

Judge Manuel Pamaran •

*Address of Judge Manuel R. Pamaran of the Court of First Instance of Samar, a non-mason, at the installation of officers of Mount Huraw Lodge No. 98, F & AM, on Feb. 4, 1967 in Catbalogan, Samar.*

Distinguished Masons of Mount Huraw Lodge No. 98,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is indeed a great honor and privilege to be with you this evening and share with you the joys of your glorious fellowship and sublime brotherhood.

I feel humble to the task of making a speech on Freemasonry before illustrious and enlightened Masons representing the cream of the citizenry of Samar, as I cannot pretend to know more than you do about your fraternal institution. But as a humble citizen I am deeply fascinated and extremely amazed of what I know about Freemasonry, causing me to meditate profoundly if there is anything magical or supernatural about your institution.

On this score therefore, and with all humility, I will talk about Freemasonry from the viewpoint of an ordinary layman.

While I was reading the memoirs of President Truman of the United States, I was struck by the fact that during his youth the cousin of his mother visited them and he noticed the Masonic pin on his coat and told him immediately that he had always wanted to be a member. Shortly thereafter, he became one in Belton Lodge No. 450 in Missouri, years later he became a Grand Master and Lecturer. While he was campaigning for reelection as Senator of Missouri, he met the bitterest and cruelest campaign of his career. He was accused by his

political enemies as a protege of Tom Pendergast, a supposed political backer of the Democratic Party who had been sent to jail for income tax frauds. It was made to appear that Truman was a product of a corrupt political machine. However, when it was made known that Truman had been elected a Grand Master of Masons in St. Louis, it was asked of his opponent if it was possible for Truman to be that type of a person that they had portrayed. His opponent reluctantly said "no" and it cost him a thousand votes resulting in the overwhelming reelection of then Senator Truman.

There goes also the story of an officer of the American Expeditionary Forces during the first world war when in the thick of battle, while rushing into the German lines, he ordered a ceasefire when he heard the Masonic password of a dying German soldier to save him from instant death.

Right in our country I had also the opportunity to be privy to a Masonic display of brotherly love, fraternity and sympathy in moments of distress. When President Marcos considered bypassed the three justices of the Supreme Court appointed by President Macapagal, one of the justices, who is a Mason was re-appointed because of a fellow Mason of his, also a retired justice and close to the administration, feverishly worked for his re-appointment and confirmation as if the fate at stake was his.

These three magnificent displays of

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man apparently show that Masonry's fraternal love and man's humanity to man apparently show that Masonry is not a political party but it teaches politics; not a charitable institution, but dispenses charity; not an insurance company, but insures one from disaster and travails and the vicissitudes of life; and lastly as an institution, it is one of those things but it can do everything for the upliftment of mankind and the purification of society. These incidents also indubitably show how deep is Masonry dedicated to the welfare of humanity which dedication, if embedded in the heart of everyone, will realize the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God. Freemasonry therefore, should confine its influence not only within the circle of its members but also beyond. Even if the people may not join Masonry, they can behave like one, and Freemasonry achieves its goal.

But with due respect, however, to the feelings and sentiments of the distinguished Masons gathered here tonight, I ask: How could one be attracted to Masonry and imbibe its creed and philosophy as a way of life when there are so many things wrapped from public view and knowledge, creating an atmosphere of mysticism? What are the so-called rituals, ceremony of initiation, passwords and other matters of confidence? If Masonry is for the improvement of society to make this world a better place to live in, why are those kept from public view and knowledge? And if they are really confidential, why is the public not duly informed of its necessity? It is indeed unfortunate that these observations breed an impression in the public which is very unpleasant for me to say, but I have to, believing that it

might stir a reaction on the part of the Masons and make themselves more known and intimate to the public.

I was told by several persons coming from the middle class and professionals at that, that Masons do not believe in Jesus Christ. With a dagger on hand they trample upon the cross and the host and do not believe in images. This information imparted to me was echoed by a Junior Grand Warden of your institution when he urged publicity to the function of a Lodge so that the truth may be seen — "that we do not commune with the devil nor trample upon the cross." I for one do not subscribe to this public belief for membership alone of our venerated heroes like Rizal, Bonifacio and Aguinaldo, not to mention the great leaders of the world who shaped the course of history like Garibaldi, Bolivar, Churchill and Roosevelt, and right in Samar, of our Judge Fidel Fernandez, Atty. Vicente Santos, Mr. German Candari, Mr. Teodorico Noble and others of equal stature in integrity and morality, are eloquent rebuttal of such impression. But we cannot close our eyes that because of said belief there is a seeming indifference to Masonry by a segment of society. There is the experience therefore, of a deceased Mason in whose necrological services the participation of his brother Masons for one reason or another was denied. I may say though, that if other segments of society cannot meet with Freemasonry for the welfare of man and the worship of God, it is because they run on the parallel lines of brotherly love, charity to all and service to God.

To the new officers, therefore, of this Lodge, lay the bounden duty to lead the crusade in piercing the Masonic veil of secrecy to its maximum

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it is "easy does it". With these changes, our sense of purpose has been generally altered. This transformation has ushered in influences on the lives of many. Consequently, we are engaged in a struggle against indifference, where its hands are continuously grabbing victims to its fold. Atheism and materialism are seemingly insurmountable odds that block our way. These ideologies are gaining ground because many unfortunate brethren heed their appealing call. Many ignore their neighbors because they are engrossed in their personal ambitions, politics, wealth and honor. Many forget God because success in material things has dimmed their way to righteousness.

Let us therefore unite to combat these unwholesome influences. If we are divided, we cannot face these impediments. It is time to meet in Seminars, Conventions or Religious Councils to exchange our ideas for the good of all. Let us share our different views for the laudable end of promoting *Peace, Religious Liberty & Brotherhood*. May we join hands to win souls back to the flock of God.

God with us, we should not fear. With the aid of that Heavenly Spirit and His inspiration, we can do task for His greater honor and glory.

We are here on earth on a very important mission — one of Charity. Charity towards our fellowmen does not consist merely in giving out material means to an indigent neighbor. A smile will do because "it costs nothing but creates much; it enriches those who receive it, without impoverishing those who give it — it happens in a flash, and the memory of it lasts forever." Charity is done too in our ordinary lives. You can express command in kindly terms for instance, if you are the boss in an office. An employee appreciates that man in a swivel chair with a kind disposition. It is very heartening to see a stranger with respect and sense of decency when visiting your house. A Good Samaritan sees you in the hospital, prays for your departed one and condoles with you in the hour of distress. These are Charity. It is an open-arm policy, it is an air of acceptance, it is a feeling of belongingness. Doing likewise, you are doing great in the service of God.  $\Delta$

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limit so that the general public impression that I have just stated will be corrected and everybody, Mason or non-Mason, will appreciate and adopt the Masonic creed. As has been said, no man is an island. So with Freemasonry. The welfare of mankind and service to God that Masonry has attained and will attain will remain secure only as its environment permits.

Congratulations again to the new officers and may the Almighty God be most gratuitous in bestowing upon you strength and wisdom in advan-

cing the frontiers of Masonry in a world bedeviled with envy, hunger, enmity and war.  $\Delta$

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