

prayers to that end. There followed personal interviews between President Kimball and members of the Twelve to discuss the matter. President Kimball continued to spend many hours alone in the temple, imploring the Lord for guidance.

On May 4, 1978, following a council meeting, Elder LeGrand Richards asked President Kimball for the privilege of saying a few words. He told the Brethren that during the meeting, he had seen a personage seated in a chair on the organ. He said he thought it was President Wilford Woodruff. "He was dressed in a white suit and was seated in an armchair," reported Elder Richards. "I thought at the time that the reason I was privileged to see him was probably that I was the only one there who had ever seen President Woodruff while he was upon the earth. I had heard him dedicate the Salt Lake Temple and I had heard him give his last sermon in the Salt Lake Tabernacle before he died." (Lucile C. Tate, *LeGrand Richards: Beloved Apostle*, p. 292.) The significance and timing of this appearance are apparent. Here, appearing through the veil in the upper room of the temple, was the prophet who, almost a hundred years before, had wrestled with a critical problem, plural marriage, which was resolved by revelation, the same way the problem President Kimball faced would be resolved.

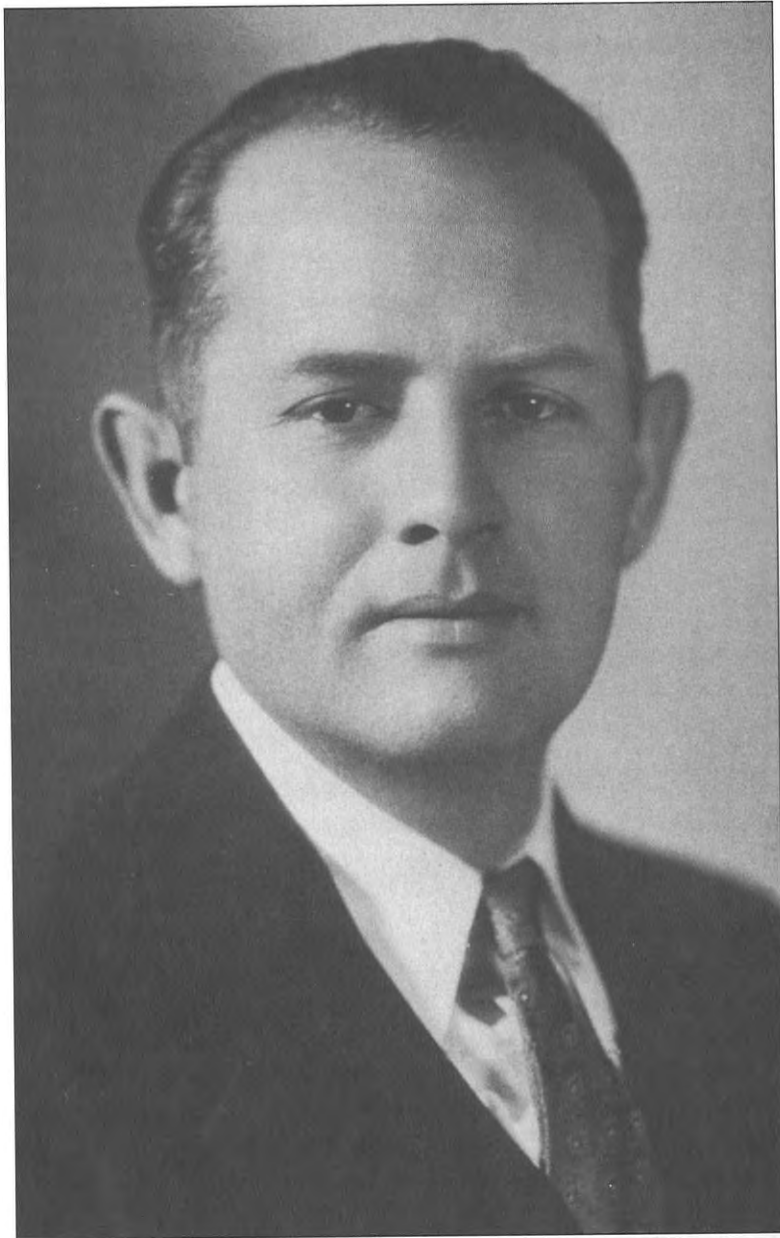
The week following this incident, President Kimball again spent several hours alone in the Salt Lake Temple, asking the Lord for guidance. On Tuesday, May 30, 1978, President Kimball read to his counselors a tentative statement he had written in longhand removing all priesthood restrictions from blacks except those restrictions as to worthiness that rest upon all alike. He said that he had a "good, warm feeling" about it. There was a lengthy review of the statements of past leaders about the restrictions on blacks. It was decided that this aspect of the matter should be researched in detail. Elder G. Homer Durham, who was serving as the Church historian, was asked to do this. Also, the luncheon in the temple for the following Thursday was

canceled. Instead of eating lunch, the Brethren were asked to fast and pray that the Lord would make his mind and will clear in this matter.

On Thursday, June 1, 1978, following the meeting of all General Authorities, the First Presidency and the Twelve (Elders Mark E. Petersen and Delbert L. Stapley were absent) counseled for two hours about the restrictions on the priesthood. Each member of the council expressed himself freely on the subject. In the discussion, the feeling was unanimous that the time had come to lift the restrictions. And following the prayer at the end of the meeting, which was offered by President Kimball, several present mentioned the powerful, confirming spirit they felt.

On Wednesday, June 7, 1978, President Kimball advised his counselors that through inspiration he had decided to lift the restrictions on priesthood. At that time, letters were read from three members of the Twelve, which President Kimball had requested, containing suggested wording for the public announcement of the decision. Using these three letters as a base, a fourth statement was prepared and then reviewed, edited, and approved by the First Presidency. This document was taken to the council meeting with the Twelve on Thursday, June 8, 1978. At this meeting, President Kimball advised the Twelve that he had received the inspiration to make the priesthood available to all worthy male members of the Church, whereupon the document was read and, with minor editorial changes, was approved. Later in the day Elder Mark E. Petersen approved by telephone from South America, and Elder Delbert L. Stapley approved when President Kimball visited him in the hospital. The statement, of course, was merely a memorandum of the revelation President Kimball had received by the spiritual means already described.

The next day, Friday, June 9, 1978, all the General Authorities who were in the city and available assembled at 7:00 A.M. President Kimball announced the decision to lift priesthood restrictions, had the statement read, and invited



Spencer W. Kimball in 1936

SPENCER W. KIMBALL

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*To the members of the Church
in Brazil, who loved
President Kimball
and who claimed him as
one of their own.*