



96th ANNUAL ADDRESS  
**HONORABLE WILLIAM C. RHEUBOTTOM**  
**M.:W.: GRAND MASTER**

Greetings:

If I were to ask you, Brethren, the question that is upper most in your minds on this auspicious occasion, I think that I would be met with the almost unanimous response that your presence here indicates your love and zeal for Masonry.

From all over this broad Jurisdiction, and other Sister Jurisdictions, you have come as proud representatives of one of the oldest and most highly regarded fraternities known among men. An institution that peasant loves, and the nobleman patronizes, one that knows no distinction, should practice no deception, and has endured because of its worth and the blessings that it has brought to the human family. If in life you have no other claim upon the gratitude of men, if fame passes you by, if fortune does not linger but nods carelessly and is gone, if you who have been the recipients of the arts and mysteries of Masonry and the boon that it confers, and have lived up to its magnificent teachings, have practiced its tenets, and tried to inculcate its true Christian spirit and principles, you may boast proudly of the fact that you are a Master Mason.

As Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons for the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington and Jurisdiction, I extend to each and every one of you a warm welcome. I am particularly pleased to welcome our distinguished guests, who are visiting from other Grand Lodges and Jurisdictions. We are honored that you have made it your priority to be with us on this auspicious occasion. We appreciate the opportunity to return the hospitality and friendship our representatives have received while visiting your Grand Jurisdictions.

To the Brethren of Prince Hall Lodges in the Jurisdiction of Washington, I am extremely pleased to see you here. My Brethren, we are at the crossroads of a new era. What we do during the next two days will have a serious effect on the direction this Grand Lodge will take, as we move closer to the new millennium. We, as a Grand Lodge, must position ourselves to effectively respond to changes forth coming in the next century.

My Brethren, at the 96th Annual Communication another page must be added in our history book and new dimensions in the development and expansion of Prince Hall Masonry, whenever disbursed around the globe, are due to the successes that were accomplished this year.

I wish to thank the excellent staff of officers and each of you for your prayers and support. I cannot say enough about the elected officers this past year; they all worked overtime to bring credit to our great Jurisdiction. Not once did I see or experience any unwillingness to meet a new challenge placed before them. Each time I called upon their services, the Deputy Most Worshipful Grand Master, Senior and Junior Wardens, Grand Lecturer, Grand Trustees, and the various committee chairmen and those serving on those committees were always there and willing to take on another task or project.

And, to the appointed Grand Officers, thank you for your excellent services and support as well. I truly, truly appreciate each of you. A special thanks to all my District Deputies for their hard work and support. And, to all our Past Most Worshipful Grand Masters for their heads of wisdom and council.

It is indeed a pleasure for me to stand here today before you, with much humility, and render to you an accounting of my stewardship for Masonic year 1998-99. First, I must say thanks to God for allowing me to serve you, my Brethren, as your Chief Executive Officer. The Bible has always been my guide in my everyday life. This protects me from being robbed of my self-dignity, skills, mental, physical, and economic resources by wolves in sheep's clothing; or those who masquerade as Brother!

I wish to thank my wife, family and my very close friends who I talk to daily for the support they gave me this past year. When the real test came, the Bible and prayer were there to give spiritual and physical strength to carry me through.

The earth is poor since they took their flight,  
But Heaven is richer now that they are there;  
And as their brows gleam with transcendent light,  
Such grown as honest, upright one shall wear.

Unhappily, the names of some Brothers have been removed from the rolls of this Jurisdiction, as we begin this historic 96th Annual Communication of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington. Silence will be the answer as their names are called because they have finished their labors here on earth and have gone on to that Celestial Lodge above, where, Job said: "The wicked cease from troubling; and where the weary be at rest."

Nineteen (19) of our Brothers came to the end of life's toilsome journey and dropped forever the working tools of life during 1998-1999. They were called upon to answer the final roll call, which symbolizes "the purity of life" and the "rectitude of conduct."

We, the officers and members of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the Washington Jurisdiction, extend our heartfelt sympathy to the families of our late brothers, who died during the current Masonic year. They were respected and faithful members of the Craft, and those who knew them best attest to the fact that they were men of integrity and high standards. As we reflect on a well-spent life, we acknowledge their contribution to the Craft.

We commend the hearts and minds of the grieving to the all-wise God, who can heal all hurts, and we ask almighty God to put His arms of love and protection around family members and give them peace.

Though we may not understand all of His actions, we do not challenge or question the decisions of the all wise Master of the Universe. Our hearts are with the families and we pray that God will give them happy memories, and a wealth of love and sympathy. We bow our heads in reverence to the will of God.

## **NECROLOGY**

**1998-1999**

**George A. Williams Jr.**

Daniel Chappie James #72

February 19, 1998

**David Jacobs**

Olympus #45

October 8, 1998

**Frank Bascomb Sr.**

Hamma Hamma #35

June 15, 1998

**Dan L. Ross**

Hamma Hamma #35

October 11, 1998

**James R. Franklin**

Harmony #2

June 20, 1998

**John Ross**

Lee Grant Rogers #61

October 14, 1998

**Ray C. Ford**

Harmony #2

August 4, 1998

**Willie A. Moore Jr.**

Egyptian #44

October 28, 1998

**Andy N. Weathersby**

Abiff #37

August 11, 1998

**Hershell Gill**

Cassia #5

December 1, 1998

**Leland E. Halley**

Harmony #2

August 18, 1998

**Roman W. Fowler**

Egyptian #44

January 7, 1999

**Milton Green**

Egyptian #44

August 23, 1998

**Robert M. Canada**

Cassia #5

January 9, 1999

**Joe E. Benton**

Olympus #45

September 11, 1998

**Ennis W. Daye**

Harmony #2

February 23, 1999

**Earl W. Metz**

Harmony #2

September 28, 1998

**James A. Davenport**

Lee Grant Rogers #61

May 26, 1999

**Elisha Hunt**

Egyptian #44

May 30, 1999

The Necrology Committee will conduct appropriate services at an appointed time.

**STATE OF THE NATION**

The more I think of the condition of our country, the more I appreciate our Masonic Orders. Our country is engaged in a wrenching debate who we are, what we believe in, where we are going, and the role of government (local, regional, state, or federal) in keeping our children and our nation healthy. Our streets and jails are teeming with children and young people that nobody wants or cares about. There has been a new industry introduced to the American economy — that is the Prison Building industry. Today our country is spending 3.65 billion dollars toward the building of new prisons. We have our children in armed conflict with each other, whether it be at school, public outings or at home. We cannot stand by as parents, leaders, teachers, stewards and role models (good Masons are all of these) of our children’s well-being and let them slip away because of ignorance or a failure of courage or commitment.

**Minority Health**

The U.S. Office of Minority Health plans to contact Black organizations of national stature — including the Conference of Most Worshipful Grand Masters — regarding an upcoming Health and Human Services “Healthy People 2000” American Progress Review. This is a review of the health status of African Americans. The government is attempting to reach organizations that have not traditionally been “at the table,” so to speak, when the topic of health and community involvement is addressed.

The Conference of Most Worshipful Grand Masters is invited to work with the agency in an attempt to upgrade health programs that could benefit our citizens.

## **Enrollment for VA Health Care**

Much has been said about the Veterans' Administration's proposals for the future of VA health care. Questions have been raised about new eligibility and enrollment rules for VA health Care. Misinformation has led some veterans to wonder whether they will lose their eligibility for VA health care services if they did not enroll at the VA by October 1, 1998. The answer is, No. Veterans will not lose their eligibility, but in most cases they do need to apply for enrollment by contacting their nearest VA medical center.

## **Funding for Minorities in College**

A bill has been introduced in Congress to prohibit affirmative action in admissions for ~ institution of higher education that receives ~ federal funding (Pell Grants, loans, etc.). This would end affirmative action in every college and university in the United States! Rep. Frank Riggs (R-CA), Chairman of the House Education Subcommittee on Children, Youth, and Families, is planning to offer an Anti-Affirmative Action in Admissions amendment. The amendment would prohibit all institutions of higher education from using affirmative action in its admission decisions. If even one student at the institution receives federal funds (i.e., Pell Grant or student loan), they would be violating federal law under this proposal. Affirmative Action would be illegal even if the school believes it is necessary to insure a diverse student body, or to remedy past or present discrimination.

## **THE CONFERENCE OF GRAND MASTERS**

### **MISSION**

The mission of the Conference of Most Worshipful Grand Masters Prince Hall Masons, Inc. is to identify Masonic and Non-Masonic research subject(s), present the product of that research for use by Jurisdictions so disposed, and publicize appropriate positions and issues at a press conference as desired and necessary.

### **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this Conference of Grand Masters Prince Hall Masons, Inc., shall be to perpetuate fraternal harmony among Most Worshipful Grand Masters of Grand Lodges of the Masonic Jurisdictions; to share constructive ideas, to promote and encourage community involvement with the business sector, to conduct educational workshops and seminars, to support charitable organizations and agencies that assist those persons less fortunate than ourselves; and, to extend strong educational support to our youth through annual scholarships.

## **MEETINGS**

The Conference of Most Worshipful Grand Masters usually convenes on the first or second Thursday in May. The Host Jurisdiction of the Annual meeting is determined by the Time and Place Committee. However, to commemorate our founding father Prince Hall, next year's Conference will be in Boston, Massachusetts. The dates will be May 3-7, 2000.

The Most Worshipful Grand Masters of the Jurisdictions that make up the Prince Hall Masonic family have formed the Conference of Most Worshipful Grand Masters, whose purpose is to foster progress and well-being for Prince Hall Masons, wherever dispersed around the globe. It is an advisory body, assuming no powers except those agreed upon by the Most Worshipful Grand Masters when in attendance at any one meeting.

As a matter of tradition and law by the several Grand Jurisdictions, the following bodies of Free Masonry are recognized as being either concordant, appendant, adoptive, or affiliated:

1. Royal Arch Masons
2. Royal and Select Masters
3. Knights Templar Masons
4. Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite Masons
5. Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order Nobles Mystic Shrine
6. Order of Eastern Star
7. Heroines of Jericho
8. Circle of Perfection
9. Cyrene Crusaders
10. Order of the Golden Circle
11. Daughters of Isis

The above organizations are rooted in symbolic Masonry through the Master Mason or Symbolic Masonry, and by the right of recognition granted by the Jurisdictions represented in the Conference of Most Worshipful Grand Masters. They shall frame their constitutions and by-laws, and administer and enforce such laws pertaining to the governance of their members as long as those laws, rules and regulations, shall not be in conflict with those of the Grand Masonic Jurisdictions in which they reside.

## **GRAND MASTERS VOTE ZERO TOLERANCE ON HAZING**

By unanimous vote, all 39 Most Worshipful Grand Masters present voted to have zero tolerance regarding hazing or any form of violence in any form, when initiating, passing, and raising. It has been reported that there are candidates being so brutalized that some are being hospitalized. There is no way any Prince Hall Mason can justify brutality on a candidate. The Most Worshipful Grand Masters were asked to issue Edicts, Proclamations, etc., so that this terrible problem will be eradicated as soon as possible.

While the problems seem to stem from the military members, it is becoming chronic in all areas where Prince Hall Masonry is found. There is a veiled threat that if it is not curtailed on military bases and among military personnel, Prince Hall Masons will be put on the subversive list. That would be disastrous for all Jurisdictions that have military members. We do ask for cooperation from all Most Worshipful Grand Masters in this matter.

The five topics discussed were:

1. Relationship between Prince Hall Masons and the church.
2. Membership (losses and gains)
3. Leadership Training
4. Outside Funding
5. Non-Prince Hall Masons

Overall, this was a very good conference.

### **FRATERNAL RELATIONS**

We have established a very good relationship with most of our Sister Jurisdictions with the other Prince Hall Grand Lodges. Our tie to these bodies and my personal relationship with Most Worshipful Grand Masters has been a wonderful experience for me. I have gained personal friends whom I feel I can call on at any given time, to assist this Grand Lodge in any worthwhile endeavor.

Presently, there is Jurisdictional dispute between our Grand Lodge and the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Oregon. On July 10, 1999, delivered via Express Mail from Most Worshipful Grand Master Scott of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Oregon, was a letter informing me that at their 39th Annual Communication, the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Oregon approved that they suspend fraternal relationship with us.

I have appointed a special committee to review the document received from Oregon and any other pertinent documents, and submit a report to this Grand Lodge on Tuesday, July 13, 1999.

I am pleased to report that relations between our grand organization of the Prince Hall Family of Washington are good and excellent.

Relations between the Grand Lodge and the Grand Chapter are good. What is at issue is what are the duties, responsibilities, and authority of the Grand Worthy Patron. I have met with both the Grand Worthy Patron and Grand Worthy Matron several times, to resolve the conflict.

Relations with the Prince Hall Grand High Court is excellent, and I have had a cooperative working relationship this past Masonic year.

I must state than an excellent and harmonious relationship existed with Sovereign Grand Inspector General Frank Russell, Deputy of Scottish Rite Masonry, Orient of Washington. I also have similar working relationship with Deputy of the Desert William Spencer and Grand High Priest Larry Williams of the Holy Royal Arch Masons.

The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington and Jurisdiction continues to enjoy a harmonious and productive relationship with the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Washington, F. & A.M. Contrary to some beliefs and perceptions, Prince Hall Masonry has maintained its uniqueness, customs, traditions, and its heritage. There has not been any attempt from either Grand Body to merge, change, or infringe upon each other's sovereignty and I seriously doubt that there ever will be.

On September 8, 1998, D.D.G.M. Morgan and Dr. Hall, and I were received at the United Grand Lodge of England's quarterly meeting. The hospitality and royal treatment we received was indescribable. We received a standing ovation by the 1,500 plus attendees. Right Honorable Lord Farham, the Program Most Worshipful Grand Master, made us feel very special.

The Grand Lodge of Japan allowed our 30th Far East District Session to be held at their Grand Lodge, without cost to the District. We are deeply appreciative to the warm and gracious hospitality shown to our Far East members.

### **STATE OF THE CRAFT**

I am pleased to report that the overall State of the Craft is excellent. It has been said to me during my travels that the Prince Hall Masons of Washington State and Jurisdiction are one of strongest, most cohesive groups of Masons in the world. I am pleased to report that the true spirit of Prince Hall Freemasonry prevails throughout the Grand Jurisdiction, and the overall state of the Craft is excellent. However, in an organization such as this, we always expect some problems as a normal part of our everyday business. We meet those problems, make the necessary decisions, and move on. I feel that I have been a Most Worshipful Grand Master that is sensitive to the needs of those who I was put here to serve, yet mindful of the fact that decisions are based on the needs of the whole, not the individual.

### **STATE OF DISTRICTS**

We have, in the Jurisdiction at present, 64 chartered Lodges. As of this report, our membership is at 2,467. It is a slight increase since last year. But, not as much as our potential shows it should be. There are several Lodges in Districts 1, 2, 5, and 11 that have added new members due to the presence of the military bases in their Districts.

#### **District #1**

The District Deputy reports: This District seems to be on the upswing. He has witnessed the coming together of the Brothers as men and Masons. The District meetings still lack full attendance, however, they are more united than he has seen them in the past. This District will continue to hold each of their Brothers accountable for their actions -- wrong doers and wrong doings will be dealt with.

## **District #2**

The District Deputy reports: Though Lodge Visitations and District meetings have been minimally attended; his concern has been focusing on developing leadership, confidence, motivation, and pride, while educating the Warden and assisting the Worshipful Master on Masonic teachings.

This District continues to do the things Masons should do: Community involvement, works and acts of charity, and youth programs. At Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter, the District is out in the community giving food baskets for the needy and egg hunts for the youth. These are just a few of the many acts of kindness they render.

## **Districts #3 & #4**

Lodges in these two Districts have experienced a slight increase in membership. The Lodges in Yakima and Walla Walla are not functioning as well as I would like them to. Hopefully, and soon, more military people will be permanently stationed at the Yakima Firing Center. Pioneer Lodge #39 appears to be the strength in District #3. In District #4, we hope to attract new members from Fairchild Air Force Base.

## **District #5**

This District includes Lodges located in Everett, Oak Harbor, and Vancouver, B.C., all of whom are doing an excellent job in pursuing Masonry in its truest sense — in ritualistic work, community outreach programs, and in the furthering of true brotherly love and friendship.

## **District #6**

These Lodges are Located in Japan and are doing very well. They are also pursuing Masonry in its truest sense, through ritualistic work, community involvement, and outreach programs and many charitable contributions. Members of these Lodges are subject to short notice deployment to the hot spots in the world -- often leaving the Lodges without their principle officers.

## **District #7**

This District is home to Toni Lodge #46 and Okinawa Military Lodge #68, located in Okinawa, Japan. This District has shown a moderate increase in membership. They are also doing very well in the ritualistic work and an excellent job in its community outreach programs and charitable contributions.

## **District #8**

This District is home to Marianas Travelers Lodge #49, located in Guam. This Lodge is doing very well keeping with the rich traditions of Prince Hall Masonry, and is also excellent in their ritualistic work and community outreach programs.

### **District #9**

This District this past year, as in the previous three years, has found their membership widely dispersed throughout the world in support of many peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts.

Currently, with the latest mission in Kosovo, at least six of their Lodges are fully deployed along with 70% of their membership. Because of the workload and the long hours members left are encountering, it is very difficult for the Lodges to raise funds and meet in a timely manner. Most of the Lodges in this District are meeting the challenge with a large degree of success and are fulfilling all of their financial and administrative obligations. However, some are not so fortunate due to being fully deployed. The remaining Lodges are doing very well in their ritualistic work and in their community outreach programs.

### **District #10**

This District's five Lodges, located in South Korea, are performing very well considering the fast turnover of its members, long field training exercises and the diversity of Masonic organizations operating in Korea. District Deputy Shepard has instituted a campaign to simply get "back to basics," both ritualistically and administratively. They have automated and simplified administrative procedures, assuring continuity throughout the District, Training of leaders in those areas is ongoing, because of the rapid turnover of members.

### **District #11**

This District is located in Puyallup, Spanaway, Lacey, Olympia, and Vancouver, Washington. Two of the Lodges have had a difficult time in keeping some of its members on the rolls. One of the Lodges has lost some of its members because of the Anthrax issue. Several members have optioned to be discharged from the military rather than take the shots. This being said, the remaining Lodges are performing their ritualistic work and community outreach programs in an excellent manner.

### **District #12**

This District is located in the Philippines, and is the home to Mabuhay Lodge #59. This Lodge, although small in number, is very busy performing community outreach programs. In fact, this Lodge was awarded the Lodge of the Year at the 30th Far East District Session, held in Tokyo, Japan.

### **Headquarter Lodge**

D.A.L. Bro. Robert Tucker and WM Sidney Breckenridge have successfully helped many brothers get reinstated in the fraternity. Give the over-whelming number of inquiries about our reinstatement process, and the Headquarter Lodge procedures, we can anticipate that the number of members on the rolls of Headquarters Lodge will soon reach 80.

## **MASONIC EDUCATION & FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES**

In order to establish and maintain contact with our members stationed or residing in other Jurisdictions, we have established study or social clubs. The Deputy-at-Large or Liaisons are responsible for providing our members with enlightening Masonic educational topics and provide informational newspapers and maintain a communications link to the Grand Lodge. These hard working brothers are:

- DAL Mark Heath — covering Washington D.C., Virginia, and Maryland.
- DAL/Liaison Willie Carter — covering Florida and Alabama.
- DAL/Liaison Thurman Jones — covering Tennessee, Kentucky, Kansas, and Missouri.
- DAL/Liaison J.C. Camper — covering Texas and Louisiana.

These brothers are responsible for many of our members maintaining contact with their Lodges. Please keep up the good work.

### **1998-1999 Significant Grand Lodge Programs**

Listed below are the Grand Lodge Programs that a considerable amount of human resources were devoted to, in carrying out the objectives of said program.

- 3-5 Year Planning Committee
- Scholarship & Investment
- Roslyn Cemetery
- Officer Training & Performance Evaluation
- Membership Expansion Committee
- Annual Spring Workshop
- Black, White, & Red Ball
- Committee of Sons of Haiti
- Community Medical Awareness
- Grand Historian
- Knights of Pythagoras
- Non-Prince Hall Masons
- Grand Entertainment Committee
- Special Projects
- Building — Capitol Improvement
- Prince Hall Community Development

## **STATE OF THE CRAFT CONCLUSION**

For many, membership, pure numbers is important. Numbers and totals are important because it is from this source that we derive revenue by which our various charities, philanthropies, capital improvement projects, and other programs are funded. Fewer members mean less revenue.

To overcome this reduction, additional funds must be sought from those who remain dedicated to our principles and purposes, or we adjust our operating budget with current and projected membership. Before the downsizing, or shifting of resources from Europe in 1994-1 995, we had nearly 3,000 members on our rolls.

Since the events in Europe, our strength had dropped to about 2,400 members, thereby reducing our revenue base. While we were having a decrease in funds generated, and once again while our income decreases, our expenses increased. For example, as reported to this Body July 1997, for the 1996-1997 budget year, our income was \$157,827.24, while our expenses were \$192,221.99. This resulted in a negative difference of \$38,394.85. (You may consider the same negative difference of \$38,394.25 for budget year 1995-1996, 1997-1998, AND 1998-1999.) The deficit is attributed to a decrease in membership, unexpected, unplanned capital expenditures, other financial obligations, and unmet financial responsibility by a few Lodges.

In our overseas Districts, we have not been able to find a solution to our age-old problem of maintaining a Brother's interest once he returns to the United States. We have suggested to the Lodges that they communicate with these brothers by sending newsletters, copies of minutes, certified letters and a host of other things. While there are some results, it does not reward our effort. We must continue to attempt other methods of establishing and maintaining control with our members.

The Grand Lodge voted, at our last Annual Session, to increase the Grand Lodge tax. This increase is slowly taking effect; however, the negative difference in each of these years has forced us to tap into our reserves. Therefore, I believe this Grand Lodge should prepare to operate on a more stringent budget for the next few years.

### **Grand Entertainment**

Past Deputy Most Worshipful Grand Master Jesse P. Miller, while attempting to reconcile the Grand Entertainment's Financial Secretary and Treasury's 1997-1 998 report, he discovered some unexplainable discrepancies.

He discovered that eight (8) checks had been written on the Grand Entertainment account in the total amount of \$2,950.00. He further discovered that these checks were not written from their current checkbook series.

An audit conducted by members of the Comptroller Board confirmed Past Deputy Most Worshipful Grand Master Miller's discovery. A Special Committee, appointed by this office, discovered two additional checks were written for \$400.00 each.

A month ago, I was informed by Bro. Miller that the bank informed him of a second account. I have subpoenaed the bank records of the second account. This investigation remains open.

### **3-5 year Planning Committee**

The 3-5 Year Planning Committee recently researched and documented information relating to administrative upgrades, property maintenance, building renovation and emergency building repairs. One purpose of this Committee is to assist and inform the Most Worshipful Grand Master and staff of the status of our physical, technical, administrative, and communication facilities relative to this Grand Body. WB Tommy Terry, the Committee chairman, will render a complete report during this session.

### **Special Community Project**

The Grand Lodge, in concert with Odessa Brown Children's Clinic and the Central Area Motivation Program (C.A.M.P.) sponsored, at no cost to the Grand Lodge, the 1st Annual Seattle Celebration of African-American Philanthropy. This event featured Ms. Ernestine Anderson. We have been applauded by the community for becoming more visible and many said we need to sponsor more, similar events.

## **MASONIC DISCIPLINE**

### **Darius A. Burns — Worshipful Master of Torii Lodge #46**

A Trial Commission convened to consider the case against WM Darius A. Burns of Torii Lodge #46 (located in Okinawa, Japan), who was charged with theft in the amount of \$5,000.00 from his Lodge's Treasury.

There was a unanimous finding of guilty by the Commission.

### **Sentencing Recommendation:**

WM Darius A. Burns be suspended from Masonry -- not time specific.

I, therefore, suspended WM Darius A. Burns for 10 years, with the provision that if he completes restitution to his Lodge, he then may appeal to the Most Worshipful Grand Master or Grand Lodge to reduce said sentence.

### **Homer D. Christopher III, Past Master**

A Trial Commission convened to consider the case against PM Homer D. Christopher III, who was charged with unMasonic conduct (forgery and theft).

The Trial Commission found PM Homer D. Christopher guilty of an unMasonic act. The Commission unanimously recommended that the punishment should be expulsion.

I concur with the Commission's recommendation and, by an Official Act, expelled PM Homer D. Christopher III from Masonry.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Grand Lodge affirm my decision to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Grand Lodge of Washington, to allow Lodges from both Grand Lodges to perform courtesy Degrees with and for each other.
2. That funds received from the Lodges titled "Grand Lodge Assessment" be placed in a special account, to be used exclusively for capitol improvement projects for our buildings, thereby lessening the impact of those funds not coming into the General Fund. The following formula may be used:
  - 1999-2000 Masonic year — 50% of Grand Lodge Assessment funds received should be placed in the Special Account and the other half in the General Fund.
  - 2000-2001 Masonic year — 75% of Grand Lodge Assessment Funds received should go to the Special Account, with 25% going to the General Fund.
  - 2001-2002 Masonic year — All funds received for Grand Lodge Assessment are to go to the Special Account.
3. That Guy J. Wickliffe be granted Emeritus Status as Grand Pursuivant, with 50 years of faithful service.
4. That the following one U.D. Lodge be chartered at this 96th Annual Communication **Perseverance Lodge U.D.**

### CONCLUSION

And so, my Brothers, as I come to a close, I must offer you my personal perception of how I view our organization. Free Masonry, our Free Masonry. The Prince Hall Masons of Washington State emphatically say to its members, "Act on the Square." The assumption is that, just as a building is unreliable and unsafe if not built on the square, so a man's life will only be to the community what it ought to be insofar as it is lived. "On the Square." Living on the square, to all devout and sincere Masons, means the dedication of personal knowledge, acquirements, and possessions to the highest purposes of life.

Some men are known for their knowledge; some for their eloquence and some for their wealth, but Free Masonry does not measure men by these standards. Unfortunately, some members of the Craft do, and find it very difficult to stay with the truth and carry out their promises. Nevertheless, Free Masonry measures men by the presence or absence of love in their souls, love for one another and love for humanity. It endeavors to develop a fraternity of great feats.

Let us not become what the author of the book called "Valley of the Dry Bones." A section of his book is devoted to our attitude toward each other. He goes on to say that many of us are familiar with the crab complex or crab attitude. This expression originated from the nature of crabs in a barrel. If one crab will make an attempt to get out of the barrel, the other crabs will invariably pull him back into the barrel. The crab attitude manifests itself in many ways among some of us, and it can be defined as any negative, unhelpful behavior in which people work against each other.

A true Mason is never knowingly guilty of rudeness, never selfish, never resentful, never glad when other go wrong, but is always hopeful, always patient, and always eager to believe the best.

He is generous, mild, and modest; his hand is ever ready to lift the fallen, cheer the disheartened, help the widows and orphans, and give relief and comfort to those in distress.

From my personal messages, my Brothers, I have represented this great Grand Lodge as your Most Worshipful Grand Master not because of my ego. I serve because of my love for this Grand Body. I have walked upright in all of my endeavors in representing each of you in a manner that demonstrated to the world the best side of Masonry and the image of our Brothers. I have always tried to be a gentleman/brother, without any feelings of feeding ego. I have always put into practice the words of President Kennedy -- what can I do for the Grand Lodge, not what this Grand Lodge can do for me.

I have performed my duties consistent with our constitution, while not requesting any funds above my authorized budget, although I have far exceeded that amount.

I refused to be shackled by yesterday's failures. What I don't know, I will no longer allow to intimidate me. I will, instead, view it as an opportunity. I will not allow others to define my mood, my method, my image, or my mission. I will pursue a mission greater than myself; by treating each person I encounter with dignity and respect. I will not allow self-pity, jealousy, or negativism from my self or others defer me from my goal of being an upright Brother/Mason/Person.

Any, finally my Brothers, do not judge men by the swiftness of their tongue, judge them by the content of their character and the deeds they have performed in time. All that dwells in darkness will soon come to the light. "Let your light so shine."

My Brothers, the power in which you entrusted and turned over to me at the close of our 95th Annual Session, I now return to you. Thank you for allowing me to serve you.

Fraternally,

**WILLIAM C. RHEUBOTTOM**  
**M.W. Most Worshipful Grand Master**  
**Prince Hall Grand Lodge**  
**of Washington and Jurisdiction**