



56th ANNUAL ADDRESS OF
HONORABLE VERNON SCOTT
M.:W.: GRAND MASTER

GREETINGS:

Twelve months, one year, has passed again. From all sections of this great jurisdiction of ours, we have gathered once again to experience and participate in and enjoy the reality and truth of that great axiom of the first experience each of us had in Masonry, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in Unity", and we have also come for the purpose of constructive endeavor for the benefit of more than seven hundred brothers whom we represent.

In going back thru early proceedings I ran across a prayer by our first Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother J.C. Logan, in which he said, "And will thou graciously grant us the opportunity of service", and he has watched over us and helped us in our growth and prosperity. We are thankful that in his sight we have been accounted not altogether unworthy of His divine grace and assistance. So again 52 years since Past Grand Master J.C. Logan made that petition to the Grand Architect of the Universe, we again repeat, "Lord will thou graciously grant us the opportunity of service". And not forgetting the landmark of faith and our intimately close relationship with the Divine Architect of the Universe that was the strength of our forefathers, we shall pause here, ask the Worshipful Grand Chaplain to approach our Sacred Altar and lead us in song and prayer. For we shall begin this great undertaking by placing our hands and keeping our hands in the hands of God, for His way and the light that He sheds is more sure than any known.

SONG - PRAYER by the Worshipful Grand Chaplain

It is a distinguished honor conferred upon me by the constituency of this Most Worshipful Grand Lodge that I am permitted to present to you my third Annual Report. I appreciate highly the very great honor you have seen fit to bestow upon me. With the honors and privileges also comes responsibility and obligation. I give you assurance I have done everything within my powers to fulfill all honors and obligations. With the increased business of the Grand Lodge and stepped up tempo of our programming in special fields I have taken more time from my private and business life than ever before. It has been rewarding and I do not regret one stimulating moment spent for the welfare of our fraternity.

Their passing gives a graphic lesson to us left behind. For progress in the religious life we need three daily companions: the spirit of repentance, the spirit of humility and the spirit of adoration. The first is exemplified by the psalmist saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner".

The second and third combine in John the Baptist's, "There cometh one.. .after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose., and in the Wise Men's, "We have seen his star in the East and are come to worship him". Cultivating the spirit of repentance, of humility and adoration we prepare the highway of the Lord into our hearts. The valleys of indifference, insensitiveness, faithlessness and over-anxiety are filled up. The mountains of pride and self sufficiency are brought low. We go forward toward the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. WE SHALL PAUSE FOR A MOMENT OF SILENCE TO THEIR CHERISHED MEMORY. As Isaac Watts wrote:

O God, our help in ages past
Our hope for years to come:
Be Thou our guide while life shall last,
And our eternal home.

STATE OF THE CRAFT

Progress has been made in all fields of endeavor this year. We are more than pleased with the willingness that so much of the membership has shown in assuming responsibility this year. With a few exceptions every Grand Lodge officer has been utilized in the planning and programming.

R.W. Sylvester J. Lake, Grand Senior Warden, has chaired the committee on preparing changes in our Grand Masonic Relief Department and has done extensive research on new methods to overcome our short comings in this program, while at the same time doing his very fine job as Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence. R.W. W.B. Foster, Grand Junior Warden, has been the coordinating officer between the Grand Master and the Entertainment Committee of the Grand Annual Communication this year. Worshipful Brother A. Colvin, Grand Junior Deacon, has begun an excellent job as State Director of the Pythagorean program for the State of Washington. R. W. George Jordan, Grand Treasurer, proved himself more than capable for the job, and again did an excellent job as representative of the Grand Lodge on the Guidante Clinics this year. W. Bro. Chase, D.D.G.M. #4, began to coordinate this program on the east side of the State. R.W.E.A. Douglas has extended himself this year in the number of visits he has made throughout the Jurisdiction to assist in implementing our programming. W. Bro. Gideon, 33°, Chairman of the Finance Committee, has seen that portion of our program falling outside our budget has not lagged. Joseph I. Staton, P.G.M., has assisted in special duties and fashioning By-Laws for the U.D. Lodge and for one lodge that did not have a set of By-Laws. The Grand Trustee Board has given me full cooperation and assisted in important decisions.

W. Bro. Peterson, W.M. of Eureka Lodge, has flown some 2,000 miles in Japan to assist in the business of the Prince Hall Fraternity of Washington. James L. Wasson, P.D.G.M, and his committee has been working to clarify our laws.

Last, but far from least, R.W. Louis Solomon, Grand Secretary, who has done a splendid job of renovating and implementing his office this year to make so much of the work easier for me and the lodges. There is W. Bro. Bert Harris, Grand Publicist, R.W. Bro. Moss, Past Grand Secretary and Grand Historian, etc. Obviously the remainder of the list of brothers who have given their time and talent to this great work is so lengthy that it precludes individuality, but I feel there are others whose work cannot remain anonymous that I shall name later. But the work of all these men would have been nought without the cooperation of each member of every individual lodge. For they are the bulwark of our deliberations. On their willingness to support our program depends its success. Surely this year in particular the Committee on Clandestine Masonry and I could not have devoted so much time to this phase of our work had we not been confident that the efforts in other phases of our work were progressive and continuous. I did not visit all of the lodges of our Jurisdiction individually this year because we met many of the Worshipful Masters, Wardens and Brothers in our District meetings. However, with the combined visits of the Deputy Grand Master, Grand Lecturer, Grand Senior Warden, Grand Junior Warden, Grand Treasurer and Grand Secretary, every lodge but Apple Blossom Lodge in Wenatchee, Eureka Lodge in Japan and Cherry Blossom Lodge, U.D., in Japan has had one or more visits to it. In these visitations the individual lodges have shown an intense interest in the programming and, activities of the Grand Lodge. This interest has revitalized individual lodge activities and as you will find out tomorrow has had a tremendous impact upon communities and Masonic standing throughout the state. Again this year as in the past two I cannot stress too strongly adequate programming and carrying our interests and abilities into community endeavor. The choice in Masonry is between strength and weakness. The craft is not in danger of becoming impotent. We have shown a healthy increase in numbers this year. We shall and must be dedicated to devotion to our ideals and principles and we shall survive under the intense competition of secondary values with which we are faced today.

Again this year the District Deputy Grand Masters are one of our most valuable servants and are alert men of courage, mature judgment and wisdom. They have exerted their influence in every field of our endeavors this year, arranging district meetings, assisting worshipful masters in their problems. Sentinels watching the behavior and activities of the clandestine groups in the state. Their earnest zeal for our well being is to be highly commended.

It was necessary to arrest the jewel of the office of the Worshipful Master of Cherry Blossom Lodge U.D. this year. Due to the great distance and unusual circumstances it was impossible to follow prescribed custom in ordering a trial. Eureka Lodge is 600 Air miles from Tokyo Complex where Cherry Blossom Lodge resides. Actually Eureka Lodge had jurisdiction to hold the trial.

However, it would be impossible for them to transport the brothers or offender in either direction in sufficient numbers to carry out said action. I therefore deputized W. Brother Peterson, W.M. of Eureka Lodge, to proceed to Tokyo Complex and preside over the trial.

I was not satisfied with the findings or decision the brothers of Cherry Blossom Lodge U.D. arrived at in the trial and have referred the findings to a special commission at this Grand Lodge. W. Brother Peterson is to be commended in the manner he has extended himself, handled the situation from its inception and his appraisal of the leadership of Cherry Blossom Lodge since this incident. W. Brother Bostey, placed as Worshipful Master of Cherry Blossom Lodge U.D. now, is capable, well versed in Masonic work and a gentleman and Christian. The membership is healthy and it will be my recommendation this year that they be granted a Charter, so as they will be entitled to all the rights and privileges of this Most Worshipful Jurisdiction.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

During the year I have had correspondence or have personally met every one of the forty-one Grand Masters, with whom we have fraternal relations. I am happy to say that our relations with all of our Sister Jurisdictions are the finest ever enjoyed by our Jurisdiction. The exchange of ideas and problems with the Grand Masters of Oklahoma, Massachusetts, Iowa, Michigan, Washington, D.C., Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Alabama, Mississippi and Texas, to mention a few, have been most helpful.

I was able to visit the Annual Grand Communication of the M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of California, which was held in Portland, Oregon immediately following our Grand Communication. Deputy Grand Master J. Allen and R.W. E.A. Douglas, Grand Lecturer were also in attendance. We were presented, given Grand Honors, escorted to the East and several of us gave short talks. It was a delightful experience.

It was marvelous to observe Grand Master Herbert A. Greenwood preside and make such efficient use of the programming. We had a very delightful morning.

SCHOLARSHIP AND YOUTH

We have completed the third year of our Scholarship Program. I am happy to say that every boy or girl that was a recipient of one of our scholarships is still in college and progressing nicely. Mr. Isaac Logart Payne, one of the recipients of two years ago, has been appointed to the Air Force Academy in Colorado. The first man of color to receive such an honor from the West Coast. P.G.M. Joseph I. Staton, under whose tenure of office this program was started, will make this report to you this year. We find we are still in the formative stages of this program and have many phases of it to perfect yet. The largest one I feel is to gain the interest of the brothers in the subordinate lodges in this program to such an extent that they will go out and search for outstanding students of our race to participate. With a statistical report showing over 23,000 Negro males above the age of 21 years, in our Northwest, five applicants this year was not representative.

A grass roots interest must develop so that each and every Mason will be dedicated to assist youth and avail them of the programs we have to offer.

R.W. Bro. George Jordan will again this year make the report of our very fine participation in the Guidance Clinics for the third year. He has given much time and work to this program these years. We must begin to develop more men in this field to assist. His activities as Grand Treasurer, Clandestine Commission, Guidance Clinics, raising a family and taking care of his job surely tax his time and energy.

W. Bro. Colvin will make the initial report on the Pythagorous work. I know this will prove of interest to you. This also is a program we shall have to activate from the grass roots level.

The one perplexity in these programs in the same as the first two years of my office. Again this year we found the membership will not make voluntary contributions on Prince Hall Day in sufficient amounts to carry these or support these programs. Atlas Lodge, a lodge of only five members contributed \$20.00. We asked one dollar per member this year which would have been sufficient to carry on all phases of programming. If the membership of our Jurisdiction had taken a realistic view of our responsibilities, sober judgment would have revealed that this was a minimum workable amount, not a wild dreamy maximum. The result of such judgment could not possibly have averaged the 21 cents per member which was actually received. Here again a great share of this responsibility is yours. It proceed from the premise that though authority can be and often is delegated, responsibility cannot be at this level and no matter how much our rightful responsibility we succeed in placing in the laps of others, our own remains undiminished. I am not satisfied, nor do I believe you are, with the effort we are putting into this phase of our charitable works, on an individual basis. It will be necessary to place this program on a pay-as-you-go basis this coming year. Instead of asking for a voluntary contribution of a dollar on Prince Hall Day from the membership, we return Prince Hall Day contributions to the lodges for their individual charities and contributions to the churches and pay a set fee of one dollar per year to the Grand Lodge to carry on this worthy program. I pray you will see the wisdom of this recommendation and accept it for the good of our youth and our order.

N.A.A.C.P. Legal Redress Program: I shall give you a more detailed report of this phase of the work in my report on the Conference of Grand Masters. I shall tell you though that this program is one that is entirely subscribed and underwritten by Prince Hall Masons. It is the department that is initiating a change in the American way of life for all minority groups. We must take our place and make more than token participation in this charity that is for the useful service of humanity. I shall make recommendation this year that we contribute thirty-five cents per member to this service which affects our welfare as much in the West as it does our fellow brother in the South and Midwest. I know you will support me in this worthwhile request for this charity of ours--truly the greatest man-conceived force on earth, dedicated to the proposition of obtaining, by legal resources, first class citizenship for all.

MASONIC RELIEF

Due to the unusual number of deaths the first five months of this year it was necessary for us to place a special assessment on the membership to assure being able to contribute up to \$200.00 to each lodge to assist in the welfare of a deceased brothers' family and not finish the year deeply in the red in this department.

We were informed by Mr. Hall, Deputy Insurance Commissioner, two years ago, if we continued with the program as now written it would be a suicidal pathway from a financial standpoint for us. According to the Commissioner's scale of life expectancy in our age bracket we may expect the grim reaper to visit us more frequently this coming year than the one we have just experienced. The special assessment levied was passed by a majority of the subordinate lodges to run until this setting of the Grand Lodge, at which time a new program would be presented to it. I appointed a committee, chaired by R.W. Sylvester J. Lake, who has had this under study this year and who, with his committee, will present several workable programs to you. I know you will be farsighted enough to accept the facts and recommendations of the committee and adopt a plan that will not force the Grand Master to take similar action as was necessary last year or jeopardize the savings of this Most Worshipful body.

In summation of the important programs of Our Clandestine Litigation, Grand Masonic Relief, Scholarship and Youth Program and last, but not least, the assistance we shall afford the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Research Department, this is indeed a crucial moment in a critical period of our lives. Therefore, we have no time or place for slackers here, nor in our fraternal system. This is no time for petty jealousies and bickering. They must be abandoned and ignored immediately and time and energy must be spent only on those endeavors that will be conducive to the accomplishments of the highest ideals of solidarity in our fraternity. And, as we deliberate, let it be for the advancement of this noble institution of Prince Hall Masonry rather than for the intent of personal gain, for life is too short to be spent in confused abrasions of human frailties. I present to you the challenge of completing this work at hand and of continuing united to bring to fruition the kind of Masonic system among Prince Hall Masons that will yield the largest increments of social welfare, respect and service to our Fraternity, to our community and to the State.

OUR ADOPTIVE RITE

Many years ago our predecessors saw the need for the Order of Eastern Star's being given official status with Prince Hall Masons. They therefore accomplished what is known as "Our Adoptive Rite."

During this year, as last, the Prince Hall Grand Chapter, Order of Eastern Star and the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington and its Jurisdiction have exchanged friendly greetings. The Worthy Grand Patron, William L. Hawkins, the Worthy Grand Matron, Myrtle Pitts and I, your Grand Master, have worked together in a sincere and friendly basis, exchanging ideas and during the year they have been given a better understanding and coordination of our activities during this annual communication.

Again this year we urge all Prince Hall Masons to give assistance to our Adoptive Rite and support them in all of their endeavors. I further recommend that we send a personal Greetings by proceeding to visit the Grand Order of Eastern Star during this Annual Grand Communication.

Observations:

We found the District Meetings were better attended this year than in previous years. The coordinating of the programming and organization by the District Deputy Grand Masters was well planned and executed, which showed many hours of work was behind the meetings. Guiding Star Lodge No. 6 was also well attended and everyone present showed interest in the work at hand. My message to each Lodge and District this year was the same, varying to a very small degree to the need and the information desired. Progress on our Clandestine litigation, masonic education, youth and education, legal redress department of the N.A.A.C.P. and the coming Guidance Clinics, were the main points of my address, and last but not least the necessity of correcting our Grand Masonic Relief Department. In every case I was royally received and welcomed. The delightful banquets following each occasion I shall long remember. I am sincerely appreciative of the hospitality and respect shown me at all times.

Special trips for business of combating clandestine groups:

August 9, August 30, September 21, November 16, January 24, April 18, June 13, and Friday, June 26 for Depositions in Seattle.

Decisions:

January: The law restricting or prohibiting donations by the Grand Lodge to protect the several lodges from nuisance letters was not placed on our books with the intent to prohibit lodges from entering into worthy and deserving charities on a community or jurisdictional basis.

I therefore ruled it was permissible for a lodge to make a charity contribution to a church -whose place of residence was within the state but not in the same city as the lodge resided. I further cautioned the lodge it was not advisable or expedient to deplete its charity department in one act of charity, for in the unforeseeable future a charity of serious nature affecting the lodge may confront it and tax its resources. They should take consideration of the reserves in their treasure, their probable income of that department for the year to replace said income and prospective charities in the future.

April: Ruled a Lodge could not send a letter to the District Attorney's Office in behalf of a member who had become involved with the law.

May: Ruled it was permissible for a Lodge to change its By-Laws to increase its dues so as to become solvent.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That each subordinate lodge include in its program the unstinted support of the NAACP.
2. That each Prince Hall Mason, a member of the Grand Lodge of Washington, pay to the Grand Lodge ten cents per quarter that shall be a special fund designated the Prince Hall Legal Redress Fund for the N.A.A.C.P. These monies to be paid to that department (Prince Hall Legal Research Department, N.A.A.C.P.) at the Conference of Grand Masters following the report of the Honorable Thursgood Marshall Progress Report to the Grand Masters.
3. That the Special Committee on the revision of the Grand Masonic Relief Department recommendations be accepted and adopted.
4. That all commitments to the Grand Masonic Relief Department that occurred after June 20th (closing date of our books) to the convening of this Grand Lodge be paid from the funds in the department, if there is a balance left in that department and if not, paid from the Grand Masonic Charity Department, so as the new program shall begin on an unencumbered basis.
5. That a standing committee be formed under the Grand Historian's Department on "Members in the Armed Forces", who will gather the names and service records of these brethren who are presently serving or have ever served this country as members of the Armed Forces and this data be compiled and made a permanent record of the Grand Lodge. I consider these records to be important as they will show the participation of our members in the defense of our country.
6. That this M.W. Grand Lodge endorse the Order of Pythagorans as now established on a national basis through the Conference of Grand Masters.
7. That the voluntary basis of Prince Hall Day collections to defray our Youth and Education Department be dropped and the collection of funds on that day be returned as previously to the charity department of the subordinate lodges, and an equitable method of underwriting this department be instituted by the Grand Lodge under the following regulation: That each M.M. of this Jurisdiction shall pay twenty-five cents a quarter to this department. This will place this department on a pay-as-you-go basis and shall provide adequate finance for the departments of Scholarships, Guidance Clinics, Pythagorans and each and every brother will have the honor and privilege of sharing the promotion of these charities of ours which take care of our own.
8. That the Grand Lodge contribute forty dollars to assist in defraying the expenses of the Conference of Grand Masters, as has been done the past two years.
9. That a committee be appointed immediately following this Grand Lodge for the purpose of planning and fashioning the entertainment of the Conference of Grand Masters in Seattle, Washington, in 1961.
10. That the Grand Lodge include in its annual budget the expense of the Grand Master, or in his stead some eligible representative, of this Grand Lodge, attending the Conference of Grand Masters and representing this Most Worshipful Jurisdiction.

11. That the Grand Lodge contribute fifty dollars to the Conference of Grand Masters Prince Hall Commission on Clandestine Masonry.
12. That the Grand Lodge of Washington permit the membership to begin to use King Solomon ritual in their Masonic studies as I find many of the younger brothers strongly in favor of the cipher work and are willing to learn it.
13. That the code commission in its preparation of the next edition of the code shall include a set of laws which will control and govern the operation and functioning of all auxiliary clubs, associations, corporations, etc. and that the former is strictly amendable to the lodge of the Grand Lodge and that the former cannot exist without the authority and consent of the latter.
14. That a standing committee on Public Relations be a part of this Grand Lodge to weld a strong link of recognition between our Prince Hall Fraternity and other civic bodies.
15. That a complete audit of the permanent records of the Grand Lodge be made this year, and after said audit, if there are any missing annual proceedings, pictures of former annual communications, records, etc., the information shall be released to the jurisdiction so these valuable and necessary documents, records and pictures may be assembled while there is still time to do so. (I am certain many of our elder citizens of our fraternity have duplicates of these laying in attics and basements and will be more than happy to assist in seeing our records and history are complete and are preserved.)
16. That the Grand Lodge sanction the action of the Shrine in their organization of the Sentinel Credit Union for the benefit of the Prince Hall Family.
17. That a charter be granted Cherry Blossom Lodge U.D., now fairly well established on a permanent basis in Tokyo Complex and having conformed with the regulations concerning a U.D. Lodge.

CONCLUSIONS

The official acts have been many and varied. The office of Grand Master has necessitated a tremendous amount of time and energy this year. It has been a pleasure to serve you. I would again like to thank this Most Worshipful Grand Lodge for having elevated me to the Grand East, an honor that only a few come to realize. If any good things have developed during my tenure, it was accomplished only with your cooperation and support. I pray I have been a credit to our Noble Fraternity in my labors and my conduct of your affairs both at home and away from home. I wish to thank all that have labored with me in the work this year. You are entitled to wages. Nothing could have been done had you not stood firmly behind all of our endeavors and endorsed our methods of proceeding with the important work at hand, that is not only for the betterment of our Most Worshipful Jurisdiction but the welfare of Prince Hall Masons throughout the world. As I have said before, and feel that every Grand Master before me felt the same way, that no man can fill the high office of Grand Master, carry the weight and duties successfully without an ever present awareness of his own inadequacies.

May our Grand Lodge grow numerically, grow in godliness, in devotion to service and may we never loose sight of the Masonic truths that are found in our ceremonies, obligations and our rituals, and may we continually strive to live up to them -- we shall never then have any fears of the future. In closing may I repeat and may we all say deep down in our hearts the prayer our first M.W. Grand Master, the Honorable J.C. Logan, gave fifty-two years ago nearly to the day to this Most Worshipful body, "Lord will thou graciously grant us the opportunity of service".

Fraternally submitted,

**W. Vernon Scott,
Grand Master of Masons**