

NEWS & I

UPDATE

Church Tradition Now a Policy

It had long been a tradition in the LDS church that only men were to serve in Sunday School presidencies. On 19 August 1979, however, Ann Kenney was set apart as the University of Utah Second Stake Sunday School president.

Kenney remembers laughing when Gilbert Scharffs, then a counselor in the stake presidency, proposed the assignment. Because she was unaware of any female Sunday School administrators, Kenney thought he was joking. President Scharffs assured her he was quite serious and that he had been strongly impressed to ask her to the position. He informed Kenney that a General Authority had approved the calling.

Upon accepting the position, Kenney's first task was to choose counselors; she chose two women. Next she was to meet with all of the ward Sunday School presidents in her stake. The idea of this made Kenney somewhat uncomfortable. She feared that some of the men over whom she presided might resent her because she was a woman. To her relief, her fears were unfounded. Except for one man, who said he had expected her to be more matronly in appearance, all nine of the presidents in her stake both accepted and welcomed her.

News of her calling received a more mixed reaction from the members in her ward. Many of her close friends did not comment at all. "Those who considered themselves 'liberal' were, of course, thrilled. Other than this I just got a lot of non-reaction which I interpreted to be negative," said Kenney. "Overcoming this reaction was one of the hardest parts of the job."

Kenney's concerns about the job

were short lived, because on 24 September 1979, one month after she was called, Kenney was released from the presidency. She was given two explanations for the action. The official statement was that in areas where there were worthy priesthood holders available, they should serve in the Sunday School. Scharffs told her the unofficial word was, "In the past there has been no policy set. The quorum was divided on the issue, and left the decision to the president." The President was Ezra Taft Benson.

According to Kenney, both she and Scharffs were very confused about this. Neither one of them completely understood the reason why she was released.

Her dismissal evoked, once again, mixed reactions. Most of the people who had said nothing when she was set apart were now more vocal. They claimed they had believed in the first place that it was not right for a woman to hold such a position.

Others in her ward were quite upset. The action prompted one man to send a letter inquiring about the decision to President Kimball.

Kenney's experience was by no means an isolated incident. Several other women were serving concurrently with Kenney in their ward Sunday School presidencies in her stake. They were released at the same time as Kenney. Additionally, there are some accounts of women serving in presidencies at Brigham Young University in the late 1970s. Many of these women were also released prematurely.

Earlier a similar incident occurred in Boston. Many members

of the University Second Ward remember Anne D. Harriman who served as a counselor in the Sunday School presidency in 1970. In 1971 she was called to be the president. According to Tony Kimball who was serving in the bishopric at the time, the bishop asked a member of the General Sunday School Board whether or not such an appointment was appropriate. The board member did not know. Soon after this the Church sent out a directive stating that if no priesthood holders were available, members who did not hold the priesthood could serve in ward Sunday School presidencies. Thus, Harriman continued as the president for some time.

More recently, there was a case involving a man in the Primary presidency. Early in the fall of 1984, Bishop William Cottam called Doxey Hatch to serve as a counselor in the Manhattan First Ward Primary. Bishop Cottam believed that since some of the thirty children in the Primary came from fatherless homes, it would be nice for the children to see a man in a leadership role, being affectionate and loving.

Additionally, Cottam believed that Hatch, an unmarried graduate student, would benefit from working with children. The other members of the presidency were single as well.

According to Linda Stevenson, a member of the Manhattan First Ward, no one in the ward was very surprised by the calling. Many of the Primary teachers were male and the members could see the need for the children to have some good father figures.

However, Hatch's calling did not last long. The day he was sustained, a woman serving on the General Primary Board in Salt Lake City was in the audience. After the meeting she informed the stake president that such a calling was contrary to Church policy and that it was not a good idea for men and women to serve together. On 16

REVIEWS

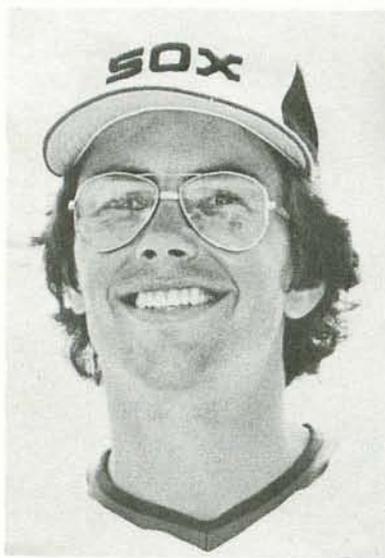
December 1984, Hatch was released.

While it is difficult to locate any written policy on the matter, in August of 1980 a "reminder" of the Church position did appear in the Priesthood bulletin. "We remind bishops that men are not to be called as members of Primary presidencies," reads the first page of the bulletin. And on the second page, "We remind bishops that

women are not to be called as members of the Sunday School presidencies." No explanation accompanied the directive.

No previous announcement by a Church leader has been found concerning this subject. Thus a reminder in the Priesthood Bulletin, apparently without historical antecedent, has become the governing policy of the Church.

Vance Law Leaves White Sox for Expos



Vance Law

Chicago White Sox infielder Vance Law, whose baseball career began at Brigham Young University, was traded to the Montreal Expos in December for pitcher Bob James. The twenty-eight-year-old Law, son of Pittsburgh Pirates pitching ace Vernon Law, spent two years in the minor leagues before joining Pittsburgh in 1980. After two seasons with the Pirates, Law was traded to the

White Sox and was a key player when that team won the American League West divisional title in 1983.

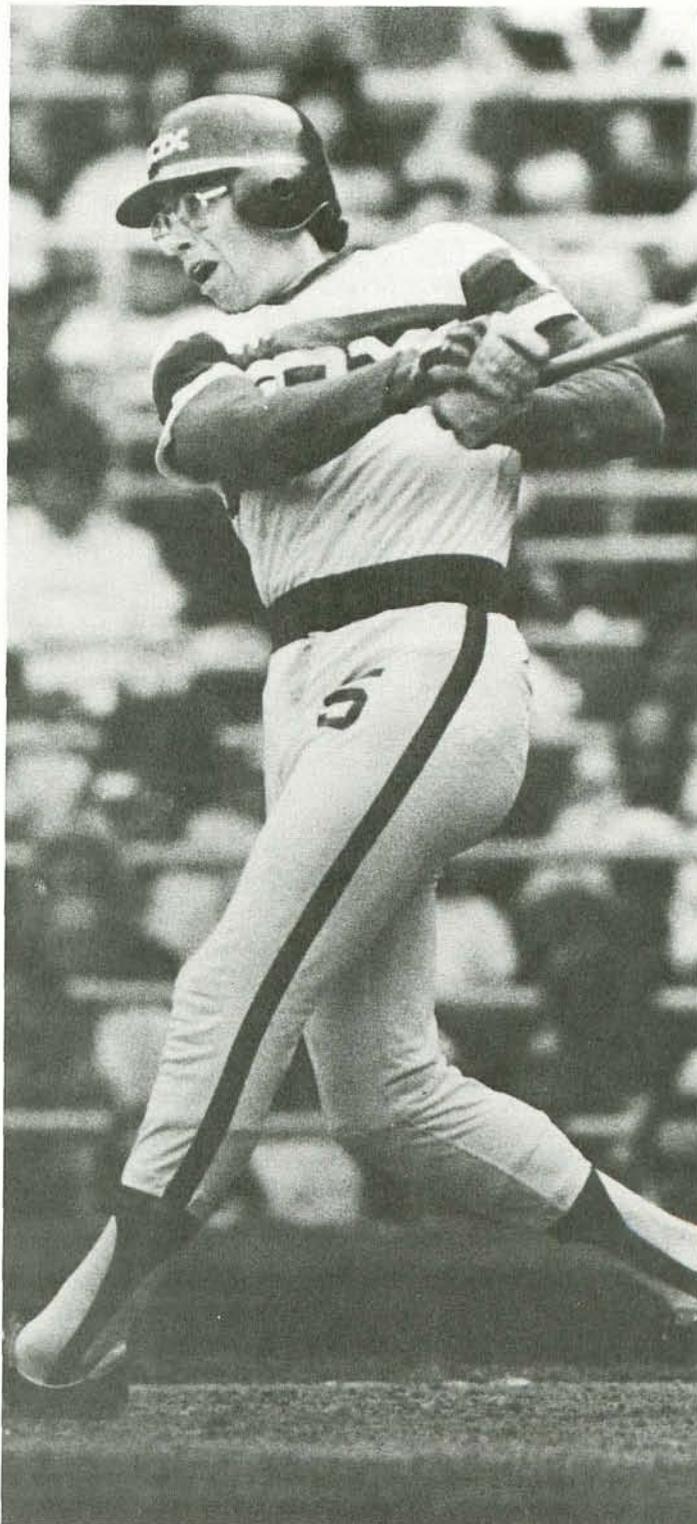
Despite criticism that he was a "good-field no hit third baseman," Law had his best year offensively in 1984. Law batted .252 while hitting 17 home runs and driving in 59 RBIs.

"At first I was disappointed by the trade," Law told SUNSTONE, "because I felt attached to the White Sox organization and to several players on the team. But I finally realized it was a good career move for me because I would have the opportunity to play every day."

Law also indicated he was looking forward to playing again in the National League.

"It's a different type of game in that league because there isn't the designated hitter, and the pitchers rely more on finesse than overwhelming power. But I've played in the league before and I think I can hit National League pitching."

Recently, Law, who lives with his wife and children in Provo, received BYU's Alumni Community Service award. The recognition came as the result of efforts by BYU alumni from the Chicago area.



Excommunicated Man Sues Church

Claiming his excommunication from the Church damaged his reputation, a Mesa, Arizona, man in December filed an \$18 million defamation suit against the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and his stake president.

According to articles in Mesa's *Arizona Republic* and Salt Lake City's *Deseret News*, Norman L. Hancock first asked to have his name removed from Church records for "personal reasons." Because it is official procedure to conduct a court following such a request, Hancock was summoned before a sixteen-member jury composed of the hierarchy of the Mesa Arizona North Stake.

According to Hancock, Stake President Duane Beezer conducted the closed-door trial, held on 4 March 1984, in a manner which "humiliated" Hancock. Hancock believes Beezer "slandered" him with accusations of "illicit, improper and immoral conduct in violation of the law of the Church." Such statements placed him "in a false light in the public eye" and "permanently injured his reputation, business, and standing in the community."

Hancock also complains that no witnesses were called to testify against him and he was allowed to call none in his defense. This, Hancock believes, was illegal.

Church policy requires that the proceedings of the court as well as the reasons given for the excommunication be kept private. Even Hancock, for "personal reasons" has declined to reveal the charges. However, he claims lies were

spread about him following the trial based on what occurred there.

"The term 'excommunicated' itself is damaging to my reputation among both Mormons and non-Mormons," Hancock told SUNSTONE, because it presumes someone is bad or has done something wrong. I just wanted out of the Church and wanted to be left alone."

Hancock says he considered appealing the decision to higher Church officials but finally decided "it would be a waste of time."

Then he heard about a similar case in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in which Marian Guinn was awarded \$390,000 in damages after she sued the Collinsville Church of Christ. Apparently a letter was read the congregation which she claimed publicly denounced her for alleged "fornication."

Hancock says he decided to sue the Church and Beezer out of neither bitterness nor desire for financial gain. He says he is seeking \$6 million in actual damages and \$12 million in punitive damages because he believes the Church should be forced to reevaluate their court procedures.

"It will be a better church," says Hancock, "when they let God be the judge of a man's conduct."

Hancock is acting as his own lawyer. His suit has been assigned to Superior Court judge David Roberts. Roberts, a Mormon, serves as Beezer's first counselor in the Mesa Arizona North Stake. Roberts has said, however, he will "undoubtedly" disqualify himself from the lawsuit.

Myth-Busting Utahns in W

by Michelle Macfarlane

Reporting on Utah Mormons in Washington, D.C., is certainly nothing new. As recently as March of 1981 *The Washingtonian*, a widely read monthly in the nation's capital, reported on the apparent disproportionate influence wielded by Mormons. In the November 1984 issue of *Utah Holiday* magazine, *The Washingtonian's* analogue in Zion, readers are once again treated to a Who's Who of Utahns in Washington. But unlike previous listings, the authors have examined not only the influence of these Utahns but also some of the myths and stereotypes engendered by their presence.

Authors Mary Lythgoe Bradford of *Dialogue* fame, herself a Utah transplant, and Alice Allred Pottmyer, reigning president of



Rex Lee

Mormons for ERA, have compiled a lengthy list culled primarily from surveying other Utahns in D.C. Their article entitled "Power People on the Potomac" identifies the most influential Utahns according to a panel of "about fifteen men and women, Republicans and Democrats, spread across a spectrum of age, knowledge and experience." The panel nominated prominent Utahns in four leadership categories: government and politics ("All

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the President's Men"), business and trade associations, professions (Media Mavens, Lawyers, and Lobbyists"), and women leaders ("Women Who Matter").

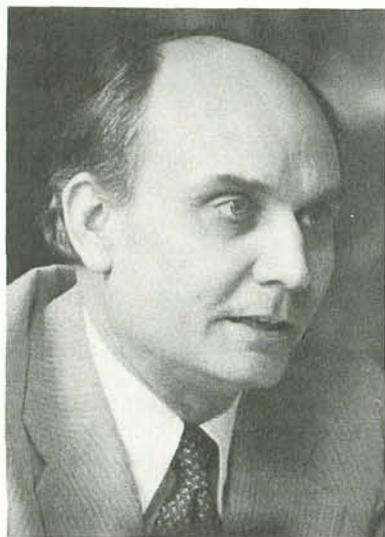
In the government and politics category Utah's two Republican senators, Orrin Hatch ("credited with killing the 1984 Civil Rights Act because it could have threatened the LDS church's tax exempt status") and Jake Garn, chairman of the powerful Senate Banking Committee, were most frequently mentioned by the panelists.

Also on every panelist's list was Richard Wirthlin, President Reagan's pollster-strategist.

Although he recently resigned, Education Secretary T. H. Bell was listed by some, while other panelists argued that his influence was marginal at best.

Other persons in this category included Rex Lee, the U.S. Solicitor General ("the beleaguered enemy of the New Right"), Mark Cannon, the Chief Justice's administrative assistant, and Roger Porter, a White House aide.

Not surprisingly, J. Willard Marriott, the Marriott Corporation's chief executive officer and the Washington stake president, headed up the business leader



Jake Garn



Orrin Hatch

category. Also on the list were his parents, J. Willard, Sr., and his Alice, who arrived in Washington in the late 1920s on their honeymoon and stayed on to set up a root beer stand.

Jack W. Carlson, executive vice-president and lobbyist for the nation's largest trade association, the National Association of Realtors, as well as three other businessmen/lobbyists, Kent Colton, Gary Terry, and Ralph Meacham were identified in the article.

The professions category included individuals ranging from such nationally known figures as syndicated columnist Jack Anderson to perhaps the most effective lobbyist in Washington, Tom Korologos ("dubbed by his colleagues 'the 101st senator'").

According to the *Utah Holiday* article, no Utah woman is more influential in the nation's capitol than Esther Peterson, the labor-consumer activist who has served in every Democratic administration since Franklin D. Roosevelt. Also under "Women Who Matter" were Sonia Johnson, excommunicated Mormon feminist and Citizen's Party presidential candidate; and two other founding mothers of Mormons for ERA, Maida Withers, director of Dance Construction Company; and Hazel Rigby, past president of the Alexandria Educational Association.

Authors Bradford and Pottmyer explain and assess several prevalent myths surrounding Mormons in Washington. The myths—with the authors' conclusions of validity—are as follows:

1. *All Mormons, especially Utah Mormons, are right wing conservatives.*

False. Ideologies don't make it in Washington.

2. *The FBI and CIA are completely infiltrated by squeaky-clean Mormons who are being recruited in droves.*

False. Dale Van Atta's report that 10% of CIA operatives and employees are Mormon is probably off by 9%.

3. *Mormons present a unified block because they are alike and they all know each other (i.e. Mormon Mafia).*

Somewhat true.

4. *Mormons are trying to take over the government.*

False. The percentage of influential Utahns is "not overwhelming."



Sonia Johnson

5. *Mormons stop short of the top because they are not willing to sacrifice families and church work.*

Partially true. "Other long-time Washingtonians aver that most Mormons simply haven't developed the intellectual strength and reservoir of knowledge that would propel them into positions of lasting power. . . . An anti-intellectual strain, combined with a strong need to make money, may cause Mormons to sell themselves short."

The article is a useful source of information for those particularly interested in the Saints in Washington, D.C., and in the perceptions others have of Mormon influence there.