

MW Charles Mosebrook

*(Speech delivered by MW Charles Mosebrook, PGM, to the Knights of Capitol City Council, Knights of Columbus and Ladies of Regina Mundi Circle, Daughters of Isabella, on April 2, 1967.)*

Grand Knight Magbag and Regent Daughter of Isabella, Mrs. Reyes, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I consider it an honor and privilege to be invited here this morning. I come in two roles. First of all I am a Protestant clergyman, an ordained minister of the Methodist Church. I was ordained in 1932. Secondly, I come as a member of the Masonic Fraternity. I joined Masonry in 1929.

It is good that at long last we are in the happy process of getting acquainted with one another. We as Protestant clergymen are benefited by the exchange of ideas which we enjoy with Roman Catholic Priests. We all stand in debt to Pope John for his enlightened leadership.

You have asked me to speak today about the Masonic Fraternity. This I am most happy to do because in my long years as both a clergyman and a member of the Masonic Fraternity I have found nothing which has disturbed my Christian conscience. On the other hand through my contact with Masonic brothers I have found enlarged opportunity for Christian service and influence.

I have received many honors from the Masonic fraternity. I have had the privilege of serving as Master of High Twelve Lodge No. 82 here in Manila. The position of a Master is one of honor and distinction. In 1964 I was elected to serve as Grand Mas-

ter of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines. This is the highest distinction which can be given to any Mason for the position of Grand Master carries with it a great deal of responsibility. I have been honored by the Supreme Council of Scottish Rite Masons in the Philippines and I am a thirty-third degree and active member of the Supreme Council. I mention these only to point out that it has been my privilege to see Masonry in the Philippines at very close hand.

Philippine Masonry has assumed a place of leadership in all of Asia. The Grand Lodge of the Philippines not only has jurisdiction over all Masonic Lodges in the Philippines but also over five Lodges in Okinawa, two in Guam, one in Saipan, two in Japan, one in Kwajalein and one in Korea. We enjoy fraternal relations with all of the other Grand Lodges the world over.

In addition to the work of the Grand Lodge, there are other Masonic bodies which emphasize particular phases of Masonic teaching which are also very active. They are the Scottish Rite Masons, the Royal Arch Masons and the Eastern Star. This last one is for wives or daughters of Masons, the DeMolay Order which is for the sons of Masons, and the Rainbow Girls and Job's Daughters for the daughters of Masons. All of these have organized chapters all over the Philippines. They

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are not only busily engaged in Masonic activities but are also very much involved in social welfare projects and in problems concerning the life of the nation.

Masonry emphasizes the brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God. No man is eligible to become a Mason unless he believes in God. Masonic teachings emphasize immortality of the soul. The tools of a stone mason are used symbolically. The square for men to square their actions with one another and the plumb line, obedience to the truth. One need not be a Christian to be a Mason and so on the Masonic altar may be found any of the books of faith. In Cotabato it will be the Koran, while in Manila it will be the Holy Bible. All meetings are opened and closed with prayer. There are two things which are prohibited in a Masonic Lodge. One is the discussion of sectarian religion and the other a discussion of partisan politics. The emphasis is upon tolerance. Every man is encouraged to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, and to vote in the same manner. Pope John in "Pacem in Terris" says: "Every human being has a right to worship God in accordance with the right dictates of his own conscience and to profess his religion both in private and public." This confirms Masonic convictions in regard to one's church allegiance. It is a matter of personal conscience.

The three great pillars in Masonic teachings are "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity." Historically Masonry has taken an active role in the Liberty and freedom movement. It has acted against tyranny in all its forms. It took a very active role in this movement as it swept across Europe and

finally to America. The early Filipino Masons such as Marcelo H. del Pilar, and Dr. Jose Rizal were stimulated by Masons in Spain and elsewhere in Europe.

The early leaders of the United States of America were largely Masons. They were the men who framed the Bill of Rights and who signed the Constitution. Many famous names like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson are to be found in the list of early Masonic leaders in America.

In Virginia just across the Potomac River from Washington D.C. is a Masonic Shrine. In this Masonic Shrine are things that had to do with the early life of America and particularly with George Washington, the first President. There is inside a small Lodge hall which has the furniture used in the Lodge to which George Washington belonged. He had been a Master of this Lodge. His gardener was one of the most active members. There is a mural showing George Washington as President of the United States wearing the apron as a Mason laying out the site for the State Capital. They used a Masonic Ritual, they used the symbolic tools of Masonry. This mural is historically true.

However, even more important than these has been the role played by Masonry in the life of America in holding high the ideals of liberty and freedom, promoting public education, and in helping to maintain the separation of Church and State.

No responsible historian can write about the freedom movement in the Philippines without taking into account the influence of Masonry. When you honor some of the truly great in the Philippines, you are honoring men who were Masons. In the lobby of the Plaridel Masonic Temple is a life size

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statue of Dr. Jose Rizal wearing a Masonic apron. He was a man of culture and training. Andres Bonifacio the leader of the masses is also one of the honored members. General Aguinaldo and those closely associated with him were Masons. We are very proud of Chief Justice Abad Santos. He was one of the most respected Grand Masters. In the Masonic movement today in this land are a number of your most respected leaders.

In times past you were told things about Masonry which are not true, and we have told things about the Knight of Columbus oath which were false. Pope John, old in years but very wise in spirit has sounded the call which all intelligent men must heed. Now is the time for intelligent men to put aside their prejudices and to bury their intolerance and to face squarely together the enemies which today threaten all of humanity.

I believe that there were two things which Pope John wanted to accomplish in the ecumenical movement which he started. He was a pastor and he loved people. He had a sincere desire that there be goodwill and understanding. However, I believe that he was interested in more than just an atmosphere of good feelings. He was concerned with the issue of justice and peace. He appointed a Secretariat for Christian Unity and gave the responsibility to an old and trusted leader, Cardinal Bea. Cardinal Bea in speaking to the foreign press in Rome soon after his appointment said: "The problems which humanity has to face today are indeed so enormous and so urgent that it is really indispensable to mobilize all those forces which are in agreement at least on the level of the religious idea, the idea of God, and

the existence of a moral order. On that ground they can and they ought to seek to understand each other."

It is my feeling that if we are to be true to the great vision and the idea of Pope John, ecumenical fellowship will not stop content only with good feeling and better relationships.

Mankind has never faced a more serious hour than the one through which we are now passing. It is becoming increasingly clear that these problems can only be met by a concerted effort on the part of all intelligent men. There was a time when it was the ignorant of the world who were fearful. Now it is the intelligent man who is afraid. The intelligent man knows that man today has within his power the ability to totally destroy the entire earth. The men who helped in the discovery of the atomic bomb and know of its destructive power say: "Time is short and survival is at stake."

There are problems confronting all men and every nation which must be met. I will not attempt in closing to discuss in detail these problems but only to indicate some areas of concern that must be faced by intelligent men.

The first is the control of armaments. In this area it is beyond our direct control but one that needs study and expression of opinion.

The second area is the population explosion which today threatens the world. The Philippines is directly involved in this problem. The rate of growth is 1,000,000 and by 1980 the estimate is the population of the Philippines will be 55 million. The problem of food, water and housing is directly involved. This calls for serious study and concern.

The third is in the area of production of food. In spite of the great increase in the knowledge on how to

control the forces of nature there has never been more hungry people than at the present time. A United Nations report says: "That out of every 1,000 babies born in the world, 240 of them will die in the first year, 400 will grow to adulthood but will never enjoy the fullness of life. They will always be undernourished and always hungry. Only 360 have any chance to live a full decent normal life." Lord John Boyd Orr, a Nobel Peace Prize Winner and the first director of the Food and Agricultural Organization says: "The rising tide of population and the falling reservoir of food constitutes, apart from actual war, the gravest issue facing mankind today."

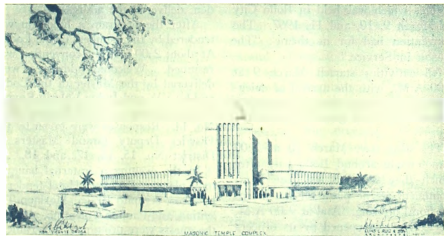
The fourth is the problem of law and order. This too, is a problem facing all mankind. In the United States there has been an 18-month study presented by the National Crime Commission. Here in the Philippines this too is a problem. In the ancient day

a man who went into the sanctuary of the Lord was safe, but now as was proven the other day in the case of Judge Valdez in Mindanao, no place is really safe. This calls for study and expression of public opinion.

In other words it would seem to me that facing problems as we do today calls to men of goodwill to join hands together in combating our common enemies. It is news today that the walls are down and that we can meet with one another. It is my fervent prayer that the day is not far off when we can discuss together ways and means of dealing with mutual concerns. I am personally convinced that this was the hope also of Pope John that one thing would eventually lead to the more vital things. Joint action and creating of public opinion for common causes must follow.

In the name of Christ we are united and through him we are truly brothers. △

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At the annual meeting of the Capitol Masonic Corporation, formerly the Capitol Masonic Temple Association, Inc., it was announced that the

first unit of the arcade around the temple complex will be started soon. The construction has been awarded

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