



65th ANNUAL ADDRESS OF  
**HONORABLE LOUIS R. SOLOMON**  
**M.:W.: GRAND MASTER**

Greetings:

It is with a deep sense of humility and gratitude that we at this time extend to you, one and all, our most sincere, cordial and fraternal welcome to this, our sixty-fifth annual communication, and it is our hope again that 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.

The honor of being Grand Master comes to only a Few, with it lies a tremendous responsibility to do that which will, create, promote and maintain progress and harmony within the craft. As we end this masonic year, we recognized the aid and the support of the Grand Master of the Universe, without his guidance, as we all know, all our efforts would have been in vain.

Today, we as Prince Hall Masons, must take stock of the fact that every facet of our lives, in this great nation of ours, is expanding and changing so rapidly that we are, as a group, apparently unable to keep up with the ever changing conditions. This nation of ours is expanding, in terms of productivity, the long awaited development and practice of human rights, the level of opportunity, each of these is at a level that did not exist as recently as five years ago. Masonry must move with the times. It must also show advancement in the application of its principles. The framers of the Constitution of these United States did a remarkable job, yet they could not vision the interpretations which have evolved or the many complex situations to which it has been applied; yet it is still the foundation of American life and generations have built upon it to make this the greatest nation on earth. Prince Hall, our founder, was a man prominent in the issues of his time, particularly with respect to men of color. Even in today's time, he would be considered very modern and progressive. I use these examples to emphasize that although we as Prince Hall Masons have basic tenets to which we must adhere, we also must develop in harmony with the world around us or Masonry will wither and eventually die upon the vine,

**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 twelve 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.

### **STATE OF THE CRAFT**

For the third time you have honored me with this most honorable office of Grand Master and I have considered it a distinct privilege and pleasure to have served you. This year we have been faced with a tremendous amount of challenges and problems. We have been called upon to make many decisions and we have traveled more than 20,000 miles in our efforts to fulfill the many assignments that are required of this office.

We are happy to report to you that our Masonic brothers are continuing to make some progress in almost every part of our jurisdiction. We are sad to report that we had to have our District Deputy Grand Master of District #3, R.W. Charles L. Bridges, to journey to Great Falls, Montana to pick up the charter of Electric City Lodge #48, Thereby closing that lodge for all Masonic purposes, We must report that many of our lodges are continuing to experience the lack of attendance at their meetings and therefore are hampered in their efforts to carry out full and meaningful programs.

Our finances and investments have improved this year, as shall be reported to you by the several departments. Our membership in most areas either improved or remained the same.

### **FRATERNAL RELATIONS**

We can state, categorically, that we enjoy fine relationships with all the jurisdictions of the Prince Hall Family and to the Ninth degree with our Adoptive Rite, the Order of Eastern Star, as well as with all the concordant bodies in this jurisdiction. We again enjoyed the opportunity and the pleasure of attending the Conference of Grand Masters of Prince Hall Masons that was held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 2-4, 1968. Most of the Prince Hall Grand Masters and many other present and past grand lodge officers were in attendance. Conference discussions were centered around "Building Model Lodges For This Modern Age."

### **THE GEORGE JORDEN EPISODE**

You will all recall that we reported to you during our last annual' communication that our Grand Treasurer, George Jordan, had misappropriated a large sum of the Grand Lodge's money. At that time I promised that as soon as all details and particulars were known to me that I would inform you of the decision and actions that were taken concerning that matter. That I have done. Also, you will receive other information relating to that subject from the appropriate committees during this session.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

We have spent many many, many hours of time in conference and meetings during this year, in the full circle of community life, fraternal, civic, church, business, education, etc., all in our efforts to equal life's chances for the Blacks Man.

## **CONFERENCES - AFFAIRS - HONORS**

We find space too limited in this message to attempt to bring to you the great many conferences, affairs and meetings that were attended by us during this Masonic year; therefore, we shall say that we enjoyed the honor of being invited and the pleasure of attending.

## **GRAND LODGE VISITS**

Once again we enjoyed the good fellowship and the opportunity of visiting our sister jurisdiction in its eighth annual communication, the M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge, F. & A.M., of Oregon. It convened in its annual meeting, Monday, June 24, 1968 in the City of Portland, Oregon at 9:00 A. M. with the M.W. Grand Master Robert H. Dillard presiding. We are very pleased to note that this grand lodge is moving rapidly ahead in all of its Masonic programs. The entire communication was held at the Holiday Inn.

## **NEW LODGES**

May 11, 1968 our Grand Lecturer, R.W. Brother E.A. Douglas, our Grand Trustee, R.W. Isiah Simon and I traveled to Fairbanks, Alaska for the purpose of creating a U.D. lodge out of a Masonic Club. A Past Master Willie W. Martin was given the special assignment to formulate and organized this Masonic club. Brother Martin performed that task with a display of skill, ability and Masonic knowledge that is certainly a credit to this jurisdiction. May 12 we journeyed to Eielson AFB, along with the Worshipful Master of Midnite Sun Lodge #51, Worshipful Brother Herman L. Smith, the officers of his lodge and a number of his brothers.

Under the brilliant leadership of W.M. Smith the several degrees of Symbolic Masonry were executed in such a manner that any Master Mason would have been proud to have observed--and Arctic Lodge was born.

## **SPECIAL AFFAIRS**

During the last annual communication of this Grand Lodge R.W. Brother A. E. Pendray was awarded two very special honors. 1. Received the high honor of a life membership of this Grand Lodge. 2. Was the first brother in our jurisdiction to receive style and title of Honorary Past Grand Master. During the month of March, 1968 an affair was held at the Epicure Restaurant, Seattle, Washington in honor of M.:W.: Brother A.E. Pendray. During this occasion Brother Pendray received his certificate of Life Membership and the jewels and apron of an Honorary Past Grand Master, along with many beautiful gifts.

The tremendous success of this affair was due primarily to the hard work and diligent efforts of Past Grand Masters Johnny Allen and Joseph I. Staton. Thanks, Most Worshipful brothers, for a job well done.

December, 1967 the lodges of Districts No. 1 and 2 joined together, along with several chapters of the Order of Eastern Star and the Heroines of Jericho in the ceremonies of public installation of officers. These ceremonies were held in the Chamber of Commerce Building, Seattle, Washington. This affair as the largest and most outstanding of its kind that has ever been held in the Pacific Northwest. Your Grand Master was the installing officer and we also received a large number of financial gifts. The huge success of this occasion was due entirely to the brilliant leadership and the tireless efforts R.W. James W, Davis, D.D.G.M., #1 and R.W. Carlton B. Tucker, D.D.G.M., #2.

### **SPECIAL SESSION**

We convened our Grand Lodge in special occasional session on the following occasions; July 18, 1967 we had the sad duty of convening our grand lodge for the purpose of performing the last rites for our departed Worshipful Brother R.R. Lawrence, Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

August 26, 1967 we again had the sad duty of convening our grand lodge in Bremerton, Washington to perform the last rites for our Worshipful Grand Bible Bearer, The Rev. Brother Anthony Modisett.

### **BUILDING FUND ASSESSMENT**

During the last session of this grand lodge we inacted into law a regulation requiring each brother to pay a \$100.00 Building Fund assessment over a period of three years, with a specified amount to be paid each of the three years. Since July, 1967 we have sent to the member of this grand lodge three memorandums and numerous letters to the individual lodges in an attempt to explain the purpose, need and the terms of this assessment as passed by the grand lodge. In addition we have visited the several lodges in the state on two on more occasions to personally explain end answer questions pertaining to this matter. Our building program, which will emerge from this assessment, will become the best thing that this grand lodge has ever accomplished. Other information and details will be furnished by committees during this session.

### **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 fear. 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.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

We offer the following recommendations for your consideration:

1. That the grand lodge authorizes an amendment to our Code by adding a section to the code to be known as the "Department of Buildings."
2. That the grand lodge authorizes a complete revision of Article XV, Section 1 to 4, Chapter I of our By-Laws, entitled "Masonic Relief."
3. That the grand lodge donate the sum of \$120.00 to the Conference of Grand Masters for the year 1968—1969.
4. That the grand lodge donates the sum of \$50.00 to the Legal Research Fund.
5. 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 2½ % bond issue for a sum up to and including \$50,000 for the purpose of acquiring stocks owned by several lodges and chapters in certain buildings, whereby we may be able to build, remodel or renovate some buildings that our lodges may have decent quarters.
6. That the grand lodge, at this session, grants a charter to ARTIC LODGE U.D. of Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion we must say that during our tenure of office as your Grand Master we placed upon the trestle board many plans and programs, some we were able to complete, others are in the several stages of progress and still others had to be discarded; nonetheless, we worked hard and faithful trying our very best to be worthy of this high office. Now that our term of office has reached its conclusion we shall return to you the jewels of this high and honorable office unstained before the eyes of man and now we offer you our most sincere thanks and appreciation for giving us this opportunity of service.

Fraternally submitted

**Louis R. Solomon**