



**64th ANNUAL ADDRESS OF
HONORABLE LOUIS R. SOLOMON
M.:W.: GRAND MASTER**

Greetings:

We most sincerely, cordially and fraternally welcome you to this our sixty-fourth annual grand communication, and again hoping that here we shall spread the cement of Brotherly Love and Affection, whereby, that when our deliberations are concluded each of us may express our sincere pleasure for having been here.

We shall take this opportunity, on behalf of our Grand Lodge, to thank our host lodge, Egyptian Lodge #44, F. & A.M. and our Grand Entertainment Committee, whose collective attendance to responsibility has worked diligently on our behalf, to make our stay here pleasant and memorable.

Sixty-four (64) years ago a courageous, visionary and dedicated small group of Master Masons met in assembly in the City of Seattle, Washington, fully realizing that Prince Hall Masonry in this state was standing at the cross roads. The number and magnitude of their problems demanded that decisions and actions were necessary then, if Prince Hall Masonry was to flourish and progress in this state and jurisdiction, and without making these decisions and taking these actions, Prince Hall Masonry in this state surely would long ago have floundered on the rocks of despair. Out of this assembly our Grand Lodge was born. The fruits of their decisions and actions that we inherited gave to us the privilege and the right to meet in this convention today.

Now today, sixty-four (64) years later, we are again standing at the cross roads. The magnitude of our problems is as great as were our founders. We sincerely believe that this group of intelligent Prince Hall Masons is prepared and willing to make the necessary decisions and to implement them with action, so that our great fraternity may continue to progress and flourish in our Jurisdiction. We admonish you to listen attentively to the several reports and recommendations, whereby you may be able to make intelligent decisions. I am fully convinced that should our deliberations produce outstanding decisions we shall experience an unprecedented growth and prosperity in the years ahead in this jurisdiction.

NECROLOGY

“As we are born, that moment, also we begin to die.” In conformity to ancient Masonic usage, we here are assembled in the character of Master Masons with deep heart-felt sincerity and affection, to recall the passing of many brothers with whom we have labored and loved in the pursuit of our avocation.

Although we have assigned each in his turn to the grave, in truth we realize that in the spring time of the early morning beyond this veil of tears surely we shall meet again.

The Supreme Grand Master has with care selected **nine** of our faithful and beloved brothers to drop forever the working tools of life, since our last annual communication. We shall now call upon our Grand Chaplain to offer up prayer for the living in solemn memory of our departed brothers...AMEN. I want to express my thanks to the Grand Chaplain. The prayer was needed.

STATE OF THE CRAFT

It has been our distinct pleasure and honor to have served as your Grand Master for another year. There have been many problems to face, many decisions to make and a tremendous amount of time spent in travel and trying to do the many things that are required of this office. We are pleased and happy to report that the true spirit of Prince Hall Freemasonry prevails throughout this Grand Jurisdiction. Lodges in all areas of our jurisdiction have shown very definite progress in spite of the many problems that have faced them, with the exception of our British Columbia and Montana lodges. Atlas Lodge No. 21 of Victoria, B.C. had declined in membership and interest to the point where the Worshipful Master. R.W. Brother A.E. Pendray informed this office that the said lodge was unable to meet and to transact its business. He also requested that we pick up the charter. After exploring the situation at length we complied with the request and on December 10, 1966, closed that lodge forever. We issued Grand Lodge Dispensations to all the remaining members with special instructions. True Resolution Lodge No. 16, F. & A.M., Vancouver, B.C., appears to have more than its share of problems. This lodge seems to be at a standstill. No real efforts are made to really take any definite steps toward improvement or progress. Electric City Lodge #48, F. & A. M., Great Falls, Montana: As you know this is a military lodge and a great number of its members have been transferred to other areas. However, the Worshipful Master and the remaining brothers are doing as good a job as possible under the circumstances.

Alaska Lodges:

Our lodges in the State of Alaska are making a very prominent and decisive record for Prince Hall Masonry in that developing state. They have, without doubt, become the force for motivation in their several areas. The devoted and proven leadership of R.W. Richard W. Watts. District Deputy Grand Master, has been the source of inspiration and development in the entire Prince Hall Family in this district.

Japan and the Far East:

These lodges have long since developed into the pride of our jurisdiction. Their acts of benevolence, practices of brotherhood and their great desire to perpetuate Prince Hall Masonry in that area leaves little to be desired. Under the brilliant and dynamic leadership of R.W. Brother .John E. Peterson, D.D.G.M. this district continues to remain worthy of emulation.

Districts No. 1 & No. 2

During this Masonic year these two districts, under the capable and willing leadership of R.W. James W. Davis and R.W. Harold Bond, District Deputies, respectively, have made some remarkable progress. Many new programs and innovations have been planned and executed which have proven once again that brothers who are working together can accomplish great things. These two districts have been the prime movers in most of our Grand Lodges participation programs this year. Our hat is off to the Prince Hall Masons of these two districts.

Districts No. 3 & 4:

R.W. Brother McKinley Yates and R.W. Brother Charles L. Bridges, D.D.G.M. respectively have acted with decorum and ability that has been a guiding beacon to the Prince Hall Masons in their districts. These two districts have joined forces in several programs and activities that have and will prove of great importance to this jurisdiction and to Prince Hall Masonry in general.

In summary, we believe that a large majority of our brothers in all areas of our jurisdiction are beginning to awaken to the many great tasks that lie ahead of us and will now begin to make great strides to keep us in the main stream of progress in our rapidly moving times.

FRATERNAL RELATIONS

We are very pleased to report to you that our relationship with all other Prince Hall Grand Lodges is at its highest point in our long history. We have had the pleasure and the opportunity of meeting and conversing with most of the other Prince Hall Grand Masters. Further evidence of our good relations can be ascertained by the large volume of communications that has been exchanged between our Grand Lodge and the other Prince Hall Grand Lodges.

INTER-FRATERNAL RELATIONS

We sincerely believe that we have reached the acme of relationship with our Adoptive Rite, concordant and appendage bodies. We are now enjoying that due respect and honor that a beloved father expects from his devoted family. This, too, can be determined by the many invitations that we received and by the great many requests for advice and council that came from all parts of our Masonic family.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

We have expended a vast number of hours working with and for many of our community, civic and civil rights organizations. We firmly believe that in these fields of public relations we are now enjoying a place of honor and respect. However, there is one segment of our community life where there is some misunderstanding, viz., the central area of Seattle churches. We are working diligently to clear up this misunderstanding. I shall not attempt to cover public relations or church relations in this message. The Director of Public Relations will cover that field in his report and a special committee will cover our church relations.

CONFERENCES - HONORS - AFFAIRS

August 14, 1966: Our R. W. Deputy Grand Master, Frank Russell, and I met in conference with M. W. Grand Master E. Haskell Johns, Deputy Grand Master Audley Mchaffety and Past Grand Master George Bovington of the M.W. Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Washington (white) to discuss our request for full recognition and intervisitation.

September 2, 1966: I had the distinct honor of being invited to attend and appear as guest speaker for Cascadian Consistory No. 75 on its very wonderful Ladies Nite Affair.

October 7, 1966: We were most pleasantly honored by the Grand High Court of the Heroines of Jericho of the State of California, who awarded to us the honorary degree of the Heroines of Jericho. These honorary degrees were conferred upon us by Sarah Dupree Court No. 19, Heroines of Jericho, Seattle, Washington.

October 16, 1967: We were again honored and pleasingly surprised by the action of the Council of Deliberations for the State of Washington, Ancient, Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Northern-Jurisdiction, U.S.A. We were elected to receive the 33rd. and last degree of Masonry.

February 11, 1966: We attended by invitation from our Grand Worthy Matron. Sister Dorothy J. Foster, a banquet sponsored by Prince Hall Grand Chapter, O. E. S. honoring their recent life members.

May 7, 1967: Attended the 86th Annual Meeting of the United Supreme Council, A.A.S.R. of Freemasonry, Northern Jurisdiction, U.S.A., held at the City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. At this meeting the 33rd. Degree was conferred upon me.

May 11, 1967: I enjoyed the pleasure of attending the Conference of Grand Masters of Prince Hall Masons of America. This conference was exceptionally well attended by the Grand Masters of our sister jurisdictions. The conference theme was "Whither Are We Traveling?" Many programs and problems that are common to most of our jurisdictions were discussed, among these were:

1. "Building and retaining membership in our lodges".
2. "Full Recognition".
3. "Our place in the Civil Rights Movement".
4. "The Prince Hall Mason's duties and responsibilities to his community, his race and his government",

All the subject matter was very well handled and a great wealth of information and inspiration was obtained by all that were in attendance.

June 25, 1966: Once again we enjoyed the good fellowship and the opportunity to visiting our sister jurisdiction in its seventh annual communication, the M.:W.: Prince Hall Grand Lodge, F. & A.M. of Oregon. It convened in its annual meeting, Monday, June 26, 1966 in the City of Portland, Oregon at 9:00 A.M. with the M.:W.: Grand Master Arvel W. Denton presiding. We are very pleased to note that this grand lodge is moving rapidly ahead in all of its endeavors.

SPECIAL AFFAIRS

In the latter part of August a committee was appointed, with R.W. Frank Russell as chairman, to make plans to arrange a suitable banquet or affair, whereby we might present W. Brother James E. Claxton his life membership certificate, which had been granted during our last annual communication. On November 12, 1966 this affair was held in the Tacoma Motor Hotel, Tacoma, Washington. It will long be remembered for the tremendous success that it was. Ill. Brother Russell S. Gideon was the speaker of the evening.

If we were called upon to make a choice as to the most successful, entertaining and pleasing affair that was held by our grand lodge this Masonic year, our choice by a wide margin would be the Northwest Conference of Prince Hall Masons. This conference was held March 11, 1967, Hyatt House Hotel, Seattle, Washington. This affair was generated from ideas offered by our D.D.G.M. #1, R.W. James W. Davis. More than thirty-five individual brothers, divided into seven groups, spent a considerable amount of time in planning and research to bring to us the most informative, inspirational and educational information that has ever been displayed in our jurisdiction at any one time in our long history. Brothers from almost every section of our jurisdiction were in attendance and our lodges that found it impossible to attend did their share in participation, particularly our overseas lodges and Alaska lodges. R.W. Bro. Davis, Chairman and R.W. Bro, Harold Bond, Co-Chairman, produced the lion's share of work. Our esteem gratitude goes to those two brothers and I shall say—"Well done Brothers, Well done".

SPECIAL SESSIONS

We convened our Grand Lodge in special session on the following occasions:

July 31, 1966: For the purpose of laying a cornerstone at Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Bremerton, Washington. We were invited to perform this service by the Rev. Brother C.J. Walker, pastor of the said church. All preparation and arrangements were made by Hamma Hamma Lodge #35, under the guidance of W.M. E.J. Mouton.

October 14, 1966: An occasional Grand Lodge was opened in Tokyo, Japan by R.W. John E. Peterson, D. D. G. M., in our behalf to consecrate, dedicate, constitute and install the officers of O'misawa Lodge #54. Misawa, Japan.

December 10, 1966: We had the sad duty of convening our Grand Lodge for the purpose of performing the last rites for our departed R.W. Grand Trustee. R.W. Bro. Lee Grant Rogers.

March 16, 1967: We again had the sad duty of convening our Grand Lodge for the purpose of performing the last rites for our departed M. W. Brother Hilliard H. Hood, P.G.M.

June 4, 1967: For the purpose of laying a cornerstone at the Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church, Seattle, Washington. We were invited to perform this service by the Rev. B.A. Taylor, Pastor of the church. Our Public Relations Department under the direction of M.W. Brother Johnny Allen did a magnificent job in making this occasion one of the best public affairs in the annals of our Grand Lodge.

GRAND LODGE OFFICERS

We shall take this opportunity and privilege to extend our gratitude and personal thanks to all of our Grand Lodge Officers for the wonderful spirit of cooperation that they have displayed this year. They have been called upon many many times and they have responded to the best of their abilities. We are proud to have had the pleasure of working with such a wonderful staff.

BUILDING FUND

At our last annual communication we brought before you a plan whereby a building fund would be established in our Grand Lodge to assist our constituent lodges in their building efforts. This program was designed to be strictly voluntary. We had anticipated that a large number of our brothers would participate in this effort, knowing full well that our brothers were fully aware of the condition of our temples, halls and meeting places and the acute need to build, remodel or renovate for our own personal pride and use, also for our physical image in our several communities. The building program committee has worked very very hard this year trying to awaken the brothers to this need. We have discussed and lectured in every area of our jurisdiction on this subject and at this date only a very few of our brothers have responded to our pleas. To those brothers that responded by donating the \$100.00 that was requested, we extend our most sincere thanks and to those of you to whom our pleas fell upon deaf ears, we ask you to re-examine your conscience as to your place in our Prince Hall Family.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I offer the following recommendations for your consideration:

1. That this Grand Lodge assesses every brother in this jurisdiction the sum of \$100.00 for building purposes. (Details by special committee).
2. That we organize a lodge of Research and Education and that this lodge be chartered by this Grand Lodge at the proper time, and that the express purpose of this lodge will be to acquire, study and evaluate all Masonic periodicals, books and other information, as well as to prepare in printed form reports at least twice a year and mail the same to our several lodges for their education and information.

3. That the Grand Lodge donates the sum of \$120.00 to the Conference of Grand Masters for the year 1967-68.
4. That this Grand Lodge donate the sum of \$50.00 to the Legal Research Fund 1967-68.
5. That this Grand Lodge authorize our Grand Trustee Board and our Finance Committee to develop plans for and to purchase a certain piece of real property, located in the City of Fairbanks, Alaska, to be used by Midnight Sun Lodge #51, of Fairbanks, Alaska.
6. That this Grand Lodge authorize the Grand Master and the staff of Grand Lodge officers to utilize the necessary finances and to use the good offices of this Grand Lodge for the purposes of developing plans and to project us into the sponsored public housing development under the Federal Housing Authority.
7. That this Grand Lodge grant the authority to the Grand Master, the Finance Committee and the staff of grand officers to prepare and float a 25 year 2-1/2 bond issue (if necessary) for a sum up to and including \$50,000.00 for the purpose of acquiring stocks now owned by several lodges in certain buildings, whereby we may be able to rebuild, remodel or renovate some of the buildings that our lodges are now using.

Humbly and fraternally submitted,

Louis R. Solomon
Grand Master of Masons