

Polk, Colonel Thomas L. KANE, who had proven himself a friend of the Latter-day Saints.

President Brigham Young assigned Orson HYDE of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to remain in Kanesville to supervise the movement of Latter-day Saints to the West as quickly as possible. The town's location on the Missouri River was particularly advantageous for several thousand British converts who had postponed their migration to America until a new gathering place and headquarters in the West had been established. By sailing to New Orleans, steamboating to St. Louis, and then upriver to Kanesville, these immigrants were spared the rigors of overland travel at least that far.

At one time, as many as thirty-one small encampments were clustered in and about Kanesville. At its height, Kanesville consisted of 350 log cabins, two log tabernacles, a post office, and numerous shops, stores, and other business establishments. Wheat, corn, and many vegetables thrived then, as they do today, in the rich riverbed soil near the bluffs. The town's most pressing problem, to provide adequate food, shelter, employment, and wagon outfits for large numbers of poor immigrants "passing through," was made easier by the California Gold Rush of 1849–1851, which resulted in a boom for Kanesville and other outfitting towns. The gold rush greatly expedited LDS migration while transforming Kanesville from a Mormon into a "Gentile" town.

By the summer of 1852, more than 12,000 Latter-day Saints—6,100 from Great Britain alone—had traveled west via Kanesville, ending the period of concentrated LDS presence in the area. In December 1853, non-LDS residents incorporated Kanesville and renamed it Council Bluffs, in memory of Lewis and Clark's council with the Indians in 1804 on or near the city site.

Kanesville is also remembered as the place where Oliver COWDERY was rebaptized by Orson Hyde in November 1848, ending years of estrangement from the Church he had helped organize in 1830.

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COUNCIL OF FIFTY

The Council of Fifty, a council formed in Nauvoo in 1844, provided a pattern of political government under PRIESTHOOD and REVELATION. It was, to its members, the nucleus or focus of God's latter-day kingdom.

Old Testament prophecy speaks of a stone "cut out of the mountain without hands" that will roll forth to fill the whole earth (Dan. 2:44–45). Joseph Smith and his associates believed that the "little stone" represented in part a political kingdom similar to the other kingdoms referred to by DANIEL. Joseph Smith taught that in this, the DISPENSATION OF THE FULNESS OF TIMES, "all things" would be set in place for Christ's return, including the basic principles and organization for a system that would govern the earth during the MILLENNIUM (*JD* 1:202–203; 2:189; 17:156–57).

On April 7, 1842, Joseph Smith received a revelation giving the formal name of the "Living Constitution"—or, as it came to be known by the number of its members, the Council of Fifty—and indicating that the nucleus of a government of God would be organized. Two years later, in the spring of 1844, after a small group of faithful Church leaders and members had received their TEMPLE ENDOWMENT, the Prophet formally established the Council of Fifty.

Members of the council understood its principles to be consistent with the ethics of scripture and with the protections and responsibilities of the CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES. Non-Latter-day Saints could be members (three were among the founding members), but all were to follow God's law and seek to know his will. The PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH sat as council president, with others seated according to age, beginning with the oldest. Revealed rules governed proceedings, including one that required that decisions be unanimous.

The council had some practical responsibilities for organizing Joseph Smith's presidential campaign in 1844, the exodus from Nauvoo in 1845–1846 (see WESTWARD MIGRATION), and early

government in the Great Basin. But what interested council members most was, not their specific duties, but the expectation that the council represented something much larger: it was a working demonstration of the principles and pattern for a future KINGDOM OF GOD on earth. The Church already had a well-developed apocalyptic outlook, including belief in the latter-day collapse of existing governments before Christ's return. In this framework, the Council of Fifty was viewed as the seed of a new political order that would rule, under Christ, following the prophesied cataclysmic events of the last days.

The council, therefore, did not challenge existing systems of law and government (even in Nauvoo), but functioned more as a private organization learning to operate in a pluralistic society. Its exercise of actual political power was modest, but provided a symbol of the future theocratic kingdom of God. Always, the Fifty functioned under the FIRST PRESIDENCY and the QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES, who were also members of the council.

After the westward migration and the early pioneer period, the Council of Fifty largely disappeared as a functioning body, except for a brief resurgence during John TAYLOR's presidency when the Church again faced intense political challenges. Still, the Saints found consolation in the belief that one day, when the Savior returned, the Council of Fifty, or a council based on its principles, would rise again to govern the world under the King of Kings.

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COUNCIL OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY AND THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

Each week the two presiding quorums of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints meet

jointly as the Council of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Meeting in a room in the Salt Lake Temple, this council discusses and decides all major Church appointments and policy matters.

The presiding members in this council are the FIRST PRESIDENCY, consisting of the PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH, who has ultimate authority for all matters in the Church, and his counselors, who assist him in directing the affairs of the Church. The Council also includes the QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES. The members of these two quorums are the only men on earth who hold all the KEYS, or authorization, of the priesthood, and only they are sustained as prophets, seers, and revelators for the Church.

N. Eldon Tanner, counselor to four Church Presidents, said, "It is in this body [the Council] that any change in administration or policy is considered and approved, and it then becomes the official policy of the Church" (Tanner, 1979, p. 47). Responsibilities of the Council include such matters as approval of new bishops; changes in ward, stake, mission, and temple boundaries and organizations; and approval of general officers and central administration of the auxiliary organizations of the Church, such as the Primary, Sunday School, and Relief Society.

The order and procedure of the Council are rarely discussed in public, but can be inferred from published accounts of the process by which a revelation was announced in 1978. After a considerable period of prayer and discussion among the General Authorities, President Spencer W. KIMBALL felt inspired to extend eligibility for the priesthood to all worthy male members of the Church. He first presented it to his counselors, who accepted and approved it, and then to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the Council of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The same inspiration came to the members of the Council, who then approved it unanimously (McConkie, p. 128). After the Council had sustained the President in this action, the revelation was subsequently presented to all other GENERAL AUTHORITIES and to the general membership of the Church, who approved it unanimously (Tanner, 1978).

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