

Dec 29 1973

Journal  
of a Prophet

to the Twelve ever to be called and at the same time that President Lee became a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

"We shall now hear from President Nathan Eldon Tanner who has been Counselor to three Church presidents and a loyal, faithful First Counselor to President Harold B. Lee.

I then made announcements and announced the closing number to be President Lee's favorite "Still, Still With Thee," by Harry Roe Shelley, sung by the Tabernacle Choir.

The benediction will be pronounced by Elder D. Arthur Haycock who has been very close to President Lee throughout his term in the Presidency. One could hardly be more efficient, kind, and considerate and helpful and has gone far beyond the point of duty.

We of the General Authorities walked down to the north door and lined up inside the building so that the remains of President Lee could go through and then the family. We then went to our cars and drove to the cemetery. It was sprinkling or raining most all of the time, and then when we got to the cemetery we were given umbrellas and we stayed in a close circle around the grave while the son-in-law, Brent Goates, gave the dedication prayer.

We returned to the office, took care of some little business and then came home.

*Bad Day Rain and Snow*

After an hour or so we went to the home of John and Velma Simonsen for dinner, being picked up by Brother and Sister Lynn Layton. We had a very pleasant evening with them.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1973, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

This morning I had a long interview with Wendell Ashton, trying to get me prepared for the interview and press conference on Monday morning.

*Church reorganized*

We were invited to Olive Beth's home for dinner but found the roads so dangerous that we remained home. At 2:15 Brother Stapley called for me and for Brother Petersen and the three of us rode to the Church Offices and then to the temple. All of the 14 Apostles were present, President Romney in fifth place, President Tanner between Brother Hinckley and Brother Monson. We sang "Come Let Us Anew Our Journeys Pursue," and I played the organ and then called upon Brother Marion G. Romney to offer the opening prayer. I spoke without notes for a little while, expressing my deep humility, my great sorrow, the unexpected nature of the changes that were coming and my own limitations and smallness and compared myself as a pigmy to President Lee as a giant.

We then went to our rooms to dress for the prayer circle and I asked Elder Delbert L. Stapley and Gordon B. Hinckley to administer the sacrament. Then I asked President Tanner to lead the prayer circle and Brother Thomas S. Monson to pray at the altar. We then changed our clothes and returned to the room. I explained to the brethren that it was the Council of the Twelve Apostles that now had leadership in the Church and that we could continue our service in that capacity or we could reorganize and that there had been 3½ years between the death of Joseph Smith and the ordination of Brigham Young and three years and two months between Brigham Young and John Taylor and 11 days between Johnson Taylor and Wilford Woodruff and seven days between Wilford Woodruff and Lorenzo Snow and four days between Lorenzo Snow and Joseph F. Smith and 7 days between Joseph F. Smith and Heber J. Grant and 7 days between Heber J. Grant and George Albert Smith and five days between George



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*Dec 30 1973 Presy of -  
Church Reorganized*

Albert Smith and David O. McKay and five days between David O. McKay and Joseph Fielding Smith and five days between Joseph Fielding Smith and Harold B. Lee, and it is now four days since President Harold B. Lee passed away.

I called upon the brethren in turn to speak their minds as to whether we should reorganize the Presidency at this time or wait and we began with Brother Benson and went through the circle. When Brother McConkie at the last had spoken, Elder Ezra Taft Benson made the motion that Spencer W. Kimball be approved and ordained and set apart as the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It was so seconded by several and then I said another few words, after it had been approved unanimously. I stated that my next responsibility was to call counselors to serve with me. I told the brethren I had been to the temple alone to pray for guidance in selecting the counselors and that if he was willing to serve with me, I now chose and nominated Elder Nathan Eldon Tanner as my first counselor. He stood and accepted and call and seemed not only willing but pleased. I then said that if Brother Marion G. Romney would be willing to work with me I would like to choose him for the second counselor and I told of my love and appreciation for each of the counselors. President Romney accepted graciously.

Then Elder Mark E. Petersen nominated Elder Ezra Taft Benson to be the President of the Quorum of the Twelve. This also was approved, as were the counselors, by unanimous vote and Elder Benson recognized his call and accepted it.

We then surrounded the chair in the center and I sat and was ordained and set apart by Elder Ezra Taft Benson with all the brethren laying their hands upon my head. Then with all the brethren assisting me I set apart the First Counselor, President Nathan Eldon Tanner, then the Second Counselor, President Marion G. Romney, and the President of the Council of the Twelve, President Ezra Taft Benson.

Our closing song was Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow and asked President Hugh B. Brown to offer the closing prayer. I then had a brief visit with my two new counselors and then we returned to our homes.

In the evening Grant and Rose Calder and their married children and their spouses and two babies called upon us and we had a nice visit. I worked at my desk until 10:30 and then went to bed.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1973, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

Today is the last day of the year 1973. It has been a year full of great interest, some development we hope, some great sorrows and some great responsibilities. The early part of the year, in early March, Camilla and I went to Korea and I organized the first stake in Korea. We visited all the missions in Japan.

Later in the year we attended the conference in <sup>Munich</sup> Germany and took part there and then visited the missionaries in Holland, Hamburg and Berlin and then held a stake conference at Stuttgart, Germany, before returning home.

There were other special situations in the remaining months, all covered in my journal.

A great change and sadness and honor came the day after Christmas when President Harold B. Lee passed away quite suddenly in the hospital. It was a great shock to all of us; the great responsibility of the Church fell upon me. Though I was at the hospital when he died, there was no opportunity to talk to him or have a last word or farewell. He passed out so quickly. Brother Marion G. Romney, his second counselor, and I proceeded to notify the Council of the Twelve and President Tanner, the other counselor who was in Phoenix.