



APPENDIX D

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ELDER ERAN A. CALL'S REMARKS

AT TEMPLE GROUNDBREAKING

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SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 1998

**M**y dear brothers and sisters, from here on the stand you are a wonderful sight. Thanks for being here. Thanks for this beautiful, historic morning. I say beautiful because it is a beautiful occasion that brings us together. The sun is shining in our hearts, which are warm with love because of the occasion that has brought us together. My heart rejoices, beating with many memories of the blessings that the Lord pours out and has poured out upon His Saints wherever they have gone.

Our forebears, who came to these lands more than a century ago, have been mentioned. The gospel has gone into many parts of the world and to many parts of this beautiful Mexican Republic. We have gathered today to carry out the groundbreaking and initiate the construction of a beautiful temple on this lovely site. Last Friday, a week ago yesterday, the prophet spoke with me and authorized me to come celebrate with you this morning.

The temples of the Lord are the most sacred places of worship here on earth, for the servants and children of the Lord. From the earliest times, wherever the kingdom of heaven and of God has existed on the earth, there have been temples. In this dispensation, we see an increase of temples; about two weeks ago, the prophet announced

another temple in Africa. This will be the second new announcement of construction since the three small temples were announced in conference last October. I suppose, but without certain knowledge, that there will be more announcements. Our current prophet, Gordon B. Hinckley, is very determined to build more temples on the earth. There is no other prophet who has dedicated or rededicated more temples than he. He has dedicated or rededicated thirty temples. We will have the privilege of being with him next week and with you in Chihuahua and in Ciudad Juárez a week from now.

I would like to read a few words from the prophet and President of the Church, Wilford Woodruff, who on September 16, 1877, said the following: “When the Savior comes, a thousand years will be devoted to this work of redemption; and temples will appear all over this land of Joseph—North and South America—and also in Europe and elsewhere; and all . . . who received not the gospel in the flesh, must be officiated for in the temples of God, before the Savior can present the kingdom to the Father, saying, ‘It is finished’” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 19:229–30). The Lord’s temples, as we know, are required to carry out the saving ordinances which unite families, to receive our own endowment, and to perform baptisms for the dead and all the saving ordinances for all those who will reach the heavens and live with God. Let us be faithful, brothers and sisters. Let us use the temples, the small temples as the prophet said. They will be used according to demand and need; they will not be open every day. I hope that those who come to this temple will come frequently. These three temples which have been announced will be a model for others yet to be built. Let this one be a temple of heavy use. About a month ago, I attended a regional conference in Hermosillo with Elder Packer. The members from the area of Ciudad Obregón and Hermosillo also regard this place as their temple, and they will come. Many will come. Prepare yourselves to be workers to officiate and have callings and responsibilities in the temple of the Lord. The Lord has blessed us, and He will continue blessing those who are faithful and keep His commandments. Having a current temple recommend, brothers and sisters, is an honor and a humble responsibility. Those who have been endowed please renew your temple recommend, and always keep it current as evidence before God and yourselves of the sincerity with which you received your endowment when you went

to the temple. How wonderful it is that in this sacred place a temple will be built. On behalf of the President of the Church, I would like to thank the Romney family—Sister Nellie Romney and her sons—who have donated the land that the prophet chose for the temple, a beautiful setting. On this little hill, the temple will shine like a pearl. Before you leave, please take a look at the picture that is here in front; it is the architectural drawing of the temple that will be built here. When I spoke Friday with the prophet, he said, “Brother Call, we hope to dedicate this beautiful building in less than eight months,” so before the end of the year we hope to gather once again for the dedication of this building. This gives us time to think seriously about the blessing, which begins today. Now let us all unite in prayer, as I pronounce a few words to dedicate this site where a holy house will be built. We will hear a hymn by the choir, and then the Area Presidency will symbolically begin the construction of this temple with the groundbreaking. We will then give the shovels to the stake presidencies that are here, and I would like Sister Romney to accompany her two sons in turning over the holy ground that they donated. We will proceed.

## **SITE DEDICATORY PRAYER**

Our loving Heavenly Father, with the authority vested in me and in the name of Thy Son Jesus Christ, we dedicate this land that Thy prophet, Thy servant, has chosen for the building of Thy house, the Colonia Juárez Chihuahua Temple, in this beautiful and lovely Mexican Republic. We dedicate this site, Father, as a holy place, a chosen place where Thy Spirit will dwell. We bless the ground; we bless the entire construction of the building, the walls, roofs, the interior, and the finished temple. We bless the workers who will participate in this beautiful construction, that it may be done in Thy way so that in it we may enter and worship Thee, Holy Father. At the same time, bless those who will participate in the sacred ordinances that will be accomplished in these holy precincts. We bless the Church members who live in this temple area that they may continue faithful, and at the same time we bless those who will come to worship Thee and receive and make sacred covenants in Thy holy house.

We ask a special blessing upon those of us who have been endowed with knowledge and with sacred covenants, which we have made in holy places, that we may be faithful and obedient to the covenants that we have made so that some day, Holy Father, thou might welcome us into Thy holy presence.

Today we dedicate this holy site for the building of a beautiful temple, and I do it by the authority of the holy priesthood that I hold, in the name of Thy Holy Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, amen.

(Virginia Romney, *History of the Colonia Juárez Chihuahua Temple*, trans. Richard Cowan, 1:95–97.)