

The Reflections
of
R.W. Brother Dr. Hugo Thomas (PGM)



Volume II

Foreword

On February 3rd, 1969, Dr. Hugo Thomas was rejected when his first petition for the degrees of Masonry was placed for ballot. The motivation behind that rejection will never be known. The following day his recommender, in what turned out to be a futile attempt to have the 12-month waiting period before repetition waived, called me to arrange a meeting with Dr. Thomas. February is an extremely busy time of the year in our Grand lodge office, and although I rarely take lunch and was very reluctant about getting involved in the matter, I relented, and subsequently met Dr. Thomas for lunch in a quiet restaurant in downtown Frankfurt.

At about the time the dinner crowd started arriving, we both realized it was long past the time to take our leave. We had been thoroughly engrossed in non-stop conversation, oblivious to everything around us, for approximately six hours. It was a fascinating encounter I will never forget. Thirteen months later, Dr. Thomas's second petition to Frankfurt on the Main Lodge No. 861 was accepted, and he was initiated on March 23rd, 1970.

R.W. Brother Dr. Hugo Thomas's subsequent service in the various stations in our Lodge, and later in our Grand Lodge, culminating in his serving as Grand Master during 1976-77, is well documented. To even attempt a summary of those years or to expound on his continuing intense dedication and love for Freemasonry, or comment on what evolved into a lifelong friendship, in the Foreword to this edition of some of his writings, would be foolhardy. His works and words speak for themselves.

With unabated enthusiasm for his works, copies of his various papers have been requested by many Brethren over the years. His consummate ability to project and convey his ideas and thoughts in a language other than German, his mother tongue, is remarkable in itself. Of even greater significance, evident in all his writings, are his humanity, his humility, and undying love for Freemasonry and its principles. Read on, dear reader, and join R.W. Brother Dr. Hugo Thomas as he takes you by the hand on an enlightening experience through the realm of what the essence of Freemasonry is all about.

Frankfurt, Germany

April 4th, 1994

Fraternally

Jess Minton, PGM
Grand Secretary

Volume II

Past Masters Research Lodge No. 950

American Canadian Grand Lodge

Within

The United Grand Lodges of Germany

Proudly presents this compilation of addresses presented over many years by a distinguished member of this Lodge who, through his love for our great fraternity together with serious study and personal application, offered his "Reflections" to many spellbound audiences. The Lodge again offers these "*Reflections*" in the sincere hope these will instill in many a greater love and understanding of many of the basic principles of our Fraternity. To Right Worshipful Brother Dr. Hugo Thomas; we offer our sincere thanks and heart felt appreciation for sharing "the Light herein contained" with all of your Brethren.

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Of My Own Free Will

Presented at "Pyramid Lodge No. 869" on 3rd April 1975

*"A word spoken in due
season, how good it is."
(Proverbs 15:32)*

Worshipful Master and Brethren all;

I thank you for your fraternal invitation and I gratefully acknowledge the honor to communicate with you at this Lodge of Instruction. At this time, I would like to preface our work with some remarks of general interest.

In the beginning of his Masonic travels, a candidate must indicate his willingness to absorb all the lessons taught in the Degree. He must acquire and cultivate the spirit of Brotherhood. He must offer his particular gifts to speculative or Freemasonry for any task a Lodge may require of him. Encompassed in such a favorable climate he ought to grow Masonically. By the same token, Brothers of longer standing membership will grow in stature, provided they make the required efforts. However, Brothers who freely admit personal shortcomings in measuring up to the high standards of Freemasonry are numerous. These searching's of the conscience should or rather *must* consequently lead to higher levels of life and conduct.

One Brother will go back to the phraseology of the petition to help his fellowman, or whether he has shirked his duties often. Another Brother is somewhat awed by the thought that he owes an immeasurable debt to the two recommenders and avouchers who signed his petition. Such a Brother states quite definitely that he must try to live up to the high opinion they had of his character. Still another Brother will consider his Lodge's good opinion of him must be sustained, because he was honored with a unanimous ballot. He might wonder whether an Investigation Committee would recommend him again should he petition anew.

These mental interrogations indicate the Brother is drawn to make sacrifices and perform duties that he may have previously shunned. To the Brother with regrets because he has been a passive, inactive member, one can order the antidote, of steering him to the opposite course. There is always room in the Lodge, especially set up for Brothers who are constructive with their suggestions, who are desirous of having and receiving Light, more Light, who promote peace and harmony, and who are willing to go far beyond the line of duty to repay, in part, their voluntarily assumed duty to Freemasonry.

My Brethren, you did not honor Freemasonry when you were admitted into the Temple for the first time. Masonry honored you and you are indebted to the Fraternity for this honor, it can never be repaid in full. The will to work, act and part, outlines a principle, which is especially applicable to the endeavors of a Freemason. Responsibility is the obligation one is accountable for and the fulfillment of which we must squarely accept. To respect and honor this educational process is to be mature, to implement and fulfill it, is to be a true Mason, and for each Brother to do more than his share is to be noble. . *Brethren!*
"to these duties you are bound by the most sacred ties.

"When I decided to name this presentation: **OF MY OWN FREE WILL**

it is presented with apologies for its omissions but with the sincere hope that it will accomplish something, at least achieve its primary purpose, the stimulation of a new increased interest in Masonic education, to establish values and to perceive a deeper meaning of some facets of our Masonic philosophy, ever bearing in mind, on the volume of our Masonic life these bright words are written, from which every side blazes an ineffable splendor; duty and work, truth and faith, relief and charity.

Freemasonry is a voluntary association of men, which is entitled for doing only those things voluntarily, which they desire. It is our job, to instill in our Brothers the desire to fulfill their voluntary duties daily anew, in every day.

The most devastating and furious enemy of Freemasonry can reside within its *own* bosom. This malignant disease is characterized by indifference, intolerance and ignorance. Masonry teaches the practice of good morals and accepted standards of behavior, leaving interpretations of right and wrong to the individual conscience.

We believe in the equal rights of all men and the freedom of opportunity. We know that all are not born equal because the Almighty has seen fit, to bestow upon some the ability of genius and on others, lesser ability. However, all who seek it, equality of opportunity, will receive it; if one wishes to improve oneself, an effort in that regard can be rewarded. "*As a citizen you are enjoined to be exemplary in your civil duties.*" We have all memorized that statement; consequently we have to live what we have learned.

Certainly, as Freemasons we will not agree on all candidates or propositions placed upon the ballot, but if we carefully investigate the matters to be voted upon so as to be knowledgeably informed in regard thereto and then *Ballot*, we will make our determination known in the best possible way.

We all agree, politics has no place in Masonry, but politics is nothing more than the art of persuading others to support our point of view. And all Masons, having been obligated through the three degrees in the belief and support of freedom, equality and Brotherly affection, should be able to influence others in matters of right. We Masons as individuals, who believe in the rights of man and who believe, that disagreements, when they cannot be settled by argument

and persuasion, should then be resolved Masonically. There are men, and one sometimes meets them, who reach the evening of life a little disappointed that no one has asked them to join our Fraternity. They sometimes wonder why it is that with other honors coming their way, with their services in demand for this and that social enterprise, with the apparent regard and esteem of their fellows, they have never been invited to enter our mystic circle.

Freemasonry is almost, if not quite alone in refusing to proselytize, to sell anyone the idea of membership. But, after all, Masonic funds are put to good use; the more members we have who pay initiation fees and dues, the better will our work be done. It seems logical that we should seek out men who would enjoy the Masonic association, and suggest to them that they might become a member. A year or two ago some well meaning Brothers in Germany and the United States were dallying around with the idea of introducing proposals to permit solicitation. Lately little has been heard of these proposals, and it seems likely, that wiser counsels have insured their natural death. We do not guard this landmark simply because it is a landmark, simply because we have agreed to guard it. There are practical reasons too.

We have many defections from our ranks. Some men enter the Craft, take the three Degrees and from lack of real interest in instructions, gradually fall away. Others go through the chairs, attain the rank of Past Master, but have been so little gripped by the realities of the Craft that when the excitement is over and the Past Master's Jewel pinned in place, they cease to be active. Others, on changing their place of residence, take no steps to resume attendance when they have settled down. A few and they are probably very few; indeed, resign in dudgeon or disappointment, unable to get on with their fellows. Some are struck off for non-payment of dues.

Many who leave us could be saved, but when one considers how very highly most of us value the privilege of Freemasonry, the number who do cease to be active Freemasons, seems too high. And yet these are all men who have themselves taken the initiative. They have themselves, by their own approach, and uninfluenced by the solicitation of other people, sought to be received into the Craft. They cannot say that someone else persuaded them. They cannot plead that they were given a wrong idea of the institution and so induced to join. If they are not at home, they have no one to blame but themselves. For the ordinary society, membership for a few years, resignation, then a further period of membership is not abnormal. But once a man is a Freemason he remains a Freemason. He may or may not remain active; he may not remain in good standing, but he is nevertheless a Freemason. Death can sever the bond, but neither expulsion nor resignation can dispense from the provisions of the obligations, which are taken willingly, and without reservation. They are obligations, which it would not be proper to persuade a man to take. The preconceived opinion, which we require, must be a genuine one; the sincere wish, based on worthy motives, to be numbered among us must not be a wish deliberately implanted by someone else. Only if this is so, can we feel assured

that men come to us of their own free will and accord, and only if they do this, can we be assured that their interest is likely to be genuine enough for us, to be able to rely on its permanence.

Whatever we do, we will lose some members, although we shall not always lose their sympathy. Men in the course of their adult lives do change; the Craft is not the only influence acting upon them. A man may become generally embittered, may lose his faith, may follow gods of which the Craft knows nothing. A man may become solitary, may cease to feel the need of adult male companionship, may find himself no longer in sympathy with our objectives, may feel he has discovered a conflict between our tenets and his own religious faith.

These men we lose, and it is normal wastage. But we should not lose men because they have been induced to join us in the first place, because their desire has been influenced rather than spontaneous. We are wise to scrutinize our candidates carefully. *"Easy come"* can soon develop into *"easy go"* and the Masonic Craft is no short-term diversion for the unthoughtful. Our mysteries and privileges are to be ensured to worthy men alone, and enjoyed forever.

When balloting, our virtue, honor and reputation are concerned; when spreading the cement of Charity and Brotherly affection we implant deeply and firmly in our hearts, those foundation stones of principle, on which to erect our Masonic Faith, which all the storms of misfortune and all the powers and temptations shall not prevail against.

My Brothers, keep in mind: *"sense shines with a double luster when set in humility."*

In our daily life, we must apply the principles of temperance to all facets of our dealings with our fellowman, most especially our Brothers. If we ask ourselves the question, and the answers being in the affirmative, are we not exercising temperance?

Do we show moderation by not flying off the handle when our Brother does not measure up to our expectation? Do we carry out our Lodge assignments without complaining? Do we, when on an investigating committee, carry out our responsibilities, without letting personal prejudices interfere with our duty?

Temperance is one of the cardinal virtues, one we should practice and emulate in our daily life, for such things as "joy, love, peace, mildness, faith, self control" are attributes worthy of attainment. The beauty of the Masonic Degrees, the fellowship within our Masonic Lodges, and our charitable efforts are enlightening, and extremely important, to be sure.

However, we have additional obligations, not the least of which is to participate in making our fraternal views and tenets known to those about us, by our actions and the way we lead our daily lives. Thereby, we will become *involved* as individuals in those problems round about us, which we know are right and good. As we live and act, so will we be known.

In closing, I owe gratitude for the famous remark of the French philosopher "Voltaire", who stated: *"I disagree sharply with your opinion, but will defend your right to voice your opinion with my life."* And quoting "Abraham Lincoln" *"I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true; I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to the Light I have received I must stand with anybody who stands right, stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong."*

/s/Hugo Thomas
(Dr.) Hugo Thomas
Grand Senior Warden
American Canadian Land Grand Lodge

What Came You Here To Do?

And now, my brother,

What came you here to do?

When you joined our mystic circle,

Had you a purpose in your heart

To be of service to your fellow man

And perform your allotted part?

Or come you out of curiosity

Or motive personal in view?

Tell me, brother, on the square,

What came you here to do?

Have you failed to grasp the meaning

Of the symbols of our chart?

Have you learned to subdue your passions

And make improvements in your art?

Do you always, always uphold the trusts

On which we firmly stand

Teaching the Fatherhood of God

And the Brotherhood of man?

Have you been willing to aid the brother

When life surges fierce and wild?

Have you offered cheer and comfort

To the Mason's, widow, wife, and child?

If you have done so, my brother,

You are a Mason good and true,

And can give a correct answer

What came you here to do?

“Anonymous”

What Came You Here To Do?

*(Presented at the "Past Masters' Night at Truth and Friendship Lodge No. 828.
10th January 1979)*

Worshipful Master, my Brothers:

This evening we have much to be thankful for to the Worshipful Master of this well governed "Truth and Friendship" Lodge No. 828, Worshipful Brother Billy W. Harris, to the Past Masters, and to the Wardens and Brethren of this or any other Lodge, for once again impressing upon our minds and consciences the beauty of ritual and the meaningfulness of our Masonic ties. I regard being here tonight as a great privilege, and am deeply grateful for the opportunity to commune with my brethren especially under such auspicious circumstances: a Past Masters Night in the Degree of an Entered Apprentice.

One of the first questions any candidate encounters when he is introduced to the mysteries of Freemasonry is: "Whence came you . . . and in whom do you put your trust?"

Truly a thought provoking, soul searching, demanding question asked of every man and Mason. And there seems to be a driving force that makes us ask over and over:

"What came you here to do?"

Upon being initiated, and later advanced, into our ancient and honorable Fraternity, - and mark well: into its mysteries! The heart and mind of the Brother is prepared to receive them; he becomes intellectually fitted to comprehend them and to answer the above given questions. However, the rough ashlar must be trued, squared and polished for its appropriate place in the structure of the Masonic edifice. All the forces at man's disposal are a Mason's working tools. Morality, sympathy and friendship are such forces which first unite and then cement our Brotherhood. A friendship, culminating in that peculiar Brotherly Love, sealed by most solemn pledges ever made by man to man. No Brother can ever forget or ignore these strongest ties that ever united the hearts in the bonds of intimate trusting Brotherhood, without violating his vows or betraying his trust.

In our Fraternity a degree is a principle in action, and the beginning "on the step" is essentially a symbol of rectitude, serving as a guideline, when we are charged to inculcate the three great duties: to God, to our neighbor and to ourselves. These duties tend to strengthen man in his daily conduct, to build up his willpower against evil and temptation, to avoid all irregularity and integrity, his self-respect and fidelity. This Masonic life is a great and solemn dispensation. Yet it is also graciously cognizant of the frailties of human nature and man's proneness to error. We, therefore, never measure our progress by the degrees we receive, rather than the degrees with which we throw our influence into applied Masonic teachings and education. It is not possible for everyone to

be great or accomplish great things. But we can all work to the limit of our power, meet and master the problem of the hour, and be thankful for our blessings. The resources are inexhaustible, and "To whom much is given, of him shall be much required". This requires a special mental and spiritual preparation, a never ending process, beginning in our heart, to absorb that what we term Masonic Light.

To give light to a Brother, a man must consume himself; display and disperse energy. A Teacher who puts no energy into his lectures cannot attract and gather students. In time all men die, but some rust out while others burn out. Those who burn out may go more quickly, but at least they go gloriously. The Initiate who kneels at the alter may have the candle of his soul ignited by the enthusiasm of those who give him Masonic light, and by touch with that light of new truth. To give light we must burn. No lukewarm Brother ever inspires the soul of his Brethren to higher endeavors and aspirations. May the gentle illumination of the Masonic light shine into the far places and illuminate the pathway of the Craftsmen of lodges forever. This is a solid Foundation and a Freemason's daily challenge: to have faith which is Wisdom, to implant hope which is Strength, and to practice Masonic Charity which is Beauty. Only by raising our sentiment to its just elevation, can we comprehend Freemasonry's purpose in this world. Let us never defer nor neglect it, because we will never pass this way again. Brethren, keep your feet on the ground and your head in the clouds; if we brought Masonry up-to-date today, it would be again out-of-date tomorrow. I therefore believe, all of us are and remain Apprentices in this Terrestrial Lodge.

I now salute our newly initiated Brother who has just commenced a journey toward more and further Light; who has received as a symbolic honor his lambskin, and who has been invested with a titular honor, to be called "Brother". The highest honor in our Order, then, is no one special title. Each title indicates true accomplishment that is honored in Masonic ranks or titles. If the effort and spirit are high, the resulting honor, whatever its terminology, is the highest honor of Masonry; always bearing in mind: humility and education make a Mason.

We must always remember, the chief mission of a Lodge and the members of a lodge is for the mental, spiritual and social improvement of ourselves and others, services to God, the country, the family and humanity; our sole purpose is to initiate good men and make them better! Freemasonry has no other purpose! We work on a spiritual and sublime level!

On this traveling East we pass several doors, each opening upon something very important. To these doors we must have the fitting Key which will open them when needed. Call the doors anything you want.

There is the first door which opens on Courage; it takes a while to make the right key for that, forged with faith and with trust. Then we reach the door called work. This one does not open to any old key; we may have to find just the right one. Sooner or later we will find the right material with perseverance

and devotion. There is a very special door called Believing, it does not much matter in what we believe as long as we do, knowing that the GAOTU is constantly with us, and to HIM we all must render that awe and reverence that a created man must give to his Creator. To open the elusive door called happiness we may fashion even a hundred keys in the course of our lifetime, because we all have different standards and demands and wants. To many the search for the right key goes on and on a full lifetime.

The door called Brotherly Love is not a one-way door; it opens outward and inward. This door permits us to unlock ourselves, so that we can be loved, and, more important, permits us to love our fellowman. The key to the door of Learning can be made by anyone. Learning is not wisdom, and it is not entirely in books or in formal education; it is what we derive from living. The most important door of all, which opens upon spiritual understanding only, is Masonic Charity and Tolerance. It takes years of understanding and constant searching to find the proper ingredients to make this sublime key. But once we have made and used it, nothing can deeply trouble us again. For the key of spiritual understanding unlocks the ultimate door, that leads to the same eternal goal, the intimate knowledge of what is good and true and just.

Let us continue to search and find each door with the proper key in our hand and heart that leads to the Mystery of the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of GOD.

My Brothers, your individual example as a votary of our Royal Art is one of our free world's greatest strengths. You are members of a lifeline that stretches back to the beginning of recorded history, a lifeline that brings man out of the dark into God's light. If we walk away from the light, our shadows fall before us. The further we walk, the further they extend the shadows of anxieties, fears, false concepts, if we walk toward the light, the shadows fall behind us and their burden lessens. Finally, if we stand under the light, they disappear. As you stand under that eternal Light, you set an example and you send a message to your fellow men of strength and hope and faith that is the ultimate contribution of Freemasonry to the future of mankind.

In closing, please listen to the Masonic confession of the Honorable Brother Benjamin Franklin:

"Masonic labor is purely a labor of love. He who seeks to draw Masonic wages in gold or silver will be disappointed. The wages of a Mason are earned and paid in their dealings with one another: sympathy begets sympathy, kindness begets kindness, helpfulness and tolerance begets the attitude of a true Mason, and these are the wages of a Mason." So help us God, and make us steadfast to perform the same!

/s/ Hugo Thomas
American Canadian Grand Lodge

I am the Bible

Just use me I am the Bible,

I am God's wonderful library.

I am always and above all The Truth.

To the weary Pilgrim

, I am the good strong staff,

To the one who sits in gloom,

I am a glorious light.

To those who stoop beneath heavy burden,

I am sweet rest.

To him who has lost his way

, I am a safe guide.

To those who have been hurt by sin,

I am healing balm.

To those who are distressed by the storms of life,

I am an anchor.

To those who suffer in lonely solitude,

I am a cool, soft hand resting on a fevered brow.

O, child of man, to best defend me,

just use me.

Author Unknown

Work and Receive Masters Wages

(Presented on 30th September 1975 at "Triangle" Lodge No. 834)

Worshipful Master and Brethren all;

Thank you for your fraternal invitation, and I gratefully acknowledge the honor to communicate with you at this: "Lodge of Instruction"

At this time, I would like to preface our work with some remarks of general interest.

Every Masonic communication is a day of happiness when carefully prepared and conducted, but only so far as we individually make it so. We are taught to live and promulgate the teachings of Freemasonry in a universal sense, as a *science* in the original meaning of the word "*accumulated knowledge systematized for the purpose of discovering general truths*".

To a Mason those truths are the laws of moral and ethical behavior. These are summed up in the principal and most valuable tenets of the Fraternity. Freemasonry is progressive only as the individual Mason applies his knowledge of moral and spiritual principles to his own life and to his community, only as his character becomes "more effective by successive stages". Freemasonry does *not* classify and codify knowledge of morality and ethics in textbooks, which only scholarly minds would find challenging. Paraphrasing our Past Land Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother H. Dale Walker:

"Our *daily life is our playground as Masons?* Freemasonry has epitomized the science or the "*Know How*" of a purposeful moral life in the image of the builders' art. And especially our "*Working Tools*" and implements are a vivid symbol of a universal moral principle. And they are this graphic simplification of the "*science*" of right living, which has always been one of the chief attractions to the men who call themselves Masons. Therefore we must learn from our personal experience, just how to strike our blows to suit the material we are working on. We have to adjust the force of our stroke, the angle of our blows and the number of them for the different kinds of ashlar.

Thus Freemasonry shall have no more important goal than to mold and inspire each individual who knocks on its door. "*Of his own free will and accord!*"

My Brethren! - You did not honor Freemasonry when you were admitted into the Temple for the first time. Masonry *honored* you and you are *indebted* to the Fraternity for this honor, "*it can never be repaid in full.*"

The will to work, act and part outlines a principle which is especially applicable to the endeavors of a Freemason. Responsibility is the obligation one is accountable for and the fulfillment of which we must squarely accept. To respect and honor this educational process is to be mature, to implement and fulfill it, is to be a true Mason, and for each Brother to do more than his share is to be noble - Brothers - "*to these duties you are bound by the most sacred ties*"

When I decided to name this presentation; "*Work and Receive Master's Wages*" it is presented with the sincere hope that it will accomplish something, at least

achieve its primary purpose: the stimulation of a new increased interest in Masonic education, to establish values and to perceive a deeper meaning of some facets of our Masonic philosophy; ever bearing in mind, on the volume of our Masonic life these bright words are written, from which on every side blazes an ineffable splendor: duty and work, truth and faith, relief and charity.

Thoughts are the parents of deeds. We are generally careful about our actions and sometimes too careless about our thoughts. How to live is a problem each of us must solve: shortly, let your moral life be right and all will be well! How? Man cannot work without tools. In material or operative building as well as in moral or speculative building, one of the most important tools is the *square*. The instrument called the Square in operative building has its counterpart in moral building, the faculty called the *Conscience*. As the Square is applied by the operative to his work, so are we to apply our conscience to our work of life building. In this sense we remain Apprentices throughout our whole life. In the Lodge we are directed for Light to what are called "*The Three Great Lights and the Three Lesser Lights*": they are briefly, Revelation and Creation. Through these, every Brother receives the light to guide him in his work as a Mason and builder of the Temple. Through them the Eternal Spirit communicates with the spirit of man. Creation is a loving nurse to the mind of man. At every turn it invites his latent faculties into action.

We remain first of all Apprentices when we clothe ourselves with the badge of a Mason, a symbol of innocence and purity; for innocence is a shield to virtue, and purity disarms temptation. With our *Gauge* we measure our time to the respective duties of life, giving to each its due time and attention. Our Gavel enables us to reduce the irregularities of pride, passion and prejudice within our heart, so that we may become like unto a perfect Ashlar. We are always Apprentices and taught to serve, working freely to the great plan of the Divine Architect, burning with the fervency that overcomes all difficulties, and zealously producing from the seeds of Truth imparted to us in every Degree, fruitful works of Charity, Brotherly Love and Truth.

As Apprentices we are not satisfied with faith and belief only. As we mature in Masonry we seek the light of knowledge, education and experience. Then we pass on the degree of Craftsman, and passing onward, the Craftsman is *raised* to the Lodge of the Master. But we still remain Apprentices, particularly when we are to square our actions in accordance with the dictates of our Conscience; when we apply the *Level* of humility to our heart and build on the everlasting rock of *Truth*, and constantly test our life work by the *Plumb Line* of uprightness. Let us gratefully acknowledge we are permanently apprenticed. And let us never neglect nor defer to adorn ourselves with an attentive Ear, a silent Tongue and with a faithful Breast.

My Brothers, I now ask you three serious questions:

1. What will you get out of Freemasonry?
2. What induced you to become a Master Mason?

3. What are a Brother's Wages?

What will you get Out Of Freemasonry?

A thought provoking question of this type can only be answered in a personal way. Every worthwhile endeavor we put our hands to, should remind us, that we will get from it as much as we give to it. If masonry only knows something other men do not know, then we have it. If it is a ring, a tie tack or a lapel pin, then we have it. If it is more than this, we can have it, but we must seek it. We must give of ourselves. *"You will get out of Masonry in direct proportion to what you put into Masonry"*. I have heard it a thousand times and have probably repeated it a like number of times.

Is it true? - Have you received as you have given to Masonry? As for me, I have received a thousand fold more in friendship, in learning and in my faith than I have contributed. However, both are incalculable, so I will say I was lucky. I could test the truth of the saying in many places.

When I was raised, the first effect of Masonry on me was to give me a social outlet other than that of the Government or the Army. I had fellowship with people who welcomed me as a Brother. They invited me to work with them. They welcomed me to their organization and gave me a place in the organization. I soon learned more and became a part of the ritual team. I was receiving in a much greater proportion than I could give.

I discovered that Masonry transcends language barriers, where the saying *"to travel in foreign countries, to work and receive"*, was a reality; where former wartime enemies became closer than friends, they were and are Brothers.

As a soldier, at a post with only few military personnel, I found the fellowship at the local Lodges as heart warming and hospitable as any I had experienced. They also found work for my temporarily idle Masonic hands and I again found the Brotherly affection I had known in Masonry.

Here I have been elected to serve my Brothers. From local work we have become part of the Grand Lodge and through it received membership in the United Grand Lodges of Germany. I made many close personal friends across this country and even across the world. In the years of privileged service I have been honored by being permitted to obligate hundreds of Brothers. They have included mechanics, house painters, a major, merchants, clergymen, doctors, teachers, members of the armed forces and men from many other occupations. All these men have two things in common: they are men and they are Masons. All of this began because I was told what I could get out of Masonry. Here in the Lodge I found the beginning of Masonic wisdom and knowledge and I believe it is my duty to pass it on to others.

Since my portion is great, I owe a great deal. It is like all love: the more we give away, the more we receive. My Brothers: What do we get out of Freemasonry? The Brotherhood of men under the Fatherhood of God. It is available to all who do as I have done. We must all try to give in direct proportion to what we receive.

What Induced You To Become A Master Mason?

This is a question we often hear asked, and often hear answered. But, I fear, it has become routine. We may hear the question and answer with our ears but not with our minds. Let us stop and ponder for a moment on each part of this answer, for each part has its own significance for us. "That I might obtain the Master's Word" . . . Thousands of pages have been written and thousands of hours filled with speeches on the ancient and modern mysteries of the Master's Word. Some of the Secrets are reserved for the Lodge room; others are at your command through the Grand Lodge Library or other reading, research and discussion. My purpose is to concentrate on other parts of the answer, parts which demand more immediate action.

"Travel in foreign countries, work and receive Master's wages," and be thereby better enabled to support myself and family . . . These are restrictive, if not somewhat selfish motives. But looking at it from the positive side, we discover that the words travel in foreign countries tell us that the Master Mason of the Middle Ages was one of the first of common men to be concerned with the world at large, more than any comparable group. Unlike others, the Master Mason traveled to wherever the cathedrals and castles were being built.

The great cathedrals he built were the highest aspiration of the civilization of which he was so important a part. His reward was not alone in wages but also in the glory of the great structure which he built. We Masons have long known that we are involved in the whole world and that the eyes of the world are upon us.

To digress for a moment from the philosophical, let me remind you that this "travel" is a real thing today. I urge you to travel and to visit the Craft as you do. How much better our relations will be if more Masons exchange visits. How much better it will be if sojourning Masons will take advantage of their travel to affiliate locally.

Our Grand Lodge permits dual membership, unlike many other Grand Lodges that try to hang onto their members. The building of King Solomon's Temple was an international effort. That Temple was the expression of the faith of the entire nation of Israel and the cooperation of her neighbors. Certainly in today's world *"no man is an island"*. We as Masons are committed to the general welfare in so many ways and have so much to offer.

"And contribute to the relief of distressed worthy Master Masons, their widows and orphans". These last words define, in rather limited form, our duty and privilege of charity. We strongly believe in mutual aid. In past years, on the farm or in simple village life, mutual aid was a real thing. You clearly knew who deserved help and what they needed. But today, the simple human needs may be hidden under a haystack of forms and questionnaires or buried in computer programs. No longer do many of us raise our own food or any part of what we eat. We cannot help ourselves, much less help others or share with them. We are all locked into a vast and impersonal system. One of the great challenges to Freemasonry is for us to tear down that vague curtain of impersonality which threatens all of us. Freemasonry is most emphatically a man-to-man relationship.

Our organization is one of the world's most democratic and most flexible. Our officers change every year. Nobody can build up a dynasty or an extended vested interest in a job or title.

Those friendly handshakes, that eloquent title “Brother”, are indelible trademarks of our Craft. Our Lodges and Grand Lodges are merely pipelines or mechanisms through which we channel this brotherly love and focus it on the needy. There are other and ample evidences of our charities to our selves. Our charities to others are equally important and far more significant to the world at large.

A man's value to the world is in direct proportion to the unselfish service he renders. In the heart of every true Mason there is something, call it instinct, principle or what you may that does not permit him to be so well satisfied with those things he does for others. That is why all members of the Craft now living, or those who shall live, and shall owe a debt of gratitude to those who devote their lives to the teachings of Masonry.

When we talk about speculative or Free Masonry, we are automatically faced with a third challenging question:

What Are A Profiler's Wages?

What do we hear about ourselves when we sit on the sidelines or elsewhere in a Lodge Room? Are we not continually being told to keep busy? We are Craftsmen, which is another name for working men. A set of tools and an apron are handed to us and the opening ceremonies are one long reminder to us, of our duties and functions. The Worshipful Master is there to see that we get work and keep at work and make no trouble about it.

He draws designs for what we are to do on his Trestle board. But are not the majority of the speeches delivered from the East and directed at us? And do not they nearly always exhort us to be busier than ever, or else expatiate on our duties?

Recently I fell to thinking about this, one night, after Lodge, and after I reached home about midnight. While meditating, the clock struck Low Twelve; and Low Twelve you know is not the time when we pick out the cheer fullest subjects to think about. Now, I shall not deny that for a little while I fell into a mood to croak at things, such as wondering what a Brother gets out of the evenings he spends away from home doing Lodge work. It came across my mind that as a matter of fact the great and cheerful subject of wages occupies about as much space in the Temple as the serious subject of the work we have to do. I also thought that we are Free Masons and that if ever the spirit seizes us after listening to orders, instructions and speeches from the East, we can get up in the side lines and talk back at the East on the subject of wages. Please do not misunderstand me: I made up my mind to think about the wages of a Master Mason, and that is a very cheerful subject, and payday is a real holiday.

You may reply to me, the work we do in the Lodge is real work, but they do not give us any real corn, oil or wine; and this almost sounds as if no man could question it. Wages are that which the Craftsmen own in the things they make

and no Lodge has a moral right to expect its members to work for it unless it pays them their wages if any be due. What are the wages of a Master Mason? Let us forget about the language of symbolism and emblems, because the wages we receive are in every full and actual sense, completely real. I shall not recite the complete list of wages paid, but remind you of only a few of them.

First: the honor and satisfaction of being a full member in an ancient, honorable, worldwide Fraternity.

Second: as a regular Lodge worker you have learned by heart and therefore have in your permanent possession the Ritual, which is worth a very high price, because of the language, the wisdom, the beauty in it.

Third: where two Masons meet, though they have never seen each other before, are at once friends and Brothers, because they have traveled the same road and received the same Light in Masonry, which you have.

Fourth: you find in the Lodge itself, a large group among whom you find associates, companions or close friends, with whom you are united into one sacred band or Society of Friends and Brothers.

Fifth: whatever your Lodge and Freemasonry accomplishes, a part of it is your own; because Masons compose a Lodge and you are a part of it.

Sixth: you have a social security of another kind from that offered by any government but of as high a value if you are unfortunate, relief will come; and if you pass on, your descendants will not be forgotten.

Seventh: we have the enjoyment of many social and regular communications. Therefore when the Master sends us out to work in the morning, or in the beginning of the Masonic year, let us reply that we will go, if at night we receive wages of this kind.

Worshipful Master and Brethren all! All who are satisfied with the answers given are invited to embark upon our Masonic ship, the greatest and best, and the most solid trawler!

For one thing Masons have developed a case of mental allergy to the words greatest, best, most. There are no books or formulae to explain or describe the "wonder" of our Masonic message and no one makes his journey alone. Therefore, we must conclude that in seeking the greatest, best and most, we see much humor and gentleness in the littleness of many greatest, best and most things, and feel much happiness and fraternal understanding in discovering the beauty and importance of small things. Our Masonic ship is a very special kind of ship, a treasure ship, it's wealth is measured in a unique collection of tenets, virtues, symbols and tools, a testimonial to a very special group of passengers,

linked together by their cable-tow and a mystic tie. The crew of this Masonic ship has been carefully investigated prior to being hired by a unanimous secret ballot. They are the backbone of this ship, and without disparaging or belittling the brave captains, if only the worshipful and illustrious captains get all the credit for the glories of the journey, this would unjustly and seriously disparage all the others, navigators and wardens, crewmen and deacons and stewards, deckhands and craftsmen whose names are carefully recorded in the log books and passenger lists. They are artists, the builders, the poets and thinkers, the promoters and servants who have always been happy to "sign on and in" for any part of the journey for a low pay, high esteem kind of fringe benefit. Not all took part in every trip. Some have signed in only occasionally. Others have chosen to remain in the background. Each in his time, and his way has contributed his share of greatness to the full measure of our treasure and to our mutual enrichment and enhancement.

On the bridge, preparing to sail into the next decade, we recall the words of some of our famous Right Worshipful Commanders: "*Brotherly Love*" by Right Worshipful Brothers H. Dale Walker and Louie Conine; "*More Light from Masonry*" by Right Worshipful Brother Gordon Greenwood; "*A Stronger Jurisdiction Through Knowledgeable Brothers*" by Right Worshipful Brother Burton L. Clyde; "*Let Us Think, Speak, and Act Masonically*" by Right Worshipful Brother Gunther Gall; "*Solidarity*" by Right Worshipful Brother Burton L. Clyde. All aboard, Brothers! You cannot win tomorrow's game with the points you made yesterday. And the Bell of Hope, Faith, and Love, tolls loud and clear, we are called from Refreshment to Labor!

/s/ Hugo Thomas

Hugo Thomas Deputy Grand Master
American Canadian Grand Lodge

MASONIC BROTHERHOOD

(Presented at "Nahe Temple" Lodge No. 824 on 20 March 1978)

Worshipful Master Grand Lodge Officers past and present,

At this time, while communicating in a consecrated Temple, a house of Light, dedicated to virtue, benevolence and Freemasonry, I am grateful to you. Worshipful Brother Montry Allamon, for inviting me into your truly well governed "Nahe Temple" Lodge No. 824; and I humbly acknowledge the honor to share Masonic fellowship with all Brothers here in attendance at this Lodge of Instruction. I would like to preface our work with some remarks of general interest.

In the beginning a candidate must indicate his willingness to absorb all the lessons taught in the Degrees. He must acquire and cultivate the spirit of Brotherhood, and this requires special qualifications. In a larger and more important sense they determine a man's fitness to remain a Mason. They are the qualifications of a Mason, not merely of a man who desires to become a Mason. They always remain in force; therefore we do not out grow them when we pass the ordeal of the ballot. By a candidate's qualifications is consequently meant what values or worth he may possess to fit him for a place in the fellowship of Masons. While Freemasonry remains true to its own fundamental principles and exercises due and proper care in the selection and training of its candidates it has nothing to fear of the future. We may not experience any great membership gains, but our strength, our influence and our usefulness do not depend upon mere numbers, but upon the quality, the loyalty and the devotion of its active members. It is a great danger that some lodges with membership problems are sometimes tempted to let down the bars and to accept as candidates men who are unqualified for membership. We cannot afford carelessness in the screening of our candidates. Encompassed in such a favorable climate Brothers ought to grow Masonically; they ought to always remember the Masonic phrase they repeated on the night of their Initiation, *"art or arts, part or parts, point or points of the hidden Mysteries of Ancient Freemasonry"*; arts mean the knowledge or things made known, parts the degrees in which Masonry is divided, and the points the rules and usages of our Order. By the same token Brothers of longer standing membership will grow in stature, provided they make the required efforts. However, Brothers who freely admit personal shortcomings in measuring up to the high standards of Freemasonry are numerous. These searching's of the conscience must consequently lead to higher levels of life and conduct. One Brother will go back to the phraseology of the petition he signed; another Brother is somewhat awed by the thought that he owes an immeasurable debt to the two recommenders and avouchers who signed his petition; still another Brother will consider his Lodge's high opinion of him must be sustained, because he was honored with a unanimous ballot. He might wonder whether an investigating committee would recommend him again should he petition anew.

These mental interrogations indicate, the Brother is trying to make sacrifices and performs duties that he may have previously shunned. To the Brother with regrets because he has been a passive, inactive member, one can order the antidote of steering the opposite course; there is always room in the Lodge set up for Brothers who are constructive with their suggestions, who are desirous of having and receiving more light, who promote peace and harmony, and who are willing to go far beyond the line of duty to repay in part at least their voluntary assumed duty to Freemasonry. The teachings of our fraternal Order demand the best that is in us. They demand the sanctification of our lives, the purification of our souls and the ordination of our spirit, but it is by our actions that the world shall know us. Our actions are our mark upon our work just as surely as were those left by our ancient Brethren upon the stones of the great cathedrals.

My Brethren: you did not honor Freemasonry when you were admitted into these consecrated walls for the first time. Masonry honored you and you are indebted to the Fraternity for this honor, it can never be repaid in full. The will to work, act and part outlines a principle which is especially applicable to the endeavors of a speculative, that is a Freemason. Humility and education is our obligation we are accountable for and its fulfillment we must squarely accept. To respect and honor this educational process is to be mature, to implement and to realize it, is to maintain and support our specific Masonic way of life, and for each Brother to do more than his share is to be noble. Brothers, "to these duties you are bound by the most sacred ties".

When I decided to name this presentation:

Masonic Brotherhood,

it is presented with the sincere hope that it will accomplish something, at least achieve its primary purpose the stimulation of a new increased interest in Masonic education, to establish or rather revive values and to perceive a deeper meaning of some facets of our Masonic philosophy, ever bearing in mind that a Lodge meeting is called for the sole purpose of promoting the growth of our own spiritual life and of our fellowmen . . . and for no other purpose!

Masons are Brothers by a double tie and among Brothers there can exist no invidious distinctions. A king is reminded, that although a crown adorns his head, yet the blood in his veins is derived from the common parent of mankind, and is no better than that of the meanest of his subjects. Men in inferior stations are taught to love their superiors, when they see them divested of their grandeur, and condescending to trace the paths of wisdom, and follow virtue, assisted by those of a rank beneath them. Virtue is true nobility, and wisdom is the channel by which it is directed and conveyed. Wisdom and virtue distinguish Masons.

If I may pay a fitting tribute to a thrilling exemplification of Masonic Brotherhood in a realistic and sincere adjustment of one human being to another, and not as a matter of sentiment. I am reminded of the Apostle Peter, who in his first epistle advised the laying aside of all malice, hypocrisies and evil speaking, exhorted: "Honor all men. Love the Brotherhood and fear God." Brotherhood or genuine caring for Brothers is our potential and powerful tool to build a better world. The Honorable President Brother Franklin Delano Roosevelt expressed it

all too well in a prayer: *"Grant us Brotherhood, oh Lord, not only for this day, but for all our years; a Brotherhood not of words, but of acts and noble deeds"*.

More than ever before I am convinced that Freemasonry has given us a new opportunity to promote the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God. Heaven knows too well, how much we need to do this. Oh yes, I realize, that the trouble with opportunity is, that it always comes disguised as hard work. This opportunity of a Brother inculcates his responsibility to the Craft in general and to his own Lodge in particular. "There is no right without a paralleled duty". And you cannot practice Masonic Brotherhood without knowing the basic structure and functions of your Lodge, its local problems, its various projects and activities; without realizing the importance of regular Lodge attendance and willingness to participate in Lodge work both within and without the walls of the Temple. Therefore, let us prove worthy to the fulfillment of our obligation to our Brothers and fellowmen by the improvement of ourselves and by uniting our collective fraternal efforts, when there are no Masonic prohibitions to prevent it. Many of us doubtless have the ability to keep our immediate surroundings busy in other ways. Some of us, however, I pray, God has tamed to be an apostle and contender for our noble precepts and valuable tenets.

I see Masonic Brotherhood in a realistic sense, not as a superficial matter of sentiment. Brotherhood is a sincere and realistic adjustment of one human being to another. One may not agree with his neighbor about many things, but I can always be just to him, do him no harm, speak no evil of him and wish him well. Honest differences of opinion should not separate us, nor cause us to hate one another. A soldier on the battlefield does not inquire about the beliefs of his brother as they prepare to make a common sacrifice. It is true this illustration relates to time of crises. But are we not at a crisis point right now?

We all want a better world in which to live. Military, political and diplomatic successes alone have not brought about world peace. Losers in these contests never forget. There is only one way to achieve real peace on earth, and that is through the instrumentality of genuine Brotherhood among all mankind. It is more than a dream, it is our only hope. To realize it, we have got to start some time. Let me put it this way; "All of this leads me to say that God has given us a new opportunity to promote the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Let us not destroy each other's attempt and right to worship God and to strengthen our Brotherhood through listening to unsubstantiated assertions, past shortcomings and current ignorance. Rather, let us prove worthy of each other's confidence even though we have different approaches to the fulfillment of our obligations to God and our fellowman by the improvement of ourselves and our institution with collective fraternal efforts.

We are gathered in this Lodge hall in the spirit of Brotherhood; a friendly gathering of Brothers, each wishing to understand one another just a little better, so that we may walk our ways in peace and understanding and harmony. Some Brothers may be naturally gifted with a strong Brotherhood make up, and all of us benefit by strengthening personal qualities essential to promoting real understanding in our Fraternity. Each time this experience transpires, all

Brothers achieve a better appreciation and awareness of fellowship and Brotherhood.

When you put other Brothers first, this reverence and accommodation to others bring forth harmony. It is remarkable how quickly things do change for the better when a person finds that someone really cares. Outstanding ideas are often of little or no value unless the Brothers who are to execute them are properly motivated. This motivation comes when they recognize that their efforts are considered important by others and that others do care about them. It is not always important for Brothers to be included in an effort, so long as they feel that they count no matter what job they perform. This feeling is more important than a merely formal participation; and to be a part of a united effort requires one to absorb peculiarities and mistakes of others without making a profound judgment. Brotherhood in the world is at its best a dream yet to be fully realized. In Masonry it is a fact. The link between each Brother is an eternal bond. That Mystic Tie is our strength!

In the world of Masonry there is a common ground of unity and oneness regardless of a man's state or status. Brotherhood is a treasure. To keep it as the norm and ideal we must not take it for granted. We may never allow anything to cause any Brother or the Brotherhood to suffer, but rather cultivate the highest and best in our Brotherly relations. We share within our Brotherhood the best of life as well as the worst; and we always make every Brother feel welcome and when we have visiting Brethren let us extend the right hand of fellowship and fraternal love.

Sometimes, being weak, frail mortals, a Brother may slip, stumble, fall or even fail, but none of us should ever be guilty of casting stones. And if ever we are so tempted, I pray the stones will be too heavy to pick up. When kind admonitions of correction or sympathetic words of wisdom are needed, we must always do so in the name and spirit of Masonic charity and treat each Brother as we would want to be treated, sharing in his sorrow, misfortune, weakness, strength, triumphs as well as failures; laugh with him and also weep with him. Our strength may never turn into arrogance or pride of spirit which would certainly destroy ourselves and our Masonic Brotherhood.

Whatever the need in the life of the Brother, I hope we have and will have trust with each other to come to the Brother's rescue. This may mean counseling as well as consideration. It may mean listening and advising. Masonic Brotherhood ought to be a system of competition. To climb upward is never a race: and the desire to climb upward ought to be responsible action as well as right motivation. In this context let us not take ourselves too seriously; there is above all the joy of bringing the light of happiness, of truth and understanding into a dark world. And we may never forget our sense of destiny as Brothers.

The world about us and the world within is one. Masonry continues to influence the world about us as Masons everywhere practice Masonic Brotherhood and friendship. We can be and should be builders of a better world and a better

tomorrow. It begins with each as an individual, then as Brothers and then through the Lodge.

One final comment on two subjects so intimately interwoven with the topic of this presentation; the young and the old Brother. Freemasons are summoned, not only by definition, to cultivate and educate the new and the young Brother in the spirit of fellowship, friendship, unity and harmony. As he begins his journey we must take personal interest in him. He is uncertain and, therefore, needs strength and most of all guidance, understanding and support. Never let him stand alone; his future successes are in his present education, orientation and acceptance. Those who are assigned to him in the memory work should also help in communicating, within the limits of each degree, a sound educational process of understanding, knowledge and awareness. The memory work is important but it can only be as effective as is the step by step understanding. It is not enough to memorize. We must relate, educate, stimulate and concentrate on his understanding and illumination.

In many Lodges there is a wide age difference. It is here that we need to exercise tolerance and Masonic Brotherhood. The younger Brethren have genuine respect and consideration for the elders. Wisdom is a treasure; strength is a blessing; enthusiasm is a great asset but it must be tempered with patience and prudence.

The older Brothers of a Lodge have often been the pioneers, the Pilgrim Fathers in the struggle for establishment and beginning. The younger Brothers would do well to seek their counsel and gain wisdom from their experience. The attitude of the "now generation" that the "old generation" are not with it is a tragedy. Men gain wisdom and truth from the past, and to live only in a "now situation" in the present day, offers emptiness, not wholeness of life. This kind of consideration ought never to exist in any Lodge, or in any Masonic organization. The young as well as the Older Brother ought to complement each other and add to the dimension of life with each other. We must seek from each other those lessons and that spirit which adds to life, not detracts from it.

Masonic Brotherhood, as I see it, is carved, marked and engraved on the symbolic Five Masonic Points of Fellowship.

First: When the necessities of a brother call for my aid and support, I will be ever ready to lend him such assistance, to save him from sinking, as may not be detrimental to myself or connections, if I find him worthy thereof.

Second: Indolence shall not cause my footsteps to halt, nor wrath turn them aside; but forgetting every selfish consideration, I will be ever swift of foot to serve, help, and execute benevolence to a fellow-creature in distress, and more particularly to a Brother Mason.

Third: When I offer up my devotions to Almighty God, a brother's welfare I will remember as my own; for as the voices of babes and sucklings ascend to

the Throne of Grace, so most assuredly will the breathings of a fervent heart arise to the mansions of bliss, as our prayers are certainly required of each other.

Fourth: A brother's secrets, delivered to me as such, I will keep as I would my own; as betraying that trust might be doing him the greatest injury he could sustain in his mortal life; nay, it would be like the villainy of an assassin, who lurks in darkness to stab his adversary, when unarmed and least prepared to meet an enemy.

Fifth: A brother's character I will support in his absence as I would in his presence; I will not wrongfully revile him myself, nor will I suffer it to be done by others, if in my power to prevent it.

In closing, let us pray that the glorious gospel of our blessed God may motivate our worthy endeavors by promoting Freemasonry. The mystic tie of Freemasonry is Masonic Charity and Masonic Brotherhood, which springs from pure hearts, good conscience and a sincere faith in God. Masonic Brotherhood that knows no limits is nothing less than the Love of God operating in the hearts of Freemasons. The agape of God, that is his unlimited love, has no beginning and it has no ending, our Masonic Brotherhood should be no less!

/s/ Hugo Thomas
(Dr.) Hugo Thomas
Past Grand Master
American Canadian Grand Lodge

Freemasonry's Responsibility to Society

*(Presented at the Semi-Annual Communication of the ACGL Bad Kissingen, 14th
Nov. 1981)*

Worshipful Master and Brethren all,

The rank of Past Grand Master is associated with many happy and delightful experiences, not the least of which is the privilege of having been found worthy to present this paper in a place dedicated to virtue, to benevolence and to Freemasonry.

I hope that nothing I am about to say will be allowed to mask the sense of privilege which I feel of being able to engage with the best minds in contemporary Freemasonry and to address so respectable an audience as this Grand Lodge, which I salute as a faithful guardian of the fundamentals of our noble Order to whom we are bound by every tie of gratitude and for whose virtues we feel every sentiment of admiration and esteem.

This communication breathes that true Masonic spirit which permeates and actuates the smallest group of Brethren just as much as it does the larger assemblies. Let us, therefore, be instrumental in the advancement and education of the Craft, whose work is to bring goodwill into the community, to uplift mankind and to have an impact upon the life and the character of men and Masons everywhere.

Brethren, it is not my intention to enter into an elaborate disquisition concerning Masonry. That task far exceeds the limits of my abilities; I shall only venture to submit to your serious consideration a few observations.

Those words are not an example of 20th century modesty or understatement; and I will hasten to reveal they are, in fact, the opening words of the Oration given by Brother William Preston himself in 1772, when he introduced the first of his famous Masonic lectures. All the same it is this spirit that the following thoughts, suggested by our Grand Master in late October, are offered on the subject of:

"Freemasonry's Responsibility to Society"

and is dedicated to the Brothers of the American Canadian Grand Lodge.

By a long process in which speculative Masons have drawn upon material from former times, from the freestone masons, the Volume of Sacred Law and from ancient sources unconnected with either, is little short of amazing. By a long process of refinement, by adding and discarding system has been developed which despite all the anomalies and anachronisms inevitable in such growth, is nevertheless surprisingly harmonious. We ourselves compass the structure and the curriculum of our Masonic Temple; let ourselves be the Temple, which shall

stand in great proportion unto all eternity. This requires, however, a lifelong educational process to become intellectually fitted to comprehend and practice such alleged responsibility; the rough ashlar must be trued, squared and polished for its appropriate place in the structure of the Masonic edifice. All ethical forces at man's disposal are a Mason's working tools. Morality, friendship and fraternal love are such forces which first unite and then cement goodwill in society. Our task today, as ever, is to make men better, more tolerant and consequently happier.

Word fashions come and go. Slogans are widely used to put across a point, to convey an idea, sometimes to cause a thought. Most of these have political or commercial origins and are used to promote an individual's interest or to sell the public some bill of goods offered by a business. Even Freemasonry is not immune from modern sloganeering. Change sometimes seems to become fetish; some advocate a special Masonic image. And even such serious topics as *"Human rights of the future of our Society"* carry the implication of change and we are in grave danger of being coerced into sweeping changes purely as a sign of the times. They are too self evident to speculative Masons to react ostentatious about their practical application or to proclaim them from the housetops. Yet, the challenge becomes apparent, a challenge toward off approaching danger due to misinterpretation.

I do not construe this as indicating that we should shun all changes, or that we should cease our efforts to constantly seek improvement. But I do believe that we should abandon no standards until we are morally certain that we have replaced them with better and more effective ones, and I pray the basic principles of Masonry will always escape the ravages of changing times.

Webster's definition for "responsibility" is synonymous with obligation, duty and accountability, and encompasses many facets of the way of life which we adopted when we became members of the Order. Wherever Masonry flourished the highest standards of living have been obtained; and wherever it has been cast out, the standards of living have immediately gone down, civilization has deteriorated and the freedom of the people abolished.

I believe the great work of Freemasonry is to raise mankind to a higher realization of the beauty of truth, the importance of human freedom, the building of character, the glory of service in every good and charitable cause. Deeply convinced that the world of tomorrow can be a better one than that of today if the minds and hearts of the people are regenerated, Masonry has ever sought to build not only temples, but also character, thereby strengthening the moral fiber of its votaries. It is in memory of those who made the supreme sacrifice in order that we might have freedom to worship, freedom to think, freedom to live as Free and Accepted Masons.

Our contribution to mankind down through the centuries has been significant, whether it be in the fields of government, education, literature, medicine, music or almost any other area we could name. This is not so much because of any

direct involvement, for such would be contrary to our high principles, but rather is the result of individuals practicing Masonic precepts in their daily lives. The precepts and teachings of our Order in seeking tolerance and personal liberty for all and a desire to be better men and citizens have been instrumental in the formation of our free nations, where common duties inculcate commonly shared responsibilities. In this process we never measure our progress by the degrees we have received, rather than the degrees with which we throw our influence into applied Masonic teachings and education. It is not possible for anyone to be great or accomplished great things. But we can all work to the limit of our power, meet and master the problem of the hour, and be thankful for our blessings. The resources are inexhaustible, and "*of whom much is given, of him shall be much required*". This requires a special mental and spiritual preparation, a never ending process, beginning in our heart, to absorb that what we term Masonic Light.

Benjamin Franklin said: "We gave you a republic, if you can keep it"; expressed Masonically: we gave you your working tools, keep and use them wisely. I realize that the trouble with responsibility is that it always comes disguised as hard work. And it begins with our responsibility to the Craft in general and to our own Lodge in particular. "*There is no right without a paralleled duty*". And we cannot practice responsibility without knowing the basic structure and functions of our Lodge, its local problems, its various projects and activities; without realizing the importance of regular Lodge attendance and willingness to participate in Lodge work both within and without the walls of the Temple.

Don't expect perfection in a man just because he is a Mason. If you do, you will be disappointed. Masonry makes men better, but no human agency makes them perfect. If he is a Mason, you have a right to presume he is a fairly good man, but do not condemn Masonry, even if a few Masons turn out bad. Even the great Teacher himself had a Judas. The aim and purpose of Masonry is to receive none but good men, keep them good, and make them better, judge the Institution not by a few failures but by the average of its successes. The average is high and it consequently gives standards to its members, but it cannot be an infallible guide.

When the world criticizes Freemasonry, it may be saying: "*What you say you are, and what you really are fills me with doubt. Your preaching and practice are unrelated*". Maybe the world is wrong to criticize us. Only you can answer that! *Guilty or not guilty!* Preaching is not enough. Reciting a creed, religious or otherwise, is not enough. We need to go beyond the quoting of old clichés! We need to dream the impossible dream, to be willing to march through hell for a heavenly cause.

There is really nothing wrong with what we preach from the East or from the sidelines. The real hang-up comes from what we are and do, not from what we say we are. I can say I love God and I believe in God, but when I say I have faith

in God, then I have strength to move mountains. I can say I love Masonry, I believe in masonry, but when I say, the worlds will be better for this what I do, then I reach the unreachable star; the unreachable star of love and universal Brotherhood; the unreachable star of genuine commitment on the part of the entire Fraternity; the unreachable star of a new world where all men can breath free without fear.

There are periods of time when Masonry goes its way in an atmosphere of calm assurance. The national standard of morality is high. Masonry continues in her pursuance of Masonic teachings and principles, a commitment to excellence.

There is, however, no let down in the eternal search for more light. There is no recess from the work of masonry. But at such times, the Mason labors in a spirit that finds its counterpart in the general national spirit. There then comes a great change in the moral tone of our countries. Old beliefs, tried and true patterns of human behavior are described as old fashioned. Religion itself is challenged. Masonry is training for such conditions. The present efforts of the past must be used effectively against the false philosophy of the present. What we have done in the past is commendable. But conditions demand that we do more; and conditions increase responsibilities. It is imperative that we be more than just members of the Masonic Fraternity. We dare to tackle the toughest of jobs; we pity the sleeper and the indifferent; we pity those who merely join something, those who give up and say that it can't be done.

There is a bit of quotation that I cannot vouch for as to its origin, but I remember Robert Kennedy using it over and over. It is this:

*Some people see things as they are and ask, why?
I dream of things as they are and ask, why not?*

If you want a better world, work at it. If you want a better Lodge, work at it. If you want a better community, work at it. . Why not?

We modern day Masons too are craftsmen and builders, and if our labors are to contribute significantly to that, ideal, philosophical empire which is not only our Masonic dream but the hope of mankind as well, and if our actions are to mark our work with a standard of excellence, then we must pour our devotion and steadfastness into the mortar.

We too must, by precept and example, strive with every fiber of our strength and persuasion to add substance and power to the spiritual aura surrounding our lives and the life of our Brothers, our Lodges and Grand Lodges. There is a need for a revival of spiritual self, a rededication to the unfoldment of inner self, a giving of self and of spirit.

Our life is a single but highly complex cosmic structure and we must look closely and with serious heart at the edifice we have entered, if we listen with understanding we will hear a sound made up of the beating of human hearts, and hear the nameless music of men's souls. If we look we will begin to dimly see the soaring outline of the building itself of many forms and shadows.

Surely the work of no ordinary builder. Can you see the mighty pillars, cast in the form of the bodies of our Brothers who have sacrificed themselves in the name of truth and justice, and their endless rows forming a bulwark?

Can you see the cornerstones from which all else expands, and see there our Masonic fathers surrounded by our young men, our Brothers of tomorrow? Can you see in the spans and arches above, the joined hands of all men, interlocked and strong, and hear in the heights of the lofty dome the gentle music of the dreamers of the world?

And can you see that the mystic house is not yet finished. It is still building and not being built upon, and we realize that the work must always go forward. The building must be united.

It seems a simple realization, yet the profound feeling of it brought forth a Moses and Jesus Christ, a Buddha and St. Augustine, a Darwin, Anderson and Einstein. These great axial thinkers become creators of transcendent values and created a world of universal thought which today is our most precious human heritage. They speak to us with the sole purpose of helping to create that kind of world, *"of that state of perfection at which, we hope, being the rough ashlar we are to arrive, by a virtuous education, our own endeavors, and the blessing of God"*. It is a rugged and difficult pathway. God will supply the blessings; but we ourselves have to come up with the endeavor.

My Brothers; your individual example as a votary of our Royal Art is one of our free world's greatest strengths. You are members of a lifeline that brings man out of the dark into God's light. If we walk away from the light, our shadows fall before us. The further we walk, the further they extend, the shadows of anxieties, fears, false concepts. If we walk toward the light, the shadows fall behind us and their burden lessens.

Finally, if we stand under the light, they disappear. As you stand under that eternal Light, you set an example and you send a message to your fellowmen of strength and hope and faith that is the ultimate contribution of Freemasonry to the future of mankind.

In closing, please listen to the Masonic confession of the Honorable Brother Benjamin Franklin:

"Masonic labor is purely a labor of love. He who seeks to draw Masonic wages in gold or silver will be disappointed. The wages of a Mason are earned and paid in their dealings with one another; sympathy begets sympathy, kindness begets kindness, helpfulness and tolerance beget the attitude of a true Mason, and these are the wages of a Mason".

So help us God, and make us steadfast to perform the same!

/s/ Hugo Thomas
(Dr.) Hugo Thomas
Past Grand Master
American Canadian Grand Lodge

Communication

*Tonight is Lodge, the friends I'll meet have all been tried
the same*

*And each one that I stand and greet Knows Mankind's
own true aim.*

*Tis Lodge tonight, the Work is there laid out for all to view
Craftsmen assemble, pair by pair to make their Ashlars
true.*

*Lodge is tonight, the Summons shouts come join our
happy band*

*Keep harmony in and discord out, Rejoice - ye upright
men.*

*Lodge is tonight, and Brothers all we'll meet with spirit
free.*

Bound by ties and governed by law and faith and charity.

Bro. L. Sherman Brooks

The Genius of Freemasonry

(Presented at "Eifel" Lodge No. 855 on 29 July 1975)

Worshipful Master and Brethren all thank you for your fraternal invitation. I am grateful and I duly acknowledge the honor to communicate with you in your well-governed Lodge of which I am a member, and to conducting a Lodge of instruction. My Topic:

"The Genius of Freemasonry"

Symbolizes both, the spirit which prevails within the portals of this Temple and which motivates the members of this Lodge in their daily conduct and actions who have been found worthy for admission.

Every great leader who has ever risen among the sons of men has been possessed by one master thought that has gripped the people like a passion. *Socrates* had a key-word: the Immortality of the Soul; *Buddha*: the renunciation of life;

Dr. Martin Luther, the German reformer had a special password; the freedom of the Individual, or how can I obtain God's mercy; *Jean Jacques Rousseau*, the French revolutionary declared: Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.

Now the greatest leader who has ever led the hosts of humanity, now, Freemasonry came with its master thought, glorious and thrilling, not world shaking but certainly world transforming and its password is:

"Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of GOD"

And to follow this magnificent and imperial command is one of the numerous privileges it grants us. With this way of life it inspires us to fulfill our mission, to announce to the people of our time that we can correct wrongs only, as we hear these words, accept these teachings and apply them to our every day's life. With this persuasion and uplifting force we must feel Freemasonry's presence in our joy and its comfort in our pain and its genius in our mind.

One of the great secrets of Masonry is, it is one facet of its genius, that it makes a man aware of the divinity within him, where from his whole life takes its beauty and meaning, and inspires him to follow and obey it. It is the new inner attitude and habit of thought with regard to the worth and use of life. Every man has a train of thought on which he rides when he is alone; and the worth of his life to himself and others, as well as its happiness, depends upon the direction in which that train is going, the baggage it carries. Masonry puts that inner train on the right track, freights it with precious treasure, and starts it to the Grand Lodge above. What other or higher ministry can it render to a Brother?

Adhering to the example of Grand Master Hiram Abif, such is the ideal of Freemasonry, and fidelity to all that it demands, that we give ourselves to it, trusting the *power of truth*, the *reality of brotherly love*, and the *sovereign worth of character*. For only as we incarnate these ideals in actual life and activity, do

they become real, tangible, and effective. God works for man through man and seldom, if at all, in any other way. He asks for our voices to speak, for our hands to work and act here below, with persuasion, power and enthusiasm, with clean hands and charitable hearts.

I am neither learned nor famous, but we all together are summoned to be loyal and true of heart undefiled by evil, faithful and helpful to our brethren. Then our life will be a capacity for the highest thoughts, the noblest deeds. Let us make it a pursuit of the highest, an eager, incessant quest of truth; a noble utility, a wise freedom, a genuine service. Through us the Spirit of the genius of Masonry may grow and be magnified and glorified. Only thereby no voice of distress reaches our ears in vain and no hand seeks our aid with out response.

Our spiritual concept as speculative or Freemasons inculcates those noble attributes such as personal responsibility, personal power of judging, the will to believe, to work, act and part. Responsibility is the charge one is accountable for, and the fulfillment of our social *responsibility* has long been expressed by the world wide traditional *Golden Rule* of goodwill. The basic admonition has been propounded in its own phrasing by each religion of the world; Christianity: "*As you would that men should do to you, do you also to them likewise*"; Islam: "*No one is a believer, until he loves for his Brother, what he loves for himself*"; Judaism: "*What is hurtful to yourself, do not to your fellowman.*"

Our actions and habits create the genuine nature of our Fraternity, what it actually stands for, and what it will realistically achieve. As a general habit, each of us is obligated in his daily life in the midst of many privileges, to give more thought to the inevitably related personal responsibilities.

We have the privilege of membership in our Lodge, and the associated responsibility of displaying the principles of Freemasonry in exemplary daily lives. And thereby we have the privileged opportunity of contributing to the welfare and growth of this "*Brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of GOD*".

We have the privilege of building a better life and a better world, and the inherent obligation of building that life upon the tenets, promulgated by our Masonic philosophy, the teachings of the Prophets of Judea, of the Great Master of Nazareth, and other revered teachers.

Some forgotten rhymester has aptly cautioned us of this basic human and Masonic obligation with the simple lines:

My life shall touch a dozen lives, before this day is done;
Leave countless marks for good,
Ere sets the evening sun. So, this the wish I always wish,
The prayer I ever pray;
Lord, may my life help other lives
It touches along the way.

What is the genius of Freemasonry, Brethren?

What is it that has drawn men to it through the years? Its appeal has been almost universal. Among its followers we find men from all walks of life, scholars and men whose educational advantages have been limited. Kings and statesmen have been proud to accept that simple title: *Master Mason*. What is the source of its magical power? To some it might be its power to attract and hold the minds of men akin to religion. Though not a religion, it is deeply religious. Others might point to the philosophical character of its degrees. The teaching of Freemasonry as exemplified in its degrees is drawn from the noblest thoughts of the greatest teachers of the ages: those immortal truths through which men have grown in moral, spiritual and intellectual stature.

Still another group might suggest that its appeal and its strength lie in its practice of Charity and Brotherhood. Undoubtedly each accounts in part for the appeal of Freemasonry. But what do they all add up to? Isn't it good old-fashioned idealism? Deep down in the innermost conscious of all men is a love and appreciation of the ideal. In some secret recess of his mind, seldom exposed to public gaze, he cherishes some idealistic thoughts, some dream of a better world, when truth and justice, tolerance and a host of other simple virtues will make of this world a temple fit abiding place for the Great Architect Of The Universe.

To that idealism Freemasonry gives expression, idealism common to all men regardless of their station in life or their educational background. Herein lays Masonry's secret and its power.

Should Freemasonry lose that idealism, like Samson when his locks were shorn by Delilah, its powers would be gone, and its appeal would become impotent. Therefore, if we preserve our Fraternity as a vital forward-moving institution, it behooves us to preserve that idealism. This is our primary responsibility as Freemasons.

The thought that membership in the Fraternity carries with it responsibilities of a high order is implicit in every degree. The Entered Apprentice learns "*lie there stands an upright man and mason, ever to walk and act as such before God and man*". Often we are reminded that duty is with us always, inflexible as a destiny. This thought of personal responsibility and of duty is essential if we are to preserve the genius of Freemasonry and Freemasonry perpetuated to serve future generations, it will be reflected in the speech and conduct of individual Masons.

It is easy to be enthusiastic in the Temple. However, Masonry can work only through active Masons outside the Lodge room. Through Brothers who are willing to serve with no thought of reward but in their love for the Fraternity and what it stands for.

The genius of Freemasonry, the source of its power to attract and hold men as it has done down through the centuries and is doing today, is its inspiring idealism.

The Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God is one of our most important lessons. It takes unity, cooperation, understanding, harmony and,

above all, the will to progress, the desire to work and share, to join hearts and hands for the enhancement and strengthening of Masonic Brotherhood. We are living in unprecedented times. Our precepts and our convictions are needed as never before. And with that need comes a great opportunity to be of vital service to our Order, to all mankind. We must be leaders and achievers. We must take the initiative and move forward.

Progress depends upon you, and upon me. Together we can achieve it! Freemasonry appeals to us by its fellowship. Nest to our family, and the House of God, it is the most blessed influence in our life. Its simple and profound faith, its wise and practical philosophy, uniting the wisdom of love with the love of wisdom, illumines our mind as its genius of fraternity warms our heart. Masonry appeals to us as an agency for the organization of moral faith, practical brotherhood, and social idealism, the worth and power of which we have not yet realized.

In a day when the brotherhood of this world is broken, our ancient and noble Craft has an opportunity, the like of which it has never known before, to use its influence and power to spread that fraternal righteousness without which the future will be as dark as the past.

Scarcely a Masonic discourse is pronounced, or a lecture given, that does not teach two extremely profound principles, the love of God and the love of our fellow man. That is the very spirit of Masonry, its light and power, its basic and the apex. Upon that faith it rests, in that faith it lives, and by that faith it will persuade and win.

Masonry was not made to divide men but to unite them. It asks for tolerance and for fraternity. Therefore, all through the ages it has been, and is today, a meeting place of differing minds and a prophecy of the final union of all reverent and devout souls.

Against those old sectarians who substituted intolerance for charity, and persecution for friendship, and who do not love God because they hated their neighbors. Masonry made perpetual protest in a voice now becoming, hopefully, the eloquence of the world.

A vast change of heart is now taking place in the world, by reason of an exchange of thought and courtesy, and a closer personal touch. The various sects, so long estranged, are learning to unite upon the things most worthwhile and the least open to debate. That is to say, they are moving toward the Masonic position. When they arrive, Masonry will view a scene which was prophesied from the beginning. Then Masonry, having fulfilled a pan of its sublime, prophetic mission upon earth, will rejoice. It will then write the eternal verities of the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, the Moral Law, the Golden Rule, and the hope of a life everlasting.

Today this great Fraternity, with its plea for liberty, equality, and fraternity, is worth a great deal for the safety and sanctity of our countries.

Some day, when the cloud of prejudice has been dispelled by the searchlights of truth, the world will honor Masonry for its service to freedom of thought and liberty of faith. There will come a day when the barriers of race, creed, and habit which separate men today, will be wiped away.

When the spirit of this Order has its way upon earth, as it surely will, evil, injustice, and every vile and slimy thing that defiles humanity will skulk into the dark, unable to endure the light of Freemasonry.

Heavy responsibility rests upon each officer and Brother of our Lodges. Those who accept any office must make up their minds that personal sacrifice is going to be necessary and that they must bear their share of the burden of carrying on the affairs of the Lodge in which they hold office.

Let each of us who have been honored with election to a position of trust in our great Fraternity conduct himself, in Lodge and in public, so that honor and respect will be given to the Masonic image, a larger number of the civic leaders of our country will be inspired to join in the membership and labors of Masonry, and the Fraternity become, once again, a leader in spreading the moral principles for which we stand in our countries, that sorely needs such leadership at this time.

One man living a life of brotherhood is worth countless lectures of brotherhood! Practical brotherhood, if it has any meaning at all, means that all men, regardless of race, creed or rank, shall have the opportunity to live well and in equality. The world is perishing for lack of brotherhood, and though we have the great ideal on our lips, it has not yet found its way into our hearts and minds.

The present great service which Masonry, by its principles no less than its history, can render to the world is to estimate a man by his character and worth as a man. A blind, unreasoning rancor must give way to the light of intelligence if we are not to live in a welter of wrangling hatreds and hideous conflicts, a future which no one can contemplate without dismay.

It is generally known by the outside world that Masons are bound together by the strong ties of love, of reverence, and of duty, and that Freemasons are men of integrity, men whose lives are directed by the Great Lights in Masonry.

The Masons have girded the globe and, in the words of Homer, an ancient Greek poet, "have seen many cities and learned the minds of many men". We know how diverse are the people and how hard it is to persuade them all to practice brotherhood.

As Freemasons we have learned to be patient, persistent, generous, faithful and charitable. We do not expect or discern a second Renaissance eventuating from space exploration. From all the futility around us in this our troubled world, we turn to those who, by whatever faith or creed, hold aloft the banner of liberty and fraternity. More inspiration may be found here at our meetings than at the United Nations' World Capital, which most of the time is a Tower of Babel.

It takes no great philosopher to discover that the course of steady progress is that of moderation, and the middle road which Masons personify and try to exemplify in their daily lives. As Brothers we travel widely, observe, carry with

us our message, and live with fair-minded people our way of thinking and conduct. Thereby we are obligated to act as ambassadors whose records are unblemished; whose ritual is modest, simple and dignified; whose steady optimism outlasts political prophecies of doom and cheap posturing. This my Brothers is another facet of Freemasonry's genius.

This is our lesson: it is that the world must be convinced to follow our example and turn to Brotherhood, decent living, obedience to law, charity and the practice of the eternal verities. Ours is a noble, impressive ritual. As Masons we have been, for generations, a quiet but potent force for tolerance, avoiding extremes, practicing and preaching our common humanity, as Franklin, Washington or the Prussian King Frederic the Great and others were primarily motivated, when they blazed the way in the troubled world of their time. How well we carry out our obligations, how well we demonstrate in our lives the effectiveness of Masonic teachings, will always be the measure by which the outside world judges Masonry.

The habit of speaking well of our Brothers, of having a just concern for the happiness and welfare of our Brothers, of having the proper respect for the opinions of others, and our unyielding belief in the goodness of GOD, are ways in which we communicate Masonry.

The proof of our Masonic way of life is in our deeds, and it is by deeds that Masonry is made known to the non-Mason. Ours is the obligation to transmit Masonry pure, unsullied and undefiled. Everyday we are revealing this immeasurable universal force:

"The Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of GOD."

In closing each of us should always remember the answer to the first questions in the Entered Apprentice Degree:

"Whence came you?" "What came you here to do?"

/s/ Hugo Thomas
(Dr.) Hugo Thomas
Deputy Grand Master
American Canadian Grand Lodge

Re-Obligation

(Presented on 21 February 1975 at "Berlin 46" Lodge No. 933 ("Reunion and Re-obligation Night"))

Worshipful Master and Brethren all;

As grateful as I am for the confidence the Worshipful Master, my friend and Brother, John E. Hobbs, has shown in me by his friendly invitation in giving me the pleasant opportunity of formulating an address, suitable for this memorable and solemn occasion of a:

Reunion and Re-Obligation Night

I may offer you my sincere appreciation for the favorable sentiments with which it abounds and the trust reposed in me. But I can also assure you, that I accepted with some reservations, having made suitable proficiency in my medical profession I must confess, the human brain is a wondrous organ that starts to work the moment you are born, and never stops, until you stand up to speak.

Frankly, the prospect of having to address you on this auspicious occasion and before such competent Brethren of real merit and knowledge is quite difficult, because it is a peculiar and different thing to develop a presentation that, hopefully will be meaningful, and can do sufficient justice to the dignity of this day of Truth and Light.

My Brothers; how can the language of the heart be communicated into the language of the pen or put in words, and give justice to my desire to express my pleasing sensibility for your favor and esteem, and to share Masonic fellowship with all the Brethren of this well governed and honorable:

Berlin 46 Lodge No. 933

My poor vocabulary fails to express the true emotions of the heart when attempting a dialogue with friends and Brothers that have blended with the Brotherhood of history and repeated the same words at the sacred Altar of obligation, that were pledged faithfully by the great and Honorable Washington and Franklin, but also by Frederic the Great here in Berlin, and so many Brothers who have traveled the same road before you and me, and received the same Light as we did. The idea and revelation that this sublime act makes us Brothers one with the other and with the greats of all ages and with the faithful and capable Brothers of this highly reputed Lodge staggers my, granted, limited abilities, as does it enrich and enhance my solemn vows and my obligations.

The gentle and noble art has worked its sweet mystery, when it joined in Friendship and Brotherly Love the hearts of so many votaries of our royal art, especially within our American Canadian Grand Lodge Lodges, and a humble

medical doctor, whose greatest award is and ever will be, to be considered by all of you as a true and faithful servant and a worthy Brother.

This address is presented with apologies for its omissions, but with the sincere hope that it will accomplish something; at least achieve its primary purpose: the stimulation of a new increased interest in the subject:

Re-Obligation; a Freemason's privilege and honor.

To re-establish values and basic fundamentals and to perceive an updated image of our Fraternity.

When first we were introduced and initiated into the Mysteries of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons we were taken by the right hand, conducted to the center of the Lodge for the benefit of prayer. Before this great and important undertaking we invoke the aid of deity:

"Vouchsafe Thine aid. Almighty Father of the Universe, to this our present convention, and grant that this candidate for Masonry may dedicate and devote his life to Thy service, and become a true and faithful Brother among us. Endue him with a competency of Thy Divine wisdom, that, by the influence of the pure principles of our Fraternity he may be better enabled to display the principles of Holiness, to the honor of Thy Holy name."

Thus being invested with the working tool of prayer, on our further progress we had to pray for ourselves. And speaking of prayer, I cannot help but remind you that prayer is frequently used in our business sessions as well as in the ritual of each degree. We do not hesitate to ask for guidance and help when needed; and we are informed very clearly what to do and where to go for our help when we have exhausted all of our own resources. Yes, my Brethren, prayer is one of the most useful tools at our disposal, "to preserve the reputation of the Fraternity unsullied" and to strictly adhere to our solemn vows given at the Alter of obligation.

There is in this word "obligation" itself, a point which has a meaning of its own. For at the root of the word is a reminder that he who accepts an obligation ties, or binds, himself to something he is to have as a sacred duty. We bound ourselves to a regular Lodge and did so in view of two duties we are expected to perform. One of these is our duty to be a good and faithful *Mason*, and the other is our duty to be a true and worthy *worker* in the Lodge. In accepting that obligation we did certain things. What it was we did, others could not see, because we did them within ourselves; we thought, felt and decided deep down in our own soul what afterwards we promised. It is therefore, that the obligation which ties us to the entire Fraternity is a *Mystic Tie*. We had it in our mind, which we were obligating and rededicating ourselves to the Lodge and to Freemasonry in general. And now we are sustained and reminded, that the Lodge and the worldwide chain of Brotherhood were obligating themselves to *us*. For we could not have an obligation that bound only *one*. We were making our own promise to the Lodge, which in turn made a promise to us, and the

Master gave us a pledge of his friendship and Brotherly Love on behalf of the Lodge. In this double tie is the other side of what is meant by the Mystic Tie: It is Mystic because it is in the soul; it is a Tie because it binds us mutually together.

This Mystic Tie is a “*union of the hearts*” and implies an intellectual allegiance to a common Masonic tradition, an awareness of a philosophy of life which is universal, an underlying conviction that Brethren, who share their spiritual unity, enable us to find a wise and satisfactory base for common actions and decisions. The dynamic of Masonic fellowship is not the mutual profession of a creed or agreement in matters of Lodge organization and procedures. Fellowship is of the spirit and the heart, and not necessarily a meeting of the minds. Men may disagree, but must respect each other and work together. Quoting Voltaire: “*I disagree sharply with your opinion, but will defend your right to voice your opinion with my life.*”

The dynamic of Masonic fellowship, as I see it, transcends an agenda or differences of opinion. It restrains a man from imposing his own personal views upon another as a condition for common action. Our union of the hearts is an adequate base for any communication, whether it is a Lodge meeting or a Grand Lodge Communication. Whatever Freemasonry hopes to accomplish in the world must first come to pass in the spirit of individual Freemasons. No Grand Lodge can promote understanding and unity if these qualities are not operative in its constituent Lodges. Modesty, Brotherly Love, willingness to cooperate, and an unremitting devotion to Masonic ideals will win. This, however, requires, building up and cultivating that *Greatness Within* us, so peculiar for the votaries of our Order, who call themselves the Sons of Light. To labor to keep alive in our heart that little spark of celestial fire called conscience, and never waver from the purpose, we must be “aggressively active”, or name it “militant” if you please, because throughout our lives we are involved in a competitive system, providing due consideration is given to others and the moral laws be obeyed. None should be discouraged, but pray, plan and permit each of us to *rededicate* ourselves to the Greatness Within our Order. Masonic history very clearly proves that this Greatness within our organization does exist if we remain active, progressive, determined and properly use our working tools, never deviate from our obligation and use an overdose of enthusiasm. All duly obligated Masons are participants in this competitive system. We adhere to it with time and effort, also money -, and the *Dedication and Re-dedication* of ourselves. Our goal is not power and authority, certainly not ranks or titles.

Let’s roll up our sleeves and go to work, some of us silent and contemplative, or aggressively active. The giving of ourselves is probably the greatest of all, as it results in the exemplification of our most valuable tenets: Friendship, Relief and Truth toward all mankind. We cannot, and do not want, to change the world, but we can make it more human with an unpretentious unity concerned with those mutually acceptable precepts by which we desire to live together. *Our* minimum canon in compliance with this *Re-dedication* is based on the occidental order to do what is humanly right, in order to protect human rights. One might easily say this sounds “*reactionary*”. I have no fear of everyday catchwords, because this order to which I refer, in fact expresses nothing more,

than a development based on the intellectual heritage from antiquity and the Christian religion.

Worshipful Master and Brethren all;

We shall always consider the members of this good Lodge as our friends and Brothers, as we have learned it in the Trowel lecture. May every Brother, whom we have met or thought of this day, feel our steadfast affection. May we receive Freemasonry's gift with thanksgiving and never forget for what purpose they are given.

We know you and your Officers and all Lodge members will exemplify these qualifications. We thank you for the challenge of this place, and as we leave it, may we go to our various stations and places with a deeper sense of dedication, that we might share with others that, what we found here: the Brotherly Love which fills our hearts; the Solidarity which molds our lives; and the drive which makes us act. May we become more *Re-dedicated* citizens of worldwide Freemasonry and at last see the dawning of a world of a Brotherhood of Men in the words of the great King Solomon as he *Re-dedicated* the Temple, the final sentence of his prayer:

“That Thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even for the place of which Thou hast said, Thy name shall be there, and Thy name is here! Amen!”

*/s/Hugo Thomas (Dr.) Hugo Thomas
Grand Senior Warden
American Canadian Land Grand Lodge*

Reunion and Re-obligation

(Presented on 30 April 1975 at "Cornerstone" Lodge No. 836)

Worshipful Master of this honorable and well governed Cornerstone Lodge No. 836 and Brethren all:

I greet you well and I am very proud to bring you fraternal greetings from our Land Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Gunther Gall, from the Grand Master of the United Grand Lodges of Germany, Most Worshipful Brother Friedrich Heller and his Deputy, and certainly from all elected and appointed American Canadian Grand Lodge Officers.

For your fraternal invitation and your warm reception I am most grateful, and I offer you my sincere appreciation for the pleasant sentiments with which it abounds. As grateful as I am for the confidence reposed in me by your dynamic Master of the Lodge, Worshipful Brother Clyde Goodbread, of formulating a keynote address, suitable on this auspicious and memorable occasion of your "*Reunion and Reobligation Night*", I can only hope this presentation will be meaningful to so distinguished an audience, and can do sufficient justice to the dignity of this day of joy and Light.

On the volumes of a Masonic life these bright words are written, from which on every side blazes an ineffable splendor: *duty and work, relief and Brotherly Love, truth and faith.*

It is frequently said, that the purpose of Freemasonry is to take good men by the hand and to make them better, which we all subscribe, but in doing so, Masons have an even nobler goal, they strive for greater achievements. Our Masonic spirit must be transformed into an acting center of Light, whose rays or emanations pervade both, the Universe and this world. For that is the Light for which all Masonic journeys are a search; in which we see the true meaning of the necessity of recovering the world. We are all duly prepared to fulfill our mission by the mode of preparation and tests of purification in the various Degrees. Each of us has made at least three declarations of a most serious and solemn nature in the process of becoming a Master Mason, and kneeling at the Altar each has assumed and subsequently re-affirmed in a most dramatic ceremony, a vow of broad and binding nature. Each of us has enjoyed the expressed confidence of all who considered our qualifications for membership, and found worthy in having and receiving Light, more Light, further Light.

The word *Light* as Masons understand it is the center of our philosophy. It signifies understanding, guidance, and help in time of trouble, Faithfulness and education. "*Let there be Light*" is our daily password as Initiates, as Fellows of the Craft and as Master Masons." "*Let there be Light*" is the interpretation and exemplification of the theme of the year of our Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Gunter Gall: "*Let us think, act and speak as Freemasons*".

Ordinary light scatters in all directions, each particle going its own way. In another form of light, the Laser light, the particles work together, thus giving

them the power of united effort. This light, with the ability to cut through metal, is called *coherent light*.

My Brethren: Are we allowing the light that is within us to really manifest as coherent light or is it dissipating as ordinary light? Freemasonry at least teaches us, how to use and exemplify that inner light. How we use it, is the choice of the individual. A dictionary's definition of coherent is: "*logically consistent*". If we make our lives logically consistent with the Truth we know, consistent with the Light that has been conferred upon or communicated to us, we can make the Light within us coherent. If we think unkindly about a neighbor, part of our light is obscured under such thought and its power is reduced. When we see a need and fail to respond to it, the light is dimmed more. Careless speech brings more darkness. When all our thoughts and actions are accurately corrected and adjusted by the Square of virtue and wisdom, by the plumb of Justice and love, and by the Level of humility, our light is coherent, which will overcome all obstacles in its path. To be coherent, logically consistent, all that we think, say and do, must be in perfect harmony with the will of God. Only Brotherly Love can be expressed through and by us: unworthy thoughts and passions must be dismissed and subdued, not dwelt on, or entertained.

We cannot serve two masters. The attempt to do so dissipates the light and power within us. Let's make our decision now and rededicate and re-enlist ourselves to serve Freemasonry with freedom, fervency and zeal, as we have learned it in the Entered Apprentice lecture.

Thoughts are the parents of deeds. We are generally careful about our actions and sometimes too careless about our thoughts. How to live is a problem each of us must solve: shortly, *let your moral life be right and all will be well*. How? Man cannot work without tools. In material or operative building as well as in moral or speculative building, one of the most important tools is the *Square*. The instrument called the Square in operative building has its counterpart in moral building, in the faculty called the *Conscience*. As the Square is applied by the operative to his work, so are we to apply our conscience to our work of life-building. In this sense we remain Apprentices throughout our whole life. In the Lodge we are directed for Light to what are called "*The Three Great Lights and the Three Lesser Lights*": they are briefly, Revelation and Creation. Through these, every Brother receives the light to guide him in his work as a Mason and builder of the Temple. Through them the Eternal Spirit communicates with the spirit of man. Creation is a loving nurse to the mind of man. At every turn it invites his latent faculties into action.

We remain first of all Apprentices when we clothe ourselves with the "*badge of a Mason*", a symbol of innocence and purity; for innocence is a shield to virtue, and purity disarms temptation. With our *Gauge* we measure our time to the respective duties of life, giving to each it's due time and attention. Our Gavel enables us to reduce the irregularities of pride, passion and prejudice within our heart, so that we may become like unto a *Perfect Ashlar*.

We are always Apprentices and taught to serve, *working freely*, to the great plan of the Divine Architect, burning with the fervency that overcomes all difficulties, and *zealously* producing from the seeds of TRUTH imparted to us in

every Degree, fruitful works of CHARITY. BROTHERLY LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP.

As Apprentices we are not satisfied with faith and belief only. As we mature in Masonry we seek the light of knowledge, education and experience. Then we pass on the light of knowledge, education and experience. Then we pass on the degrees of Craftsman, and pressing onward, the Craftsman is "*raised*" to the Lodge of the Master. But we still remain Apprentices, particularly when we are to square our actions in accordance with the dictates of our *Conscience*, when we apply the *Level* of humility to our heart and build on the everlasting rock of *Truth*, and consistently test our life-work by the *Plumb Line* of uprightness.

Let us gratefully acknowledge we are permanently apprenticed. And let us never neglect nor defer to adorn ourselves with an *attentive ear* that gathers in the treasures of wisdom and experience; with a "*silent tongue*", that preserves peace and commands respect, and with a "*faithful breast*", that loves truth and lives true.

Our wages as Master Masons cannot be measured by any standard by which the value of intrinsic things is measured. They are *not* paid in silver or gold, in ranks or titles, save that most noble rank; "*my Brother*". Our books, therefore, are balanced in heaven and our wages are measured only by the value placed upon us by the one who has received them. This requires a spiritual motivation, or faith. But faith is not mere belief, faith is action, acting on the fundamentals of what we believe is right, and faith without work is dead.

Our Lodges are not something separate and distinct from their individual members. The Brothers *are* the Lodge. These Lodges are not a machine which can be started, aimed into a certain direction, and then ignored. They must be perpetually motivated through more Light *from* Masonry. I am convinced that all the Brethren fully realize the extent to which their individual and combined efforts and activities, affect the image and reputation of all Lodges within which they operate and work. We as *individuals* are Freemasonry. What we individually and jointly accomplish, determines the extent to which the great teachings of our Masonic heritage will be put into practice. Every concerted effort or combined action we perform, no matter how significant in itself adds to the stability of each constituent Lodge in this Jurisdiction, because such united efforts are required to absorb mutual understanding and respect, and the ability to learn from everyone.

Then we shall attain and exemplify that noble goal so eloquently expressed in the Theme of the year of our Land Grand Master: "*Let us think, act and speak as Masons*".

Let us take the positive attitude that seeks to know and serve all members. Let's appreciate the social and educational value of Freemasonry, and the tremendous potential of our idle legions. Let us re-enlist them, re-involve them, reactivate them. We can close the gap between promises and performance, if we will. To do so will serve the interest of our Fraternity, the needs of our communities, and the teachings of our ancient Grand Master and his successors in the Oriental Chair!

My Brother: we shall ever pledge our sincere support to your respective Lodges in the spirit, so eloquently expressed by Brother Edwin Markham:

"There is a destiny that makes us Brothers; none goes his way alone, all that we send into the lives of others, conies back into our own"

In this spirit let us now resume our labors according to the designs laid down upon the Trestle board....

/s/Hugo Thomas (Dr.) Hugo Thomas
Deputy Grand Master
American Canadian Land Grand Lodge

More Light in Masonry

(Presented at the District (7 & 8) Meeting on 28 June 1975 in Schweinfurt)

“As pilgrims, each Brother moves across the sands of time;
And gently GOD each one removes unto that Land sublime.”

Right Worshipful Brother Jess Minton, Very Worshipful Brothers Bob Everett and Alva Reed (District Masters of the 7th and 8th Masonic Districts),
Worshipful Masters, Past Masters, Wardens, Officers, Brethren All:

I greet you well . . . Brothers of:

Truth and Friendship Lodge No. 828 Bamberg Acacia Lodge No. 832
Cornerstone Lodge No. 836 Pyramid Lodge No. 869 Freedom Lodge No.
873 More Light Lodge No. 874 Spessart Lodge No. 875 Hands Across
The Main Lodge No. 879 North Sea Armed Forces Lodge No. 829 (in
absentia)

I am happy and highly honored to bring you the warmest fraternal greetings from our Grand Master of the American Canadian Grand Lodge, Right Worshipful Brother Gunther Gall. Due to his urgent commitments in conducting other

Masonic Communications, I am privileged to represent him at this combined District Meeting of the 7th and 8th Masonic Districts. This is the proper time and place to express my sincere appreciation for your kind invitation and to conduct our labors in the spirit of our Grand Master's Theme of the Year:

“Let us think, act and speak Masonically”.

The District Masters have chosen a striking theme for this District Meeting:

“More Light in Masonry”.

A meeting? Yes! And I personally classify these meetings as Masonic workshops of utmost educational significance.

One great peculiarity about Freemasonry is that it will stand investigation; the deeper the research, the more extensive the knowledge of its hidden art and secret mysteries, the more highly it is appreciated. A man who merely takes his degrees in a listless, careless sort of manner, who remains a mere spectator at all lodge meetings and considers the customary refreshment at the close as the best part of the proceedings, may think that Masonry differs little from other societies. But the man who dives deeply into Masonic literature, takes a lively interest in every part of the ceremony, and learns the origin, meaning and moral bearings of its symbols, cannot possibly fall into such an error. To him Masonry has a refining and elevating influence not to be found in the ordinary run of societies. To bring his influence to bear on every member of the craft, and to

direct them to the systematic study of Freemasonry, should be the great aim of every true Mason who has the welfare of the Craft and his Brethren at heart.

Our Fraternity does not need to create a new structure for Masonic education. We have a well performed structure. It is sound and attractive, and even more; it is timeless in its style. Perhaps we shall have to confess that we have not been attentive to this as we should have been. We are sometimes so busy building additions, look outs, thereby neglecting the central edifice, but we should be aware of how basic it still is to Masonry. To every Brother the three degrees of Freemasonry are the fundamental structure of that spiritual house. They are the unified base of Masonic education; they are this Trinity of education and as such, cornerstones of our structure for enlightening our Brothers.

There are three things with which each Brother in his more serious and reflective moments knows himself to be concerned: GOD. MAN and DESTINY; our three degrees deal with these great concerns in the order given.

Every Degree in Freemasonry is a station on the road home; it is a challenge we must meet and an opportunity, and this opportunity is not an arrival, it is only another point of departure to a more noble and glorious goal, or name it destiny if you please. All of us, here below, are on certain bases, where neither rank nor titles are important; they might be in some instances, of certain value and some administrative necessity. *"The internal and not the external qualifications of a man are what Masonry regards."* Some of us are waiting for someone to bat us further; to some we must offer the ever present choice between indolence and initiative, but life's rules are fairer. In life there is an inner score board where every effort is credited to our record, and *"our records are balanced in Heaven"*. There is always one thing yet to do. Admonished to direct our steps through life by what we find in the *Volume of Sacred Law*, we come across this directive:

"Study to show thyself approved unto GOD? A workman that needs not to be ashamed. . . . (II Timothy 2:15)

"More Light in Masonry" . . . encompasses the whole spectrum of Masonic education; expressed Masonically: as duly obligated Fellows and Masters of the Craft we have indicated what we most desired . . . more and further Light, and we received all of it that can be conferred upon or communicated to us. And he who has the key, will interpret all according to the Light he possesses. In our constant search of Light in Masonry, we try to transmit the divine mysteries and symbols to those who are apprenticed, who passed the Middle Chamber and were finally found worthy to assemble in the unfinished Sanctum Sanctorum; to those who practice our most valuable tenets and who are not enslaved by empty trappings of words. We all agree, the wisdom of man is but the reflection and image of that of God. His wisdom caused the material world to be made real after his type, by His Logos, which is His Word, and His Word or Commandment was:

"Let there be Light!"

Our Masonic spirit must be transformed into an acting center of Light, whose rays pervade both, the Universe and this world. For that is the Light for which all Masonic journeys are in search; in which we see the deeper meaning of the three Degrees. We are all duly prepared to fulfill our mission by the mode of

preparation and tests of purification in the various Degrees to receive that Light we most desire, which engenders and is engendered only through *"More Light in Masonry"*, the theme of the year of Right Worshipful Brother Gordon Greenwood in 1971, and which primarily inculcated more Masonic education. But who is educated? An observing person will note that some who laboriously work their way through college, showing a diploma for their efforts and some outward signs of culture, lack general culture and show no real marks of education; others with an average education or less, apparently knowing less but reading and thinking more stand out as the more intelligent, the better balanced and the more really educated. One can readily conclude that the wisdom of the world is not always with the learned or so called educated; often it is found in the perceptive common sense of the man in the street. Literacy does not necessarily carry with it the ability to read. That man is educated who puts to the best use what he does know in reference to the particular environment of which he is a part. This is a fundamental aspect of education.

It is not illiteracy that is the greatest danger to our Fraternity, but it is the half literate, the people who can read but who do not think, who constitute the greater danger. Henry David Thoreau, America's famous poet and philosopher, expressed it well when he wrote: *"A man's ignorance sometimes is not only useful but beautiful while his knowledge is sometimes worse than useless besides being ugly". Which is the best man to deal with, he who knows nothing about a subject, and what is extremely rare, knows that he knows nothing, or he who really knows something about it, but he thinks he knows all? My desire for knowledge is intermittent, the highest we can attain to, is not knowledge but sympathy with intelligence."*

Solon (638-558 B.C.), one of the wisest statesmen of ancient Greece, confessed in one statement the final mark of an educated man: *"I grow old learning still."* It is another way of saying that education is a continuous learning process. After all, the truly educated are the self educated, a lifelong process that is never complete. We are accumulating knowledge at a prodigious rate. No one will ever know more than a very small fraction of the knowledge in existence today but he who would educate himself will want a sound of knowledge of as much of it as possible. An important part of this education will be to acquire the ability to discriminate, to contemplate, and to choose, to meditate and to think. This is the road to wisdom and understanding: *"Get knowledge, but with all thy getting, get understanding, get wisdom"*. Common sense indicates that some kinds of knowledge are more essential than others. He who believes to be educated, has his work laid out for him on life's trestleboard. The span of his life will be too short to graduate from the *"college of life"*.

The answer to the question of who is educated must always be a relative one, "I grow old learning still!" do we really recognize and live up to that particular short part of the charge *"that you will conform to the principles of the order, by steadily persevering in the practice of ever commendable virtue!"* A serious personal responsibility, a summons, a charge and I firmly believe all our Brothers, if found worthy, are always ready and willing to obey this summons, and we are reminded to assist them in this educational process, to stretch forth our hands, to whisper wise counsels.

Our individual attitude or reaction to personal responsibility and education is largely a matter of habit of thought and practice and the impact of our environment. If we tend to refuse to recognize or heed the call of responsibility, habit quickly takes over and enables us to be indifferent to our obligations. The result is, that we become irresponsible and our character is so known and identified. The actions, habits, character and destiny of each Brother are of deep concern to every other Mason. It is what each individual Mason truly is, that creates the genuine nature of what the Masonic Order really is, what it actually stands for, and what it will realistically achieve. Dr. William James (1842-1910), the "Galilei" among psychiatrists, stresses the personal consequence of our power of judging with the generally known summary: *"Sow an Action and you reap a Habit; sow a Habit and you reap a Character; sow a Character and you reap Destiny."*

Each individual's responsibility is as large as his ability, and for as long as he lives. He fails to meet his inherent obligation, if he moves to choose out on the one hand, or to retire out on the other.

The Will to believe, to work, act and part, outlines a principle which is especially applicable to the actions of Masons and to Freemasonry.

Responsibility is the obligation or Charge one is accountable for, and the fulfillment of which we must squarely accept. To respect this responsibility and educational process is to be mature; to implement and fulfill it, is to be a good Mason; and for each Brother to do more than his share, is to be noble.

These are the choices that time demands of all of us. This is the inherently involved concern of every Brother.

My Brethren . . ."to these duties you are bound by the most sacred ties."

/s/ Hugo Thomas
(Dr.) Hugo Thomas
Deputy Grand Master
American Canadian Grand Lodge

Judge With Candor... Admonish With Friendship

(Presented on 3 March 1977 at Pyramid Lodge No. 860)

My Brothers:

I thank you for your fraternal invitation, and I sincerely acknowledge the honor to communicate with you at this Masonic Education Night. One of the most pressing needs of Freemasonry today is the need for further light and more Masonic education within the Craft." Judge with candor, Admonish with friendship" is the topic of this Lodge of Instruction. Before we start this Communication, ask yourself some questions -just for a moment. Before you enter this Holy House of Light, ask yourself in your innermost heart; am I duly and truly prepared? If you will listen you may hear an inner voice saying: "It is a Brother desiring admission". Can you enter this unfinished Sanctum Sanctorum tonight as, indeed, a Brother?

Have you divested yourself of envy, jealousy, deceit, hypocrisy, intemperance, and put on the robe of Brotherly Love?

Can you stand before the Holy Altar, which recalls to your mind, memories of bygone days, and looking into the eyes of your Worshipful Master, extended a greeting to those about you; can you behold your Brother?

Can you enter the Lodge tonight with a desire not only to receive but to give?

Should you entertain a spirit of enmity in the slightest degree for a Brother in this Lodge, go on in. take the hand of that Brother in yours, talk it over with him in the Fraternal Spirit that you should, and watch the mists disappear and the sunlight of Masonic Brotherhood illuminate your heart and his.

Just try it. Brother. You will not be disappointed.

The noblest work of GOD is man, and the Ancient Landmarks of Freemasonry are His handiwork of man's highest nobility.

Unless, then, you claim to be a Mason, good and true, I beseech you to turn back and do not enter. But if your ambitions and aims are the high calling of the Brotherhood of Man, as taught throughout the ages by the Fraternity of Free masonry, and sanctified in nature and revelation by the approval of the Great Architect of the Universe.

"Enter here; for within, you will find that, Which you seek"

We readily admit the world is affected by Masonic ideals. From time immemorial. Masonry has stood for the highest ideals of civilization; and wherever Masonry has flourished, these ideals have come nearest to realization and the highest standards of living have been obtained. Wherever Masonry has been cast out, the standards of living have immediately gone down, civilization has deteriorated, and the freedom of the people abolished.

Don't expect perfection in a man just because he is a Mason. If you do, you will be disappointed. Masonry makes men better, but no human agency makes them perfect. If he is a Mason, you have a right to presume he is a fairly good man, but do not condemn Masonry, even if a few Masons turn out bad. Even the great Teacher himself had a Judas.

The aim and purpose of Masonry is to receive none but good men, keep them good, and make them better. Judge the Institution not by a few failures but by the average of its successes. The average is high and it consequently gives standards to its members, but it can not be an infallible guide.

In this world of ours we are confronted with our daily human shortcomings; even personality conflicts among Brothers are sometimes reported. This is deplorable, but Freemasonry has provided us with the antidote: our Masonic way of life, as outlined in the various lectures of the degrees, and its practical application in our daily conduct. But we must try hard.

No one succeeds at anything without really trying, and the Mason who keeps on "trying", e.g. attending Lodge regularly, observing, learning and accepting responsibilities, cannot help but succeed in becoming a better Mason, and consequently a better man in other contacts, such as at home, his work, his community, his Lodge.

Perhaps it is too easy to lose enthusiasm for Masonry, but if we do, there is nothing to take its place, many of us overlook the benefits and advantages we become accustomed to accept as Masons. Perhaps we don't know a good thing when we see it, as no other association among men has as much to offer as Masonry.

If you have lost or temporarily misplaced your old enthusiasm for Masonry and your Lodge, start today to recapture it, for your own benefit! When you are enthusiastic about Masonry and your Lodge, you will enjoy the work and the Brotherhood, and your Masonic Brothers will enjoy you, too.

How comforting it is to rely on the moral principles inculcated in our cardinal virtues.

Some authorities think of temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice only as moral principles, the use and value of which is Masonically taught. The consensus, however, is that they are symbolic in that their meanings can be extended beyond mere definitions. Thus, Temperance is usually taken to mean care in the use of stimulants. Masonically it means far more, just as it did to Socrates, hundreds of years before it was woven into Freemasonry. Temperance means caution in action, speech, thought, feeling, judgment, life and living.

Fortitude implies physical bravery, but masonically it means moral courage far more than physical.

Prudence is not only the selfish determination of "what is good for us" but the use of common sense, reason, logic, in meeting any problem.

Justice, a civic concept, is masonically allied with that without which it can not really exist, mercy. Justice is a strict interpretation of the law which is an expression of the greatest good to the greatest number. Mercy is actually a tampering with, as well as a tempering of justice, and implies, that in special cases, justice is insufficient. This moral dilemma of philosophy is not indicated ritualistically, but is implied by the fact that the cardinal virtues do have a symbolic as well as a moral meaning.

It should be objection sufficient to exclude any man from the society of Masons, that he is not disinterested and generous, both in his acts, and in his opinions of men and his constructions of their conduct.

He who is selfish and grasping, or censorious and ungenerous, will not long remain within the strict limits of honesty and truth, but will shortly commit injustice.

He who loves himself too much must need to love others too little; and he who habitually gives harsh judgment will not long delay to give unjust judgment.

He who is intemperate and abuses the required moderation in drinking alcohol of abusing other drugs, and then, through his necessarily loss of self discipline, brings discredit on a Lodge or the fraternity, subjects himself to Masonic trial, or cannot be found worthy and well qualified to become a Brother.

As Fellowcrafts we are charged to develop a new character, to change our own ego, if necessary. But character is a total. Character is like an acrostic, read it

forward, backwards or across, it spells the same thing. However, that what it spells can change, and does. It is never quite the same today as it was yesterday, or will be tomorrow. For character is a total. It is the sum of the thoughts you think, your habitual attitude toward people and events. Luckily, each of us has a chance to improve his score, this total.

No matter how slow a start you may have had in thinking constructively, in living purposefully, in being unselfish, in helping others, in consciously undertaking to be a better person, you can change your total dramatically. Your life is like an unfinished portrait. No matter how dissatisfied you may be with the picture, remember it is not yet finished. The brush is still in your hand.

Some 2,400 years ago, *Pericles* of Athens, who laid the philosophical cornerstone of Democracy admonished his people "Fix your eyes on greatness and character". We of this day must fix our eyes firmly at all times upon the essential ingredients of a dynamic fraternity. Only through a dynamic "Brotherhood in Action" can we make sure that we remain the master of our own and the world's destiny.

Remember that your brother can not be your enemy. While sometimes things may occur that will seem to pull you apart and the weeds of malice and hatred may try to take root in your heart, the cement of true Brotherhood is indestructible, for it is made of true brotherly love.

If you do not have that kind of love in your heart there is something definitely wrong with you and you should proceed to enlighten yourself as to the real fundamentals of true Brotherhood.

The question of Cain: "Am I my brother's keeper?" is a challenge and requires a Masonic answer: "I am my Brother's keeper." Facing responsibility as a Freemason is groundwork for a better life. Brothers who need brothers in daily life are the luckiest in the world.

Everything in Masonry tends to strengthen man in his duties to God and his fellowman, to fortify his will against temptation and evil, and to preserve his most precious jewels: Faith and Fidelity. Yet it is also graciously cognizant of the frailty of human nature and man's proneness to error.

Our life is a great and solemn dispensation. And this is a solid foundation and a Mason's daily challenge, to have Faith which is Wisdom, to implant Hope which is Strength, and to practice Charity which is Love. Only by raising our soul to its just elevation, we can comprehend the purpose of this earth.

According to the ethics of Freemasonry, it is made a duty, obligatory upon every member of the Order to conceal the faults of a brother, that is, not to blazon forth his errors and infirmities, to let them be learned by the world from some other tongue than his, and to admonish him of them in private.

So there is another but a like duty of obligation, which instructs him to whisper good counsel in his brother's ear and to warn him of approaching danger. And this refers not more to the danger that is without and around him than to that which is within him; not more to the peril that springs from the concealed foe who would way; lay him and covertly injure him, than to that deeper peril of those faults and infirmities which lie within his own heart, and which, if not timely crushed by good and earnest resolution of amendment, will, like the ungrateful serpent in the fable, becomes warm with life only to sting that bosom that has nourished them.

Admonition of a brother's fault is, then, the duty of every Mason, and no true one will, for either fear or favor, neglect his performance. But as the duty is Masonic, so is there a Masonic way in which that duty should be discharged. We must admonish not with self sufficient pride in our own reputed goodness, not in imperious tones, as though we looked down in scorn upon the degraded offender, not in language, that by its harshness, will wound rather than win, will irritate more than it will reform; but with persuasive gentleness that gains the heart, with the all subduing influences of "mercy unrestrained", with the magic might of love, with the language and the accents of affection, which mingle grave displeasure for the offense with grief and pity for the offender.

This and this alone, is Masonic admonition. I am not to rebuke my brother in anger, for I too have my faults, and I dare not draw around me the folds of my garment lest they should be polluted by my neighbor's touch; but I am to admonish in private, not before the world, for that would degrade him; and I am to warn him perhaps from my own example, how vice ever should be followed by sorrow, for that goodly sorrow leads to repentance, and repentance to amendment and amendment to joy.

/s/ Hugo Thomas
(Dr.) Hugo Thomas
Grand Master
American Canadian Grand Lodge

Equal Rights and Opportunities

(Presented at the "Galilei" Lodge No. 810A on 29th August 1977)

My Brothers

It is a single honor and real pleasure for me to be invited to actively participate in this Masonic education night, in a Lodge, where Masonic Light of our American Canadian Grand Lodge illuminated the pathway of the craftsmen first, and thus becoming a light-tower for all 42 constituent Lodges in the following years. It is knowledgeable pride in this Lodge and the willingness to come to its assistance wherever the necessity might require it.

In recent weeks I have reviewed my thoughts to determine where increased emphasis be placed during this communication to deal with problems of the day. As a result, I have concluded that our principal concern should be directed to carry on the sound and profound admonition:

"Masonic obligations inculcate equal rights and opportunities"

Word fashions come and they go. Slogans are widely used to put across a point, to convey an idea, sometimes to cause a thought. Most of these have political or commercial origins and are used to promote an individual's interest or to sell the public some bill of goods offered by a business. Even Freemasonry is not immune from modern sloganeering. Change has become a fetish, the *in* thing, the thing to do; some advocate a special Masonic image. And even such a serious topic as *"the future of Freemasonry"* carries the implication of change and we are in grave danger of being coerced into sweeping changes purely as a sign of the times.

"Equal Rights", *"human rights"* are further re-modernized slogans; too self-evident to speculative Masons to react ostentatious about their practical application or to proclaim them from the housetops. Yet the challenge becomes apparent, a challenge toward off approaching danger due to misinterpretation.

Webster's definition for *"obligation"* is synonymous with duty, responsibility, vow and accountability; and *"opportunity"* inculcates convenience, occasion, season; an opportunity is a conjunction of possible, with probability of success, advantage or gratification.

And *"equal"* classifies: of the same degree with another or with each other, as in magnitude or value, neither greater nor less; having the same rank, rights or importance; meeting on the level, uniform in operation under equal laws – What more can I say?

The needs of modern living encroach upon both our personal and public lives with ever increasing demands, with multiple activities competing for every available moment. Unfortunately, it is often Freemasonry which suffers and does not receive the attention it merits in this competitive situation. Freemasonry is heir to a great legacy but we must always remember that an

institution is only as strong as its foundation, a chain as strong as its weakest link.

We want to select only those promising strong links forging the mighty edifice as strong today as in times past. The structure's foundation must remain as firm as it once was. Each and every Mason must look in his heart for the answer. Our contribution to mankind down through the centuries has been significant, whether it be in the fields of government, education, literature, medicine, music or almost any other area we would name. This is not because of any direct involvement, for such would be contrary to our high principles, but rather is the result of individuals practicing Masonic precepts in their daily lives. The precepts and teachings of our Order in seeking tolerance and personal liberty for all and a desire to be better men and citizens have been instrumental in the formation of our free nations, where "common obligations inculcate equal rights and opportunities".

I do not construe this as indicating that we should shun all change, or that we should cease our efforts to constantly seek improvement. But I do believe that we should abandon no standards until we are morally certain that we have replaced them with better and more effective ones, and I pray the basic facets of Masonry will always escape the ravages of changing times.

In opening this section of my presentation you may have noticed I began by thanking our Creator. For I am aware that had it not been for His greatness and goodness, and the prayers you offered upon my request, I would not be able to deliver to you in person this topic today...

It has been said that out of pain and suffering the souls of men are rewarded with a greater understanding of the true value of things. And I am fully aware that it was Another's spirit that guided your prayers that affected my thoughts which I offer you for consideration, meditation and contemplation. Yesterday has passed; with the yesterdays and today behind us, we must now look ahead to many trying tomorrows. Experience and increased results should be our goal for every tomorrow.

An institution comes into being because it has something of great value to contribute to society. It exists as long as it adheres to its original design and continues to make its influence for good felt in society. It has always been the work of Masonry to keep before the world those lofty teachings which give meaning to life, which reflect the divine nature of man, and which give dignity and worth to the individual, in equal proportion. Freemasonry was never intended for the masses we are a selected and receptive group of equals. It is an institution with nothing to sell to the general public, no public welfare.

Each man who desires admittance comes of his own free will, promoted by a favorable opinion conceived of the institution, and uninfluenced by mercenary motives. And we ask for nothing but to let us continue in our time-honored and proven ways to go about our business quietly, and to do our good works: to belong, to measure up, to be accepted in the company of one's peers; to know, that what they are doing is just, right and true; to be a part of a great institution whose precepts have been tested by the fires of times, while practicing equal rights and opportunities for centuries.

We are proud, that in all of history. Freemasonry has never broken with its past; never spilled one drop of blood for opinions' sake; which, in spite of its latent power, has never dominated or controlled anything by block voting; whose adherents are secure in the knowledge, that happiness is not complete unless it is shared, to share and pass on those great eternal truths that he has discovered.

Let us pray to God that it is His will that our Order stands upright as it was since time immemorial. And having prayed let us muster our numbers and all other Masonic organizations and put our combined good resolves into meaningful action.

Benjamin Franklin said: "We gave you a republic, if you can keep it". I paraphrase his statement Masonically: We gave you your working tools, keep and use them wisely, ever remembering, our common obligations inculcate equal rights and opportunities. When we pledge allegiance to Freemasonry, we are really demonstrating the spirit of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth in the spirit of the Three Great Lights. Only a symbol or a slogan? Not so: but rather the visible sign of the power to nurture and sustain our invisible Mystic Tie; they are the Charter of our spiritual liberty, our reverence to the Grand Lodge empowering us to bring men to Light, who would have otherwise remained in perpetual darkness; to make this world a land of the free and the home of the brave, with integrity, pride, hope, love of God. That is our Masonic equal right and daily opportunity. George Washington expressed it all too well in his farewell address: "The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts; of common dangers, sufferings and success. Every portion of our country, and of our order -, finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving this union of the whole".

The Craft does not pretend to take a man any man and make him good. Rather its purpose is to take a good man and try to make him better. In so doing, the result cannot help but benefit society as a whole. For that reason, Freemasonry is, and should be, exclusive in nature. Only those found to be worthy of the honor should be admitted. To be a member of the Order is a privilege, not a right, and should be ever so.

There is no substitute for quality, with or without equal opportunities. In the Book of Ecclesiastes, we read that there is a time for all things. Freemasonry is more than Just an organization. It is a state of mind, and as such, it is timeless. Freemasonry is indeed in the pursuit of further Light "a time for all seasons".

Truly, to comply with these demands means a revolution in our way of life and thinking. Does not this mean a privilege! And the greater the privilege the more important is the responsibility. Governments and their institutions can legislate against poverty or discrimination, - racial or otherwise; a Mason's task is improvement and tolerance. We reach refinement through endurance; perfection is God's work.

I, therefore, protest those who campaign and petition and parade for individual rights but have no tolerance for the rights of those who oppose them. I protest those who profess to champion peace and equal rights, but resort to terror and violence.

I protest broadcast commentators and journalists who feed the flame of fear by allowing rumors, guesses, speculation and conjecture to masquerade as facts. In

short: I protest those groups and individuals who champion any system at variance with the basic concept of equal rights and opportunities.

The symbolic Sword pointing to the Naked Heart illustrates that justice will sooner or later overtake us, and although our thoughts, words and actions may be hidden from the eyes of men, yet - these are our equal rights and opportunities.

Finally, my Brothers: I believe, that Masonry can not continue to live, only because of the esteemed place which it has held in bygone days, but must gain new life by virtue of its contribution to the present generation and the plans it makes for the next.

I further believe, that the opportunity for putting into practice Masonic teachings has never been greater and that telling the world what we have done is not nearly as important as promoting excellence of purpose in a revolutionary world that needs our guidelines for stability.

And I further believe, that true men will continue to make application to our Fraternity, if traditional Masonic philosophy, based on belief in God, Country and the Brotherhood of Man, is made visible in the lives of all our Brothers.

There is one supreme victory for each Mason. It is the satisfaction which he must feel, when he has taken the message of the obligations to his heart, when he banishes all evil from his life, when he is free of guile and jealousy and when he recognizes in his Brothers men who are striving, as he is, to faithfully discharge their duties to God, to country and to all mankind within the length of their Cable-Tow.

May God continue to bless our Masonic obligations and vouchsafe the equal rights and opportunities contained therein.

(Dr.) Hugo Thomas
Past Grand Master
American Canadian Grand Lodge

Masonic Jurisprudence

(Presented at the District Workshop of the 1st and 5th District)

Distinguished Grand Lodge Officers; Worshipful Sirs, my Brothers:

Permit me to express my deep appreciation to Very Worshipful Brother Gunter Furst for his kind invitation to actively participate in the District Workshop for the privilege accorded me to present a paper on this special subject of;

Masonic Jurisprudence

particularly what constitutes a Masonic offense and certain Masonic penalties?

I admire the confidence of the District Master of the 1st Masonic District he reposed when he assigned this task to me, the most obvious perhaps being my preference to invest my abilities and my knowledge in the medical field rather than in judicial endeavors. None, however, should take this statement verbatim: I am deeply convinced of the necessity of Masonic laws and a strict adherence to them; I am too familiar with our laws to appreciate their main purpose, to preserve that general uniformity of character and design which constitutes the true universality of our Institution. And they are equally important for the prosperity of the Order, and for its capacity of keeping up with the progress of the age. At this time, I will not even attempt to compete with many brilliant Masonic scholars on Masonic Jurisprudence: *Albert G. Mackey; Louis B. Blakemore; J. Edward Allen; Sir William Blackstone; Robert Ingham Clegg*, to name but a few "stars". But it is their spirit which motivated me to present this paper.

First, let me offer you some general remarks. Every Master Mason is obligated to abide by the laws, resolutions, edicts and decrees of his Grand Lodge, the By-laws of his lodge of which he is a member, and to uphold, maintain and support the ancient usage's and customs of the Craft. It is impossible to abide by any laws if we do not know what they are. In a foreign jurisdiction a Mason is amenable to its laws, as well as those of his own jurisdiction. In this duality of allegiance Masonry follows the civil law; thus, an American residing abroad is amenable to the laws of the nation in which he lives, but is also expected to obey the laws of his own nation. Neither is a Mason from Texas exempt from the laws of the Grand Lodge of that state merely because he happens to be sojourning in Massachusetts or Germany.

The laws of Masonry, like the laws of nations, are both unwritten as "common law" and written law. And the foundations of Masonic Law are to be found in the "*Ancient Landmarks*" or unwritten law and in the "*Ancient Charges*" or "*General Regulations*", the written law.

Some brief comments:

The "*Ancient Landmarks*" are thus stated to be those foundations of the laws of Masonry which are not subject to change and consist of the laws, usages and

customs which have existed since the time when the memory of man runneth not to the contrary. Had the Grand Lodge which first adopted the "Ancient Landmarks" provided more definitive explanations it would have saved much trouble and confusion for those newer Grand Lodges which came later. Apparently, however, they were so well understood and practiced then, that it was not thought necessary to codify them. The Landmarks Mackey lists 25 have been reduced to print and made a part of the written law in many jurisdictions. Nothing can be subtracted from them or added to them, and we are bound by the most solemn obligation of duty to transmit them to our successors.

The code of the "General Regulations" as set forth in Anderson's Constitution of 1723 and adopted shortly after the formation in 1717 of the First or Mother Grand Lodge in England, is considered as the universal written law of Freemasonry. Together with the Landmarks they constitute the foundation on which the whole superstructure of Masonic law is erected, and make the science of Masonic law. It is unnecessary to itemize these General Regulations, i.e. the Old York Constitutions of 926, the Constitution of King Edward III of 1327, the four Regulations of 1663 until 1720, and finally the General Regulations of 1723. In general it may be said that the Ancient Landmarks are concerned with the individual brother and his Lodge and his brethren; the General Regulations with the conduct of the Craft as a whole. The latter permit their own alteration by Grand Lodge, - the Ancient Landmarks do not. It is, therefore, of real importance that Masons desiring to understand the laws by which the Craft is governed and the legal standards by which Grand Lodge measures its laws, resolutions and edicts, should study both; and the Grand Lodge has an inherent power and authority to make new regulations, or to alter these, for the real benefit of our ancient Fraternity, provided always that the Ancient Landmarks be carefully preserved.

The Ancient Landmarks and the General Regulations may be regarded as bearing the same relation to Masonic law as the provisions of the Magna Charta bear to modern constitutional laws. Just as the Magna Charta specified some of the inherent rights of men which all laws of all governments should consider and respect, so the Landmarks crystallize in words the inherent characteristics of Masonry those fundamentals which make Freemasonry, and without which it would be something else.

I will now omit to commence a treatise on the subjects that relate to the qualifications of candidates, their method of application and admission, or rejection. Symbolic Freemasonry recognizes nothing beyond the degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, Master Mason and Past Master; according to the progress they have made, they acquire certain rights and prerogatives; and according to their obligations specific duties devolve upon them as individuals. These applicable laws, including the nature and prerogatives of constituent Lodges or the Grand Lodge, as their representative capacity will not be the subject matter of this presentation.

Law in Masonry is so much more a matter of the heart than of the head, so much more concerned with setting forth conduct than in assessing penalties that to thoroughly comprehend it, we must be willing to revise our ideas of law as we understand the enactment of legislatures.

It is peculiar to the subject which is now about to be treated, that the division of wrongs in the profane world is not admissible in, or applicable to the system of Masonic jurisprudence. In Freemasonry, every *offense* is a crime, because in every violation of a Masonic law, there is not only sometimes an infringement of the rights of an individual, but always, super induced upon this, a break and violation of public rights and duties which affect the whole community of the Order; and this is the very definition of a crime. It is a settled axiom of Masonic law, that every offense which a Freemason commits is an injury to the whole Fraternity, if in nothing else, at least in this, that the bad conduct of a single member, or a lodge reflects discredit on the whole institution. The discredit and shame, therefore, that is brought upon the Institution by the misdeeds of its members, is an important element to be considered in the consideration of every Masonic offense. That is to say - that all private wrongs to an individual are public wrongs to the Order. There is a division of Masonic offences which is well worthy of notice. You will find them listed, together with all other matters of Masonic jurisprudence, in Section 4:00, Code, American Canadian Grand Lodge. Worshipful Masters! "*Cause it to be read in your Lodge, that none may pretend ignorance of the excellent precepts it enjoins*".

Let me briefly reflect on just a few of them cruelty to one's inferiors and dependents, un-charitableness to the poor and needy, and a general misanthropical neglect of our duty as men to our fellow beings, exhibiting itself in extreme selfishness and indifference to the comfort or happiness of all others, are offenses against the moral law. And therefore Masonic crimes; injustice in every form in which one man can do wrong to another is a Masonic offense; - disobedience and want of respect to Masonic superiors, and the bringing of private piques or quarrels into the Lodge are justly considered Masonic offenses; a want of courtesy and kindness to the brethren, speaking callously of one behind his back, or in any other way attempt to injure or slander him, is each a *serious* violation of the precepts of Freemasonry, and an offense.

Loyalty is an essential qualification in Freemasonry and only those who cheerfully conform to every lawful authority are accepted. Disloyalty in any form is regarded as a serious Masonic *offense*. To be loyal is to be faithful to one's obligations, to be faithful to our leaders, and show faithfulness to obligations. Let us give a little thought to one's obligations; not only to friends but also to the solemn obligation you and I took while we knelt at the Altar. Perhaps, it would be well for us to do a little reviewing of these obligations, especially the phrase "I will speak no evil", or "I will not wrong, cheat or defraud". Have you ever had the heartache of some unkind person speaking evil of you just for spite, jealousy, or perhaps just to irritate you? This type of person is not loyal to God, his home, or even to himself. When we find it necessary to speak of another person it would be wise for us first to put ourselves in that persons place and then ask ourselves if those words were or are kind: Are we being loyal to our obligations? Be faithful and loyal to your convictions. The chief glory in the crown of manhood is loyalty. Take a tip and *be* loyal. Everyone knows how to express a *complaint*, but few can utter a graceful compliment. It's a matter of practice. *If everyone sweeps up his own front door the whole world will be clean.*

I could go on and on - it is sufficient to say that whatever is a violation of fidelity to solemn engagements, a neglect of prescribed duties, or a transgression of the cardinal principles of friendship, morality and brotherly love, is a Masonic offense, and renders the offender liable to Masonic punishment.

In this context I must, however, bring to your attention, that it is *not* a Masonic offense for a brother *not to* attend lodge or to *obey a summons "health and business permitting"*. In every lodge everywhere, there are members who remain inactive except for remitting their dues payments. This appears, on the surface at least, to be inconsistent with that dynamism one would expect from a member of our fraternity; the facts are that some members, for better or worse, actually appear to remain passive in their Masonic activities. These Brothers are as vital to the well being of Craft Masonry as those who devote many hours to the work of the lodge. We must never lose sight that without the financial basis to operate derived principally from dues and fees, very few lodges could maintain a viable program, or even provide the "setting" for the active members to conduct their affairs. In this sense, it is not necessarily derogatory to be termed a "card-carrying-Mason" if by that term the implication is conveyed that the brother concerned is in good standing and is supporting the lodge by his regular dues payments. So the simple fact a brother may be inactive, while very unfortunate indeed, cannot automatically place the brother in a disparaging light. He is just as much a Mason as the brother who attends regularly, votes, and holds office; he is just a different type of Mason. Some Masons are more motivated than others; some love ritual and instruction, some love administrative work, some just enjoy sitting on the sidelines and watching others perform, and some even enjoy participating so long as they can criticize. To each his own. Masonry has something for everyone. And there are brothers who remain very active for a period of time, and then, for some reason best known to themselves, simply display what appears to be a lack of further interest by not attending or participating in the lodge's affairs. What happens to cause these brothers to retire from active attendance or for not obeying a summons I cannot say, but I accept it in good faith. Were we to question the motivation of every member, and attempt to determine for ourselves just what constitutes an "acceptable" response to such summons, we would not be recognizing the fact that every member is the best judge, whether we personally think so or not is irrelevant, as to the proper allocation of his time in accord with our Masonic teachings. Only a brother can best determine what constitutes "business" for him, and how his time should best be allocated to attend to such business. Remember always that the term "health and business permitting" is not restrictive to one's personal commercial endeavors, but applies to anything a brother rightfully considers as his business. Domestic affairs and duties are in this category, and blessed is the man that remains home to preserve his domestic tranquility if his family cannot or will not put up with his absence at lodge. Unfortunate, but it must be respected. In short, we must endeavor always to respect a brother's excuse, whether we consider it to be valid, acceptable, or anywhere below that evaluation. We may not like it, but we are dealing with mature human beings and Brothers who received the same light as you and I did, and fortunately they are eminently human. Education is the only answer here. After all, in Masonry we are constantly dealing with Brothers, good, upright men with their own human traits and inclinations. Masonry does not have the authority to mobilize its members simply by issuing orders or expecting them to obey commands. We do not think in military categories! Our only real source of

control over our membership is that exerted in the form of the Mystic Tie, that mysterious force which enables us to respond immediately because that force does not exist and causes us to respond, to acknowledge our duties, and to view Masonry in that favorable light which has enabled it to expect such response from its members, but always voluntarily!! Motivate the Brother concerned; pay him a personal visit to attempt to get the answer. Each man's answer is to him, personally valid. We can only change men's views or opinions by understanding this vital fact. A man's excuse is personally valid, until he can be convinced by himself, that the excuse is not valid. Do not force a Brother against the wall, respect his answer first, and then attempt to make him see things your way, but give him the genuine respect he should enjoy as a brother, whether you think he deserves it or not. Summing up this issue into one sentence, "Do ye unto others, as ye would have others do unto you!" You just cannot beat the Great Light when it comes to wisdom in brief.

Many civil laws are provided with measures of enforcement and penalties for infringement. Masonic law in this jurisdiction knows but three penalties: *reprimand, definite and indefinite suspension and expulsion or Masonic death*; to these other Jurisdictions have added *censure and exclusion*. These Masonic penalties for serious infractions of Masonic law may be ordered after a Masonic trial and a verdict of guilty, but the punishment is usually made to fit the crime, and mercy is much more a part of Masonic than of civil law. Infractions of Masonic law resulting in trial and punishment are rare, compared to the number of Masons, the vast majority of whom are so willing and anxious to obey the laws that "enforcement" is seldom required. But this requires basic mental qualifications.

I suggest to consider carefully the fact that while a man is born with some qualifications, there are many which he can acquire for himself; he can qualify himself by deciding to do it, by will, determination and practice, by patiently learning this great and ancient art of Freemasonry, permitting himself never to be discouraged by either time or difficulty. Our goal is: *to make men better*. Of all descriptions pertaining to Masons these are the most applicable prerequisites for mental qualifications: good character and to be free born. *Good character* connotes being honest and truthful, devout and charitable, thoughtful, loyal and respectful of others and of oneself. Moral concepts and moral behavior must be learned, molded at an early age through adulthood, with training and self-discipline; and then become a way of life just as Masonry is a way of life. It is, therefore, inappropriate for a Mason to sponsor a man for membership in our Order merely because he knows of nothing against him. He should know him well enough to know his philosophy of life, his good character. And we still number among membership qualifications the requirement to be *free born*. But, how else could we be born, since today we have neither slavery nor serfdom? Our Order requires that a man be free born in every sense of the word, wholly answerable to himself, not under obligation to give an account of himself to others, nor required to divulge to relatives or to business, political or religious superiors every thing he does. Otherwise it is impossible for him to keep his Masonic obligations. The Investigating Committee is our first line of defense. Let it be vigilant and alert and successfully resist all attempts to relax our traditional moral standards, or the consequences may be fatal to the Lodge and the Brother concerned.

You will note, among the Masonic penalties is not noted the "*Admonition*", although I'm tempted to briefly comment on it. According to the ethics of Freemasonry, it is made a duty obligatory upon *every* member of the Order to conceal the faults of a brother, that is, not to blazon forth his errors and infirmities, to let them learned by the world from some other tongue than his own, and to admonish him of them in private; to whisper wise counsel in his brother's ears and to warn him of approaching danger. And this refers not more to the danger that is without and around him than to that which is *within* him; to that deeper peril of those faults and infirmities which lie within his own heart, and which, if not timely crushed by good and earnest resolution of amendment may bring harm to the Brother. But as the duty of admonition is Masonic, so is there a Masonic way in which that duty should be discharged, never admonish with self-sufficient pride in our own reputed goodness, not in imperious tones, not in harsh language that will wound rather than win, will irritate more than it will reform; but with persuasive gentleness that gains the heart, with the all-subduing influences of "*mercy unrestrained*", with the magic might of love, with the language and the accents of affection, which mingle grave displeasures for the offence with grief and pity for the offender. This and this alone, is Masonic admonition. I am not to rebuke my brother in anger, for I too have my faults; but I am to admonish in private, not before the world, for that would degrade him; and I am to warn him perhaps from my own example, how vice ever should be followed by sorrow, for that goodly sorrow leads to repentance, and repentance to amendment and amendment to joy.

On the subject of Suspension, deplorable as any Masonic punishment, I will briefly touch the sentence of *Definite Suspension*, a verdict which is exercised in December by many Lodges when some Brothers are subject to suspension for non-payment of dues. By definite suspension is meant a deprivation of the rights and privileges of Freemasonry for a fixed period of time, which period is always named in the sentence. By the operation of this penalty, a Freemason is for the time prohibited from the exercise of all his Masonic privileges. His rights are placed in abeyance, and he can neither visit Lodges, hold Masonic communication, nor receive fraternal relief during the period for which he has been suspended. - But he is still a Freemason!

I endorse the many fine comments made by Masters of Lodges and Masonic scholars on this subject, particularly Brother Jess's article in his last November MAD-Bulletin. However, it is urged that every Lodge investigate thoroughly each individual case before actually suspending a Brother. There is too often the possibility that a Brother is in a financial bind; and many are too proud to make their hardships known, although this is not the attitude a Brother should take; he has the right to confide in his Brethren that he is in need of assistance. Did we instruct him so before he left the area? It is always possible to investigate thoroughly these cases across the miles? Did we make every possible effort to ascertain if a Brother is not letting himself be suspended merely because of his financial inability to pay? I do not mean those few Brothers who deliberately fail to pay their dues because of coldness and indifference to the Lodge. No, no, - but I am referring to the 80 percent who have lost contact with their lodge; where we have no valid up-dated address; who were never trained or instructed how to travel in foreign countries; who never received a lodge communication. I could go on and on - the manner this serious subject is dealt with and discussed in some lodges makes me sick and distressed. But I will not hesitate to publicly

correct an often-observed misconception or rather misinterpretation; that is "*We need their dues to meet with our Charity goals*". Yes, but this goal must be primarily directed on the needs of the Lodge.

It is to be borne in mind that Freemasonry is not to be entered in the hopes of personal gain or advancement. Our aim is to cultivate a brotherly feeling among men and help the distressed and afflicted Brothers to the extent of our ability. But it cannot be too strongly emphasized that Blue Lodge Masonry is not a *benefit society*, although the practice of Masonic charity is a fundamental virtue. There are other excellent Masonic Bodies founded for monetary charity.

We should also remember that Freemasonry originally was *not designed to confer degrees*. This function was incidental to its main objective which was to enable men to meet together in friendship and brotherly love. This still should be the main objective of every Mason and his most important task should be the building of a chain of friendship which will make of his brethren a Temple of living stones. Only the individual Mason can make this come to pass but he must have an inspired leadership in order to do so.

Brothers of the Lodge: be sure in each case before final action is taken on suspension.

All Masons, whether members of Lodges or not, are subject to the infliction of any Masonic penalty when found to merit it after due trial. Resignation or withdrawal from the Order does not cancel a Mason's obligations, nor exempt him from that wholesome control which the Order exercises over the conduct of its members. The highest of all Masonic penalties that can be inflicted on a member of the Order is *expulsion*; it has been often called a *Masonic death* in its all-encompassing consequences. An important question remains to be discussed, which refers to the penalty of suspension or expulsion from a Masonic allied body. They do *not* affect the relations of the punished Brother to a Symbolic Lodge. But a sentence from a Lodge carries with it, of necessity, the same sentence from every appendant body. The concordant bodies are not and cannot be recognized as a Masonic body by a Lodge of Master Masons by any of the modes of recognition known to Symbolic Masonry.

In closing this presentation, imperfect and with all its omissions it must of necessity be, just one final comment on this subject, perhaps it can serve as a small guideline.

As the Lodge is opened with the rising sun, in the name of the GAOTU, and closed at its setting in peace and harmony, so, if you have any *animosity* against a Brother, let not the sun sink in the west without being witness to your reconciliation. Early explanations prevent long continued enmities.

The golden ladder of charity that must be climbed to reach the summit is the rung of *grace*. Grace is often doing for another being, kindness he doesn't deserve, hasn't earned, could not ask for, and can't repay. Grace offers man what he cannot do for himself. The unwritten creed of many is that God is under obligations to them, but grace suggests that we are under obligation to God. To live in that consciousness is to live by grace. When you possess the gift of grace, you see the needs and hear the hearts of others through an inner awareness. And within every Freemason should be found the gift of grace towards all mankind.

The unconscious grace of knowing your Brother's need before he speaks and your mindfulness of that need will be as little light to dispel his darkness, if all Freemasons act as little lights to each other and to humanity at large, we can never taker on our path. Always remember that from your light, another may be ignited. All our little lights together will form a brilliance comparable to a sunburst at noontime.

Masons look for the good in life - and praise it! What value is it to dwell upon the negative aspects of the otherwise wonderful lives which are our good fortune to live! The *philosophy of positive thinking* is by no means an exemplification of the "*head in the sand*" syndrome. It is, simply stated, the prototype of the basic Masonic belief in a Supreme Being. It is a specimen of our knowledge that by practicing and teaching the four *natural virtues* of antiquity; i.e., fortitude, prudence temperance and justice, together with the *three theological virtues* of faith, hope and charity, that the ills of the world may be tempered, if not cured.

Finally, my Brothers, allow me the liberty of quoting the Apostle Paul as this sums up my feeling on how everyone, including myself, should conduct himself in his Masonic life.

Paul said:

*"Study to show thyself approved unto God and the brethren,
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed of the way he deals
with the Truth".*

And so mote it ever be!

/s/ Hugo Thomas
Hugo Thomas
Past Grand Master
American Canadian Grand Lodge

Concordant Bodies

(Presented to the Brothers of the ACGL on 9th July 1977)

My Brothers of this or any other Jurisdiction:

I gratefully acknowledge the honor to share Masonic fellowship with all of you at this Masonic social get-together. Without the guidance and assistance of my good friend and Brother Dusty Rhodes, we would have some problems to find this fine place.

And this reminds me of a little story I witnessed a while ago: I am sure you have heard about the two friends who ran into each other in front of the psychiatrist's office. "Hello", said the first. "Are you coming or going?" "If I knew", his friend replied, "I would not be here." We are lucky! We know why we are here. We also know, no one can do everything, but everyone can do something.

Freemasonry is a bridge, a connecting link between men which conveys agreement on certain moral principles, ideals and philosophies designed to improve their lives. It bridges the gap which exists until men gain the light of knowledge that comes through the Masonic experience. It is not a panacea. It does not claim to cure all the ills which plague mankind. But when men do follow Masonic precept and example more likely than not, a lasting tie of brotherhood and understanding will evolve.

Nothing yet devised by man has been perfect; even great bridges have fallen. But if men do practice our tenets of friendship, truth and Masonic Charity, or name it relief, as Masonry advocates, then a benevolent alliance between men will endure like the best-engineered bridge and provide the most rewarding and fulfilling life.

We do not favor unoriented progressiveness. We feel, human planning for the future based on the needs of mankind must develop, which is not feasible without conscious clarification of the norms which constitute our mutual existence. Some of these norms are our fundamentals; they represent cornerstones of our Masonic edifice, of our Lodges and of the individual Freemason.

You see: finding enough to talk about is not a difficult matter at this July meeting; awakening renewed interest in the symbolic Lodge among those who have lost touch through activities and attendance at other Masonic or affiliated gatherings; aim to emphasize more strongly the cement of brotherly love so members will come back again to enjoy co mingling with their fellows and family members.

When I decided to name this presentation, "Which way to go? Our Relations with the Concordant Bodies", I had the sincere hope, that it might accomplish something, at least achieve its primary purpose: the stimulation of a new interest in truly achieving Masonic greatness only when we have found true

Brotherhood and a certain affinity with the Fatherhood of God. And then we can truthfully join in the universal refrain:

Show me the way, not to fortune and fame,
Not to win laurels or praise for my name,
But show me the way to the hearts of men,
And they will say: My Brother, come in!

In the beginning let me make clear my position, I should rather say our position. And in this context I owe a debt of gratitude to many valuable ideas of mutual agreement and for the commonly shared energy and concern on this subject to Most Worshipful Brother Robert A. Martens, Grand Master of Wyoming.

Is it possible for a Brother to find true satisfaction in the activities and fellowship of his own Blue Lodge? In other words, can a Mason find the ultimate in the Ancient Craft of three degrees? Our answer is wholeheartedly in the affirmative. Although the beauties of our Mystic Art are not restricted to the Symbolic Lodge one can find supreme happiness there. When you come down to the fine point, is not the real test, the kind of Masonic life lived, not the number of degrees acquired?

Consider also another phase of this question. Look over the Brother Masons who have completed 25 and 50 years of faithful service in their Blue Lodges without attaining membership in other Masonic bodies. In the mellowing process of the years they have been enriched in fellowship and Masonic knowledge and feel amply rewarded.

I have tried in my Masonic profession to uphold a high standard. I have never consciously spoken a word or written a line of which any man could be ashamed. I have never put a word into print which I could not show to my Brothers and my family and be proud to show it. I have never written a line which at the moment of writing I did not absolutely believe to be true.

My Brothers: "... The President of the United States is the "First Citizen" but as a citizen has no more right, power, privilege or honor than his humblest neighbor."

The additional degrees and Rites of Masonry can make their fortunate possessors better Masons than they might have been without these experiences and additional teaching. But none of them can make a good man more a Mason than he was when he was raised to the Sublime Degree.

Symbolic Masonry is the heart and soul of all Masonry, and the wiser a Mason becomes in any of the concordant bodies, the longer he lives and learns within them, the more convinced is he of the primacy of that which is given the initiate when he is raised to the Sublime Degree.

It is because of these facts that there is one Freemasonry in this country. There are four recognized, desirable and admirable branches of the universal Masonic tree, but the trunk and roots thereof are Symbolic Masonry, to which all Masons of whatever affiliation or degree must belong.

So, it is proper that these concordant or allied Masonic needs have come not from within the body of Ancient Craft Masonry but rather that it has formed the foundation, from which the Appendant Bodies could grow.

It is doubtful that anyone would take serious issue with the objectives of these Bodies. In addition, here is a desire among many Masons that cannot be stated as an objective which these Appendant Bodies may be filling. This is participation. It is definitely needed to maintain interest in Masonry or anything else for that matter.

What I am saying is that not nearly enough is done in the average Lodge, under its existing structure, to keep its members busy and interested. But, my Brethren, there is another side of this picture that we must recognize. There are men who might be active in their lodges if their time, energy, and talents were not diverted by these Bodies and the more Appendant Bodies in a given Jurisdiction the greater the diversion.

After all, we must remember that collectively we have the same ultimate goal: *to make good men better*, the quarrel we have sometimes with each other is how we persuade a member of one or more orders to divide his time. How we get him to assign his priorities. It really is as simple as that.

I would like to relate the so-called problems between the Appendant Bodies and the Blue Lodge to a business situation wherein we are in reality trying to barter with a customer (member) to retain his account (time) from our competitors (appendant bodies). One of the main problems we have sometimes is an overblown sense of authority with which either side regards the other Masonic organization. Yes, we are the final authority and we do have the power to perhaps influence certain things, but we are dealing with mature men, who for a good percentage are successful in their field of endeavor, and they do not lightly take to being ordered about, in their private affairs. How much better it is to lead than to order. President Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "*If I have to order a man to do a task, he will only stick as long as I have him scared, if I have convinced him that the task is just and right, he will stay through hell and high water.*"

I am an eternal optimist, and I have to answer, the appendant and concordant bodies are good for Masonry and generally help tremendously to strengthen it. We must face realities that some bodies appear more glamorous, some have sharp employees and for all purposes, full time ambassadors and are better organized to promote their programs. They actively solicit and promote to our membership and the public at large while we operate on an ever-changing basis from year to year with new leaders coming along to take their reigns of command.

Some good, some bad, some indifferent and some not capable of exercising strong and capable leadership. This then, reduces the problem to the level of Masonic Leadership, a topic which has been well covered many times, and yet is intertwined to the point that it becomes inseparable.

After all, *we* have the candidate first; *we* initiate him and guide his progress for a period of three months and upwards. What impressions do we make to instill our philosophy and doctrine in him? We know what the Shrine, Scottish Rite, York

Rite and Eastern Star will do. We, in many instances, choose to lay the decline to Blue Lodge interest and membership at their door step and yet have we considered the competition of service clubs, school events, and last and certainly not least, that which to me should be most despised of all, television. We often fail to inspire our initiates to a point where an easy chair and fancy Television programs can be equated with an evening of Masonic fellowship. Brethren, acknowledging the problem at this level, makes us aware that our Masonic appendages are not the problem. At this point, I believe that, they are *in reality, carrying the load of growth and mere survival*. Yes, unquestionably, we have applicants for membership who have as their goal, membership in the Scottish Rite and York Rite and the Shrine, but never forget we must have them first. If they are good men, I do not feel they should be denied, for if we do our ritualistic work, show fellowship and interest and involve them, we will make good active members of them. All too often members move on and become active in the other bodies for the simple reason that there is where they are offered the opportunity to actively participate.

Let's examine the average lodge in this Jurisdiction. The membership roster will show forty resident members. Twenty members attend each regular meeting. Where are the others? All at Chapter, Rite meetings. Shrine Ceremonials? Hardly, my brethren, for these bodies meet but once generally each month and rarely conflict with the Blue Lodge meeting night. Evidently we must have a program to get these missing members involved. Whether it be lectures and degree work, or committee assignments. Our task did not end when we raised that candidate. We, of a necessity, must keep him an integral part of our lodge work. If we do not, we cannot complain if the other bodies seize the opportunity and do involve him, his interests, and his time.

I do not agree with the trite old saying. *"We need more Masonry in men, not more men in Masonry,"* I believe we just happen to need more of both. An organization which is atrophying cannot long stay viable. By our lack of leadership, too many Masons have substituted the 24 inch Television Screen for the 24 inch gauge.

It is incumbent upon *us* to learn to turn their attention to their mother Lodge and realize the fellowship they are missing. Yet, again, it will take more than opening, degree work and closing to keep their attention and participation. Our strong lodges are the ones with good interesting programs at least once a month or whenever they do not have degree work. They are also the ones who are proficient in their degree work.

I can speak only of my knowledge of Masonic organizations in this Jurisdiction, but I am sure it does not vary too much in others and stateside. The Brothers in the York Rite, Scottish Rite and Shrine see that the members are involved and committed. There is degree work, degree teams and practices in the Rites, and to face cold hard facts, a dangling hope, the carrot of reward in terms of recognition with honorary degrees. A contradiction of Masonic principles? Perhaps yes, but also most effective.

In the Shrine there is that pageantry and costuming which appeals to the boy ever present in all men, coupled with this are the charitable causes, and on and on. But to belabor the point, the man is active and feels useful and needed, instead of setting back knocking these people, let's learn from them. *Let's set the craft to labor.* We need the leadership to present interesting programs and to see to it that our Blue Lodge members become involved.

The first impressions you make are important, if you are interesting and actually interested in your friends, knowledgeable and able to communicate, your friends will stay. Even if your glamorous sister does solicit them; if you have built a good base for a long friendship, they will not forget you. Do not be a square, but encompass them.

I must beg your indulgence: maybe this is too frivolous an approach, but it really does state the problem. Glamour and attention are tough competitors, but an active interest in and participation by our brethren will rekindle their interest.

One point, strictly sales promotion, and yet a misnomer, which I believe we can and should correct through the Rite Bodies. They are not the *higher degrees*, but only further, broader or explanatory degrees. And we gratefully acknowledge, these Bodies never interfere, or even try to do so, in Grand Lodge or Lodge business.

I am going to have to confess or perhaps express my gratitude and thanks to be able to say that at least within the American Canadian Grand Lodge, this has presented no problem for us. We have been accorded the most courteous and sincere cooperation that could be asked for. I personally am a great believer in face-to-face meetings whenever possible. I realize that our small membership, small number of lodges, and many Masters of Lodges and most Grand Lodge Officers are actively involved in the work of our appendant Bodies; and this fact makes my personal task in this regard much easier. The Appendant Bodies realize, I know, that the decline of membership in many Grand Lodges must ultimately be reflected in their own growth curve. In personal visits with their leaders, their concern has been stressed. It may have been, that in times past we received occasionally only lip service from them, but their awareness of the problem of a general decline which is about to overtake them, also has changed this attitude from a passive to an active interest in Blue Lodge Masonry.

They are all Blue Lodge Masons; and as such they are all under the Jurisdiction of their various Masters, and of course, the Grand Lodge.

The task for us is what it has always been, to work in a spirit of reverence, harmony and love, and to give of our talents freely, with no thought of personal gain, toward the realization of our hopes and dreams for a better world.

The answer to the question posed is a clear, *YES*'; the Concordant Bodies do and will continue strengthening Masonry.

Be not too hasty to make unfavorable remarks on our Brethren in these orders if they are active and participating where they are, and vice versa, for as I said at the beginning, we all strive for the same purpose: To *make good men better.*

And remember also, as it was so aptly said by Henry David Thoreau, in his book, "Waldren": "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it

is because he hears a different drummer, let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away" ... of his own free will and accord !

/s/Hugo Thomas
(*Dr.*) Hugo Thomas
Past Grand Master
American Canadian Land Grand Lodge

A Tribute To The Order of DeMolay

(Dedicated to the special class of initiates on 5th March 1977 in Kaiserlautern)

*There is nothing too good to wish you
But this wish I hope may come true;*

*That all the sunbeams you've scattered,
Reflected, may shine back to you.*

Greetings and Salutations my young friends, to this your special Initiation class.

Vital to every man is a sense of real purpose in life. The operative Mason becomes a real master builder when, beyond earning his wages for cutting and setting stones, he snares the joy, in the inspired sense of achievement that comes from the realization that he is building a great cathedral.

Without the vision of his ultimate goal, and without the pride in the individual contribution he is making toward the noble finished product, the magnificent building that will be so great a source of inspiration, without this vision and this feeling of dedication, the worker is little better than a robot, or a zombie.

All too few of us today have a sense of deep pride in our jobs, and all too few of us are dedicated to building for generations yet unborn. All too few of us are building for our sons and daughters, the generations that tomorrow will be running the world.

From the moment of birth, the healthy baby begins a seemingly endless series of aimless twitching, which as weeks go by, takes on a semblance of purposeful activity. If the new born child is too quiet, a firm but friendly pat or two will trigger a cry of pain and the activity of life begins.

Growing up is a constant refinement of uncoordinated muscular activity into purposeful or effective motion, learning to eat, to walk, to use the hands, to train our muscles to do the million of things that are a part of human life.

The mind, too, grows in the same way, but far more subtly. The child must first learn to take care of himself, and then learn to live with others. No child should grow up without an awareness of the necessity of purposeful activity to sustain life. No child should mature without developing a sense of ultimate responsibility both to himself and to his Fellow man.

Too many of the young people of today are floundering, they have the inner urge to do something, but they do not know what to do. Many have so much handed to them, with so little restraint, that they are just bored or fractious.

Our youth groups, DeMolay Boys and Rainbow Girls, have a great potential. They give our young people something to do and guidelines for doing. It is obvious that the rioters and the hippies are not from families with Masonic background. The basic tradition of Freemasonry is the joy of the builder not the frustration of the destroyer.

What does our youth expect? Regardless of popular rumor, today's young people are not lost to all virtue and constructive endeavors. In many cases it is manifestly obvious that youth has thoroughly digested some of the most profound lessons of humanity. Young people are rejecting and condemning many old forms of hypocrisy and intolerance which justly ought to be so rejected. Unfortunately, in the eyes of many of the young, formal fraternities have assumed the inaccurate image of being hopelessly ultra-conservative, anti-youth and prejudiced. In addition, many of today's youths perceive that such organizations simply do not want them. From the outside, traditional Masonry often seems to have built in, its own defensive wall to keep young people and their ideas as far away as possible.

Regardless of the image problem, however, youth still needs Masonry as much or more than it ever did. Where else is there a potentially better vehicle for the ever-essential fact is that Masonry still holds the key to the imagination of youth? Fortunately, that key rests in Masonry's most fundamental concept, the concept of world brotherhood, fraternity and tolerance.

Brotherhood is probably the most powerful word in the philosophical vocabulary of today's youth. We have developed one of the most active and participating generations in history. To excite the interest of today's young people, no organization needs to do more than say, "We are helping others. You can join us and have a meaningful role in making this world better!"

To join and simply "belong" is not enough. There is too much attractive competition for one's time. Youthful membership in anything must promise relevance, active participation and demonstrated mutual respect. What a young man wants from Masonry cannot be separated from what Masonry needs for itself. To help give perspective to its crusades, youth needs Masonry. To help give crusades to its perspective, Masonry also needs youth. I do not know who the first Mason was. I do know, however, the first great DeMolay was Frank S. Land; and I know what a Mason and a DeMolay are now, today, tomorrow. They are the perfect representation of love; a love that goes hand in hand with kindness, courtesy and respect.

Freemasonry and DeMolay stand for kindness for those in need, and to assist and support today's youth in worthy Masonic youth organizations, its kindness is, sitting through a long meeting, but enjoying it as they watch the efforts their knowledge and guidance have wrought; it is seeing the faith and hope they have helped instill. And knowing that through their kindness, they have brought together many new friends.

It is courtesy for their neighbors, it is stopping to help a stranger along the way, lighten their load and add a smile.

It is respect for our fellowmen, and thus set a precedent for all mankind. This, and much more is, what Freemasonry and DeMolay are.

In closing permit me to leave you with the following:

*From far and wide we came today, to honor our Boys of DeMolay.
Boys they are with hearts of gold, but men at heart a thousand fold.
One for all and all for one, like soldiers who have a battle won.
In colorful dress large and small, they stand before us proud and tall.
Hearts are filled with what we see, this day of joy will always be.
A day we are so proud to say, "God bless our Boys of DeMolay,
and let us salute Youth in Masonry.*

/s/ Hugo Thomas
Hugo Thomas
Grand Master
American Canadian Grand Lodge

A Tribute To The Order Of The Rainbow for Girls

*(Presented on 3 October 1976 at the Institution of Liberty Assembly L. T. Order
of the Rainbow for Girls, Hannau Germany)*

Yea, I have a goodly heritage. Psalm 16:6

Beloved Supreme Deputy in Germany of the Supreme
Assembly of the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls,
Esteemed Grand Worthy Advisor of Germany,
Very Dear Mother Advisor,
Lovely Worthy Advisor.
My Brothers of our common Masonic Path.

We, the members of the American Canadian Grand Lodge, are indeed in a delightful situation to thank you for your kind invitation to assist you in the Institution, the Initiation and the First Installation of Liberty Assembly , Order of the Rainbow for Girls here in Hanau.

We consider it a happy privilege to be with you and to bring greetings of the 42 Masonic Lodges under the American Canadian Grand Lodge, which are comprised of some eight thousand Masonic Brothers residing throughout the world. We assure you that the American Canadian Grand Lodge is endeavoring in every way possible to help and assist, and to cooperate with our Masonic youth organizations and all other Bodies of Masonry. We assure you of our good will and our hope for success in your labors. I am proud to stand here as a servant of our Grand Lodge, supported by my Grand Lodge Officers and the Brothers, and to confess that we are cooperating in every way possible. And speaking of cooperation we must feel our Order's presence in our joy, its comfort in our pain, and its genius in our mind. As active workers in our Order, with an overdose of enthusiasm, we, you, shall convince the world at large of the true meaning of Rainbow.

At your initiation into the International Order of the Rainbow for girls, founded on April 6, 1922, by our revered Reverend W. Mark Sexson and first started in McAlester, Oklahoma, you have entered a new world. Symbolically and spiritually you have been reborn. This started the moment you became a Rainbow girl. And as you progress in knowledge your vision will broaden; you will become more vitally alive then ever before; you will become more aware of your fellowman, you're family, your church and your country. Your whole life will become richer, more precious; and you can decipher the beauty of the world as symbolically encompassed by the seven rainbow colors. Let your light of Faith, Hope, Love and Truth shine upon this rainbow, because we ought to be reflectors of the Light we most desired.

Years ago, when I was first invited to attend the Order of Rainbow for Girls, I just wanted to know what was going on and why it seemed so attractive. Every time I have attended since then I learned something new and different. I understood why everything had to be just as it is and I let Rainbow have a real place in my life. My association with Rainbow Assemblies has taught me a great deal. I have learned to speak in front of people with more ease; I feel closer to God and I can talk about Him to others with more comfort and enthusiasm. From *Love*, I learned to give of myself, to help others when ever possible and it has helped me understand Rainbow Love. *Religion* taught me more about God and how to confess my belief. I understood the part the God plays in a Rainbow life. *Nature* has taught me to appreciate the flowers and trees, and all of the beautiful out-of-doors. *Immortality* has helped me accept the thought of death, although it still scares me to a degree. *Fidelity* has shown me that if I want others to trust me, I have to earn that privilege. *Patriotism* has given me a new respect for the flag, and our countries, and the role of a boy and girl. *Service*, like *Love* has made me give to others who need my support.

And I must admit, there are still many things I do not understand. I hope, in time, that I will learn and understand even more. I am glad that I still have things to learn, because it gives me a special goal. I wish that all girls could be Rainbow sisters, because it probably gives them a clearer understanding of God, life and womanhood.

Rainbow makes it much easier to adjust to new surroundings. I cannot imagine our life without Rainbow, and I would not want to be without it.

Have you wondered "Why we devote time to our Masonic youth organizations?"

The answer is simple. These young people are an inspiration to us; they warm our hearts with their truthfulness and rekindle our hope in the future. Where else lays the future but with young people? God's blessing must surely rest upon them. Our DeMolay boys of today might well be Masons of tomorrow, our Rainbow Girls of today might well be the wives of these boys in the future. Our young people are a wholesome, fun loving, impressionable group that will reflect the character of their elders.

Therefore, as Masons, it is our responsibility to set a living example that is above reproach. We must be a guiding light, free from deceit, dishonesty and immorality. We should endeavor to exceed, if possible, the enthusiasm of these young people, we must, through active, religious participation, show our sincere belief in God.

These young people are seeking the same truths in life as you and I. If this were not so they would not be active in our organizations that are dedicated to righteous living, honoring God, Home and Country. We all believe that by working together with these young people our future will be assured.

Regardless of popular rumor, today's young people are not lost to all virtue and constructive endeavors. In many cases it is manifestly obvious that youth has thoroughly digested some of the most profound lessons of humanity. Young people are rejecting and condemning many old forms of hypocrisy and

intolerance which justly ought to be so rejected. Unfortunately, in the eyes of many of the young, formal fraternities have assumed the inaccurate image of being hopelessly ultra-conservative, anti-youth and prejudiced. In addition, many to today's youth perceive that such organizations simply do not want them.

Regardless of the image problem, however, youth still needs Masonry as much or more than it ever did. Where else is there a potentially better vehicle for the ever essential communication across generations? The exciting fact is that Masonry still holds the key to the imagination of youth. Fortunately, that key rests in Masonry's most fundamental concept, the concept of world brotherhood, fraternity and tolerance.

Brotherhood is probably the most powerful word in the philosophical vocabulary of today's youth. We have developed one of the most active and *participating* generations in history. To excite the interest of today's young people, no organization need do more than say, "*We are helping others. You can join us and have a meaningful role in making this a better world!*"

To join and simply *belong* is not enough. There is too much attractive competition for one's time. Youthful membership in anything must promise relevance, active participation and demonstrated mutual respect. What a young man wants from masonry can not be separated from what Masonry needs for itself. To help give perspective to its crusades, youth needs Masonry.

After all, what does Rainbow mean to a Brother of the Masonic Fraternity?

Rainbow . . . the universal symbol of hope and optimism, of faith and eternal truth;

Rainbow . . . that gracious thing, born of rain drops and the light of sun shining through adverse skies;

Rainbow . . . that echo from heaven, emblem of our own resurrection, emblem of a bright and better land;

Rainbow ... a glorious kaleidoscope of endless enchantment, where the universe seems like turned inside out;

Rainbow ... a touch of reverence to our Heavenly Father; a symbol of Truth and Light, and Liberty.

These are the vows which I communicate to you, to this newly instituted *Liberty Chapter*, in belief of all members of the American Canadian Grand Lodge. We greet you and wish you well!

May the bell of Hope, Faith, Charity and Liberty, toll loud and clear when this Chapter and Rainbows' are at work or at refreshment. Thank you very much with Rainbow Love!

/s/ Hugo Thomas Hugo
Thomas American
Canadian Grand Lodge

A Tribute to the Scottish Rite

(Presented at a Reunion of the American Military Scottish Rite Bodies on 2 April 1977 in Wiesbaden)

Venerable and Wise Master; Commander and Master of Kadosh,
Distinguished and Illustrious Sirs, Ladies and Sisters,
My Brothers of the American Military Scottish Rite Bodies, NATO Area, under the auspices of the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America, considered and recognized as the Mother Council of the World.

With a pleasing sensibility I accepted the invitation extended to me by my esteemed friend and faithful working District Master, your Venerable Master, Very Worshipful Brother Gunter Furst, to share Masonic fellowship with you at this Reunion.

What a meaningful time of the year: the Passover and Easter message is in and around us, the spirit of the Chapter of the Rose Croix is governing our thoughts and words, and we are reminded by the symbol of the Rose Croix to be steadfast in our obligations we have taken at the sacred Alter as Brother, irrespective for what degree.

Let me offer you my sincere thanks for the favorable sentiments with which your kind reception abounds. But I also can assure you, that I accepted with some misgivings. Frankly, the prospect of having to address you, on this auspicious occasion is quite frightening, because it is a peculiar and different tiling to develop an address that, hopefully, will be meaningful to so distinguished looking an audience, as I now have before me.

As the first servant of our American Canadian Grand Lodge, I am, however, grateful to pay a fitting tribute to the Brothers of the Scottish Rite Bodies and to salute you in behalf of all Brothers who hail from our Grand Jurisdiction. Our salutations are broadcasting common basic principles and fundamentals: the guiding light of God's tender loving care, the hope of immortality, and the triumph of Truth and justice over the evils of darkness, intolerance and ignorance. Oh yes, I know, the all encompassing rituals of the Craft are some times described as the vestibule of Freemasonry. I do not agree with this misnomer. Light, more Light and further Light are our fundamentals, a speculative inspiration; they are expressions of an idea, of a peculiar way of life, a reminder; "To improve myself in Masonry", as pronounced in the Entered Apprentice Degree's Proficiency. And the top in Freemasonry is an accomplishment and not a degree. Our degrees are a station on the road "home"; they are an opportunity, not an arrival, and in that, another point of departure.

All of us are on certain bases; some are waiting for someone to bat him further; to some we must offer the ever present choice between stagnation and initiative,

but life's rules are fairer. In life there is an inner scoreboard, where our efforts are credited on our records; and our records are balanced in heaven.

This address is presented with the sincere hope, that it will accomplish something; at least achieve its primary purpose: the stimulation of a new or increased interest in my topic:

“An active Brotherhood of Men under the Fatherhood of the Almighty”

A striking theme, which reminds me of a little story. When the teacher asked: "Boys, can you tell me one great difficulty George Washington had to face?" Jimmy's hand shot up as he announced: "Yes Sir, he couldn't tell a lie," I sympathize with Jimmy. "An active Brotherhood of Men under the Fatherhood of the Almighty", this simple credo will work like magic, as man kind moves toward the new day; and it was the Sovereign Grand Commander and Past Grand Master of California, Most Worshipful Brother Henry C. Clausen, who reminded us to return to the intuitive Masonic admonition that is more ancient than any practiced reason and logic: let brotherly love prevail!

At this time of the year. Brothers all over the world observe the Passover services, the Maundy Thursday Observance and the Easter Sunday Ceremonies. I will not attempt, nor is it my ambition, to compete with the great and brilliant achievements attained by so many outstanding Brothers of your Bodies: Brother Albert Pike and Brother Henry Clausen may stand for all of them.

It is very evident that our universe was designed to work. If the material universe embodies a working design of the *Great Architect of the Universe*, surely He meant that laws governing the highest level of His creation would be adequate. And there is a Freemasonry in and around us which provides us with the necessary tools and intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge. It exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and we know that these virtues abound and give to our life its real meaning, its highest beauty and joy. Without it there would be no Brotherly Love, no Mystic Tie, no Masonic Charity, and the eternal light with which Masonry fills the world, would be extinguished. But nobody can physically see or touch the Masonic spirit, unless we are practicing it in our daily lives, as "an active Brotherhood of Men under the Fatherhood of the Almighty", not only on Passover or at Easter time, but throughout the year.

In the book of the prophet Zechariah we hear the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying: "not by might, not by power, but by my *Spirit*, says the Lord of Hosts". I want to share with you a little bit of history in the beginning, so that you might get the setting or the feeling of what I want to share with you.

In the year 596 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian King, carried away his first captives into Babylon and in 586 B.C. Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed, he also carried away the sacred treasures of the Temple and of the

royal palace, and the precious jewels of Judaism. He died in 561 B.C., thank God.

In the year 538 B.C., Cyrus, the Persian, conquered Babylon, and in the first year of his reign issued a decree that the children of Israel should return home. And so to the leadership of Zerubbabel, a prince of the house of David was entrusted this unusual task of again building the destroyed house of God. Under his leadership the Temple was rebuilt, started in 520 B.C. and four years later formally dedicated.

The words of the prophet Zechariah together with those of the prophet Haggai and also those great giants Hehemiah and Ezra were responsible for the re-establishment of the uniqueness of the Jewish faith. The community began to prosper again. It was not by might, and not by power, but by an active living Brotherhood guided by the spirit of God. And this, as for our own time, the divine spirit was the inspiration and it must be in our time the source of inspiration for both, the spiritual and the secular life of old people the world over.

One of the chief problems of our modern governments has been the use and the misuse of power. The voice of God, which ought to be the inspiration for peoples' minds, has now become quieted. And so you find existing all over the world all kinds of contradictory philosophies of governments, and this has kept our present world in a perpetual state of confusion. We have less happy and free people to day than we have ever had in the history of the world. Too often we do not have any mutual attempts of understanding each other. And we have to do some careful thinking too on our own countries, the interpretation and misinterpretation of law has provided for us a kind of permissiveness that has provoked so much disorder and troubles.

Now is the time that we begin to think things through, and think through carefully the things which made our nations great! Let us just pause for .1 moment and contemplate upon what those great Brethren who helped to mold and shape the fortress for Freedom in our countries, have left us by taking the lessons, which they learned through divine providence by the square and the level and the plumb, and wrote into that marvelous set of rules, the Bill of Rights, which is the most glorious set of rules for free men, that free man has ever dreamed, codified the only set of rules by which men can live free and enjoy the freedom that they ought to.

And yet these great leaders were the kind of men who constantly reminded its citizens that no government can function without the inspiration, the guidance and the restraint of for mal religion.

Yet, these great Brothers challenged us, and that is the only way we can awaken people's ideals, and help them to show some sense of what is worthwhile in living. Let us not forsake our institutions, for they alone are the custodians, they alone are the ones who will keep the fire and the light of freedom burning in the hearts of men.

Benjamin Franklin, in 1787, three years before he died, addressed a meeting of the Constitutional Convention in session thusly: "I have lived a long time, and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs the affairs of men. We have been assured, that except the Lord build a house, they labor in vain who build it. I firmly believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political or any other building no better than the builders of Babel". Not by might, not by power, but by an active living Fraternity and by the spirit of the Lord, we shall succeed.

H.G. Wells, you might remember, wrote this very potent sentence: "As soon as a man thinks he is God, he begins to act like a devil". And the blood stained pages of history are an absolute proof of that statement. For when men have felt themselves most powerful they have destroyed the best in men.

By God's spirit in dwelling and motivating our lives, we realize those spiritual values such as love, honesty, search for truth, the principles of moral rectitude, loyalty to that which is best, that which has permanence, that which is the ultimate. "Not by might or by power, but by an active Brotherhood and by the spirit of the Lord."

Masonry, my friends, has might, and this has been one of its great distinguishing characteristics. It has might because it insists in its devotees the permanence of belief in an Infinite Creator. Each one of us has values in His eyes. And He watches over us with the same loving care as the fondest parent does of its child. The Volume of the Sacred Law on an altar ought to be to us a constant reminder at all times, that from Him and Him alone come all the blessings that we enjoy in life, and to Him and to Him alone we owe our primary allegiance. This is so basic and this is our might.

Freemasonry and this *Brotherhood* has *power*, the power to change men's lives to make good men better, to renew that spiritual building that must always be constructed and build, and built upon by the symbolic working tools entrusted to our care. The power to make and to mold lives. Each of us has within himself the capability of becoming, and this is the great challenge of all times, that we must all become the best that we can. God wants the whole person, revealing the best that is in that man's life.

Freemasonry and this *Brotherhood* have *God's spirit*, and that great spirit is permeated with love, our great concern for each other, and the love of our fellow men. This is the great motivating force of our life, but one of the little side elements in this great experience of Love is, what we call *Charity*. Look about you, my friends, on these grounds, and there you see evidences that God's spirit is at work in the generosity of Brothers, who have been compelled by an inner sense of love and devotion to those primary things that have meaning and purpose in life, and they have left here examples of their great faith that God's spirit can only be manifested in helping, aiding and assisting those who cry out for our help.

We ought to spend ourselves over and over again in developing other avenues of research, so that we finally might erase those horrible, hideous evils that keep destroying and cursing mankind. We have our challenge for today: "Not by might, not by power, but by an active living Brotherhood and by the spirit of God."

In closing, let us thank God for the challenge of this place, and as we leave it. may we go to our various homes with a deeper sense of dedication that we might share with others that, which we have found here: that love that fills our hearts, those ideals which mold our lives, and the drive which makes us act. May we become stronger, more dedicated citizens of His Holy Kingdom, and at last see the dawning of a world of a Brotherhood of Men and peace, in the words of the great King Solomon as he dedicated the Temple, the final words of his prayer: "That Thine eyes may be opened toward this house night and day, even for the place of which Thou hast said, Thy Name shall be there" . . . and Thy Name is here; and we always bear in mind:

"Spes mea in Deo est"

"My trust is in God!"

/s/ Hugo Thomas
Hugo Thom as
Grand Master
American Canadian Grand Lodge

Charter Day Commemoration

(Presented on 1 September 1973 in "Alt Heidelberg Lodge No. 821")

“Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation
a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a
a sure foundation”
Isaiah, Ch.28

Fraternal greetings to all resident and non-resident members of

Alt Heidelberg Lodge No. 821.

The CHARTER DAY, a memorable day of pleasure and honor, is one of the highlights in the history of each Lodge, and all Brethren gratefully look back across the years, when this good Lodge was brought to Light on the 1st Day of September, 1955 A.D. and 5955 A.L. and received its Charter by the Most Worshipful United Grand Lodges of Germany.

With a pleasing sensibility I share the cordial and fraternal congratulations and best wishes for the years to come with the Land Grand Master of the American Canadian Grand Lodge, his elected and appointed Officers and with numerous Brothers of our common Masonic Faith dispersed all over the world, with all the Brethren of this honorable Lodge.

We respectfully and graciously recognize some Past MASTERS, whose names may symbolize the glory and reputation of this Lodge:

Right Worshipful Peter M. RASMUSSEN

Worshipful Brother Stewart M. L. POLLARD

Worshipful Brother George M. MINOR

Worshipful Brother Elmer C. GEORGE

Worshipful Brother Richard M. McELHINEY

Worshipful Brother William G. STAGEY

We certainly would be remiss if we would not duly recognize and welcome all the faithful non-resident Brothers, residing in the United States and elsewhere, who, through their membership prove their affection with us and this Jurisdiction in general.

An eighteen years' Birthday for a Lodge is neither a long time nor a short time, since Masonry is ageless and our ancient Brethren were working since time immemorial, as writers and speakers are fond of saying. This makes one think of the Hour glass, so reminiscent of the sands of time, which used to be exhibited in most of the ancient Lodges. On a day like this, interest should be revived in bringing back its symbolic meaning.

Among the great things in our life that have brought us a humble pride, is the fact that *we* are a *Freemason* and a member of this Lodge.

Our Fraternal organization, older than any government, has more followers than any philosophy. Today we are humbly proud of the three great principles which have made Freemasonry grow since ages. Also, this Lodge, as any other duly constituted Lodge, rests upon these three important fundamentals: the dignity of work, the importance of Brotherhood and BROTHERLY LOVE, the non-sectarianism of Freemasonry.

Our ancient Brethren discovered the *Dignity of Work* in the Middle Ages, when gentlemen and ladies refused to work because it was degrading. In the course of their own daily work and not from theory. Freemasons discovered it is true of the nature of things that unless a man works he cannot be a duly qualified man, and that no man can be honorable that preys on other men.

The Fatherhood of GOD means, of necessity, the *Brotherhood of Man* which inculcates one of our most valuable tenets: BROTHERLY LOVE. Not a Brotherhood of Men who believe in the same revealed religion, or in the same form of government, or the identical principles of a labor union, but of ALL men; - a Brotherhood because of mutual manhood.

Freemasonry's non-sectarianism makes it possible for the Christian and the Jew, the Mohammedan and the Parsee or the Mormon, happily to kneel at a common Alter and, under the name of the G.A.O.T.U., each worship the GOD he reveres, side by side with his fellowmen, in peace and harmony.

BRETHREN: we want you to be so proud of your Freemasonry that you will never neglect your Lodge. We want you to help and support your Lodge by attending, by showing interest, by taking part. The clink of the Trowel should always be heard in some parts of the building. With faith in man, hope for the future of humanity, loving kindness for our Brothers, Masons must always act and teach. Let each do that for which he is best fitted.

There is nothing stronger on earth among men, than the strong grip of Brothers, closely and affectionately on the five points of fellowship.

Thus we will render ourselves worthy of the honor which has been conferred upon us and merit the confidence our predecessors and Brothers repose in us.

Fraternally and Sincerely,

/s/ Hugo Thomas
(Dr.) Hugo Thomas, LGJW

Independence Day

(Presented in Frankfurt On The Main Lodge No. 861 on 4th July 1973)

To all the Brethren of "Frankfurt On The Main Lodge No. 861;

Fraternal Greetings!

When we Masonically celebrate a day which is devoted to freedom, INDEPENDENCE DAY or FOURTH OF JULY, we cannot help but note the coincidence between the name of the day and the name of our own Fraternity. We are FREE masons, not Masons; ours is the Fraternity of FREE masonry, not of Masonry, and the history of the Craft makes clear what a great difference there is. We cannot help but feel that it is especially appropriate for us to meet in observance of Independence Day because we ourselves have for so many centuries not only called ourselves FREE Masons, but always have been proud of the fact.

What is the meaning of Free in Freemasonry? There are several answers to that question, and one answer does not always exclude another because they are true at the same time.

When our Fraternity began eight or nine centuries ago any man employed in building or architecture was called a Mason. To be a Mason was to be a builder. Among these the Freemasons stood above and somewhat apart from any other guild of Masons because they were architects and the other Masons were not. The architectural craftsmen came for that reason to be called "Freestone Masons," which became shortened to Freemasons.

This is a great philosophy, and if we as a Fraternity take a special pride and glory in helping to celebrate Independence Day it is because we know that for more than two centuries Lodges in America have trained millions of men to be free men, and that has not been without its effect upon the history of this land

The ringing of the Liberty Bell was a gratifying but no new thing to a Freemason. Our Masonic Forefathers had begun to ring it eight centuries ago.

Fraternally and sincerely,

/s/ Hugo Thomas
Hugo Thomas
Master

Family Night

(Presented at "Fidelitas" Lodge No. 830 on 3rd February 1977)

Brothers and Sisters;

I gratefully acknowledge your kind invitation to take part in this special Masonic communication of this honorable Lodge and to celebrate this "Family Night" in your company.

The French King Louis IX was one of the finest gentlemen of his century and greatly beloved by his people. When he was married he had engraved on the inside of his wedding band three words: "God, Country, Margaret (his wife's name). Those, he said, are my three basic loyalties, and in that order given. I would agree! For that one whose most basic loyalty is not to God can not be trust worthy, either to country or to wife and family. There is a Latin motto: *Semper Fidelis*; "always faithful", which I would like to examine in a Lodge named "Fidelitas" and Fidelity is itself a God-like quality of life.

As Freemasons, our lives and efforts are tied to three solid mooring posts:

Faith in our Creator, the Almighty God; and this ancient requirement insures that if a Brother recognizes the Fatherhood of God he can readily accept the concept of the Brotherhood of Man.

1. Our duty to and love for our country deserves the support of every man who is interested in the welfare of his mother country and the state in which he lives and respects the worth and dignity of its citizens. We teach and learn the lesson that "righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people", and the individual who is untrustworthy in his love of his own country would be untrustworthy to the world, and our life is built on trustworthiness.
2. We charge the votaries of our royal art to be aware of a Mason's responsibility to his neighbors and his family in particular. And even our ritualistic ceremonies beautifully portray lessons of genuine family life, which reflect growth in awareness from youth and manhood to the maturity of age.
3. Here then lies the challenge: on the cornerstone of our faith in God, Country and Family, spreading bright hope amid the prevailing sense of uncertainty, Freemasons thoughtfully build a social structure based on the practice of Masonic Charity in its fullest sense of human concern and self sacrifice.

Once again I stress also the emphasis, so apparent in the teachings of all the degrees, upon the application of the mind. In the complexities of our modern relationships correct decision making requires profound analytical study, in our Lodges, in our families.

This address, therefore, is not made in pessimism but rather in realistic appraisal and a full and glowing confidence in the success of our efforts when directed by wisdom and devotion.

I am impelled, however, to express one very important caution because of recent trends to wards the relaxation of moral values and the erosion of the sacred ties of family life. Let no Masonic brother be deceived into believing, that there now exists a new morality. Customs and usage's of families change, but the moral values refined in the crucible of long human experience under divine inspiration are immutable truths.

I have been much impressed by the definition of Brother George Washington who stated " I conceive the organization of Freemasonry to be an institution dedicated to the Brother hood of Man, the family and the advancement of the human race". I have always sought to dispel some misconceptions of people generally, who are not fully cognizant of the principles of Freemasonry. Our object, in the Lodge and in our families, is, to educate man and to elevate him to the fullest extent in all those faculties of Ills nature that tend to harmonize the human family, and to elevate mankind to the highest attainable condition to which it is possible for human agencies and institutions to raise him.

We are a society of builders, equating the principles required to erect the great cathedrals, to the building of strong temporal structures, or moral fiber, whereby each reflective member is strengthened in character, virtue and morality. Men who are Freemasons take great pride in their membership for many reasons, prominent among which is the feeling that they are a part of a great force dedicated to worthy purposes. It is of course possible for an individual to be singularly devoted to self improvement, but with the knowledge and awareness that one as a part of a brotherhood in which common goals and aspirations are shared, the load is lighter and the objective more attainable. It is the individual member's action and conduct then, which must speak for the worth and dignity of the institution. What a great feeling to be a part of a way of life in which each member in not content with his present state but ever striving for self improvement, and with every member, regardless of location, cheering him on.

We help those who are worthy, but we help none which would in any way imply approbation of misconduct or failure to observe our basic duties to God, our Country, our Family and neighbors. And we have no Secrets, since what is known by the Craft is also quite well known by non-Masons. All the "known secrets", an oddly contradictory description, are avail able to our Brothers and non-Masons alike through hundreds of books and publications of Freemasons. If we have "known secrets", do we, by contrast, have "unknown secrets" as well?

We have a few modes of recognition, but if we have secrets that no one knows, how do we know if there are, and what they are? That could be a secret in itself! It is; but a Freemason must reveal it and he does never conceal it, willfully: it is, when he has learned how to make friends and keep them, and above all, how to keep friends with himself and his family; it is, when no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain, and no hand seeks his aid without response; it is when he finds good in every faith, that helps any man to lay hold of divine things; it is, when he knows how to pray, to love, to hope, and when he has learned how to give himself, to forgive others, and to live with thanksgiving; it is, when he has kept faith with himself, with his fellow man, with his God; in his heart a bit of a song, glad to live, but not afraid to die.

These are the only real secrets of Masonry, and the one which it is trying to give to the entire world.

In such a favorite climate we form and develop our friendships, we enjoy and wisely spend our family life, always remembering: what we have done in our life for ourselves alone, dies with us; what we have done for others, for our families' remains and is immortal.

This, our Masonic way of life banners the spirit of our "Family Night" we are about to celebrate. Tonight we remember that our Lord has put the beauty in the world, the singing of the birds at dawn, the brilliance of the sun, when white clouds grace the blue sky and Brothers are fidelity.

We rejoice in the 25th Wedding Anniversary of Brothers and Sisters, which

makes their heart to beat higher, and ours to chorus in response to the blessings and happiness that have come to them through the years.

Youth or age is not a time of life, it is a state of mind. Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years; people grow old only by deserting their ideals. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self confidence, as old as your fear; as young as your hope. Youth or age does not refer to a time in life, but to a state of mind, a temper of will, a quality of the imagination, a predominance of courage over timidity.

Since time immemorial Freemasons are fond of speaking in symbols and allegories, and a Silver Wedding Anniversary is considered as something very special by the Craft. This Anniversary is symbolically linked together with a Masonic emblem of purity and all perfection, the *silver rose*: symbol of light, love and life; gratefulness for all love in the past 25 years and for all the love and understanding in the years to come. The presentation of this silver rose is to signify, that we uphold and return to a free evaluation of mankind in the relationship of man-to-man; to show the courage to exemplify love. Is this necessary? Yes! The indolence of the heart is cheap and comfortable. Love is

always a risk, but only by taking a risk do we stand to gain. This statement is given with all due respect and with humility: Freemasons are no semi-Gods, they have as many human short comings as any other human being; expressed in good Swabian dialect: All, they too, are just folks. But they are summoned to exercise the power of good. The scale of strength is in the end unimportant, only involvement is demanded. We should not shrink from it, but with that reliable confidence, utilizing every last possibility in these trying times, press forward and risk doing good. This should be understood as an inner obligation. May I summarize quite simply: in the end it is the individual, the Brother, the family, to who, we look and to whom we exemplify our love.

At this time, I must ask your indulgence. I was asked to present a congratulatory address to our Brothers and Sisters commemorating their 25th Anniversary. I have attempted to do this with a due regard to appropriateness, even at the risk of disappointing possible expectations. I feel, however, it is always a fine duty to confess, and a rather rare custom and opportunity to express thanks. I realize, I am lacking the so called "talent for ceremoniousness", but I do believe I possess a certain medium aptitude for unbiased love. This is certainly not meritorious. It belongs quite simply to Freemasonry and Brotherhood. And love begets gratitude, it is its own reward.

In closing, and before those here assembled will return to their daily lives, may I express this request: Seek and ye shall find forever the original path to your own self; the trinity of Wisdom, Strength and Beauty; the symbolic radiance of the silver rose: light, love and life; the way to your neighbor, yourself and your family, always bearing in mind this Scripture lesson we read in Revelation:

" Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee the crown of life. "And so mote it ever be!

/s/ Hugo Thomas
(Dr.) Hugo Thomas
Grand Master
American Canadian Grand Lodge

George Washington's Birthday

First Presentation given February 1975

*"A word spoken in due
season, how good it is."
(Proverbs 15:32)*

Fraternal greetings;

To all of you who celebrate the 243rd Birthday of a Brother, General, Statesman and first President of the United States with us.

The Honorable George WASHINGTON

born on February 22nd, 1732 in Wakefield, Virginia, on the banks of the Potomac river, 38 miles from Fredericksburg, his boyhood home, not too far from Mount Vernon, the stately home of his later years.

Brother George was still a child at his father's Augustine sudden death in 1741, but he was given chores and assignments that we can hardly envision being done by a mere lad. From them, however, he drew the tenacious pattern for his life, and for the way in which he was to serve his Nation so well in later years.

By stern example and admonitions, his mother BALL-WASHINGTON, toned and shaped he six children's personality: discipline and adherence to high principles during their formative years; that the soft and easy not the right way and that they owed a duty to themselves to persist until their goals had been attained, providing due consideration was given to others.

In those demanding years Washington's preparation for life and for living was immeasurably augmented joy his becoming a Mason in early manhood, when lie was Raised on November 4, 1752 in Fredericksburg Lodge No. 4, Virginia. How-ever, he wisely used the working tools Freemasonry presented to him, and strove for perfection in everything he under took.

Mainly self-educated, with only a few years of grammar school, like another self-educated, self made man Abraham Lincoln-, he struggled with difficulties outside of himself and within himself as well, and arrived at self mastery. His character and ideals are still a fountain-head for inspiration; his wisdom, his resourcefulness, and his power to inspire area priceless heritage.

Only some two hundred years separate us from that event, yet in that comparatively short period of time the then unknown youth has become a foremost symbol of American manhood and American Masonry.

What is known about Washington goes to prove that when he presented himself at Fredericksburg he had all the qualifications to wear the Masonic Apron. As a youth we know he was making progress in the practice of every commendable virtue before he knocked on the preparation door. That small group of Fredericksburg brothers was not looking into any crystal ball when they adjudged him worth of admission into their sacred portals.

How could they stretch their imaginations to the extent of visualizing this candidate as a world shaking personality who could overshadow so many great figures of history? Humbly we step into accord with our brethren of the Grand Lodge of Virginia in recognizing Washington's faithful step into Masonry. So the young Mason seeing and participating in this celebration must come in a large sense the realization that of the many facets of Washington's character his integrity stands out like a beacon light.

George Washington was a developer of great men; he galvanized every man who knew him. From a wilderness he built a Nation and became its first President on April 30, 1789, and greatest political thinker, laying down the lines of policies with wisdom and tremendous human force that brought out the best in every man who came in contact with him. His leadership communicated itself to others.

Whatever they had of ambition, purpose, personality, he magnified by the tremendous force of his character, by his fathom less reservoir of strength-in-repose. That is why the Rappahannock Valley where George Washington grew up raised up scores of men to high achievements and greatness. Men, who caught his spirit, became imbued with his courage, and charged after their leader into the epic struggle to found and keep a Nation: George Mason, the author of the "Bill of Rights". James Madison, the "Father of the Constitution", James Monroe, the author of the "Monroe Doctrine", John Marshall, Henry Lee. The virtue of Integrity and Fidelity should be a goal of every Mason. When the individual has that in his possession he is truly a builder of his own character.

All the glory associated with the name of Washington is enhanced the more knowledge and research concerning him is brought to light. It will never fade as long as freedom obtains in America.

Brethren, let us continue to honor him, and endeavor to emulate in quality his character.

Nothing that is good in man, or worthy of love and admiration, can ever die!

/s/ Hugo Thomas
Land Grand Senior Warden
American Canadian Land Grand Lodge

I Pledge Allegiance to Freemasonry

(Installation Address at the Annual communication of the American Canadian Grand Lodge on 24th April 1976)

"As a man thinketh in his heart so is he."(Proverbs 23:7)

Most Worshipful Grand Master Distinguished Grand East, My Brothers;

You have elected me Grand Master. Just a few short words,

but what a wealth of meaning is contained therein. My vocabulary fails to express the true emotions of the heart when attempting a dialogue with Brothers that have blended with the Brotherhood of history and repeated the same vows at the sacred alter, that were pledged by the great and honor able Brothers, Washington, Franklin or Frederic the Great, and by millions of Brothers who have traveled the same road and received the same Light as we did. The very idea that this sublime act made us Brothers with the greats of all ages enriches my solemn obligations. The gentle and noble art has worked its sweet mystery, when it joined in friendship and Brotherly Love the hearts of so many votaries of our royal art, and a humble Brother whose greatest award is, to be considered by all of you as a faithful workman and a worthy Brother.

Even though it is axiomatic that there is no higher degree than Master Mason, I cannot help but feel down in my heart a sense of awe and humility, which you have seen fit to invest me symbolically with the responsibilities of the Royal King Solomon.

I realize that there are many other Brothers throughout the world who might stand before you as justly as I do. I can not in good conscience call this honor mine, for a Brother is made, in part at least, of all those with whom he is meeting, acting and parting on the same level. It is impossible to thank everyone who has contributed to my Masonic life, and to mention all those to whom I feel hopelessly indebted. Thanks to all the Brethren who witnessed when I first, second and third time knelt at the sacred alter, and who taught me the principles and lessons of our Fraternity, my Brothers of Frankfurt On The Main Lodge No. 861.

Thanks to all those I have had the privilege of meeting, knowing and working with thereafter; I have been inspired by them all, from the newest Initiated to those who I admire so much in this and other Jurisdictions.

And my thanks to a Brother whom I will never meet again in this Terrestrial Lodge. The one whose spirit is here, who has done so much for unnumbered Brethren; that Brother "extraordinaire" who first dreamed of English-speaking Freemasonry in Germany, and then devoted his life to transform that vision into reality for the benefit of others. Our thanks to Right Worshipful Brother Peter M. Rasmussen will be, to do all that we are capable to insure that his vision continues to grow and flourish in the years to come. Daniel Webster, in his peroration on Massachusetts, in his reply to Senator Hayne of South Carolina, said, in substance: "The past, at least, is secure!"

So far as our Fraternity and this Grand Lodge is concerned, the past is secure, indeed! We have a glorious history in which we take greatest of pride. At this time, we duly recognize and pay tribute to our predecessors in the Grand East.

My sincere thanks are due to all who served this Grand Lodge during its fifteen years history as Worshipful Masters, Grand Lodge Officers or Grand Masters. They have represented this Grand Lodge with distinction and honor, and they have never failed to take on a difficult task when asked to do so. To single out individuals would mean that someone might be overlooked, but through some I was personally blessed in receiving more and further Light from Masonry: Right Worshipful Brothers: Horst Volkhardt, Jess Minton, Lee Loomis, Jim Clark, H. Dale Walker, Gordon Greenwood, William E. Denny, Louie Conine, Burton L. Clyde and our brilliant and dynamic outgoing Grand Master Gunther Gall.

My love and admiration for each of you will remain as long as time itself. You have given me the benefit of your wisdom and clear thinking on Masonic matter, and how to think, speak and act Masonically.

Is it not a wonderful thing to know, that each one of us is not a solitary soul, is not an island. Surely the feeling of other shoulders touching ours, as they make their way to the same far off goal and glorious ideals, heartens us. We can advance quickly today with ease, because other Brothers who preceded us have worn a clear highway for us. We do not have to start at the beginning of things or near it; other Brothers have made discoveries which have been handed down to us. We do not have to find big things for ourselves; just open our eyes and they are there, left us as a priceless inheritance. How can we thank those Brothers of former years who daringly took the tremendous promises of faith into their hands, and had the audacity to risk their whole future and reputation upon the establishment and maintenance of this gentle Grand Lodge, to hand on to us the glorious tradition we now enjoy. What do we not owe to them? The one effective remembrance of them is to catch their spirit in our thoughts, to pass on the same kind of faith, unity and zeal they had, in the building an active dynamic American Canadian Grand Lodge! We who are living, and as members of the Craft summoned to work, are merely the rear rank of the vast procession of Brothers, winding its way toward the East, and the Eternal Lodge

above. There is still work to be done: goals to be attained. They will be attained by the unsung heroes of every generation: the workers who can dream and the doers who can hope: by the men who believe in God, in the Ten Commandments and in our Masonic way of life: by men who believe in our ability and opportunity to be builders. May we be found worthy to have our names recorded in HIS endless book of life as faithful workmen of the Craft.

But we can not live in the past. We must live on the presence and posterity always calls to us from the depths of the future so to live that we may pay our debts both to the past and to our Brothers who preceded us. There is only one way in which this Grand Lodge effectively can celebrate this Annual Communication and the Bicentennial; not in speeches, orations and parades, but in maintaining and supporting the basic principles upon which this great Masonic Fraternity is founded and which are responsible for whatever greatness we have attained. And these fundamentals are our belief and conviction of a Divine Heavenly Father; a belief in the immortality of the soul; and our adherence to the teachings of the Great Light in Masonry open on the altar in every regular Lodge.

Masons are builders and leaders, in those Lodges where leadership is vigorous, so is the Fraternity. Where initiative, imagination, planning and execution of plans occurs; where drive and enthusiasm are encouraged; and wherever possible the last resort of Lodge consolidation is avoided, the Masonic organization flourishes. In these Lodges, the Officers and Brothers plan their work, then work their plan. In other words: good things do not just happen. Brothers make them happen. Sound, strong, flexible, active, consistent leadership is the secret to success in reaching the goals. We should do our best to maintain it. The time is now! The winds of stress are strengthening, when they are constructively used.

We will use them in the coming year: through District seminars or workshops, jointly sponsored Lodge communications on days of special Masonic or historic significance, through a Grand Lodge Charity Ball commemorating the 15th Anniversary of this American Canadian Grand Lodge.

Masons must dwell together in Unity and exemplify an oneness among all Masonic Bodies and our sponsored Youth organizations. The leadership of each group must work with that of all the others. I realize that this may be a big order, but I am just optimist enough to believe it will be done. The entire family of Masonry works hand-in hand together, realizing the necessity of cooperation for the good of our Fraternity; I believe we must hang together, or we will hang separately. We must achieve a new and evolving unity in all of the Masonic related bodies. "We have plenty of time to do what we ought to do, but not an hour to spare".

My Brothers, this Annual Communication salutes our state side Brothers in the Bicentennial Year because we are inextricably linked with the forging of this good land, the country of most of our Brothers, in 1976 we will keep alive the Spirit of the Bicentennial abroad through Masonic communications with English speaking Freemasonry in England, Belgium and Germany.

We who labor in the vineyards of Freemasonry are among the most fortunate men alive! We are in the right place at the right time for we possess in our Masonic teachings the building stones with which to erect a house of ethics and character, of integrity and faith. The need was desperate in 1776 and men of Masonic character met the challenge. The need is as desperate in 1976.

And we shall meet our challenge with a solemn vow, bannered in my theme of the year which tolls loud and clear in unison with the Liberty Bell:

"I pledge Allegiance to Freemasonry "

This confession encompasses the teachings of our fraternal order and demands the best that is in us: the sanctification of our lives, the purification of our souls, the ordination of our spirits, it is by our actions that the world shall know us. They are our mark upon our work, just as surely as were those left by our ancient Brethren upon the stones of the great cathedrals.

I pledge allegiance to Freemasonry: not alone in respect of its glorious past or its present significance to ourselves and the world; it embodies a continuing avowal of our fidelity to its noble principles and aims. Our pledge embraces devout gratitude to the Almighty for the blessings with which HE endows us. But we ourselves have to come up with the endeavor. It inspires our ardent prayers, that all Master Masons through the ensuing year may hold their hands to their hearts, in testimony of their sincerity to strive on to finish the work we are in.

I pledge allegiance to Freemasonry: and as we salute Freemasonry throughout the world, may we never fail to remember and adhere to its fundamentals. This allegiance is our love and devotion, our re-dedication and re-obligation, where youth may find its consecration and age its consolation. Assist me my Brothers, in enabling your Grand Lodge to renew daily our physical strength and Masonic activity, as only you can do!

I pledge allegiance to Freemasonry: Masonic precepts will help our Grand Lodge retain our inspiring aspirations while adapting to a new age; this is our commitment to our Order. Our Masonic teachings are commonly shared energy, they are a protection for good, channeled discipline, work in the yet unfinished Sanctum Sanctorum. And Freemasonry has no image, but every individual Master Mason has an image. I am, you are, we are Freemasonry's image, its

spirit and its energy, its conscience and its memory bank. It is apparent to me that the Supreme Architect has set out the duties each of us has to perform, and I have trusted in HIS will with the knowledge that my trust is well founded.

I pledge allegiance to Freemasonry: let us today rededicate ourselves to new efforts as Masons. If new difficulties arise, we must only put forth new exertions and proportion our efforts to the exigency of the times, let us demonstrate our confidence in our beloved American Canadian Grand Lodge, and in a future that will flow from the glory of the past.

I pledge allegiance to Freemasonry: and now I look forward to the trials of each day, and with HIM supporting me, I fear no man's way. In times of prosperity, let us fill our hearts with thankfulness; and in the days of trouble our trust in HIM shall never fail. We must be firm, frank, deeply involved; hide not our light under a bushel basket, but expose to the world our most valuable tenets; humility and education make a Mason!

I pledge allegiance to Freemasonry: let it be known to the whole world what our Brothers most desire and as our German speaking Brothers petition the Almighty Father in their native tongue:

*"im Licht lass mich wandern, heut' und für immer;
und wenn verlöscht des Lebenslichtes Schimmer,
lass mich im Lichte gehen, in jenem anderen, das ewig ist.
Lass dessen Glanz und Heil durchwirken was ich bin und tu auf Erden;
und dann, wenn meine Füße müde werden
und aus meiner Hand für immer das Werkzeug meiner Tage niederfällt,
bestrahe noch die allerletzte Schwelle!"*

And now let it be known how English speaking Freemasons invoke the aid of Deity.

"In light permit me to walk, today and forever: and when the Light of my earthly existence is extinguished, let me continue by aid of that other "eternal Light; may its sparkle and brightness be interwoven with all that I am, and that which I do on earth; and when my weary feet shall tire, and from my grasp shall fall forever the working tools of life. May that very last threshold be ablaze with the eternal rays of Truth!

And so mote it ever be!

*/s/ Hugo Thomas
Grand Master*

THE FUTURE OF MASONRY

When was the last time you went to see a Rainbow Girl at prayer?

When did you last show a Jobie just how much you care?

When did you give a friendly shake to the hand of a DeMolay?

Regardless how long, it's too long.

Why not do it today?

For here is the future of there Masonic Lodge,

in these youngsters who meet in our halls.

They are looking for guidance;

Let us not ignore their call.

In us they see their future and it depends on what they see,

As to whether they'll drop out and leave us,

Or go on into Masonry.

Margie Harned

I am Freemasonry

I was born in antiquity, in the ancient days when men first dreamed of God. I have been tried through the ages, and found true. The crossroads of the World bear the imprint of my feet, and the cathedrals of all nations mark the skill of my hands. I strive for beauty and for symmetry. In my heart is wisdom and strength and courage for those who ask. Upon my alters is the Book of Holy Writ, and my prayers are to the One Omnipotent God. My sons work and pray together, without rank or discord, in the public mart and in the inner chamber. By signs and symbols I teach the lessons of life and of death, and the relationship of man with God and of man with man. My arms are widespread to receive those of lawful age and good report who seek me of their own free will. I accept them and teach them to use my tools in the building of men, and thereby, find direction in their own quest for perfections much desired and so difficult to attain. I lift up the fallen and shelter the sick. I hark to the orphan's cry, the widow's tears, the pain of the old and destitute. I am not church nor party, nor school, yet my sons bear a full share of responsibility to God, to country, to neighbor and themselves. They are freemen, tenacious of their liberties and alert to lurking danger. At the end I commit them as each one undertakes the journey beyond the vale into the glory of everlasting life. I ponder the sand within the glass and think how small is a single life in the eternal Universe. Always have I taught immortality, and even as I raise men from darkness into Light, I am a way of life.

I am Freemasonry.

Ray V.
Denslow.