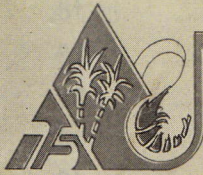




The CABLETOW

VOL. 67 NO. 6

MARCH-APRIL



ANCOM 91

75th Grand Annual Communication

BACOLOD CONVENTION PLAZA / PO HANG GYM

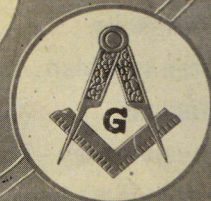
APRIL 25 - 27, 1991

Theme :

**One light. One world.
FREEMASONRY.**

Host :

**DISTRICT NO. 27
NEGROS OCCIDENTAL**



VICTORIAS
M.V. Kio Memorial Lodge
No. 210

SAGAY
Dakran Lodge
No. 281

BACOLOD CITY
Kanihon Lodge No. 64
Negrans Lodge No. 200

BAGO CITY
E. S. Salas Lodge
No. 280

SAM CARLOS CITY
San Carlos Lodge
No. 186

LA CARLOTA CITY
Mangos Lodge
No. 260

BACOLOD
beckons!

"Sugar is sweet, but BROTHERHOOD is sweeter"

P. M. / 29/10/91

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EDITORIAL:**ANCOMS SHOULD BE
MORE MEANINGFUL**

Come April we shall be holding our Annual Communication in Bacolod. It is the fifth time our Annual Communication will be outside Metro Manila.

The importance of our Annual Communication cannot be over stressed. During the Communication we will review our growth or decay in the past year, we will elect a new set of national officials and again, we will plan ahead for the coming masonic year. The Communication therefore provides the opportunity where the blue lodges, thru their representatives, can exercise in real measure their sovereign authority. It is the time to unleash their powers — executive, legislative, and judicial — for the good of the Craft. In between Communications, these powers are delegated to the MW Grandmaster.

It is opportune we review the conduct of our Annual Communications. Limited to three days, not an iota of time can be wasted to barren activities. The idea fast gaining currency is that our programs are overstuffed with ceremonials which can be cut down without offending our ritualists. There is also a clamor, increasing in crescendo, to extend the legislative debates and discussion on policy issues confronting the Craft. This is a legitimate reaction to the too fast a use of the gavel to stonewall some prosaic performances in the past or defuse disputes perceived to be harmful to our harmony. Likewise, our fight to prevent the conversion of our Annual Communication into a political circus is not yet over. Experiments should continue on how the ANCOM delegates can choose our Lights on the strict basis of who best can serve and best agree. The morally flabby, the intellectual paraplegics and their ilk cannot be allowed to rule the Craft and further mangle masonry.

Amidst the gathering gloom in our country, people expect masons to detonate some tectonic changes for the good of our people. Such changes cannot be expected unless and until we hold more meaningful Annual Communications. (RSP)



From the Grand Oriental Chair

● MW John L. Choa

HARVESTING PAEANS AND PAINS Masonic Year 1990-1991

The Masonic year about to close has been quite busy, quite hectic, quite tiring. I shall, nevertheless, leave the Grand Oriental Chair with great satisfaction and fulfillment, knowing that what we envisioned at the start of my term has been, to a great extent, accomplished.

My family and I will for ever be grateful to all of you for having entrusted to me the reins of our ancient and honorable Fraternity's leadership. That trust I will cherish throughout the remainder of my life.

Now, as your trustee, I perform the duty of making an accounting with pleasure and with pride. I want, dear brethren, to caption my report "HARVESTING PAEANS AND PAINS."

OUR THEME

Long before my elevation to the Grand Oriental Chair, I accumulated sufficient experiences, ideas and materials for my theme and program thrust as Grand Master. First, my five-year stint as DDGM gave me insights into the job of a Grand Master, particularly the relationship between Grand Lodge and the Blue Lodges and Districts. My travels to different Lodges and Districts since I was a Junior Warden, together with my membership in different committees of the Grand Lodge, have also greatly helped in preparing me for the awesome responsibilities of a Grand Master.

We chose the theme "Freemasonry: Our Way of Life" because we have always believed that we have to make Freemasonry as our way of life if we are going to create an impact on those around us. We have to prove to all and sundry that there is a difference between a Mason and a non-Mason. That difference may as well lie in our ability to impose upon ourselves a high standard of ethical and moral conduct much higher than that expected of the rest of men. When we were raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason, we were given this exhortation: "The eyes of the Fraternity are now upon you. Be faithful, be just, and be true, and convince the whole world that by becoming a Mason you have become a better man."

ACQUAINTING OFFICERS OF OUR PROGRAM THRUST

On the Saturday following my election as Grand Master, I convened the Grand Lodge Officers, including the DDGMs, the DGLs, and the Lodge Lights. I distributed to them kits containing our administrative program as well as other materials that would be of help to them in effectively and efficiently performing their duties.

Our program, in a nutshell, consisted of 16 focal areas, namely: (1) imposing upon ourselves a code of ethical and moral conduct higher than the rest of men — year-round; (2) deepening our Masonic understanding — year-round; (3) conducting lodge of instruction — year-round; (4) admitting quality members only — year-round; (5) improving lodge management — May; (6) honoring Mason heroes — June; (7) visiting long-lost brethren as well as those who are sick and bedridden — July; (8) honoring Past Masters, Senior Masons and Charter Members — August; (9) enhancing family togetherness — September; (10) undertaking charity and community projects — October; (11) sponsoring lodges of remembrance, sports, and physical fitness activities — November; (12) having a six-in-one affair — December; (13) stressing spiritual consciousness — January; (14) renewing family ties — February; (15) focusing on the youth and appendant organizations — March; and (16) stressing the relationship between Grand Lodge and Blue Lodges — April.

LODGES CONSTITUTED

Considering that the country is still suffering from economic crisis, Freemasonry in this jurisdiction is growing, as indicated by the fact that we constituted three new Lodges, namely: Catanduanes Lodge No. 291 in Catanduanes; Bud Bungao Lodge No. 188 in Tawi-Tawi; and Rufino S. Roque Memorial Lodge No. 289 in Cordova, Isabela.

LODGE DISPENSATIONS

We also issued dispensations for the organization of three Lodges. The Lodges under Dispensation are Podomo Lodge in Davao City, Kapitan Pepe Lodge in Cabanatuan City, and San Pedro Lodge in San Pedro, Laguna.

CORNERSTONE LAYING

The Masonic year about to end has been exceptional in terms of laying the cornerstone for our provincial Lodges. I have wondered if this is the contaminating effect of what we have done with our new Grand Lodge Temple.

We performed the cornerstone-laying ceremonies for (1) Molave Lodge No. 261 in Lupao, Nueva Ecija; (2) Mt. Amurong Lodge No. 244 in Talugtog, Nueva Ecija; (3) Bud Bungao Lodge No. 288 in Tawi-Tawi; (4) Rio Chico Lodge

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No. 182 in Kalinga-Apayao; (5) Hamtik Lodge No. 76 in Antique; and (6) Bataan Lodge No. 104 in Orani, Bataan.

DEDICATION OF TEMPLES

We dedicated the temples of Laoag Lodge No. 71 in Laoag City; Palawan Lodge No. 99 in Palawan; Jose P. Rizal Lodge No. 270 in Calamba, Laguna; Midsayap Masonic Lodge No. 267 in Midsayap, Cotabato; and Bud Bungao Lodge No. 288 in Tawi-Tawi.

We also rededicated the Davao Masonic Center in Davao City.

ARREST OF LODGE CHARTERS

After exerting all-out efforts to save the situation, VW Tommy Que, DDGM of Masonic District No. 14, and VW Michael Tan, DDGM of Masonic District No. 12, regrettably recommended the arrest of the charters of these Lodges in their respective districts: Calinog Lodge No. 226 and Rizal Lodge No. 20. We approved the DDGMs' recommendations.

APPOINTMENT OF GRAND REPRESENTATIVE

I appointed the following representatives who I knew would help us strengthen our relationship with other Grand Lodges: VW Fernando Manas, Jr. — Florida; VW William Webb — Ireland; VW Ernesto Malapaya — Michigan; VW Danilo Angeles — North Dakota; WB Carlo A. Magno — Saskatchewan; VW Joven Chua — Ecuador; VW Peter Lim Lo Suy — Columbia-Barranquilla; VW George Chua Cham — Queensland; VW Raymund Yu, Sr. — Italy. VW Becker Young — Switzerland; VW Ernesto Uy — Kentucky; VW Benito T. Ty — Luxembourg; VW Robert Pe Liao — Quebec; VW Ramon C. Go — Indiana; VW Alfred Li — Illinois; and VW Lucas T. Ty — British Columbia.

These brethren, who have been very active in the Fraternity, committed themselves to promote communicative relationship with the Grand Lodges to which they have been appointed as our representatives.

I also accepted the appointment of the following representatives of foreign Grand Lodges to our Grand Lodge: Bro. Isaac Hoshaver, Jr. — Indiana; MW Joseph Shurette, PGM — Florida; Bro. Soren Nielsen — Denmark; Bro. Gerard Fritz — Luxembourg; WB Urso A. Peñalosa — Arizona; Bro. Jay Caturay — British Columbia; Bro. Arie Lyle — Israel; Bro. Napoleon Rodriguez Cruz — Virginia; Bro. Joseph Vella — New York; Bro. Tommy B. Bartolome — Washington; Bro. Martti Asumaa — Finland; and Bro. Philippe Clement — Belgium.

VISITATIONS

One gruelling but excitingly fulfilling part of the job of a Grand Master is visiting the different Masonic districts. In my meeting with the DDGMs and the DGLs right after my election as Grand Master, I told them that despite the high cost of travel and the dangers due to the unstable political situation of the country, I would be a highly visible Grand Master by visiting all districts during their conventions.

Uniform Format for Discons

We instructed them, moreover, to faithfully observe the prescribed uniform format for district conventions, so that the delegates would grow Masonically.

Hence, every district convention featured a session on Masonic education. The Senior Grand Warden's lecture was followed by an open forum, in which the delegates asked questions on points they had not understood or they had doubts about.

Another feature of the district conventions was a workshop. The delegates were divided into three groups — one to discuss the topic "Progress in Masonry of the Individual Mason", another "Progress in masonry of a Lodge", and the third "Progress in Masonry of a District." In the ensuing plenary session, the three groups presented their collated reports and submitted their resolutions.

Visitations to Overseas Lodges

I attended the convention of Masonic District No. 30 in Korea, which is composed of MacArthur Lodge No. 183 and Morning Calm No. 189.

From Korea we proceeded to Guam, which is our Masonic District No. 29. This district is composed of Charleston Lodge No. 44, Milton C. Marvin Lodge No. 123, and Micronesia Lodge No. 173.

During my visitation to Guam I was honored and privileged to be appointed honorary Ambassador to the territory of Guam by no less than the Hon. Joseph F. Ada, Governor of Guam.

Moreover, since the Grand Lodge of China has been attending our Annual Communications, we reciprocated that gesture by attending that Grand Lodge's Annual Communication in October.

From there we proceeded to Hongkong as invited guests on the occasion of the constitution of the Rotary Lodge of Hongkong. (The link-up between our Grand Lodge and the District Grand Lodge of Hongkong is featured on the cover of the January-February 1991 issue of **The Cabletow**.)

Visitations to Local Districts

I was able to visit the different districts in the Philippines, during their conventions. The hectic schedule of my visitations is as follows:

July 7 — District No. 27 - Bacolod, Negros Occidental; July 14 — District No. 28 - Batangas and Mindoro; July 21 — Districts No. 19 and No. 40 - Zamboanga and Pagadian; July 28 — District Nos. 13 and 36 - Daet and Naga; August 4 — District No. 12 - Lucena; August 11 — District No. 23 - Isabela; August 18 — District Nos. 7 and 29 - Bulacan, Pampanga and Tarlac; August 25 — District No. 11 - Laguna; September 1 — District No. 3 - Nueva Vizcaya; September 8 — District No. 25 - Iligan; September 15 — District No. 37 - Legazpi and Sorsogon (Dadiangas); September 22 — District No. 2 - Cagayan and Tuguegarao; September 29 — District Nos. 15, 16 and 39 - Leyte, Cebu and Samar; October 6 — District No. 14 - Iloilo; October 20 — District No. 8 - Olongapo, Bataan and Zambales; October 27 — District Nos. 18 and 32 - Davao and Tagum; November 3 — District Nos. 6A and 6B - Nueva Ecija; November 10 — District Nos. 17, 31 and 35 - Cagayan de Oro, Butuan and Bukidnon; November 17 — District Nos. 38 and 33 - Dipolog and Ozamis; November 24 — District Nos. 26 and 37 - Cotabato and Dadiangas; November 30 - District No. 10 - Cavite; December 1 — District Nos. 9A and 9B - Quezon City; December 8 — District Nos. 24, 4 and 5 - Pangasinan, Ilocos and Baguio; December 15 — District Nos. 1A, 1B, and 1C - Manila.

The different districts visited the Grand Lodge — on October 13 for the midyear meeting of the Grand Master with DDGMs and DGLs and on December 19 for our six-in-one affair on the occasion of our 78th anniversary.

Most probably because of the innovation we had introduced, the district conventions were well attended and enthusiastically participated in. They also gave me new insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the Fraternity.

EDICTS ISSUED

"No Grand Master worth his salt can avoid the responsibility of instituting reforms within the Craft when necessary. That is his inescapable duty. The hierarchical set up and the history of the Craft demand this duty. For ours is a distinct organization. In between communications our Constitution vests all powers to the Grand Master — executive, judicial and legislative. There is no power withheld from the Grand Master. And he wields all these powers all the days of the year except the three days when the brethren are assembled in Annual Communication." Thus stated MW Reynato S. Puno, who during his grand mastership issued several edicts and circulars himself.

Desirous of instituting the necessary reforms into our Fraternity, I issued the following edicts:

Edict No. 121 — In line with our policy of accepting quality members only, we required all Lodges to have an orientation program for all petitioners before initiation, passing and raising.

Edict No. 122 — Knowing that the beauty of Masonry lies in its lessons, which are hidden in allegories and symbols and which are to be discovered by steps and with diligence, we required all Lodges to devote 10-15 minutes of their stated meetings for the conduct of Masonic education and Lodge of Instruction. For this purpose, we included in the kit distributed during the Annual Communication a 12-lesson module on Masonic education, prepared by VW Danilo Angeles, our SGL. We had observed that the Lodges were willing to comply with the Grand Lodge's requirement of devoting time during stated meeting to Masonic education but they lacked the necessary materials. Hence, the Grand Lodge provided them with the 12-lesson Masonic education module.

We expected, of course, that every mason would continue, on his own, his search for more Light either through research or through perfection in ritual, or through both.

The Grand Lodge also provided the Blue Lodges with a 12-lesson module for Lodge of Instruction, which was again prepared by VW Angeles.

Edict No. 123 — For uniformity's sake, we required the Lodges to adopt a standard building plan for their lodge buildings, stressing that the facade should display the Masonic Logo, the Square and Compasses and the two great pillars of Masonry.

Edict No. 124 — As recommended by the Board for General Purposes, we revoked Edict No. 97 *in toto*.

Edict No. 125 — We defined further a clandestine lodge and a clandestine Mason and provided penalties for holding Masonic intercourse therewith.

Edict No. 126 — We revived Edict No. 49 Wilmart, which decreed that no Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction shall initiate a candidate until such time when the name of the candidate shall have been regularly published in the Grand Lodge Circular (G.L. Form No. 12).

Edict No. 127 — We required the adoption of a uniform code of by-laws by the different districts as well as a formal turnover from the outgoing set of district officers to the income one.

Edict No. 128 — We abolished Masonic District No. 23-A in the interest of the Craft.

Edict No. 129 — We divided Masonic District No. 6 into District 6A and District 6B.

Edict No. 130 — We likewise divided Masonic District No. 9 into 9A and 9B.

Edict No. 131 — Other fraternities may have been notorious in their initiation of candidates, but our Fraternity is different. Hence, we prohibited excessive handling and maltreatment of candidates during initiation, passing and raising. In our extensive travels within our jurisdiction, we had witnessed that in certain areas the brethren tended to overdo things, thus inflicting unnecessary pain and injury to a candidate. The edict, therefore, is a preempt-

tive measure designed to caution the brethren not to exceed what is required in our beautiful ritual.

Edict No. 132 — We created a permanent committee to study and recommend the disposition of the old Plaridel Masonic Temple. This committee is composed of a chairman and four members whose term of office shall expire upon completion of the project study.

Edict No. 133 — We also formed a permanent committee for the Administration of the Masonic Cemetery. The committee is composed of five Past Masters, all of whom are residents of Metro Manila and shall have a term of office of five years.

Edict No. 134 — We created/established a permanent Commission on charity and medical assistance, defining its powers, functions and responsibilities as well as appropriating funds therefor.

The permanent Medical Center shall be housed in the former office of the Grand Master and staffed by the most qualified medical practitioners who are members of the Craft. All of them have volunteered, *gratis et amore*, their professional services to their worthy and deserving brethren as well as to indigent members of the Filipino national community.

The brethren will be provided with a list of members of the Craft who are in the medical profession, so that they can avail of the competent, professional services of these brethren when the need arises.

Edict No. 135 — We prescribed the procedure for bidding to host the Annual Communication.

CIRCULARS ISSUED

1. Lists of elected and appointed officers of the Grand Lodge, including members of the Board for General Purposes
2. Schedule of district conventions
3. P200 temple building fund
4. District and lodge correspondents to **The Cabletow**
5. Celebrating Independence Day and Bro. Jose P. Rizal's birth anniversary
6. Prohibiting use of Grand Lodge telephone for personal long distance calls
7. Submission of nominees for 10 Outstanding Masons in this jurisdiction
8. Campaign against drug addiction
9. Masonic year book
10. Ancom 75th anniversary/diamond jubilee commemorative car plates
11. Appeal for donations to earthquake victims
12. Celebrating birth anniversary of MW Manuel L. Quezon, August 19, 1990
13. Deadline of submitting advertisements for Masonic year book
14. Catholic Church's stand against Freemasonry
15. Informative articles on Catholic Church's guidelines on Freemasonry
16. Celebrating birth anniversary of WB Marcelo H. del Pilar, August 30, 1990.

17. Strict implementation of Edict No. 60 provision that candidates undergo proficiency examination
18. Prohibiting a Lodge from serving or consuming alcoholic beverages in a Masonic Temple or in the premises of the building in which it meets or at a Masonic banquet (or, complying with Section 2, par. i, Articles IV of our Constitution)
19. Mid-year meeting of the Grand Master with Grand Line Officers, DDGMs and DGLs, October 13, 1990, Plenary Hall, new Plaridel Masonic Temple
20. Instructing all Masters and Officers of Blue Lodges to submit to the Committee on the Revision of the Constitution, chaired by MW Reynato S. Puno, PGM, who also chaired the 1984 Committee on the Revision of the Constitution, their suggestions and recommendations on any particular provision that they perceive and requiring change, deletion or addition
21. Urging subordinate Lodges to pay their outstanding account/s and to remit their 1990 Annual Dues to assist in improving the financial operation of the Grand Lodge
22. Additional information/articles relative to the Catholic guidelines on Freemasonry, with the hope of further explaining and strengthening the brethren's resolve to remain steadfast and strong in their conviction as Masons
23. Assisting brethren whose children are seeking employment.
24. Reminding Lodges and Districts to conduct a seminar on Lodge Management
25. Tickets for the 6-in-1 affair, December 19, 1990
26. Extension of submission of advertisements for Masonic year book.
27. Communicating with brethren residing abroad as well as locally
28. Instructing DDGMs to submit to the Committee on Resolutions all resolutions passed during their district conventions
29. Submission of annual reports and payment of accounts due the Grand Lodge
30. Grand Lodge's exclusive use of the design of the Award for Outstanding Masons for the preservation of the dignity and prestige of this award.
31. Submission of nominees for various awards during the 1991 Ancom
32. Inviting officers and members of subordinate lodges to attend the Ancom, April 25-27, Bacolod City
33. Immediate remittance of temple fund assessment
34. List of educational digests ordered from the Masonic Service Association, which are available at the Grand Lodge Library
35. Reminding brethren to get PAC and CISO Vessels fare tickets as soon as possible to avoid inconvenience of late bookings
36. Deferring implementation of Circular No. 1, Series of 1979-Bugarin, assessing every Mason the amount of P200 for the construction of our new temple during the 1991 Ancom in Bacolod City

37. Additional reading materials available at the Grand Lodge Library
38. 75th Ancom Commemorative car plates

SIX-IN-ONE AFFAIR

December 19, 1990 will be long remembered as one of the most significant dates in the annals of Freemasonry in this jurisdiction. On that date our Grand Lodge celebrated a special communication to commemorate our 78th anniversary, the blessing and dedication of our new Grand Lodge Temple, the holding of the finals of a nation-wide oratorical contest among our youth on the evils of drug addiction, the giving of honor to our Past Grand Masters, the giving of awards to the ten outstanding Masons for Masonic year 1990-1991, and the launching of the printing of a 700-page Masonic year book.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Marcelo Fernan was our guest speaker on that important occasion.

We placed in the *Manila Bulletin* a full-page advertisement, which contained an announcement of the dedication and blessing of our new Grand Lodge Temple as well as the pictures of the ten outstanding Masons for 1990.

In the spirit of ecumenism we had our new Temple blessed by representatives of different religious denominations, namely: a Catholic priest, a Protestant minister, a Muslim imman, and a bishop of the Philippine Independent Church.

I consider, dear brethren, the completion of our new Grand Lodge Temple (G.L.T.) as the greatest accomplishment of our Grand Lodge during my term.

If you recall, this project was started by MW Jolly Bugarin sometime in 1979. According to plan, we could complete the temple within one or two, at most three years. Ironically, as stated by MW Reynold S. Fajardo, PGM, our acknowledged Masonic historian in this jurisdiction, it has taken us longer to finish our temple than King Solomon to finish his temple because the construction of our temple laboriously dragged on for 11 years while King Solomon's temple was completed in seven years. For a time, then, our unfinished temple became a symbol of our apathy and neglect, so that people started to ask, "What is happening to Freemasonry in the Philippines?"

Our leaders, particularly our Grand Masters, felt it incumbent upon themselves to protect the prestige and good name of our Fraternity by endeavoring to convert what was then referred to as "white elephant" into a symbol of Masonic strength, unity and harmony. That was, after all, our dream, our vision, our aspiration.

My eleven predecessors in the Grand East appealed for the much-needed funds and were able to raise a total of eight million pesos (P8 M). But in the face of gnawing stagflation and spiralling construction costs that amount was far from sufficient.

During my term, therefore, we had to launch an all-out campaign for more funds. One thing going for me, as stated by MW Reynato S. Puno in "Tribute to the Temple Builders" (*The Cabletow*, November-December 1990),

is that I have got the cooperation of the brethren who count, brethren who will give all to assure that I complete the temple.

With the cooperation of such brethren, whom I now thank in behalf of my family, we were able to complete our dream-of symbol of unity, strength and harmony during my term of administration.

I have to admit that the process of raising the necessary funds has been quite difficult, painstaking, even frustrating. Our campaign reaped 11.5 million pesos (P11.5M). But the sizeable amount of sacrifices involved and the spectacular response of many magnanimous brethren have been belittled, nay ignored, by a handful of critical and intriguing brethren in the Grand Lodge, often referred to as the Board of Intrigues or BOI. Those are the brethren who have not contributed their share to the task of completing our new temple. When criticizing an objective or a project, they think first of their own, not their Fraternity's benefit. They ask not what they can do for the Grand Lodge; instead, they ask what the Grand Lodge can do for them. The actuation of such brethren, I submit, is a great disservice to the Craft. It is high time that they changed their destructive tendencies, or that we made them change if we are going to maintain our Fraternity's prestige, honor and integrity.

The finals of our oratorical contest on the evils of drug addiction was so successful that we might institutionalize the holding of such a contest on the same day. We congratulate the participants in the said contest as well as their trainers.

The ten outstanding Masons we honored on that date were: Bro. Senator Mamintal Tamano, Legislature; Bro. Governor Douglas Cagas, Executive; Bro. Justice Nathanael Grospe, Judiciary; Bro. Bishop Estanislao Q. Abainza, Religion; Bro. Domingo Bascara, Civic Work; Bro. Colonel Voltaire Gazmin, Military; MW Bro. Raymond E. Wilmarth, Business; Bro. Architect Manuel Go, Architecture; Bro. Dr. Emmanuel Lagare, Science; and Bro. Dr. Ernesto Malabanan, Medicine.

In honoring our Past Grand Masters, we presented each one of them with a custom-made plaque with his picture on it.

Furthermore, during our special communication last December 19, we conferred the title of Honorary Past Grand Master to MW Tommy Weng, Grand Master of China, in appreciation for the many contributions he and other Chinese brethren have extended to help us finish our new temple. MW Weng has also attended our Annual Communications for several years now.

We likewise conferred the title of Honorary Past Deputy Grand Master to RW Christopher Haffner of Germany, the District Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Hongkong. RW Haffner, the Master of Coronati Lodge, the premier research lodge of the Masonic family, has been attending our Annual Communications for the past several years.

For the first time in our history we are coming out with a Masonic year book, which will chronicle the history of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines from 1912 to 1990. It will also contain historic events which have not yet been published, as well as the history of the Blue Lodges, together with the pictures

of the Lodge officers. The book will be circulated not only in the Philippines but also to all Grand Lodges with which we have fraternal relations. The year book committee is chaired by MW Reynold S. Fajardo, PGM.

Allow me to mention, at this juncture, a few of our brethren who were of great help to us in completing the new Grand Lodge Temple: Bro. Albert Awad, who donated the electrical requirements estimated at more than P120,000; Bro. Nelson Lim, who donated the narra doors, estimated at P100,000; VW Robert Pe Liao, who donated the glass and aluminum on the second floor, estimated at more P60,000; MW Rosendo C. Herrera, PGM, who donated P100,000; VW Raymundo Yu Sr., who also donated P100,000; VW George Chua Cham, who donate P100,000, too; WB Peter Chua, who gave P60,000; the Temple Builders Club, which lent one million pesos with no interest at all. Sister Ching Herrera donated the requirements for the offices of the Grand Masters and the Grand Secretary. Modesty aside, I made cash advances amounting to almost P520,000.

I want to thank all our brethren who also donated very substantial amounts and therefore helped us to complete our new temple. *Maraming salamat. Mabuhay kayong lahat!* May the Grand Architect of the Universe bless you all.

UPDATING OF RECORDS

At the start of my Grand Mastership, we were surprised to find out that the records in the Grand Lodge were three years behind. To correct this anomalous situation, we purchased a brand-new powerful computer. With it, we are able to update our records in six months.

I want, at this point, to thank the Committee on Computerization headed by WB Edward See, a computer wizard.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A GYM AND GAME ROOM

We have established a gym and game room in our old temple, so that our provincial brethren visiting our Grand Lodge may feel at ease. The gym will be provided with the necessary equipment, while the game room will have such features as billiards, pool, pingpong, chess, darts, and other parlor games.

MASONIC RELIEF IN ACTION

When the killer earthquake hit Central and Northern Luzon in July, the Grand Lodge, under your Grand Master's leadership, took the initiative of raising funds in order to assist our brethren as well as other fellow-Filipinos. We appealed to both our local and foreign brethren. Tremendous was the response to our appeal. Money practically came pouring in. With the money raised, we immediately sent relief assistance to Benguet, Baguio, La Union, Pangasinan, Nueva Vizcaya, and Nueva Ecija. Our DDGMS, together with the

Blue Lodges, saw to it that the assistance we were extending directly reached the intended beneficiaries.

We are proud to report that we were able to assist in installing a complete water system in some barangays or communities which had been completely covered by the landslides. We were able to help in the rehabilitation of the inhabitants in the said barangays/communities by putting up livelihood programs, including providing them with garden tools and seedlings; so that they would be able to go back to the mainstream of society the soonest possible.

As of last count, we were able to raise the amount of 1.9 million pesos (P1.9 M).

When super-typhoon Ruping wrought havoc and devastation on the Visayas and a portion of Mindanao in the later part of 1990, we appealed once more to our brethren. This time we were able to raise P120,000 as well as goods worth several hundred thousand pesos. These we immediately sent through the DDGMs of Surigao, Samar, Leyte, Cebu and Bacolod.

RESPONSE TO THE CONTROVERSIAL CBCP CIRCULAR

During the year 1990, through a controversial circular, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) once more tried to dangle the Damoclean sword of "excommunication" over the heads of Catholics who are members of the Masonic fraternity and/or Masonic-related groups/associations.

Prudently and judiciously the Grand Lodge handled the problem. Instead of issuing incendiary statements, it issued a position paper. We reminded all concerned that in the late sixties and early seventies there took place a series of dialogues between the Catholic hierarchy and the Grand Lodge. The issue on hand was settled in that series of dialogues. It was agreed, among other things, that both groups let the mist of misunderstanding between them vanish, and that, in accordance with the Christian doctrine, brotherly love prevail between them.

We issued Circular No. 14, series of 1990, stating, among other things, that a series of articles about Freemasonry would appear in the *Philippines Free Press*, that a panel of PGMs would explain our position on television or over the radio, that a statement of facts about Freemasonry would be printed in pamphlet form to be distributed to all Lodges, that Masons should dialogue with their parish priests, and that Masons and their wives were requested to write to editors, expressing their true sentiments relative to their knowledge on Freemasonry.

Articles on Freemasonry appeared in the August 27, 1990 issue of the *Philippine Free Press*.

The Cabletow, July-August 1990 issue, contained the address of Most Rev. Diosdado A. Talamayan, D.D., archbishop of Tuguegarao at the installation ceremonies of Gonzaga Lodge No. 66, F. & A. M.: "The Privilege of Being

a Catholic and a Mason" by Father Al Simon; "A Response to Specific Criticisms of Freemasonry — Part Two"; and "Our Fraternity Is Under Fire — Again"!

The Cable, September-October 1990 issue, again contained several articles on the same issue; the editorial "Only Lack of Masonry among Masons Will Extinguish Masonry"; my own column "From the Grand Oriental Chair"; "Grassroot Ecumenism"; "Postscript to Most Rev. Talamayan's Address"; "Canon Law and Masonry"; the CBCP's Pastoral Letter and the Grand Master's Response thereto; and other responses.

EDUCATIONAL MASONIC MATERIALS

Following are the educational digests we ordered from the Masonic Service Association of the United States, which we believe will intensify the dissemination of Masonic knowledge among the brethren:

1. Adventures in Masonry
2. Ancient Landmarks of F.M.
3. And Give Them Proper Instruction
4. At the Sound of the Gavel
5. Bible Quotations for Mas. Sp.
6. Dress Up Your Speech
7. From Operative to Speculative
8. Language Landmarks
9. Leadership
10. Let There Be Light
11. Masonic Questions Answered by the Courts
12. Masonic Trials & Priv. Com.
13. Trestle Board Tidbits
14. Program Notebook for WM
15. Tried and Proven
16. Truth is Stranger than Fiction
17. Vistas of Masonry in L.S. & H.
18. Why This confusion in the Temple
19. WM Workbook
20. Dictionary, Masonic
21. Encyclopedia of Masonic Symbols
22. Hat & Gavel
23. Think Tank for Jr. Wardens
24. What Is Freemasonry?
25. Vocabulary, Masonic
26. Ancient Mystic Rites
27. The Astral Body
28. Concentration
29. Expansion of Awareness
30. The Inner Life

31. Mastering the Problems of Living
32. Meditation; a Practical Study
33. Mystery of Healing
34. Self-Transformation through Music
35. Tao-Teh-King Sayings of Lau Tzu
36. Thought Power

75th ANCOM COMMEMORATIVE CAR PLATES

The Special 75th Ancom/Diamond Jubilee Commemorative Car Plates are now available at the Grand Lodge Office, new Plaridel Temple. They are priced at P5000 a pair.

PROJECTS FOR OUR YOUTHS

In addition to conducting a nation-wide oratorical contest, the Grand Lodge also sponsored a nation-wide poster-making contest on the same topic: the Evils of Drug Addiction.

We also required all Districts to put up billboards and posters about the evils of the drug menace.

CONCLUSION

The year 1990-91, I dare say, has been a power year for us, and I am happy to be a part of those historical events that made the year memorable.

Let me, therefore, thank my fellow Grand Lodge Officers, the DDGMs, the DGLs, the GLIs, the committee chairmen and their members, the Board for General Purposes, all the generous donors, the Temple Builders Club, and all who have in one way or another assisted, supported, and helped us accomplish to a great extent what we have set out to do. For accomplishing many things, we received paeans, but we also reaped some heartaches or pains. But even these we bore for the sake of our Fraternity.

I give thanks, above all, to the Grand Architect of the Universe who in His infinite wisdom has guided us and who has made possible everything that took place during my term of office in the Grand East. Without His help, we could not have accomplished much.

And now after the paeans and the pains, I am looking forward to a second honeymoon with my wife and to devoting more time with my children. To them, too, I give my loving thanks.

Maraming salamat. *Mabuhay* to all of you.

May next year be one of more fruitful, dynamic leadership in our fraternity. May each one of us continue living Freemasonry as our way of life.



RESEARCH

• Eufemio dela Cruz

Initiation Speech of M.H. del Pilar

"Through the Worshipful Master of this Worshipful Lodge you have received the fraternal embrace of all brother Masons scattered over the earth. This is a day of joy for Masonry: every new member admitted in its bosom represents a soul rescued from the grip of fanaticism and superstition, a new addition to its forces of liberation, a new conquest of the banner of civilization and progress in the secular struggle against obscurantism.

"Masonry, upon receiving your application for joining this sublime institution, has made inquiries about you through the many means at its disposal, and if the least blemish had been found in your character it would have rejected you from its ranks and this initiation would never have taken place. But unanimous and honorable are the reports we have received of your virtues, your conduct, and your love of progress. Masonry feels proud to congratulate and rejoice with you.

OBJECT OF MASONRY

"Masonry rejoices with you because Masonry, consecrated to the spreading of the light of civilization, to working for the acceptance, as a pattern of human action, of the highest ethical standards, needs men of character, men who are benevolent and just in their social relations, and self-reliant. These qualities it finds in you, qualities that constitute great additional supports for the Masonic world.

"It congratulates you, through my modest person, because the step you have just taken will constitute a brilliant page in the history of your worthy accomplishments. Masonry is not a way of life for pleasure: it is a life of sacrifice. To belong to Masonry, to embrace it with faith, is a sign of a stout heart, ready to face the greatest adversities for the sake of a fellow being. Masonry is not a society of mutual aid: mutual protection is a part of its rule and every Mason has the duty of assisting his brethren, but this is not its sole and final objective. Its ideal is very much higher, much more sacred, much more rugged: it is to uphold the principle of universal brotherhood and consequently to uphold in Spain and in her colonies over the seas the principle of democracy, the real and effective autonomy of human individuality, as opposed to the enslaving ambition of those persons who nurture their greed by trampling upon the rights of others and who build their happiness at the expense of the tears of the needy."

THREE SONNETS

I

If you can stand your ground
 Before judge and king;
 Or break bread with the poor
 And hear the lowly sing.
 If you can make your trip
 O'er rough and rugged road,
 Or carry all your burden
 Unmindful of the load.
 If you can bend to raise
 A fallen, crippled child
 Or a brother in distress
 So gentle and so mild...
 Then all of these can be
 No less than masonry to me!

II

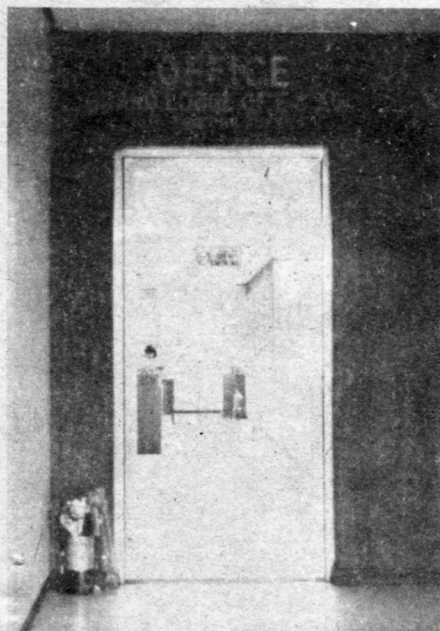
If he comforts the widows,
 The orphans he protects;
 With charity, he neither
 Chooses nor selects.
 If he can clothe the bare
 Without wish of repay;
 If he can be upright
 For the rest of his day.
 If he can teach a man
 That "self" is not the end
 To lasting happiness
 At each and every bend.
 Yes, never "I" but "we"
 For that is Masonry to me!

III

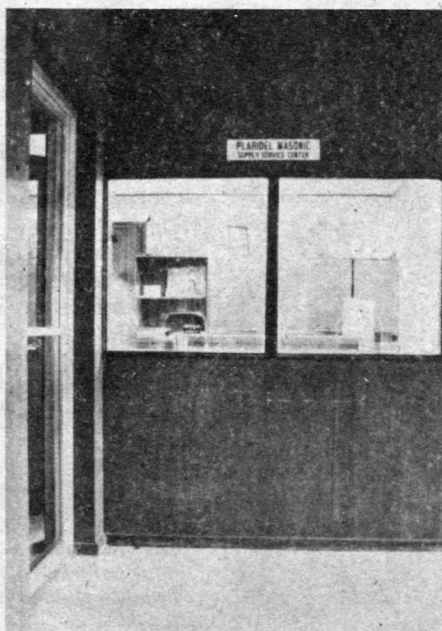
If I can build a bridge
 Between a friend or foe;
 If I can bring gladness
 Or lessen grief and woe.
 If I can live with men
 Regardless of their creed —
 Not minding faith nor race
 Just thinking of their deed.
 If I can look to God
 Above the heaven's hue
 With pride. Because I give
 Each man his rightful due,
 I pray: So mote it be.
 Yes, This is Masonry to me!

WB CARLOS S. BRIONES, PM
 Naga City Lodge 257

NEW PLARIDEL TEMPLE



*Entrance to the Grand Lodge
Office*



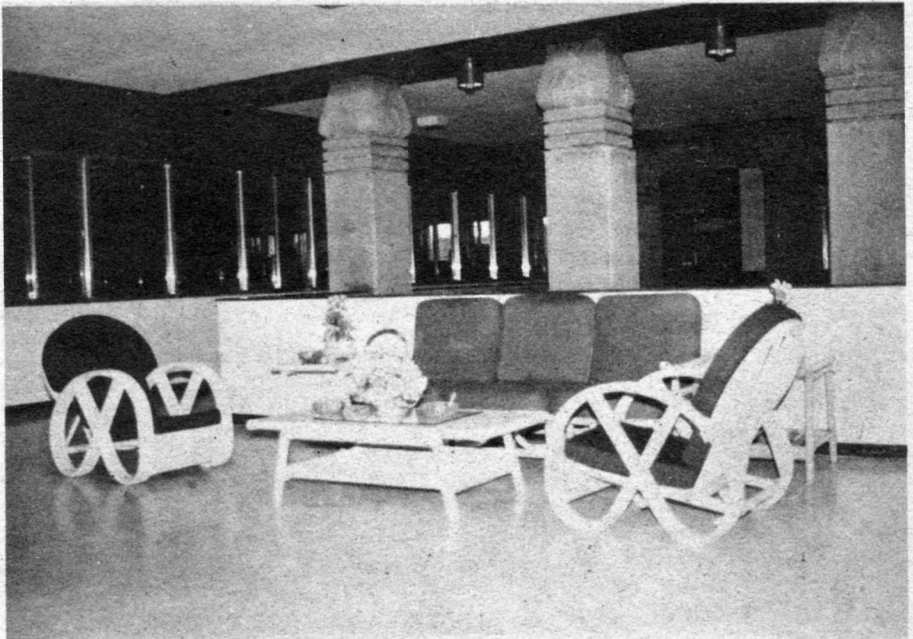
Museum Supply Center



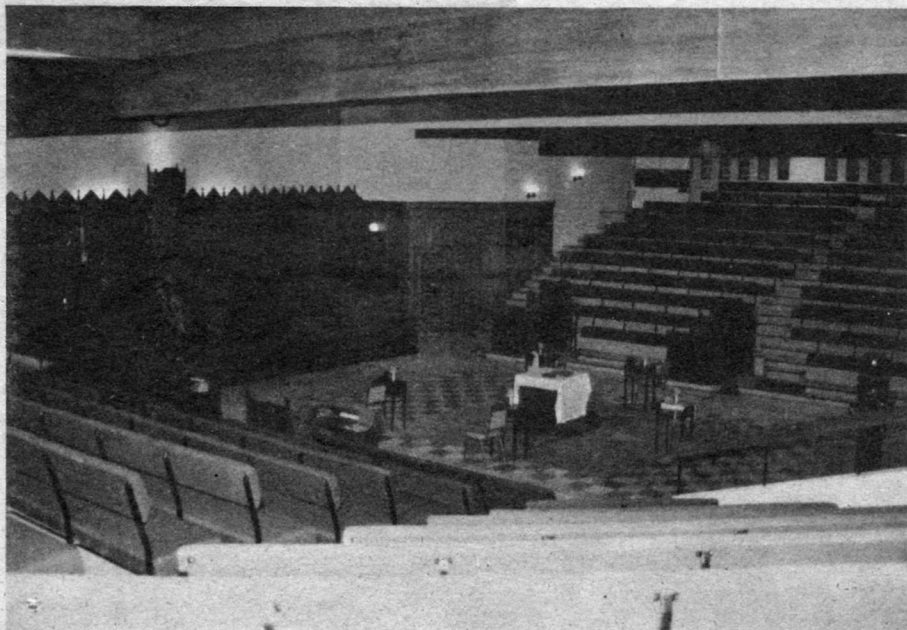
Conference room at the GM's Office



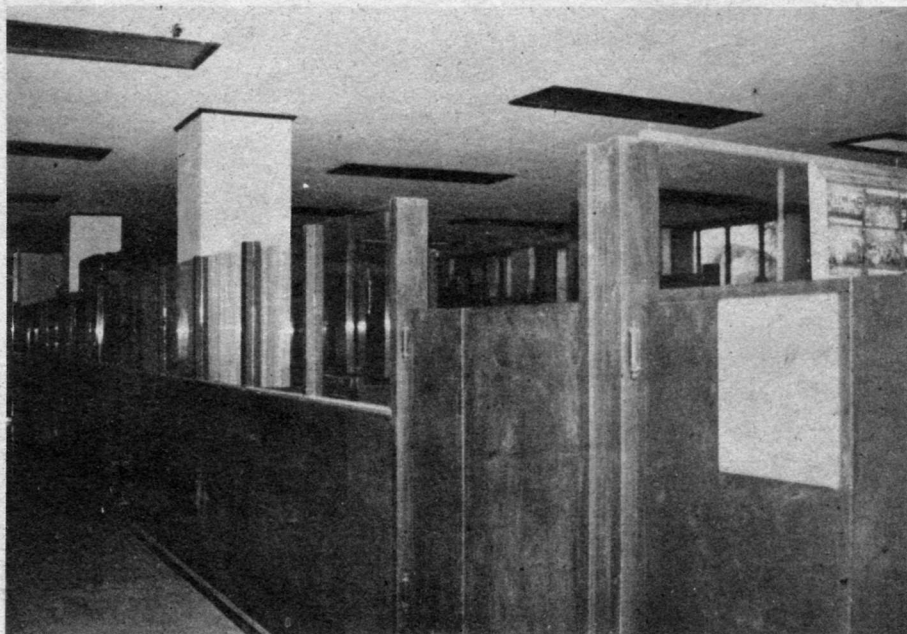
Guideline to the Grand Master's Office



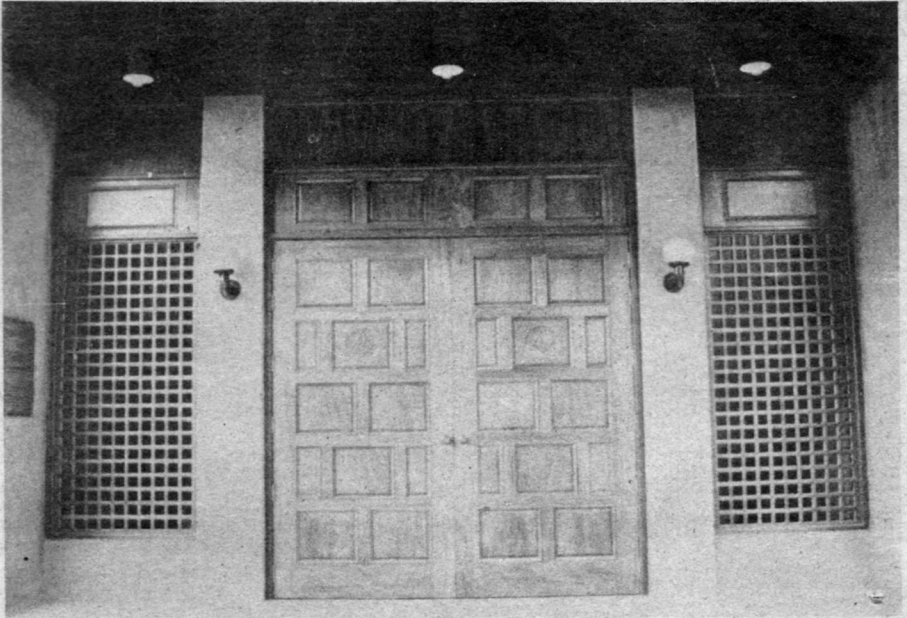
Reception rooms at the lobby



Jose Abad Santos Plenary Hall



Offices of the Blue Lodges



Main door entrance to the New Grand Lodge Temple



MW William Taylor Hall

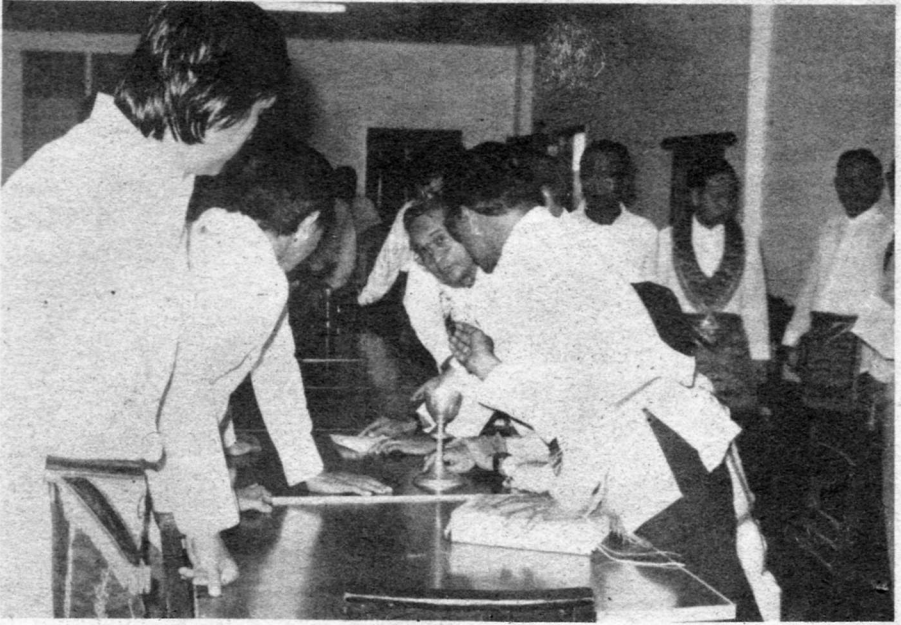
DAVAO MASONIC CENTER...



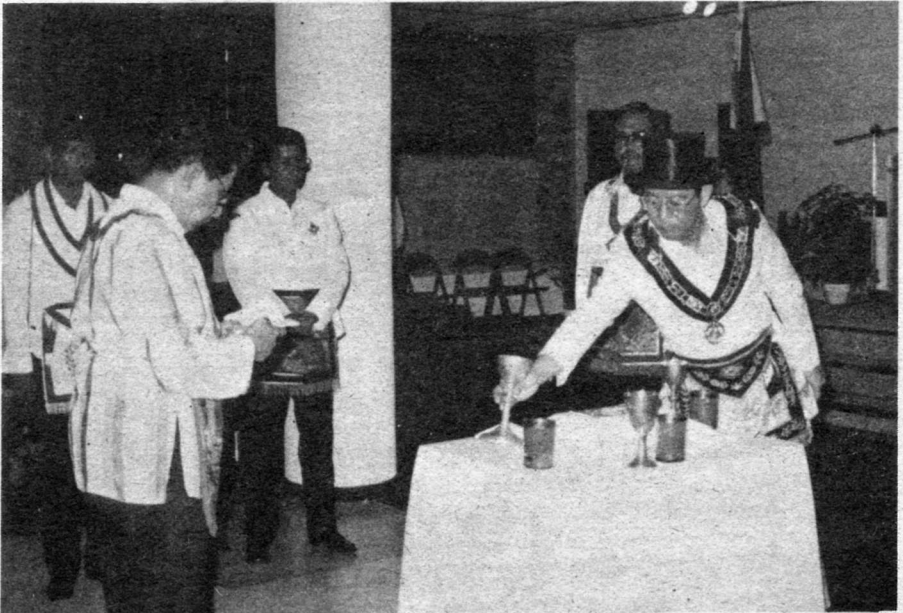
The Davao Masonic Temple after completion



Taken during the arrival of MW John at the Airport — Nov. 22, 1990



VW Danny Angeles giving his final instructions for the consecration and dedication ceremonies



In a very rare occasion, the Grand Lights were complete in attendance for the consecration and dedication



Unveiling of one of the markers. All the Grand Lights were present for the occasion



The Grand Master awarding WB Laureano Callao, Sr., PM a pin symbolic of his fifty years of continued service to the craft

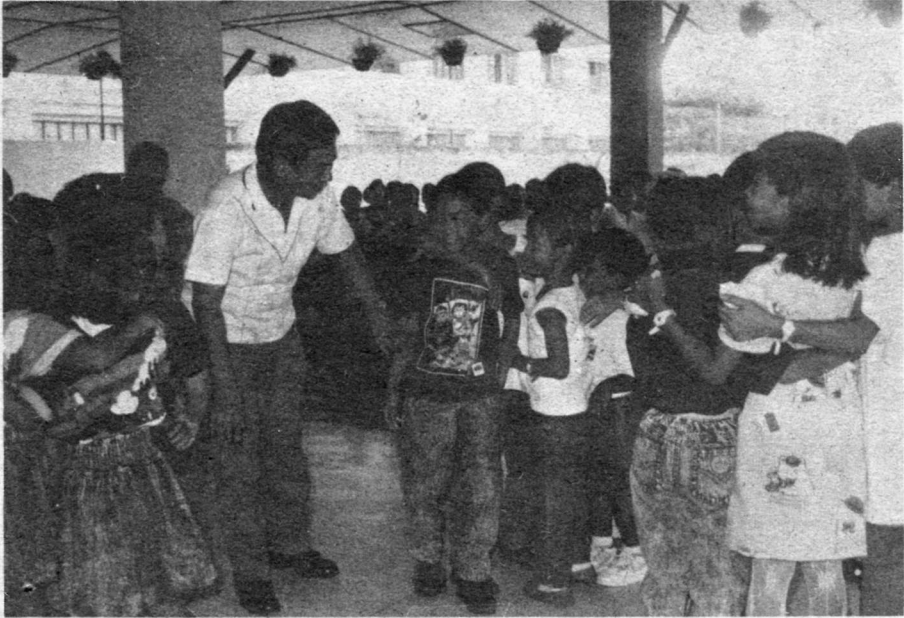


MW John stressing a point as he discussed the many controversial publications of local dailies regarding excommunications of masons from the Catholic Church

This was taken during his visit to Davao to attend the District Affair headed by Beacon Lodge No. 215 billed Enhancement of Family Togetherness.



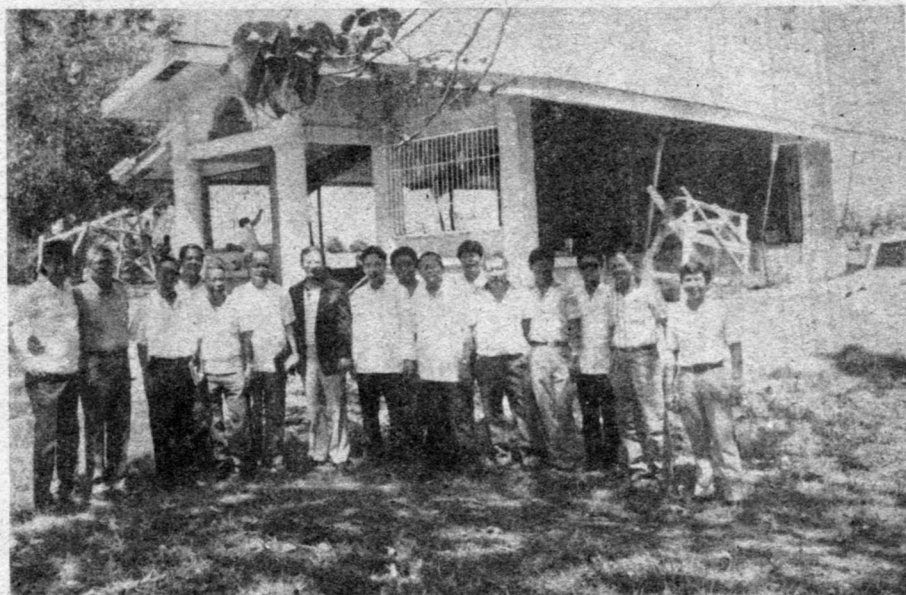
Visiting dignitaries who graced the occasion. VW Sammy P. Fernandez, who is himself a Davaoño, also came and reminisced his past as a schoolboy and a graduate of University of Mindanao



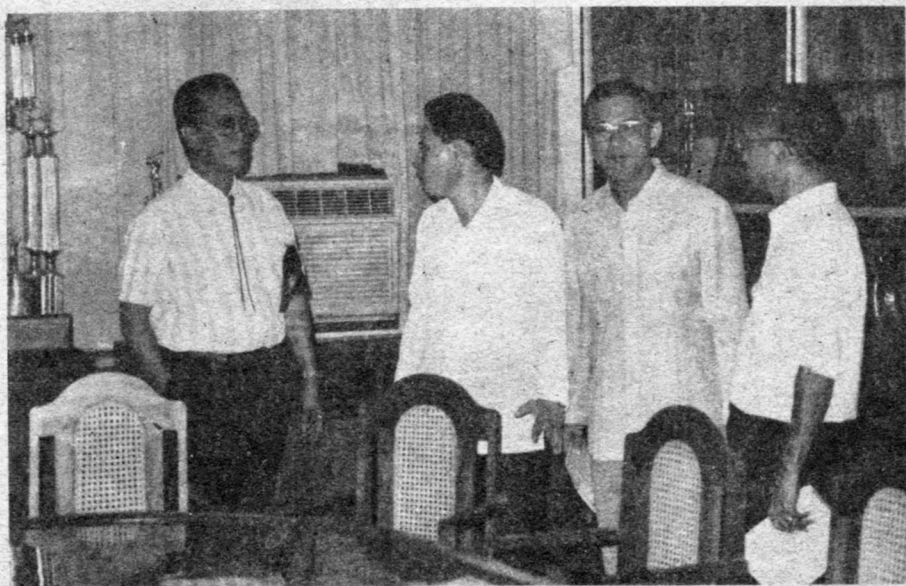
Bro. Willie Cayetano attending to the kids in one of the parlor games. The affair was well-attended



MW John C. and VW Danny A pay their last respects to the late mother of VW Jonathan Montillo, PDDGM



MW John L. Choa, Grand Master, accompanied by district officers headed by VW Romeo A. Yu, inspects the renovated chapel of the Davao Masonic Park. The project is sponsored by Davao Lodge No. 149



VW Romeo-A. Yu guided visiting brethren last Sept. 16, 1990. Shown in the picture are: (L to R) VW Sammy Fernandez, Managing Editor of the Cabletow; VW Romy Yu, DDGM; MWB John L. Choa, GM; and VW Danny Angeles, Senior Grand Lecturer



MW John chats with brethren beside the tombs of our departed brethren. Silence please! They are in deep and peaceful sleep



Bro. Dr. Gonzales of Digos Lodge No. 198 performing his Masonic duty in extending free medical care to the less fortunate citizens of Digos, Davao del Sur. VW Rolando Chiu is partly hidden. The Free Medical-Dental Clinic was another project of Digos Lodge No. 198 under the leadership of VW R.A. Yu



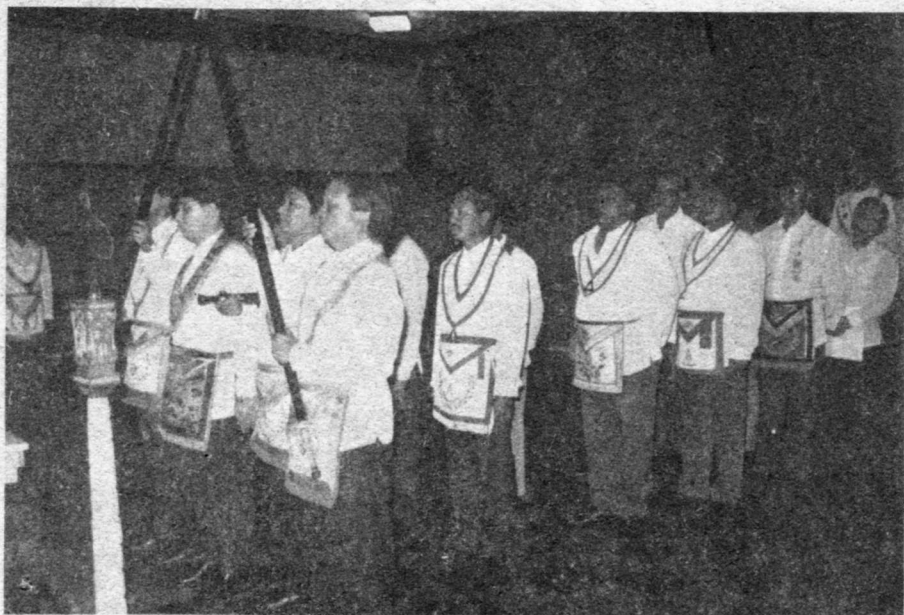
VW Romeo A. Yu, DDGM, Dist. 18 with VW Eduardo Gallardo, DGL, Dist. 18 and WM George de Peralta donating a Jetmatic pump to a barangay in Digos, Davao del Sur. The project was spearheaded by the officers and members of Digos Masonic Lodge No. 198.



RW Rizal D. Aportadera, Grand Junior Warden contributing his share during the Free-Medical-Dental clinic sponsored by Digos Lodge No. 198



GM John L. Choa, RW Guerrero, RW Mateo, VW D. Angeles with Dist. 18 officers and brethren and sisters of Digos Lodge No. 198 pose for posterity



VW Romeo A. Yu accompanied by Grand Lodge and district officers during his visitation on the First meeting of Podomo Lodge UD



VW R. Yu, DDGM receiving the gavel, symbol of authority, from VW Benjamin S. Geli, PDDGM and JGL for Mindanao. VW Geli is the charter master

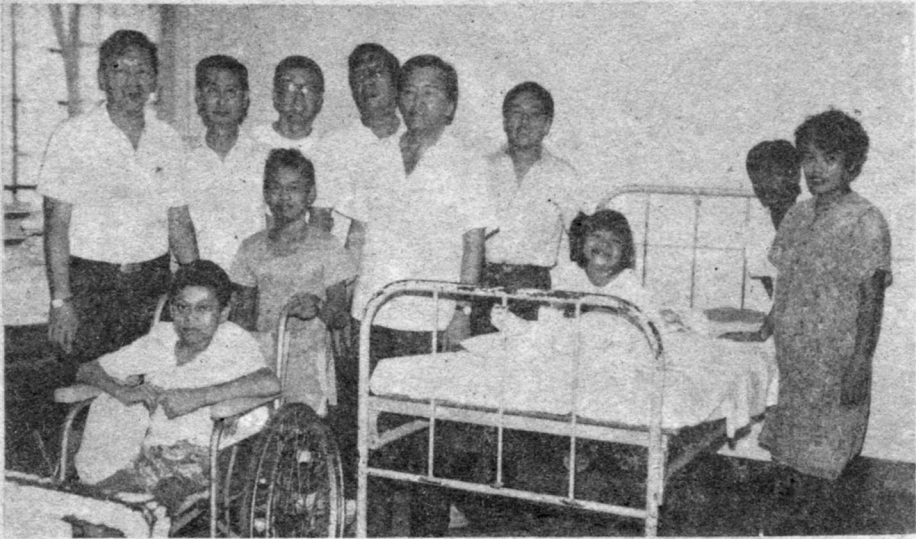


VW Raymundo Yu, Senior Grand Deacon, receiving a plaque for his untiring support to the goals of the district



Wives of departed brethren were given special care and attention during the Widow's Day Celebration (Oct. 31 '90). More than thirty widows were in attendance and they were serenaded by the ever famous Brothers of Harmony. Misty eyes and tears rolling down their cheeks became a common sight as they reminisced the masonic days of their departed husbands

MASONIC CHARITIES FOR CRIPPLED CHILDREN...



VW Romeo A. Yu, DDGM presiding over a district council meeting. It is in these meetings that district plans and goals are studied and formulated. Problems are thrashed out and solved in the most professional manner. This meeting is a monthly exercise

FAMILY OUTING...

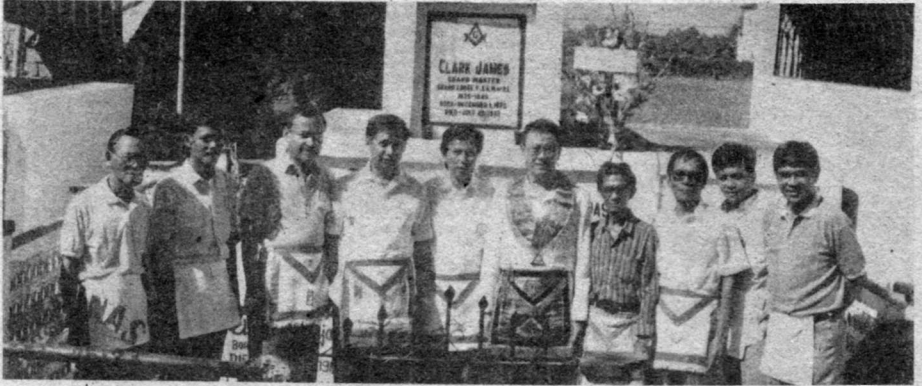


The Past Masters (LtoR): WB Andres R. Caballero, WB Merito Cunanan, WB Romeo C. Cabal, WB Isidoro C. Biag, Jr., WB Thoburn Telan and WB Henry C. Biag



Members of the Zambales Lodge No. 103

VISITATIONS...



Visitation team of Pangasinan Lodge No. 56 at the final resting place of MW Clark James, PGM — Calasiao cemetery, November 1, 1990



The visitation team headed by WM Jaime L. Nabua and IW Silverio Q. Custino, presenting a gift bag to Sis. Primitiva Paragas James



GM John L. Choa and brethren gather around Baltazar Goh Hall



Grand Lodge Officers with the dignitaries of Districts No. 33 and 38



WM Jaime L. Nabua and IW Silverio Castillo light memorial candle for MW Clark James — November 1, 1990



The parade ended at the convention site of both District No. 33 and 38 participants



VW Danilo Angeles, MW John L. Choa, WB Mayor Roseller L. Barinaga and RW Agustin V. Mateo, posed at the foot of Bro. Dr. Jose P. Rizal while IW Hernan D. Contrivida and WB Zoilo E. Ruaya, Jr., PM, called on participants to offer their bouquet



Flower offering at the monument of Bro. Dr. Jose P. Rizal prior to start of Joint District Convention for Districts No. 33 and 38



WB Kiko Aquino giving the familiar grip to WB Augusto Cabral as WM Pong Lustre and JW Dennis Donadilla pose for the camera. Note WB Ado Veneracion ascertaining if the handshake is in order



MW John L. Choa with VW Salvador Santiago Sr., PDDGM of Leyte distributing household utensils to the victims of super typhoon Ruping



MW John L. Choa as Guest Speaker during the 41st installation ceremony of Cebu Lodge No. 128



MW John L. Choa being received with grand honor by the brethren of Cebu Lodge No. 128 during its installation ceremony



MW John L. Choa posed with the newly installed brethren of Palawan Lodge No. 99.



MW John L. Choa visited WB Baltazar Goh, the donor of the lot where the Masonic Temple was enacted. With Goh is the new Charter member of Palawan Lodge No. 99



Brethren of the Tri District No. 15, 16, and 39 offering a wreath to our Bro. Dr. Jose P. Rizal



Nov. 24/90 Civic Action Free medical, dental, circumsicion, Union Lodge No. 70 Siete Martirez Lodge No. 177. Venue — Bgy. San Luis, Pugo, Sr. Fernando, La Union the remotest bgy. NPA infested area

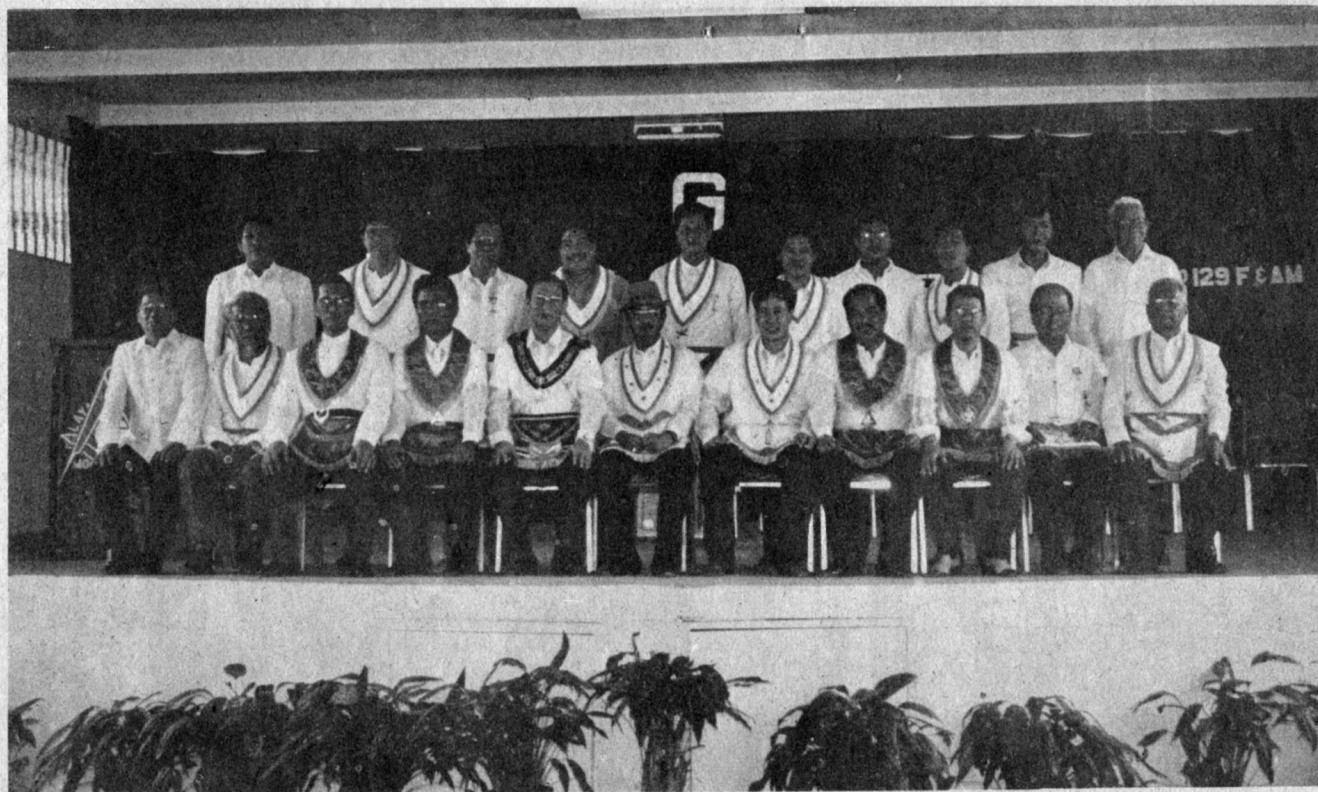


MW John L. Choa attended the house blessing of WB Ting Velasco, immediate Past Master of Palawan Lodge. With him were one of the brethren and sisters of Palawan Lodge No. 99

WELCOME!
MOST WORSHIP GRAND MASTER
JOHN L. CHOA AND PARTY
to the
LODGE TEMPLE DEDICATION AND
INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS
FEBRUARY 9, 1991
65 Foundation Anniversary **PALAWAN LODGE**
NO. 99 F.&A.M.



MW John L. Choa being welcomed at the airport by the incoming Worshipful Master, WB Greg Castro of Palawan Lodge No. 99 during the dedication of its Masonic Temple and installation of officers for 1991



Installation of officers of Sixto Lopez (Batulao) Lodge No. 129, February 23, 1991 with MW John L. Choa as Guest Speaker and VW Napoleon Soriano as Installing Officer. Officers: WB Orlando Buhay, SW Danilo Zuñiga, VW Ricardo D. King, Treas. Alberto Ramos, Sec. Jose Ma. Ramos



MW John L. Choa, VW Samuel P. Fernandez, VW Danilo Angeles, VW Joven Chua, VW Pablo Kho, VW Nestor C. Panlangue and brethren of District No. 37 offer flowers to Bro. Dr. Jose Rizal before District No. 37 Convention formally opened

TREE AND MAN

Dear Dad,

One morning, while I was listening to the song TREE (poem by Joyce Kilmer) a good friend and President of a State University in the South, handed me a note with the following:

"GUARD YOUR THOUGHTS,
 THEY BECOME YOUR ACTIONS;
 GUARD YOUR ACTIONS
 THEY BECOME YOUR HABITS;
 GUARD YOUR HABITS,
 THEY BECOME YOUR LIFESTYLE;
 WATCH YOUR LIFESTYLE,
 IT BECOMES YOUR DESTINY!!!"

As I read over and over the above lines, the more I am convinced of the value of its warnings.

Suddenly, I picture to mind the progress and the growth of a tree from the time its tender body sprouts from the soil up to the time that it had served its purpose, we learn a lot of lessons in its lifestyle. Just like a man — from his birth, infancy, adolescence, young adulthood, manhood to the time he leaves the earth to meet his CREATOR. Tree and Man have each a purpose, and common pattern of growth — from birth to their DESTINY.

Tree and Man are similar in many aspects and different in several ways. Tree and Man are of different makeup, color, and appearance. Man belongs to different races so do Trees belong to different varieties. Both Tree and Man are either strong or weak. Both depend on Mother Nature and abide by the Natural Law. Both Tree and Man have their time to live and the time to die.

At first, God created the Tree and other natural resources. Then, God created Man. The former to serve the later and the later to preserve and take care of the former. But I feel that God loves the Tree more. The reason is because the Tree is made to depend wholly and submits itself to God. However, Man is not. And does not. Man often times defies God. Because the Tree is helpless, God guides and "thinks" for it. At times Man feels that he does not need God at all, so God allows him to think and take care of himself alone. We should learn from the meekness and submissiveness of the Tree to the wishes of God. The Tree will live without Man. But Man to live in comfort and in style needs the Tree.

The lessons learned in Freemasonry have taught Freemasons to think and exercise our free will for the glory of God. And like the Tree, to submit ourselves to HIM. We should be as patient as the Tree. Pliant and resilient.

Obedient and never complaining. The Tree being submissive of His wishes and designs, man just marvel with delight at the beauty bestowed upon it by God. Man being created in the image of God is indeed beautiful. But the Tree — very natural, very simple, and eloquently silent, is as beautiful.

Watching and reflecting on the coconut trees in Tagaytay and the pine trees in Baguio and the different varieties we see along the thoroughfares in going to the provinces is so inspiring and soul lifting. In the trees we can see faith, beauty, humility, strength, resignation and submission to the will of God. As the lines of Joyce Kilmer rhapsodizes...

*A tree who looks at God all day and
 lifts her leafy arms to pray
 A tree whose hungry mouth is
 pressed against the earth sweet flowing breast
 A tree who in summer wears a nest
 of robins in her hair...*

Tree and Man — masterpieces by the Great Architect of the Universe.

With love,

Sonny





HARVEST

● J. Flor R. Nicolas (eF.R.eN)

And now the end (of Masonic Year 1990-91) is near, and so I write this final "harvest" which, hopefully, you will find worth your reading time and effort.

Two by Three

One by two. Have you read *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* and *The Messianic Legacy*? Two of the authors of these books, Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, have given the world another volume, entitled *The Temple and the Lodge* (New York: Little Brown & Company, 1989), which, according to Dr. Loren W. Kline, is better researched than the two previous efforts. It contains reasonable, as well as sympathetic to extremely positive, discussions on Freemasonry. (Cf. *Grand Lodge Bulletin*, Grand Lodge of Alberta, October 1990, p. 4.)

Agreeing with Dr. Kline, I believe that anyone interested in Masonic history will find *The Temple and the Lodge* enjoyably informative.

Section 1 of the book clearly exposes the history of the Knights Templar, including some of the less noble aspects. It also lucidly presents the events leading to the Order's demise. Section 2 discusses what happened to the Templars after Jacques DeMolay's execution and their subsequent flight to Scotland. Section 3 is a disquisition on the early history of Freemasonry in Great Britain, including the Templars contributions to it.

Read it!

One by one. Another book worth perusing, worth including in a Lodge's Masonic education program is *The Hailing Sign*, a novel by Bro. Steven B. Fink of MacSanders Brotherhood Lodge No. 773 in Roxborough, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

The novel is not about Freemasonry *per se*, but the author, a Mason, has borrowed much from our Craft. This may be gleaned from the many common denominators, including rituals, between the Masonic fraternity and the fictional fraternity called "The Brotherhood of the Craft." Somehow, like Rudyard Kipling, Bro. Fink has projected his concepts of Freemasonry into his novel.

The novel's protagonist, Alexander Mycroft (it sound almost like "My Craft"), is an erstwhile Vietnamese prisoner of war and U.S. Intelligence agent acknowledged to be a hero. His wife being an Israelite, he is suspected to be part of the Israel Intelligence called *Mossad*. Hence, his family becomes the target of terrorist attacks, which eventually cause him to suffer both physical and psychical breakdowns.

Yet he positively responds to the summons that he should renew the obligation of their fraternity, *vis.*, "I am your friend; I am your guide. I am your brother; I am a Shepherd's Son."

To Philadelphia hies off Mycroft. In the *Sanctum Santorium*, he receives the order: "Bring the brother home."

The brother referred to is Lee Sinclair, a Corporal in the U.S. Marines, who now (*circa* 1980) sits as a hostage, heavily guarded 24 hours a day, in the American Embassy in Tehran, Iran. Top rescue him, a nation cannot. Can Mycroft do it?

To prepare us for what is to come, the author leads us into the mysteries of "The Brotherhood of the Craft", into its rituals, and makes us stand behind Mycroft and look over his shoulders.

From such a viewpoint we can look into Mycroft's thoughts and feelings but not those of the other characters. But we can, of course, hear what they say and see what they do.

We empathize with Mycroft, who is armed with the resolve to perform his obligation. We feel and think as Mycroft does, particularly when he is put to the test at every turn. We endure what he is made to endure both by those who hate him and by those who love him. We watch his mind at work. In the process of empathizing with him, we feel what it is like to be stroked and manipulated, used and tortured, loved and hated.

Willingly we must submit ourselves to all this because it is our Obligation that Mycroft has to carry out. We want him to succeed, for his success will also be ours. But if he fails, his failure will be ours, too.

In the end we feel a renewed pride in our Craft. We feel that we need to periodically rededicate our lives to the obligations which we imposed upon ourselves in the three degrees of Masonry and which we oftentimes forget to put into action amid the multifarious distractions, diversions and conflicts that this rapidly changing, fast-moving, time-demanding world presents.

Bro. Steven Fink tacitly asks each one of us: "Will you go as far as Mycroft does when you see *your* Hailing Sign?"

Read Bro. Fink's novel. You will like it; it will like you.

—oOo—

Middle East Freemasonry

At the height of the Middle East war, VW Vicente Antonio Cu, PSGS, sent an article on Freemasonry in the Middle East. Here are some interesting highlights of VW Cu's article.

Israel. Freemasonry in Israel is flourishing, open, unmolested. Records show that a Lodge was formed in Jerusalem as far back as 1873, namely, Rolomon Mother Lodge. It was founded by Canadian archaeologists under their country's charter. But it closed in 1903.

Subsequently, other Lodges were established by residents of Palestine. They banded together to form their Grand Lodge in 1933.

Thence additional Lodges were established by the United Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and even Germany.

In 1953, the 32 existing Lodges formed the Grand Lodge of Israel. Among these were five German Lodges, the members of which had left Germany to escape Nazi tyranny.

There are, to date, 63 Lodges under the Grand Lodge of Israel with a total membership of approximately 3,000.

Iraq. The first Lodge in Iraq, Baghdad Lodge No. 4022, was established in 1919 under English warrant. Since then progress has been quite slow. By 1950 only nine Lodges had been formed, all of them under an English District Grand Lodge.

In 1923, Lodge Faiha No. 1311, under Scottish warrant, was formed in Basra. But when the country became an independent republic in 1958, all Lodges were closed. Most likely they may not re-open.

United Arab Emirates (UAEs). Also called the Trucial States, the UAEs are seven countries in the oil-based Gulf. Of these, Sharjah is the only one which has a Masonic Lodge, namely, Trucial Lodge No. 8160, which was erected in 1967 under English warrant. Principally, it was to provide for the British Masons then working in the oil installations. It remained in operation until 1983. It no longer appears in the current list of overseas Lodges under the United Grand Lodge of England; hence, it is likely that it no longer exists.

Iran. The discovery of oil in what was then known as Persia occasioned the influx of British workers and traders, many of whom were Masons.

At first it was the Grand Lodge of Scotland which provided warrants for the establishment of Lodges in Iran. Lodge of Light in Iran No. 1191 was formed at Shiraz in 1919. St. George Abadan Lodge No. 6958 was formed under English warrant in 1945.

More Lodges were established at the end of World War II — some by the Regular Grand Lodge of France and a few under a German warrant.

The growth of the Craft in that country led to the establishment of the Grand Lodge of Iran in 1969 under Scottish sponsorship. By 1978, the Grand Lodge of Iran had 43 Lodges, with some 1,035 members.

But in that same year Islamic unrest came to a head. As a result of protests against Sha Riza Pahlavi who wanted to modernize the country, the town of Abadan was set on fire, leading to the loss of some 430 lives. The country was thrown into chaos, and the monarchy was threatened. Shortly after the flight of the Shah from the country on January 16, 1979, Freemasonry abruptly ceased. Reportedly, as the Islamic revolution escalated, many Masons suffered persecution.

The Grand Secretary in 1978, who later became Grand Master, as well as the incumbent Grand Secretary, has an address in Los Angeles, California: a Post Office Box Number. But whether the Craft exists in Iran today in any form is not known to the outside world.

Saudi Arabia. The Lodges in Saudi Arabia have come under the American Canadian Grand Lodge's control. This Grand Lodge in turn is under the jurisdiction of the United Grand Lodges of Germany.

In the period 1962-1982, six English-speaking Lodges were formed, namely: Arabian 882, Nejma 897, Red Sea 919, Milo 938, Pyramid Lodge of Past Masters No. 962, and Udhailiyah 964. They were established for the benefit of foreign workers, mainly North American and British Masons.

It is not the policy of the American Canadian Grand Lodge to publish details of meeting places or addresses associated with the Lodges. Besides, intending visitors to Saudi Arabia have been advised that they correspond, prior to travelling, with the Grand Secretary in Frankfurt, Germany, through their own Grand Lodge.

Kuwait. This oil-rich Arab State erected two Lodges under English warrant, namely, Kuwait 6810 and Rowland Chadwick 7572, the former in 1949 and the latter in 1956. Apparently, due to strong opposition from Kuwaiti government, they have ceased to operate.

They are, however, still listed among the overseas Lodges of the English Constitution.

Lebanon. The first Lodge to be established in Lebanon was Lodge Palestine No. 415 under Scottish warrant. It was formed at Beirut in 1861.

At the start of the Great War there were four others in operation, but they did not survive that event.

According to records, Lodge Peace No. 908 was founded at Beirut in 1900; Lodge Kadisha No. 10002 at Beirut, too, in 1906; Lodge Zahle No. 1047 at Zahle in 1914; and Mount Lebanon Lodge No. 1312 at Beirut in 1923.

When the Lebanese Civil War broke out in 1974, these Scottish Lodges apparently became dormant. But they are still listed on the roll.

Nine other Lodges were established under charter from the Grand Lodge of New York. The first of these was Syrio-American Lodge No. 1. These Lodges appear to be currently dormant, but they are still listed on the New York roll, Syria-Lebanon District.

Jordan. Currently operating is Lodge Jordan No. 1339, chartered by the Grand Lodge of Scotland at Jaffa (Tel-Aviv) in 1925. This Lodge moved to Amman, Jordan in 1935. It is currently listed on the roll of the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

Yemen. When South Yemen was still known as Aden, a British Protectorate (until 1934), there were established, under warrants from the Grand Lodge of Scotland, two Lodges: Felix 335 in 1850 and Centenary 1449 in 1900. Both of these Lodges do not appear on the current roll; presumably, they might have ceased to exist.

In 1918, England established Light in Arabia No. 3870. It is currently listed as operating in Croydon, England.

Syria. Once part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire, Syria saw Lodges erected during the 1860s by the Grand Orients of Italy and France, but all these Lodges had ceased to operate openly by the early 1900s.

Scotland chartered Lodge Light in Damascus, all Lodges were forced to close. Apparently, there has been no change of situation since that time.

Note: As far as we can ascertain, there has been no Masonic activity in both Oman and Qatar.

—oOo—

Needed: A Sense of Trust Among Brethren

Like the proverbial chain, our Fraternity is only as strong as its weakest link. When we, its members, "allow deceit and mistrust to creep into our Fraternity, then we are sowing the seeds that will certainly lead us on a course of self-destruction." That is the monition of MW G. Ray marsh, Grand Master of Masons of South Carolina (*Masonic Light*, January 1991, p. 2).

We agree with MW Marsh that Masonry in whichever jurisdiction cannot continue to survive if we cannot trust one another.

Now that the Annual Communication in Bacoled City is at hand, we wish that we will take this exhortation of MW Marsh: "... let us pledge to each other that we will work together to establish a sense of trust among all members of our Lodges and of our Grand Lodge. Friendship, Morality and Brotherly Love should be our daily guide in all transactions of our beloved Fraternity."

We reiterate, at this juncture, what we have already stressed, namely: When we Freemasons have differences, we must work them out as Brothers, not for our own selfish satisfaction, but for the best interest of the Fraternity.

We should, moreover, call to mind this biblical saying, "There is none righteous, no not one — all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." This saying has application in our case in the following manner: A Brother may have committed one or more mistakes; but at least his failures and errors are past and, therefore, we should, as his brethren, help him get out of the ashes of his old self and rise again spiritually to a new tomorrow. Who knows, he will yet become a strong link in the Masonic chair.

—oOo—

Quo Vadis, Freemasonry?

Many times during Masonic Year 1990-91, I was told by leaders of the Fraternity, present and past, that we should not undertake a Masonic Awareness Program in which we make the public cognizant of what we are and what we are doing. I was also told that it is not right for a Lodge to undertake charitable works such as medical-dental clinics. I was told many other things that we should not do as Masons. What I was told by many a Mason leader has made me confused, asking myself, "Quo Vadis, Freemasonry? Where are we going, Freemasonry?"

I do agree with MW Cabell F. Cobbs, PGM, Grand Lodge of Virginia, that "We need only maintain the secrecy of our ritual modes of recognition; we cannot become strong again, if people have no knowledge of us." (*Virginia Masonic Herald*, January 1991, p. 12).

I do agree with him and other Mason leaders that we must demonstrate our attachment to Masonic principles in our daily life, particularly in our contacts with non-Masons.

Wearing the Square and Compasses on our fingers has a corresponding responsibility: that of practicing the virtues inculcated by our teachings.

Finally, we the members of the Masonic fraternity must demand quality leadership at every level. Listen to MW Cobbs once more:

... Too often, Junior Deacons (and eventual Masters) are selected on the basis of availability and without any real thought given to the sort of stewardship which the nominee will provide the Lodge as Master. District Deputy Grand Masters are routinely selected by a so-called rotation system, and every effort made to improve their qualifications, whether by requiring resumes or additional Masonic education, is met with the stiffest resistance. And, at the Grand Lodge level, the nomination of the incoming Grand Master to the office or Grand Junior Deacon, is almost routinely approved by the voting delegates. The situation is such that it has, in fact, been jocularly called an "appointment" by the Grand Master-elect. This is not as it should be.

The Craft must demand the highest qualifications of leadership and preparation for those who will ultimately be its Grand Masters. It is a position that involves enormous responsibility, a coherent vision of the future, and the administrative ability to administer the law, meet substantial financial commitments, soothe ruffled egos, recognize our very serious problems, and devise, with the cooperation of his officers, viable solutions which will last beyond his term. Above all, the candidate must be one who possesses the courage of his conviction, is willing to enforce the high standards of our Order, and to assume responsibility for his actions. (*Ibid.*, p. 13).

High, indeed, are the standards of leadership, supreme and subordinate, in our Craft. Therefore, delegates must take their responsibility seriously enough to inquire into the real fitness of the candidate for office. When their votes have helped one to office in our Craft, it will be hard to criticize the elected one for failing to do his job.

May the delegates to the Ancom in Bacolod City vote wisely and participate in the discussion of critical issues facing our Fraternity. May our Fraternity stand united whatever will be the outcomes of the Ancom.

FREEMASONRY — MY OPINION

• M. S. F. DIN.

“Verily, this Brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood, and I am your Lord and Cherisher; therefore serve Me and no other.” But (later generations) cut off their affair of unity, one from another: yet will they all return to Us.”

— *Holy Quran 21:92-93.*

The term 'Freemasonry' has been bantered around so much that if one asks a hundred different persons in the street what they know to be freemasonry, one can get many hundred answers from this hundred people.

When one tries to evaluate these answers one gets further and further away from the truth.

And so, what is Freemasonry?

Everyone has his own opinion — some favorable and some unfavorable. I have my own opinion also but it is just an opinion too.

So much has been written on Freemasonry, for and against it, that there always seems to be nothing more that can be added to the subject. But a look into the daily papers will reveal that something new always crops up, and again some items are for it, some against. And amidst all this conglomeration, I too shall try in my small way to add my own small being. I may not be able to say what exactly Freemasonry is, but I can say when even as a Muslim I can still be a Freemason and be proud of it.

I remember very clearly the evening when I was first initiated. A day before the initiation I had been asked on what would I normally make an oath. I had replied, on the Holy Quran of course.

In my 'state of darkness' during the ceremony I was directed to place my right hand on the Volume of the Sacred Law. At that moment I had no idea of what was meant as the Volume of the Sacred Law. Thereon I solemnly and sincerely had made my pledges.

When the 'state of light' was restored to me; Lo! my right hand had been placed on a copy of the Holy Quran with the Square and Compass that were resting on the Holy Bible in front of me.

The ceremony went on and my attention was directed by the Master to the Volume of the Sacred Law being one of the three great, though emblematical, lights of Freemasonry which is to rule and govern my faith. My eyes were on the copy of the Holy Quran in front just as a streak of profound feeling of solemnity passed through my body. I had realized then that oaths made by Freemasons of Muslim persuasions were as binding to them as those that had been made by Freemasons of other faiths. The Volume of the Sacred Law does

not only mean the Holy Bible. It encompasses also the Holy Quran. For it has been written: "O ye who believe! Fulfill (all) obligations." Holy Quran 5:1.

This verse has been justly admired for its terseness and comprehensiveness. Any obligation made must be honor bound and fulfilled even so far as when a group or a state enters into a treaty, every individual in that group or state is bound to see that as far as it is in his power, such obligations are faithfully discharged.

Does this not indicate that the brotherly love expounded in Freemasonry encompasses not just Christians or Jews but Muslims also?

Last year I met a cousin of mine from Pakistan where Freemasonry is not still banned by law. He too is a Freemason, Master of his Lodge in Lahore. From him I learned that during the inner workings of masonic lodges in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, there were three Volumes of the Sacred Law opened — the Holy Bible, the Holy Quran and the Holy Book of the Hindus.

When my initiation was over, my realization that the ceremonies through which I had undergone in the initiation was not in any way unislamic. Another thing that impressed my mind is the charge delivered from the East just before the ceremonies ended. I can now in reminiscence why no institution can boast a more solid foundation than that on which Freemasonry rests — the practice of every moral and social virtue.

In the Charge I was recommended for serious contemplation, the Volume of the Sacred Law.

To any Muslim what is more sacred than his Volume of the Sacred Law, his Holy Quran? Hasn't the recent Rushdie affair proved to the world at large how much reverence the Holy Quran is held in the minds of Muslims? Does he not consider it as the unerring standard of truth and justice? Does he not regulate his actions by the Divine precepts it contains and the various duties he owes to his God, to his neighbors and also to himself and his kin?

It is written that "Whoever works any act of Righteousness and has Faith — his endeavor will not be rejected: We shall record it in his favour." Holy Quran 21:94.

Does not the Charge delivered by the Past Master exhort me to follow this? It is clear to me that God gives credit for every act of righteousness, however, small.

Following on, in verse 21:105 "Before this We wrote in the Psalms after the message (given to Moses); My servants, the *righteous* shall inherit the earth." I underline the word *righteous*, for I now felt even more strongly that the Charge delivered to me by the Past Master, was an exhortion to me to do only righteous deeds.

To God (I quote) by never mentioning His Name but with that awe and reverence which are due from the creature to his Creator, by imploring His Divine aid in all your undertakings, and by looking up to Him in every emergency for comfort and support.

What Muslim does not know this?

If you go back to the beginning of my article, you can see that even in writing an article, I need to invoke His Name as I do in all my undertakings. As to mentioning His Name with reverence, it is written in verse 21:108 (I quote) "Say, what has come to me by inspiration is that your God is One God: will ye therefore bow to His Will (in Islam)."

It should be understood that He is not my God only, but also your God, for there is but One God, the Lord of the Universe, Who created and love and cherishes all. Freemasonry is not far away for have they not addressed God as the Great Architect of the Universe.

Duties to Neighbor Verse 2:177 in the Holy Quran clearly stipulates what is righteousness in a God fearing man.

He should obey salutary regulations but he should fix his gaze on the love of God, and the love of his fellow men. We are given four heads: (1) our faith should be true and sincere; (2) we must be prepared to show it in deeds of charity to our fellow men; (3) we must be good citizens, supporting social organization, and (4) our own individual soul must be firm and unshaken in all circumstances. They are interconnected and yet can be viewed separately.

Practical deeds of charity are of value when they proceed from love (in the case of Freemasons — brotherly love) and from no other motive. In this respect our duties take various forms.

In this verse 2:177 they are shown in reasonable gradation: our kith and kin; orphans (including any persons who are without support or help); people who are in real need but who never ask (it is our duty to seek them out and they come before those who ask); the stranger who is entitled to laws of hospitality (refer to Genesis 18-2 to 8, see how hospitable was Abraham), people who ask and are entitled to ask, i.e. not merely lazy beggars, but those who seek our assistance in some form or other it is our duty to respond to them; and the slaves, we must do all we can to give or to buy their freedom.

Any Muslim in his daily practice would already be doing what the Charge exhorts me to do. As far as I can see the exhortations contained in the Charge fall within the perimeters of Quranic teachings.

Secrecy. Islamic history abounds with stories of Sufi tariqa or brotherhoods. They were groups gathered together for instruction and meditation, though perhaps not as polished and streamlined in those days as the masonic lodges and chapters are of today.

Each has its own Master, expounding their knowledge amongst their own brethren and jealously guarding their own secrets. By subtle instructions and discreet actions, initiates were groomed into mastery of their arts. Some were monastic, some militant and some neither of both. Some were dated as far back to the time the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) was alive.

Islamic historians have recorded that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) was present at the meeting of a group which may call the League of the Virtuous, through other explanations of the name are given. It is unfortunate that very little was written about the League apart from the fact that it had had his approval.

A masonic secrecy, no doubt. For do we go advertising what happens in the workings of our masonic lodges?

Every brotherhood has its rules and they do not go about advertising their secrets. In fact they were not unsimilar to our present day masonic lodges with the exception that their members were bonded more to religious precepts whereas Freemasonry has in present days always declared itself to be a non-religious organization.

The main thrust of their teachings was a Christ-like emphasis on charity. To many Sufis, the Prophet Jesus (Peace be upon him) was the symbol of pure human altruism; they revered, sometimes practised his injunction to appease aggression by 'turning the other cheek'.

It is quite difficult for a Western mind to accept the fact that Jesus Christ was one of the prophets of the Muslims — but this is a different story. It is only quoted here because of, who is more charitable than Jesus (Peace be upon him) in his attitude towards mankind as depicted in a Western mind.

In general the charity of heart swells in every Muslim breast.

It is also difficult now-a-days to say whether the Sufi brotherhoods or futuwa guilds derive their teachings from their Christian counterparts or vice versa but suffice to say that each must have made considerable or substantial contributions to the other.

Western historians too have recorded that the Knight Templars of old, who were the forerunners of present day Freemasonry were during the years of the Crusades, closely linked to the Muslim world — the world so often opposed on the battlefield — and the Templars commanded a respect from Saracen leaders exceeding that accorded any other Europeans. (In Muslim history there were no such thing as the Crusades. The Crusaders were just treated as invaders from the West.) It was also recorded that secret connections were always maintained with the Hashishim or Assassin, the famous order of militant and often fanatical adepts who were the Islamic equivalent of the Templars.

The Hashishim paid tribute to the Templars and were often rumored to be in their employ.

In those days (we are talking about the eleven hundreds A.D.), the Templars' interests extended well beyond war, much to the annoyance and charge in of the Christian kings and Popes. They were not only soldiers of war, they were great traders as well.

The Templars traded not only in commerce and in money, but in thought as well. Through their sustained and sympathetic contact with the Islamic and Judaic culture, they came to act as a clearing house for new ideas, new dimensions of knowledge, new sciences. Such activities and thought had cast a great influence upon their Muslim neighbors.

As Sufi brotherhood extends itself in the Muslim society, they became (writes Michael Gilsenan in his book 'Sait and Sufi');

"... as multifaceted as the worlds of which they were so integral and representative a part — now military, now pietistic, now devoted to

scholarly and theoretical pursuits, now to ecstasies and intoxication of the senses; now the province of the religious and social elite, now of the illiterate and deprived masses; dedicated to the highest mysteries of the few, and to the exoteric simplicities of the many."

Although we should be wary of making facile generalizations about the social organization or internal functioning of the brotherhoods, but nevertheless a certain structure is common to most, if not all, the pre-modern Islamic brotherhoods. Full membership is usually confined to males. The members are bound together by an oath of allegiance to their Guide who heads a hierarchy of ranks within the order.

Some of the order extend back, via their founders of the earliest orders to members of the Prophet's household and ultimately to the Prophet himself.

In their earliest phase of development, the orders renounced even implicitly political aims (though later, their Guide or Shaikh would assume an important role as guardians of Islamic tradition).

From the twelfth to the nineteenth centuries Sufism in all its varieties became so widespread and pervasive as to be virtually synonymous with Islam itself. Many such brotherhoods are still in existence today.

So much for the Sufis.

Thus the keeping in secrecy the mysteries that are imparted to me in the lodge ceremonies is not unknown to me as a Muslim student, and bound to my obligations, I will always be.

Mysteries and secrets are always there, but not necessarily for general consumption. I remember recently here in Peterborough I had asked the Imam of the mosque (just after the Friday prayers) for the wordings of a prayer for a particular purpose as reported to have been used by the Holy Prophet in his time. He told me rather bluntly to come back tomorrow after evening prayer and to bring along the book to show him how I had come across such an item of knowledge.

I felt a little peeved at first at his bluntness. But anyway in humility I saw him again the next evening as he had directed. He took me into his chambers and after examining my book, quietly taught me the wordings. He added later that these are not the kind of instruction that one can ask about in a public gathering.

Another masonic mystery, Islamic style; no doubt. I thanked him and left.

And now, after all these years in reminiscence, I have become more satisfied in my heart that the precepts of Freemasonry as I have learnt here in Setland Hall, were in no way contradictory to my daily activities as Muslim.

Now to a slightly different vein.

A Brother had recently put to me this question" 'How do you consider Muhammad a prophet and are not known as Muhammadans, etc.?'

I shall take the opportunity to answer him here but again I must refer to the Holy Quran. It is written in Verses 2:127-128 which I quote:

And remember Abraham and Ismail raised the foundations of the House (with this prayer): "Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us; for Thou art the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing "Our Lord! make of us Muslims, bowing to Thy (Will), and of our progeny a people Muslim, bowing to Thy (Will); and show us our places for the celebration of (due rites; and turn unto us (in Mercy); for Thou art the Oft-Returning; Most Merciful."

Here in these verses is a clear definition of Muslim — one who bows to the Will of God. We are Muslims because we bow and submit ourselves to the Will of God.

Again in 2:131-133, I quote:

"Behold! his Lord said to him: "Bow (thy will to Me):"

He (Abraham) said: "I bow (my will) to the Lord and Cherisher of the Universe."

And this was the legacy that Abraham left to his sons, and so did Jacob; "Oh my sons! God hath chosen the Faith for you; then die not except in the Faith of Islam."

Were ye witnesses when Death appeared before Jacob? Behold, he said to his sons: "What will ye worship after me?"

They said: "We will worship thy God and the God of thy fathers — of Abraham, Ismail and Isaac — the One (True) God: to Him we bow (in Islam)."

So it can be seen from here that the religion preached by Muhammad (Peace be upon him) was not a religion of his own invention. It was the same religion as was worshipped by Abraham, by Ismail and by Isaac and by all the prophets of old.

To bring our mind to a more recent period of time than that of the old Testament, again I quote in Verse 5:114;

"And behold! I inspired the Disciples to have Faith in Me and Mine Apostle;

they said, "we have faith and do thou bear witness that we vow to God as Muslims."

and in Verse 3:52;

When Jesus found unbelief in their part, he said, "Who will be my helpers to (the work of) God?"

Said the Disciples: "We are God's helpers; we believe in God and do thou bear witness that we are Muslims."

The 'thou' here refers to Jesus (Peace be upon him) who was being addressed by his disciples.

Thus it has been written in the Holy Quran that before and after Muhammad's life on earth, all who bowed to God's Will were Muslims and their religion is Islam.

Neither Jesus nor Muhammad (Peace be upon them) had preached any new religion. They had come to fulfill the same religion of Abraham and the religion was Islam.

On the death of Muhammad in June 632 A.D. he had made no arrangements for the continued administration of the affairs to the Islamic state except that he had appointed Abu-Bakr to lead the prayers. The end had come fairly suddenly and for a time there was confusion in Medina until it was agreed that Abu-Bakr should be his Caliph or successor.

Perhaps the most memorable remark is one attributed to Abu-Bakr as he addressed the assembled Muslims, men whose sunshine had suddenly been turned to gloom. 'O ye people, if anyone worships Muhammad, Muhammad is dead, but if anyone worships God, He is alive and dies not.'

And finally I must add that the logical conclusion to the evolution of religious history is a non-sectarian, non-racial, non doctrinal universal religion which Islam claims to be. For Islam is just submission to the Will of God. This implies (1) Faith, (2) doing right and having the power to see right prevails, (3) eschewing wrong, being an example to others to shew wrong, and having the power to see that wrong and injustice are defeated. Islam therefore lives, not for itself, but for mankind.

The Peoples of the Book, if only they have faith, would be Muslims, for they had been prepared for Islam.

Unfortunately there is Unfaith, but it can never harm those who carry the banner of Faith and Right, which must always be victorious.

We revere Muhammad as Prophet of God and we follow his preaching. With him, not through him we bow to God's Will in Islam. That is why we are Muslims, not Muhammadans.

The word 'Muhammadan' is only a Western connotation. It has no meaning in Islamic literature or culture.

Note: The Quranic Verses above are extracted from the Translation and Commentary of the Holy Quran by A. Yusuf Ali.

Pamana ng Lahi

• Irineo P. Goce



MGA PANIMDIM SA GUNITA — IV

Salamat kay Bathala. Salamat kay Jehovah. Salamat kay Yaweh. Salamat ka Allah. Salamat kay Jupiter. Salamat kay Zeus. Salamat sa Diyos. Salamat sa lisang Lumikha ng sansinukob, na Siyang tanging tinatawagan sa iba't ibang mga pangalan, Salamat po sa Iyo, Panginoon, at di Mo tinutulutang magwakas na ang daigdig!

Napakahabang mga araw at gabi ang nagdaan na halos mamatay ako sa matinding pangamba. Inakala ng maraming mga tao sa buong daigdig, kabilang na rin ang aking mga anak, na ang digmaang sumiklab sa Gulpo ng Persiya at sa Gitnang Silangan ay siya nang simula at katuparan ng malaon nang ibinabala at kinatatakutang Armagedon.

Subalit ang hindi ko mapagwari ay kung bakit ang bawa't panig sa digmaan ay kapuwa nagpalagay na sila ang kumakatawan sa kabutihan, at ang kanilang mga kalaban o kabilang panig naman ang sa kasamaan. Sinabi ng namuno sa mga Alyados ng Estados Unidos na sila ang kabig ng Kabutihan, at ng Diyos; ang pamarali naman ng mga Iraqi ay sila ang tunay na alagad ng Diyos at ang mga dumigma sa kanila ay mga kampon ni Satanas. Sino nga kaya ang nasa panig ng kabutihan at sino ang nasa panig ng kasamaan?

Sa aking palagay, ang mga nagsipagdigma na kapuwa nagsasabing sila ang nagwagi ay pawang magkakapatid na Kinapal, at pawang mga anak ng lisang Amang Lumikha. Lahat sila ay nagmula sa iisang puno ng sangkatauhan na pinaghiwahiwalay ng Dakilang Ama matapos ang pagsupil Niya sa malabis na ambisyon ng tao na sinagisag ng kanilang pagtatayo ng Tore ni Babel.

Subalit lubhang lumalayo at napapalaot ang aking mga panimdim. Magbabalik na lamang ako sa loob ng aking bakuran, na tinatawag din sa pangalan kong *Pilipinas*.

Muling tinatawagan ko ang aking mga anak, at ipinapagunita sa kanila ang kahalagahan ng pagmamahalan bilang magkakapatid sa lahi. Unti-unti at matatag nating pag-isahin ang ating watak-watak na mga rehiyon sa magkakatulad na paninindigan bilang iisang bansa, magkakatugmang mga mithiin, layunin at pangarap.

Huwag ninyong daanin sa silakbo ng kalooban, sa init ng ulo, sa masidhing damdamin. Panatilihin ninyo ang hinahon sa pakikitungo sa isa't isa. Kasangkapanin ninyo ang mabuting pagpapaliwanag; at hindi ang mahahayap na pananalita na nakasasakit sa kalooban ng kapuwa.

At higit kong tinatawagan ang aking mga anak na Mason. Kayo, mga anak, ang dapat maging halimbawa at manguna sa kilusan tungo sa pambansang pagkakaisa.

Tahimik akong nagalak at nagbunyi nung ang Distrito Masonico Blg. 9-A at 9-B ay nagdaos ng pinag-isang kumbensiyon sa UP Campus nang nakaraang taon, na ang tema ay "Peace and Unity Thru Masonry," o *Kapayapaan at Pagkakaisa, Paraan sa Masoneriya*. At nung ang Tri-Orient Convention of Scottish Rite Bodies, A & ASR naman ang nagpulong nung nakaraang Marso 2, ang kanilang tema ay "Relevancy of Freemasonry to National Unity," o *Kaangkupan ng Masoneriya sa bansang Pagkakaisa*.

Doon sa huling kumbensiyon, halimbawa, ang isang mahalagang mungkahi ay hikayatin, sa pangunguna ng Supreme Council, A & ASR, o ng Grand Lodge of the Philippines, na magkaroon ng pagtitipon at pagpupulong ang iba't-ibang mga sektor ng pambansang lipunan, at talakayin o hanapin ang landas tungo sa pambansang pagkakaisa.

Napakaganda ang ganoong mungkahi. Datapwa't hindi kaya isipin ng ibang mga sektór, at sabihin ng pabulong: "Kayo munang mga Mason ang dapat magkaisa!"

Nababagabag ako sa ganoong kaisipan. At nababagabag akong mag-isip na ang aking mga anak na Mason sa loob ng aking bakuran ay hiwalay. Marami din sa kanila ang nagpunyaging magbukas ng madawang na landas tungo sa makabuluhang pagkakaisa ng Kapatiran. Subali't ang iba'y sumakabilang-buhay na. Pawang bigo. Nguni't patuloy pa rin ang pagpupuriyagi ng ilan. Yung isang resolusyon buhat sa Distrito 9 na ipinasok sa Grand Lodge ANCOM 88 sa Cebu, na napabayaang nitong mga sumunod na taon, ay sinasariwang muli ng mga Kapatid na Mason sa Distrito 9-A at 9-B. Idinudulog itong muli sa Grand Lodge.

Sana naman, kung dumating na ang panahong tatalakayin ang bagay na ito ay maghari ang kahinahunan at katuwiran, mangibabaw ang tahas at lantay na kabutihan ng lahing Pilipino tungo sa pagpapatibay ng Kapatirang pandaigdig. Sana naman ay pagsumikapang tuklasin ng mga Kapatid sa Masoneriya ang makabuluhang pamamaraan tungo sa tahasang pagkakaisa.

Maging positibo na sana ang pananaw ninyo mga anak. Ang inyong tanawin ay ang pagtatagumpay ng pangkalahatang kapatiran ng Masoneriya. Huwag na sanang mangyari ang mga nakaraang gawi, na ang unang nililimi ay mga balakid, kung bakit hindi magtatagumpay ang ganitong makatao at makabayang layunin.

Kung maging matibay at matatag na ang Kapatirang Masoneriya sa aking bakuran, mga anak, magkakaroon na kayo ng karapatang moral upang manguna sa anumang kilusan tungo sa makabuluhang pagkakaisa ng ating lahi at bansa.

Ernie Borgnine, Brother Good Guy

Ernest Borgnine

Brother Thomas R. Dougherty,
Director, Hospital Visitation
Masonic Service Association
8120 Fenton Street
Silver Spring, MD 20910



Dear Brother Dougherty:

For a great number of years, it has been my good fortune to be a member of the Masonic Fraternity. I have always been extremely proud to wear the Square- and Compass, and to be identified as a Master Mason.

Throughout that entire period of time, I have always maintained a deep and abiding admiration for the many great and good things which are done by, for, and in the name of Freemasonry; Charitable and Humanitarian programs such as loving care for the elderly, and the young; treatment of Childhood Language Disorders, Schizophrenia study and research, eye bank and hearing aid programs and literally hundreds upon hundreds of Scholarship programs to aid and promote education. The are all things done freely and voluntarily out of Love of Brother.

Prominent among these Masonic programs of loving care and kindness, is the M.S.A. Hospital Visitation of Masonic Friendship to thousands of American Veterans in-hospitals all over the U.S.A. You, your staff and all volunteers who work in this badly needed program, are to be highly commended for selfless devotion which leads one to the very doors of Heaven.

May God grant you many additional years in which to further serve mankind in this wonderful program.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

Ernest Borgnine, 33°



GM John L. Choa with Grand Officers at Sixto Lopez (Batulao) Lodge No. 123 Installation Ceremony



Naga City Lodge No. 257 officers and members

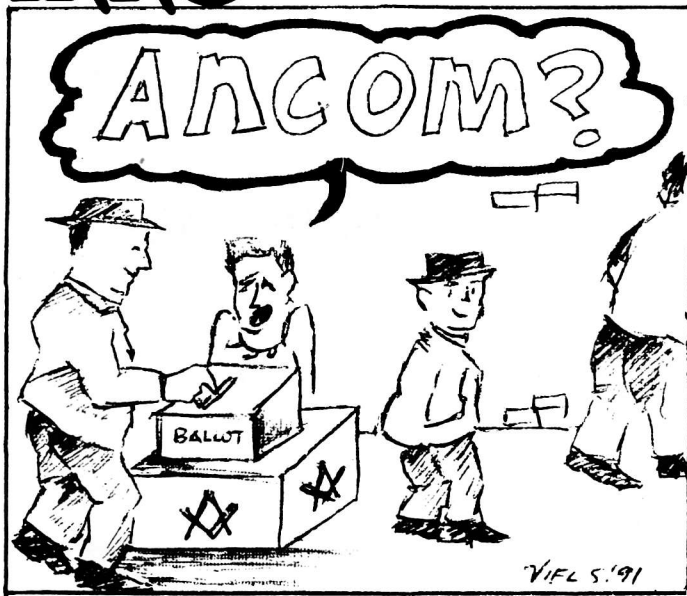
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