelation'

"The day might come when they would be given the priesthood, but that day has not come yet," he said five years ago. "Should the day come, it will be a matter of revelation. Before changing any important policy, it has to be through a revelation from the Lord."

"But we believe in revelation. We believe there are yet many more things to be revealed from the Lord. . . . We are open to the Father on every suggestion that He gives us, to every direction He gives us, to every revelation of desire for change."

Reaction among leaders of the 50 or so blacks in the Salt Lake Valley who belong to the church was one of elation.

Monroe Fleming, a quiet-spoken convert of more than 25 years, and a popular speaker at church functions and civic organizations, said he had "yearned for this day. . . prayed for this day."

"If the church is to be what it ought to be, I expected it," he said in response to a question about whether he would see

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Young Palestinian gunmen inspect debris from attack in Aaqbiye, South Lebanon, Friday. houses destroyed in Israeli commando surprise. Israel claimed the village was a guerrilla base.



Al Fatah guerrilla group's top military commander, Abu Jihad, foreground, walks with guerrilla guard through ruins of Aaqbiye. Israeli attack killed and wounded several persons.

Israelis Rock Palestinian Base With Attack From Sea and Air

AAQBIYE, Lebanon (AP) — Israeli commandos landing in darkness from the air and sea devastated a Palestinian seacoast base in this fishing village Friday. Israel called it a pre-emptive attack on guerrillas planning seaborne terror raids on Israel.

Abu Jihad, commander of Al Fatah guerrillas in Lebanon, said the garrison was caught off guard. He said its defenders killed 10 Israelis and lost five "martyrs."

The military command in Tel Aviv, however, said only two Israeli lieutenants were killed and eight raiders

wounded in a brief but bloody attack that destroyed what it said was a guerrilla naval base. It said the attackers counted eight Palestinian bodies and believed more were killed when the Israelis dynamited the base.

Other Casualty Reports

Independent United Nations sources said four Israelis were killed. Local hospital officials said they saw the bodies of five Palestinians.

"Of course they caught us off guard," said one of about 40 guerrillas milling around the ruined camp later in the

day. "Everyone was asleep except for two guards."

"More of us would have been killed if we had been in the main house at the time," said one of the defenders, pointing to a bullet-scarred building in the center of the walled compound. "We were sleeping under the trees," said the guerrilla, who refused to be identified.

Palestinians said the bodies of six Lebanese laborers were buried under the rubble of one dynamite-demolished house, but this could not be confirmed until the wreckage was cleared.

Denies Israeli Claim

Jihad told reporters 19 guerrillas manned the outpost. The Israeli military spokesman estimated the number at 30 to 40. Jihad denied it was a naval base or a staging area for attacks on the Jewish state.

"This is not a major base at all. We have some people here just as we have them scattered all around the area," said Jihad. No. 3 man in the hierarchy of Al Fatah, largest guerrilla faction in Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization.

In Tel Aviv, the Israelis said they had evidence the coastal base was being used to prepare for attacks on Israel "in the near future."

Palestinians said the raiders came in helicopters and rubber boats and used "satchel" bombs to blast three seaside houses.

The attack on Aaqbiye, 20 miles north of the Litani River, was the deepest Israeli invasion since its March 15th invasion of southern Lebanon in which it occupied 500 square miles south of the Litani.

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Church Officials Applaud LDS Action on Blacks

By Robert Bryson
Tribune Staff Writer

Salt Lake City church leaders Friday applauded the decision of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to open its priesthood to all worthy men — including blacks.

However, a well-known educator at the University of Utah said he expected the decision sooner, based on discussions he had with former LDS Church President David O. McKay.

A man exempted from the church for baptizing a black and giving him the priesthood before the church changed its policy said the decision is "meaningless unless it actively pursues proselyting among blacks."

Bishop Otis Charles, Episcopal diocese of Utah, said, "I think we should share the joy that must be in the hearts of many people at this decision. It has always been the concern of catholic Christians that every person baptized shares in the fullness of the life of the church and it is most timely because next weekend we will have Dr. Charles Lawrence, president of the House of Deputies of the Episcopal Church, New York, visit here.

"He is the highest ranking lay officer in the church and is black. His presence will be much more significant because of this," he said.

Bishop Charles noted that the Episcopal Church wanted to hold its convention in Salt Lake City in 1979 but at the convention, held in 1973 to determine the site, it was "the feeling in the church that as long as this prohibition to full participation in the life of the church existed, he could not bring the convention here. This was a disappointment, but nevertheless reflects the reality of feeling that was present within the church at large.

"This decision will open up new possibilities of understanding, cooperation and awareness," he added.

Rev. Karl D. Schimpf, First Congreg.

ational Church and president of the Salt Lake Ministerial Association, said.

"I am pleased for the black persons that might be members of the LDS church, but coming within the context of Judeo-Christian heritage, I see this in the context of a faith that has always affirmed the worth of each individual, regardless of race or creed. In view of any religious moves that will direct mankind toward the ultimate goal of brotherhood of man," he said.

Rev. Msgr. W.H. McDougall, director, Bureau of Information, Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake and rector of the Cathedral of the Madeleine, said:

"This is an indelible matter of the Mormon Church and, therefore, I don't

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Offers Own Proposals

Carter Rekindles Feud With Congress On Water Projects, Threatens Veto

By James Phillips
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Carter rekindled his feud with Congress over water projects Friday by asking for funds to begin construction on 26 projects and threatening to veto an existing House water projects proposal.

Carter's request marked the first time in four years that the White House has called for starting construction on water projects. The total construction cost of Carter's projects was estimated at \$718 million, half the estimated \$1.4 billion total cost of the 41 projects included in the House bill.

Carter's proposed projects are for flood control, navigation, hydroelectric power, recreation and wildlife habitat. None are considered controversial. The entire list could be described as small potatoes.

Eliot R. Cutler, associate director of the Office of Management and Budget, said Carter "is firm in his intention to veto a bill which is not in line with his budget."

The House Appropriations Committee already has gone well beyond the president's budget for ongoing projects, including the restoration of a number of unsound projects which the Congress agreed to halt last year," he said.

Carter's proposal calls for the Corps of Engineers to build 17 of the projects and the Bureau of Reclamation to construct or provide the funds for nine.

In addition, he is asking for \$75 million for the Soil Conservation Ser-

vice to undertake 25 small watershed projects.

Of Carter's 26 projects, however, only six are what could be described as

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"new." The House committee bill includes funds for 20 of them.

Today's Chuckle

Washington bureaucrats have finally figured out how to balance the budget. They're going to tilt the country.

By Linda Deutsch
Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — The search for a valid Howard Hughes will resumed with new vigor Friday after a jury rejected as a forgery the only purported will that has been tested in court.

More bizarre chapters promise to follow, and an attorney for the eccentric tycoon's family is now saying there may be no will at all.

Thursday night, a jury which had heard nearly seven months of testimony ruled that the so-called Mormon Will — which would have left \$10 million to a gas station attendant — was a fraud.

The will's proponent, attorney Harold Rhoden, said he would not appeal, and Nevada authorities said they have no

plans to prosecute in the case.

But 35 to 40 other purported wills already are on file with the courts, not to mention actress Terry Moore's claim that she was secretly married to Hughes and is an heiress, and an effort by two former Hughes executives to probate a will that they say no longer exists.

James Dilworth, the Hughes' family attorney, said the first job will be to try to dispose of some of those claims.

"It may take two or three years before we overcome these obstacles," he said. But with Thursday's verdict, he added, "We're one step closer to having the estate administration concluded."

"Our first concern will be another will matter — the claim of Howard Hughes Medical Institute," said Dilworth. He said two trusted executives of

Hughes' Summa Corp. — Frank "Bill" Gay and attorney Chester Davis — have filed suit to probate "a lost or destroyed will" which would leave Hughes' estate to the medical institute.

"It's most unusual," Dilworth said, "but there is a statute that covers such things. . . . They need two witnesses who saw the guy write the will. As of now, they don't even have one."

"If a legitimate will is found now," Dilworth said, "our position is we will not contest it. We will have to be convinced, of course, that it's legitimate."

But he also said that solving the riddle will be as difficult as solving the mysteries surrounding Hughes' eccentric lifestyle.

"My guess is if we ever find a will, it

will be a very old one," he said. "Based on what I now know, he was a man who in the latter 10 or 15 years of his life could not bring himself to think about death. I won't say he thought he was immortal, but I'm convinced he didn't think about death or wills in his later years."

"Hughes did a lot of amazing things a lot of times," Dilworth said. "Who could stay cooped up in one room for all those years? Nevertheless, he did it."

"You have to weigh these things in considering whether he wrote a will in his later years. . . . We have no evidence from anybody that he worked on a will after the 1950s."

If there is no will, the estate would be split among those people whom a court

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Saturday's Forecast

Salt Lake City and Vicinity — Variable cloudiness Saturday with cooler temperatures. Gusty winds, slight chance of rain. See weather details on page D-2.