

**Grand Lodge
Free & Accepted Masons
Of California
Grand Oration 1960**

**Grand Orator
Judge Gerald S. Levin
"The Spirit Of Freemasonry In A
Time That Tries Men's Souls"**

**Tribute to Grand Master
"Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom
tribute is due; * * * honour to whom honour."
-ROMANS c. 13, v. 7.**

It seems appropriate, not simply because of my gratitude to the Grand Master for the opportunity to serve the Grand Lodge of California as Grand Orator but principally because of his character and outstanding contribution to Freemasonry, that before launching into the Grand Oration I should pay tribute in the presence of this honorable and illustrious company to a great Mason, our Grand Master, Joe L. Shell. I know you will forgive me for taking advantage of this appearance to do so. I believe my remarks may be given some measure of credence, since they are based on my observation of the Grand Master in action in many parts of this State through a most interesting and challenging Masonic year.

Our Grand Master, affectionately known by thousands of Masons as just plain "Joe", is decidedly a personality that no robes or insignia of office can damask. His individuality is so strong that he is incapable of masquerading or assuming a role other than the real part he plays in daily life. His every thought and action has been mellowed by gentleness, humility of spirit and purity of soul. No prejudices, no desire for popular acclaim, no unworthy motive has distorted his judgment. He has been guided by wisdom and an abiding passion to serve his Brethren in Masonry. The distillate of his mind and spirit has inspired confidence in his work and has given to it enduring worth. His unfailing friendliness, charm of manner, abundance of energy, eloquent rhetoric, and keen sense of humor unite to form an inspiring disposition. He meets the final test of a great leader, for he leaves behind him in other men the conviction and will to carry on the prodigious work of Freemasonry. He is every inch of him, in every fiber, a true Mason.

In the words of Shakespeare, he "Bear(s) his blushing honours thick upon him."

Prologue

"* * *a still small voice."

-1 KINGS c. 19, v. 12.

The ritual of this august body prescribes that it is the duty of the Grand Orator "to deliver at each annual communication an address to the Grand Lodge upon matters appertaining to the Craft." The performance of this duty is a pleasant privilege and a high honor for me, but it is with utmost humility that I discharge the task. The foregoing is stated with deep sincerity, for a reading of the Grand Orations since the establishment of this Grand Lodge in 1850 has impressed upon me the clarity of thought and brilliance of expression by many erudite predecessors. I am comforted by one of the noteworthy precepts of our noble Fraternity; that when we are cloaked as Masons we meet on the same level -where brotherly love prevails-and I know my Brethren are too charitable and too gracious not to accept my humble efforts in real Masonic spirit. A Scottish cleric (Norman Macleod) truly said: "There's a star to guide the humble * * *." I hope that I may not be considered too audacious in reaching for that star and in seeking to invoke the blessing set forth in the Book of our faith: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (MATTHEW c. 5, v. 5; see also, PSALM 37, v. 11).

During past years, at occasions of this nature, there have been orations by Masons of great stature which may be classified as brilliant, learned, lucid and scintillating. The Grand

Orations during the existence of this Grand Lodge disclose that in general they deal with the origin and mysteries of our Order, the beauties of our ritual and our symbols, the benign influence of the Masonic Order in the establishment of freedom in this nation and elsewhere, the contribution of Freemasonry to public welfare and the progress of human institutions, the moral force of our Craft and its members in the development of human character and in the dissemination of truth and justice, the motivation for the confidence of true Masons in the Golden Rule, the obedience of Masons to the rule of law, the belief of Masons in the dignity and rights of the individual, and above all, the firm conviction of Masons in the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God.

Such encomiums cast upon Freemasonry may be justly deserved and inspirational; however, I am reminded of the saying of Ralph Waldo Emerson that "What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say." In short, we live in an age of technological marvels where scientific accomplishments, unbelievable a few years ago, demand impelling action. Americans once again are battling for their very existence, but this time on a worldwide battlefield. We are in a life-and-death struggle with Communism. We are confronted with the supreme test of our spiritual, moral, mental and physical strength. It is a test to determine whether free men are fitted to govern themselves or whether a despot or insignificant minority shall direct the destinies of mankind. It is a conflict between a totally materialistic philosophy and one which is based upon the principle that materialism must be guided and controlled by moral law. It is not a new conflict; it extends back to the very beginning of human relations. But today the amazing technological and scientific achievements have given man the power to destroy civilization and place the two opposing ways of life in a real fight for survival. We must recognize that we must meet our adversaries on all fronts where our free way of life is challenged. We must recognize that, really, the cold war is a part of World War III. This is the overriding problem of our generation and of generations to follow.

This is a time when the proper and practical application of the Masonic principles we all cherish may aid in the perpetuation of our American way of life. This is a time when the spirit of Freemasonry should be actuated in everyday life for the good and welfare of all of the democratic human institutions without which our lives would be but a desultory existence. We have truly reached "the times that try men's souls."

Rather than again discuss the origin, history, philosophy, traditions or beauties of Freemasonry, it seems timely that pertinent phases of this transcendent problem should be the subject of the Grand Oration in the year 1960. It is not because of any lack of admiration or regard for the history, philosophy and traditions of our beloved Fraternity, but because of an absolute trust in the principles of our Craft, that I seek to encourage mature meditation and judicious reflection by this leading group of Masons upon the real problem of our age—our survival as free men.

There is precedent for such a practical approach in the peerless Grand Oration of Past Grand Master Charles Albert Adams in 1910. Fifty years ago, when he served this Grand Lodge as Grand Orator, he delivered a sterling address on the subject, "Masonry in Business and Politics." It is fitting and right that he should be honored at this Communication in recognition of his inspiring service in Masonry and also in the community where he is so highly respected.

Another Sodom and Gomorrah?

"Where there is no vision, the people perish * * *."

-PROVERBS C. 29, v. 18.

Brethren! What if I were to tell you that this is your last day on earth? What if I were to say that tomorrow the sky will open and nuclear bombs and missiles will rain down on your homes and families and veritably crush and destroy civilization? Unbelievable, you say? Perhaps so fifteen years ago. But today, a decade and a half away from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, even the most incredulous must acknowledge the dangers that exist. For today it is an inescapable fact that almost half the human race is now under despotic control; that the scientific knowledge of nuclear fission is not possessed alone by the United States; and that Communistic doctrine and tyrants pose an ever-present threat to the peace and welfare of this nation as well as all the free people of the world.

For the skeptic or unbeliever, it is well to look to the events of the past. The contemporary philosopher George Santayana said, "Those who forget history are bound to repeat it." Let us not forget, but recall to memory the account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah—a narrative with a moral.

We read in the Holy Scriptures, in Chapter 18 of Genesis, that the Lord came to Abraham and told him that he was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because they were such wicked cities. South of the Dead Sea lay an extremely fertile plain, "the vale of Sodom, which is the salt sea" (Gen., c. 14, v. 3) . The Bible lists five towns in this valley—Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela or Zoar (Gen. c. 14, v. 2) . These "cities of the plain" (Gen., c. 19, v. 29) were inhabited by people who were corrupt, openly defying God and His law, and delighting in deeds of violence. The profusion of wealth of the inhabitants of both Sodom and Gomorrah gave birth to luxury and pride. The vilest and most brutal passions were unrestrained and produced licentiousness (Eze., c. 16, w. 49-50). The fatal consequences of this were irreverence to God, in hospitality to strangers, and the indulgence in the most abominable vices. These enormities highly offended the Almighty, who, in order to punish the people, announced His vengeance both against them and against their country. Persistent pleas by Abraham for the righteous in Sodom and Gomorrah brought a final response from the Lord: "I will not destroy it for ten's sake" (Gen., c. 18, v. 32) . But there were not even ten righteous people in all Sodom. "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of Heaven: And He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground * * * and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (Gen., c. 19, vv. 24,28) .

The story of Sodom and Gomorrah has been doubted, but extensive exploration and archaeological research have disclosed evidence of the trustworthiness of the Scriptures. Whether one believes the destruction resulted from divine action or was due to natural physical causes, there are seemingly reliable scientific explanations for the catastrophe. Dr. Werner Keller, in a recent book entitled *The Bible As History*, apparently agrees with the American scholar Jack Finegan that the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah probably took place about 1900 B. C. and that it "came about through a great earthquake which was probably accompanied by explosions, lightning, issue of natural gas and general conflagration."

The flames that consumed the cities of the plain shed their warning light even down to our time. We are taught the fearful and solemn lesson that, while God's mercy bears long with the transgressor, there is a limit beyond which men must not go in sin. When that limit is reached, then the offers of mercy are withdrawn and the ministration of judgment begins. In all ages Sodom and Gomorrah have been synonymous with immorality, wickedness and godlessness. The frightful disaster has made a deep impression on men's minds and has served as a symbol of the vengeance of God for unrighteous living. The moral of the story is the crowning virtue of righteousness.

Our American democracy is threatened not only by foreign ideologies and vicious propaganda, but also by the unrighteous actions too frequently happening in private transactions and public life. America should never come to the point where there should not be ten righteous men. There should be always millions of honorable and unselfish men in this nation of abundance and freedom who are dedicated to the principles of equality under law: men who will nurture and sustain and strengthen our American way of life. Yet the evident deterioration of public morality in our land has caused acute and anguished apprehension among those who realize that our strength and power as a free people come from respecting individual dignity, human rights and equal justice under law.

Our future survival has a basic dependence upon individual human conduct. It poses for each American the question: How may I contribute to the perpetuation of the American way of life, or indeed, our civilization? It presents to this audience of prominent Masons the question: Have we a special task to perform in order to save our very lives and humanity? An answer may be provided for each of you in what I call *The Spirit of Freemasonry in a Time That Tries Men's Souls*—the subject of this Oration. That subject will be considered, albeit in the limited time only briefly, to suggest salient factors, under four categories: first, Freemasonry, Liberty and the Rule of Law; second, Freemasonry, Technology and Public Education; third, Freemasonry, Politics, and the National Purpose; and, fourth, Freemasonry, Morality and Religion.

I. Freemasonry, Liberty, And The Rule of Law

"That which you have inherited from your forefathers, achieve it if you would possess it."

-GOETHE

We are Americans. We are Freemasons. Not only because we are Americans but especially because we are Masons, we have the duty to do all in our power to perpetuate our American way of life. Such "blood, tears, toil and sweat" as mentioned by Winston Churchill established the liberty which is our precious heritage, and "blood, tears, toil and sweat" have preserved and strengthened the spirit of our democracy. In 1787 Thomas Jefferson wrote: "The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants." Seven major wars since the American Revolutionary War, and many other battles, attest to the farseeing wisdom of Jefferson.

Freemasons have demonstrated their love of liberty and willingness to sacrifice their homes, their worldly possessions and even their very lives for its establishment and preservation. Reflect upon the historical facts that indicate the major part Masons played in the creation of this nation as participants in the Boston Tea Party, as leaders in the American Revolution, as statesmen in the drafting and adoption of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. Masons point with pride to evidence that the majority of the signers of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were members of our Fraternity. Masons point with pride to the fact that George Washington, the guiding spirit of the Revolution and the first president of our country, a fervent and sincere Mason, skilled in the Craft, placed great reliance upon his Brethren for the performance of tasks of the highest order in the creation of this country.

Our Constitution, declared by the British statesman William Gladstone to be "the most remarkable work known * * * in modern times to have been produced by the human intellect," still provides the guideposts of our destiny as a nation. Why? Because, Brethren, such men as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere, John Hancock, John Marshall, and thousands of other distinguished statesmen, soldiers and patriots learned early at the altars of Freemasonry of the three principal tenets of Masonry—brotherly love, relief and truth; and its cardinal virtues—temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice.

All Americans recognize the immortal words written into the Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson. "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed, by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

The significance of the words, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," gives us our philosophy of law, that is, profound concern for the individual—his rights, his duties, his dignity, his equality. It is our way of life which stands in bold contrast with the totalitarian view of the human being as expendable raw stuff for the building of a material society. Consider for a moment these concepts:

Life is esteemed lightly in many places of the world but it is of the highest value in our country. We enjoy every assurance of life that it is possible for our government to give us under a system of law which grants a defendant in a criminal action the right to a jury trial and the benefit of a presumption of innocence.

Liberty is, in the words of Justice Learned Hand, "the spirit which is not too sure that it is right; * * * the spirit which seeks to understand the minds of other men and women." It embraces all the rights under the rule of law emanating from our written laws and given to us as the law of a free people springing from custom, responsive to their sense of justice.

The right to pursue happiness is set forth not only in the Declaration of Independence but in the Constitution of the State of California and in other state constitutions. Happiness is an elusive thing. Obviously it is not the business of the state or the nation to give us happiness, but only to see that our right to pursue it is not improperly restrained.

These concepts are the basis of our American democracy and of our self-government by law. They had their origin in the minds of our forefathers. The pilgrims who came to Plymouth Rock in 1620, and our first settlers at Jamestown in 1607, sought escape from the arbitrary power of an English king who ruled without the law's restraining influence. In the Mayflower Compact

there is a provision for the enactment of "such just and equal laws * * * as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony." These ancestors of modern-day Americans carried in their minds a dream of reestablishing the individual liberty under law which King John had promised more than 400 years earlier when he affixed his seal to the Magna Carta in 1215 at Runnymede.

The roots of our American democracy are buried deep in the common conception of law and order which possesses a universal validity—that there is law above the ruler and the sovereign people to be obeyed by man. This principle of a universal rationale transcending earthly power, termed natural law, became substantial and effective in the development of an orderly society for 2,000 years. Zeno and the Stoics first formulated the common conception of law and order as a theory. It included as its three great values: liberty, equality and the brotherhood or fraternity of all mankind. The Stoics contended that natural law was the projection of the Divine Reason. The concept of natural law was adopted by the Greeks and the Romans. It was respected by European States in the Middle Ages. It was observed with greater intensity during the Renaissance and the Reformation. It provided a philosophy in the English Revolution in 1688, the American Revolutionary War in 1776, and the French Revolution in 1789. It provides a greater understanding of the political thinking during the period of the American Revolution; of the meaning of the "unalienable rights of man" in the Declaration of Independence, of the Bill of Rights of 1689; of the first ten amendments to the Constitution of the United States; of the fearless patriotism of John Hancock, who in 1774 said: "We fear not death * * * we dread nothing but slavery; * * * 'tis immortality to sacrifice ourselves for the salvation of our country"; of the impassioned speech of Patrick Henry in 1775, concluding with the immortal words: "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!"; and of the enduring utterance of Abraham Lincoln in 1863 at Gettysburg: "That we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

The concept of the natural law is the progenitor of the influential writings of Thomas Paine, a tremendous figure in the fight for freedom, the author of *Common Sense*, *The Crisis Papers*, and *The Rights of Man*, and incidentally, of an essay on the origin of Freemasonry, published posthumously in 1811. He was the first to offer the world in his *The Rights of Man* the idea of a league of nations in the modern sense for the preservation of international peace. Who in this assembly has not heard the words of Thomas Paine, as an Englishman, commencing his first *Crisis* paper:

"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will in this crisis shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it NOW, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; 'tis dearness that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it could be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated."

The contribution of the Frenchman Lafayette, a devout Mason, in the American Revolutionary War is common knowledge. Not so commonly known is that the theory of the natural law as a basis of our American democracy has found expression in the writings of at least two other natives of France. Baron de Montesquieu, in *The Spirit of Laws*, published in 1748 a brilliant comparative study of the three types of government—republic, monarchy and despotism. That discourse had a far-reaching impact in the formation of the American Constitution. Alexis de Tocqueville, in *Democracy in America*, published in 1835 1840, displays original insight and vision, justifies democracy and predicts its ultimate triumph. The consequence of the view of the natural law as the foundation of good citizenship is contained in *The Public Philosophy*, written recently by the internationally famous political commentator and columnist, Walter Lippman. In his language, "The public philosophy is known as natural law * * *. This philosophy is the premise of institutions of the Western Society * * *." Masonic faith in God brings Masons into rapport with that philosophy underlying the natural law.

In retrospect, the four millions of Masons in this nation and the quarter-million in this state, of which we are an integral part, should recognize that there is an indestructible bond between the establishment and perpetuation of our American way of life and Freemasonry.

We may be proud of the performance of our ancestral Brethren in the history of our country, but such pride should serve solely to actuate participation of Masons of this day in civic undertakings with similar spirit and selflessness.

The concluding words of the noted poet Carl Sandburg in a ceremony without precedent before a Joint Session of Congress in honor of Abraham Lincoln, "men and women * * * understand that whenever there is freedom there have been those who fought, toiled and sacrificed for it," echo the famous statement of Daniel Webster that "God grants liberty only to those who love it, and are always ready to guard and defend it."

Complacency is not the badge of a Mason. We must not be content with the great deeds of our ancestral Masons but we also must be strong in body and spirit. Charles Evans Hughes gave expression to this thought as follows: "You cannot be saved by the valor and devotion of your ancestors. To each generation comes its patriotic duty; and upon your willingness to sacrifice and endure, as those before you sacrificed and endured, rests the national hope."

The contributions of Masons in two world wars and the Korean War attest to the fact that our generation as well as generations of former eras holds fast and firm to the teachings of our Fraternity-brotherly love, relief, truth, honor, justice and liberty. The memorial script on our beautiful Masonic Temple evidences the spilling of blood of Masons to nourish the tree of liberty in support of those principles.

Recently our Past Grand Master, Chief Justice Earl Warren, said: "The basic issue today is whether mankind will live under the rule of law-and whether that rule of law is to be the law of freedom or the law of command." The issue was stated clearly by President Eisenhower: "~A~ free people can assure the blessings of liberty for them-selves only if they recognize the necessity that the rule of law shall be supreme, and that all men shall be equal before the law."

II. Freemasonry, Technology, and Public Education

"Those who educate children well, are more to be honored than they who produce them; for these only gave them life, those the art of living well."
-ARISTOTLE.

Speaking as United States Representative to the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission in 1946, Bernard M. Baruch said:

"We are here to make a choice between the quick and the dead. That is our business.

Behind the black portent of the New Atomic age lies a hope which, seized upon with faith, can work our salvation. If we fail, then we have doomed every man to be the slave of fear. Let us not delude ourselves: We must elect world peace or world destruction."

The myriad of technological discoveries and developments since Mr. Baruch's remarks have served only to emphasize the truth of his statements.

We live in a time when the whole world is in a state of turmoil and flux. New thoughts and ideas have caused precedents to be shattered and have altered the manner of our very existence. Such dramatic attainments as flight faster than sound, the splitting of the atom, miracle drugs and satellites in space are but a few marks of this new age of civilization. Scientific, economic, social and intellectual accomplishments challenge our understanding on the basis of prior standards and experience. Man's horizons have widened to encompass the universe. The strengths and weaknesses of our nation and its people, as well as other nations and peoples in this world, demand continual observation and evaluation.

Presently a struggle exists between the Soviet Union and the United States for supremacy in the space race and in the development of nuclear weapons. Piling up in the free Western world and in the Communist world are rockets and bombs of such terrific intensity that they could at any time cause a nuclear cataclysm. With such strength pitted against one another and continual pressures for recognition around the world, we are indeed in a fight for survival. That fight requires of us productive and useful lives and sacrifices at home. It requires of us moral

strength and integrity. It requires of us unity in thought and action against the insidious and dangerous Communist ideology spreading about the world.

The amazing technological and scientific achievements have led to a cry throughout this land for improvement in our system of education. There has been increasing demand in our nation for excellence by American students in their studies rather than adjustment to mediocrity. It has resulted in a searching investigation of the educational systems of the Soviet Union and other European countries. It has induced a rigorous examination of instructional programs in effect in the United States and a critical analysis and reevaluation of our teaching methods.

Contemporary thought on the importance of the acquisition of knowledge has been expressed in publications of this month by two Pulitzer prize-winners-novelist Ernest Hemingway, who writes that "knowledge is the least perishable thing," and historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., who states, "if the record of American history suggests anything, it suggests that knowledge has generally been the indispensable means to wise decision."

It is to be regretted that not all graduates of our public schools become good citizens, but statistics assign criminality overwhelmingly to the class of the illiterate. Crime and delinquency cost six times the price of public education, yet there is reluctance on the part of some citizens to make additional funds available for educational purposes. Such reluctance impels reference to a stanza from "A Song for the Ragged Schools" written by Eliza Cook in the last century:

"Better build schoolrooms for 'the boy'
Than cells and gibbets for 'the man.' "

Masons, realizing that the freedoms all Americans enjoy are indissolubly linked with our public schools, have awakened the people of this nation to the importance of maintaining inviolate a system of free public education in schools throughout this land.

The observance of Public Schools Week, which is now a community affair, was in its inception a Masonic project. It originated with a proclamation in 1920 by Brother Charles Albert Adams, Grand Master at the time. During each of the succeeding forty years the public has been urged by Freemasonry to know, visit and support their public schools.

As long as Freemasonry exists we may anticipate that free public school education shall receive such attention. Since the public has been awakened to the importance of stepping up our standards of education, curricula have been strengthened and requirements for students in academic subjects have become more stringent. We may expect superiority in the scholastic achievements of a greater number of our students in the future.

To those who have expressed grave doubt about our ability to meet the educational challenge of this age, the answer provided by Herbert Hoover in 1935 is apposite:

"Many, in honest belief, hold that we cannot longer accommodate the growth of science, technology and mechanical power to the Bill of Rights and our form of government. With that I do not agree. Men's inventions cannot be of more value than men themselves. But it would be better that we sacrifice something of economic efficiency than to surrender these primary liberties. In them lies a spiritual right of men. Behind them is the conception which is the highest development of the Christian faith-the conception of individual freedom with brotherhood. From them is the fullest flowering of individual human personality."

III. Freemasonry, Politics And the National Purpose

"Those who treat politics and morality apart
will never understand the one or the other."

-ROUSSEAU .

Of the subject of politics and religion the Jurisprudence Committee in 1875 said (California Masonic Code, sec. 16j):

"It is an inflexible rule of this Grand Lodge not to interfere or meddle with political or religious matters, at home or abroad. Its members may represent all shades of political and religious opinions, but when they are assembled in constituent or Grand Lodge, they cannot so much as

discuss such opinions. * * * Of religion we only desire to know that each one asking admission is a sincere believer in God and a future existence. Of politics we only ask if the applicant is a good citizen."

Certainly there shall be no attempt to violate in word or spirit the above rule by indulging in the slightest in interdicted controversy. The reason for the rule is as valid today as in 1875. The harmony that exists among Masons assembled in the constituent Lodges and in the Grand Lodge might be disrupted were either subject admitted. Masonry places emphasis on agreement rather than disagreement. Therefore, the rule is a salutary one. Nevertheless, the rule most assuredly does not mean that a Freemason is expected to be either apolitical or irreligious.

Our highly respected and admired Past Grand Master Charles Albert Adams dared with characteristic courage and sagacity to touch upon the subject of politics in his Oration fifty years ago. He stated: "* * * there is no higher duty devolving on us as Masons than the duty we owe the state as citizens; and one of the highest duties devolving upon an American citizen is that which requires him to concern himself with, and take a part in, politics." It is interesting to note the problems of fifty years ago referred to by Brother Adams: "The tyranny of wealth." "radicals obsessed with the idea of universal corruption," encouragement of "popular discontent" with our courts, "bribery and corruption" in public office. Undoubtedly these were the serious matters of that day. Contrast these, however, with the world-shaking problems of this day, but fifty years later, when life itself totters in the balance and civilization is on the brink of disaster. How much easier it is to solve the problems of corruption at home than abroad. How much better it is to face the peril of the "tyranny of wealth" than the danger of the "tyranny of Communism."

Preeminent is Brother Adams' significant statement that "what a government is, and whether truth and justice prevail, depends upon the individual, because every government is, after all, but the reflex of the individuals of whom it is composed." This is as certain today as it was in all times since the existence of governments and it should continue to be true as long as governments exist.

It is because of this fundamental truth that Masons must interest themselves in politics. The word "politics" is used in the idealistic sense expressed by Woodrow Wilson: "Politics I conceive to be nothing more than the science of the ordered progress of society along the lines of greatest usefulness and convenience to itself."

Masons of America pledged their lives and fortunes for the establishment of the American system of democratic government. They must not do less if they are called upon to preserve it. As a citizen each Mason is enjoined never to countenance "any act which may have a tendency to subvert the peace and good order of society." Masons should study and be fully cognizant of governmental activities. Masons must direct their energies to the regeneration of society for the common good.

It appears proper in this year, when we, as citizens of this wonderful land along with other citizens, must elect for America a leader who will be charged with guiding the destinies of our nation through a challenging period of utmost gravity, to suggest earnest study by American Masons of the views of the political candidates and their respective parties.

Senator Kennedy, in his acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention, summed up the issue as follows: "Can a nation organized and governed such as ours endure? * * * Can we carry through in an age where we will witness not only new breakthroughs in weapons of destruction-but also a race for mastery of the sky and the rain, the oceans and the tides, the far side of space and the inside of men's minds?" Vice President Nixon, in his acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention succinctly stated: "The problems which confront our next president will be even greater than those that confronted him {Abraham Lincoln}. The question then was freedom for the slaves and survival of the nation. The question now is freedom for all mankind and the survival of civilization * * *."

The issues are clear. It remains for you and other Masons as loyal Americans to exercise your right to vote for the leader you believe most capable of fulfilling the difficult task. The choice is for each to make, but whatever the decision it should be accompanied by action. Bear in mind the saying of Sophocles: "Heaven ne'er helps the man who will not act."

United with the subject of politics is the accomplishment of the primary objective of democratic government. That objective is what we as citizens and as a nation wish and hope to achieve. It is referred to by a phrase now in common use-our national purpose. It seems obvious

that correct political thinking and action should lead unalterably to the achievement of our national purpose. It remains for the citizens of the United States to define our national purpose. Current writers express the view that we may continue to enjoy our freedoms and system of democratic government only if we prove by active interest and participation that we are deserving of them. They agree that in the present worldwide hostility between the ideas of the Western world and the Communistic countries a direct conflict is presented which requires of America and its people the strength, endurance, judgment and responsibility exhibited by our forebears in the founding of this nation. In brief, our national purpose is the maintenance of our American way of life, and that requires the steady exercise of our rights as citizens.

Such thoughts were concisely expressed over a half-century ago by a great American and Mason, Theodore Roosevelt, as follows:

"Above all, let us shrink from no strife, moral or physical, within or without the nation, provided we are certain that strife is justified: for it is only through strife, through hard and dangerous endeavor, that we shall ultimately win the goal of true national greatness."

IV. Freemasonry, Morality, And Religion

"Morality is religion in practice;
religion is morality in principle."

-WARDLAW

Our Brother George Washington in his Farewell Address to the Citizens of the United States, regarded as one of the world's greatest political testaments, said: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports. * * * 'Tis substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government." We should recognize in these remarks the philosophy Washington learned as a Mason.

The moral duties owed by the individual as a member of society are impressed upon each Mason. Moral virtues form the very foundation of Freemasonry.

Public morality is the aggregate of the behavior of individuals. The eminent psychiatrist, Dr. Carl Gustav Jung, in his recent book, *The Undiscovered Self*, expressed this thought as follows: "A million zeros joined together do not, unfortunately, add up to one. Ultimately, everything depends on the quality of the individual * * * . It is, unfortunately, only too clear that if the individual is not truly regenerated in spirit, society cannot be either, for society is the sum total of individuals in need of redemption." Arnold J. Toynbee, universally acknowledged as one of the greatest living historians writing at the present time, in his recent book, *The World and the West*, expressed the same idea as follows: " * * * that any civilization, any way of life, is an indivisible whole in which all the parts hang together and are interdependent." In his last message to the world the renowned Russian poet, Boris Pasternak, who died last May, was asked, "Can a man control his future?" He answered: "Yes. Despite the system he lives under I believe that men everywhere have more power over the future than ever before. The important thing is that we must choose to exercise it."

Public morality embraces the term "righteousness" as that term is used in connection with the dramatic and thought-provoking fate of Sodom and Gomorrah. Williams Jennings Bryan once said that to be clad in the armor of righteousness will make the humblest citizen of all the land stronger than all the hosts of earth (Speech at Democratic National Convention, Chicago, 1896).

Moral deterioration of individuals in responsible government offices and also among private individuals has caused the American public increasing concern. A few of the Congressional hearings in the past decade with which you should be familiar will point up the problems: the "five per-centers"; the Reconstruction Finance Corporation procurement practices of the Government: the Internal Revenue Department: gambling and crime: cheating at West Point: bank embezzlements: television quiz shows: campaign costs and contributions: and the activities of a number of officials of labor unions. Presidential assistants in this and in preceding administrations have been subject to public criticism because of actions not conforming with the ethical standards required of persons in public office. Investigations of practices and violations of moral principles have been made not only on the national level but also on state and local levels. The continual increase of criminal offenses and juvenile delinquency presents problems of an

alarming nature. If our rise in juvenile delinquency can be attributed to a single cause, that cause is a general deterioration in public and private morality.

No more dramatic illustration of the lack of public morality can be noted than the television quiz revelations. It was bad enough to destroy with disillusionment an apparently healthy interest in the pseudo-intellectual type of entertainment as opposed to the prevalent blood-and-lust piped over the ether waves. But the assertion by District Attorney Frank Hogan of New York that, of the 150 witnesses who testified before his Grand Jury, 100 lied under oath, was more distressing. These witnesses were not illiterate, stupid people. They were some of our so-called leading citizens, examples to our youth, intellectually endowed, successful by the standards of Wall Street and Madison Avenue. They are the men who determine business usages and influence political opinions in this nation. Nevertheless, the solemn oath to tell the truth was meaningless to 100 out of 150 of them. If caught in a falsehood by subsequent revelations, their single expedient was to return to the Grand Jury for "correction."

The misbehavior of public officials is especially disturbing to the public because, as said by Thomas Jefferson, "When a man assumes a public trust, he should consider himself public property."

Herbert Hoover in his address at the Republican National Convention on July 25th of this year referred to the "moral forces * * * in the soul of America {as more important than all of our other issues."

Public morality should be fundamental in the thinking of all Masons. In our several charges we recite that "Masonry is a progressive moral science," and of our ancient and honorable Fraternity, "It is an institution having for its foundation the practice of the social and moral virtues." Entered Apprentice Masons are admonished: "As a Mason, you are to regard the volume of the Sacred Law as the great light in your profession: to consider it as the recurring standard of truth and justice: and to regulate your actions by the divine precepts it contains. In it you will learn the important duties you owe to God, your neighbor, and yourself."

Upon the closing of Masonic Lodge meetings Masons pray that the Supreme Grand Master will "be pleased so to influence our hearts and minds that we may each one of us practice out of the Lodge those great moral duties which are inculcated in it, and with reverence study and obey the laws which Thou has given us in Thy Holy Word."

Basic in our Order is the belief in God and a future existence. This is stated in so many words in the California Masonic Code (sec. 511) as follows: "An applicant for the degrees of Masonry must be * * * a believer in God and a future existence * * *." These two concepts are expressed in Landmarks Nineteenth and Twentieth in the following manner: "A belief in the existence of God as the Grand Architect of the Universe" and "The belief in a resurrection to a future life." Landmark Twenty-first adds: "The 'Book of the Law' {Holy Bible} shall constitute an indispensable part of the furniture of every Lodge."

The sacred law contained in the Bible is woven into the Masonic ritual from beginning to end. In the three degrees more than one hundred passages make direct reference to it. It is on the Bible that a candidate seals his obligations. It is the guiding light in all our proceedings. It is the greatest of the three great emblematical lights of Freemasonry. It has occupied the central place in the Lodge from the beginning of our Order.

The acknowledgment of God as the Supreme Being is the first requisite of any candidate for the objectives of our Fraternity. Perhaps you may recall how Don Quixote beat on the gates of the temple with his fists and exclaimed, "Let God out to His people and open the gates." That thought might well be expressed by Masons by saying: "Open the gates and let the public know that we pin our faith on the teachings of the Volume of the Sacred Law without affiliation to any creed."

The sinews of Freemasonry are the degrees which depict in a beautiful manner the moral lessons of life and make manifest the way to the light in search of truth. Masons should ever bear in mind the purpose of seeking the truth. Heed the words of the great Masonic philosopher Albert Pike:

"The practical object of Masonry is the physical and moral amelioration and the intellectual and spiritual improvement of individuals and Society. Neither can be effected, except by the dissemination of truth.

* * * * *

Masonry is action, and not inertness. It requires its Initiates to work, actively and earnestly, for the benefit of their brethren, their Country. and Mankind."

Dean Roscoe Pound, a distinguished Mason, in a recent article entitled What is Truth? brings the subject to date in the following conclusion:

"We need not seek for miracles in the field of physics in order to believe in the substance of things hoped for, i.e. an ideal relation among men; in adjustment of relations among men and ordering of men's conduct toward an ideal of righteousness and an Eternal outside of us that makes for righteousness."

Although Freemasonry is not a religion and the Craft makes no attempt to interpret the Holy Bible in a theological sense or to bind a Mason to any creed, Masons are committed to a belief in God and the immortality of the soul. The Fraternity seeks only to strengthen its members, as well as Freemasonry, by endeavoring to confirm each man in the faithful observance of whatever religious course he chooses to pursue in the light of his own conscience.

Masons recognize that this is a time when strong religious beliefs are needed if civilization is to survive, for no civilization has outlasted the demise of religious faith. Religious conviction is a great force because it motivates a person to do the will of God. That motivating force is founded upon the Holy Bible, which represents that which is sacred in a man's spiritual life and in his relationship with God.

The objectives and fundamental principles of Freemasonry have never changed. Freemasonry's purpose today is the same as it was in olden times. That purpose is to help men build in themselves convictions based securely upon moral integrity. Men with characters so molded will not equivocate; they will not lie; they will not cheat; they will not steal; they will not commit acts of violence or immorality; and they will never sacrifice a principle for any kind of gain.

Paramount in assuring the perpetuation of our freedom is the strengthening of the moral fiber and courage of the citizens of this nation. The increasing crime rate and moral decay should stir individual Masons to act in support of the moral forces of America. Masons must by conduct and example create a moral climate which will sustain our free institutions.

Summary of Purposes

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
for brethren to dwell together in unity!"
-PSALMS 133, v. 1.

There are reviewed in this dissertation a few of the elements that together represent the "Spirit of Freemasonry." There is much that remains unsaid. Limitations of time, space and ability of expression of the author allow only a few broad strokes on the beautiful canvas of Freemasonry.

Without intending to be presumptuous in any manner, I am setting forth several suggestions of practical operation in summary:

1. Observe in thought and action the rule of the law as the law of freedom by showing respect yourself and encouraging in others regard for the institutions of our American democratic government.

2. Strengthen your moral integrity and courage in your determination to live your Masonry. It has been the proud preachment of our Grand Master, Joe L. Shell, that each Mason must practice Masonic principles toward all men. Follow his admonition by being kind to family, friend and foe. Recognize that Masonry is more than a ritual. It is a way of life. Translate our ritualistic work into practical application by performing in daily living brotherly love and charity for the benefit of all fellow men alike. Remember that the destiny of Masonry begins with each of us by our actions in everyday life. As noted in the charge to Entered Apprentices: "Be faithful to the trust committed to your care * * *."

3. Don't sell America short but insist on the adjustment of the perplexing problems pressing from all sides by understanding the political issues of the times and the national

purpose. Be direct and forthright in dealings with your fellow men and a leader in promoting good citizenship.

4. Participate to the extent of your ability in enterprises of a public nature. Express confidence in and encourage other Masons in such endeavors.

5. Contribute through encouragement and in any other way within your power to the technological and scientific advances of our nation.

6. Promote and support the public schools of America by participation in public school programs, by serving on public school boards and by aiding in raising the standards of public education.

7. Respond to the summons of the Supreme Grand Master, our ultimate authority found in the GUIDEBOOK of our lives:

"Be strong and of good courage: be not afraid, neither
be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee,
whithersoever thou goest"
-(JOSHUA, c. 1, v. 9).

Epilogue

" * * * they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."
-ISAIAH, c. 2, v. 4.

Americans, historically complacent in time of peace, now have an awareness of the dangers that confront them at home and abroad to destroy the freedom of American democracy established under our Constitution. In the history of the entire world mankind has known but a few moments of freedom. Most of these moments have been ours. But this freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. Our liberty, our faith and our ideals face daily threats of destruction. We must meet the challenge now or perhaps spend the rest of our lives telling our children or our children's children what it was once like when men were free.

The serious anxieties of the peoples of the world, because of the possibility of "Another Sodom and Gomorrah," suggest reference to the passage in the Bible that "there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes, c. 1, v. 9). Consider, for example, the remarkable, terse and trenchant lines written in 1732 by the English classical poet, Alexander Pope, in An Essay on Man, a popular poetical summary of philosophical speculation at that time:

"See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs,
What other planets circle other suns,
* * * *

Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
Atoms of system into ruin hurled,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world
(emphasis added) .
* * * *

Hope springs eternal in the human breast:
Man never Is, but always To be blest:
* * * *

All are parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;
* * * *"

You may recall hearing Franklin D. Roosevelt say in 1936:

"There is a mysterious cycle in human events. In some generations much is given. Of other generations much is expected. This generation of Americans has a rendezvous with destiny."

In my opinion that statement is prophetic. I think that this is the generation of Americans that in Roosevelt's words has a "rendezvous with destiny."

May God grant that each one present here today, and your counterparts in all parts of this groaning earth, may have the spirit, courage and competency to discharge responsibilities with such honor, dignity and effectiveness that we may give assurance to this generation and to succeeding generations that the conditions which provoked the annihilative verdict upon Sodom and Gomorrah never again shall prevail on this turbulent planet and that our destiny may be of peace and happiness under the rule of law.

I leave you with a prophecy made by Victor Hugo some hundred years ago: "In the Twentieth Century war will be dead, the scaffold will be dead, hatred will be dead. frontier boundaries will be dead, dogmas will be dead: Man will live. He will possess something higher than all these—a great country, the whole earth, and a great hope, the whole heaven."

There still remain forty years in this Twentieth Century for such a prophecy to come true. It is my hope that many of us may live to bear witness to its fulfillment.