

Pledge of Service . . .

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY WOR. BRO. FIDEL FERNANDEZ,
GRAND LODGE INSPECTOR FOR MT. HURAW LODGE No.
98, F. & A. M., AT THE INSTALLATION OF
THE OFFICERS OF MAKABUGWAS LODGE No. 47, F. & A. M., ON
FEBRUARY 4, 1958, TACLOBAN CITY**

Times was when the different ideologies and beliefs could not live together. The stronger tried to strangle the weaker. That caused the persecution of the Christians by the pagans way back when Rome was an empire, the thirty years war between the Christians and the Moslems, the emigration of the Puritans from England forced by an over-oppression, the Philippine rebellion against the Spanish domination. The result was the victory of Christianity over paganism; the triumph of toleration which made possible for the Christians and the Moslems to live peacefully as neighbors; the birth of the United States of America which now keeps the peace in the world; the freedom of our people and the independence of our country.

Hitler fooled the Germans by his advocacy of the supremacy of his people over the others. Germany fell sprawling. Only one-half of it has started to rise. The other half is still kept down under the big foot of another form of tyranny. Italy was mcek to Mussolini's apparently constructive ideas for the glory of Italy. The prestige of Italy was destroyed. The Japanese gave way to Tojo's fallacious policy of expansion. The Japanese Empire shrank in size.

The past has given the present sufficient facts to look upon. We have it clear and unailing that when the people allows its head to be loose on the shoulders, the head falls. The suppression of reason results in the oppression of thought.

Our present existence of peace and prosperity is the lesson earned and learned from the past experiences which proved that bigotry and intolerance seek to destroy, and that respecting the ideology and belief of the man beside you is the policy.

The size of the human race calls for diverse thinking. Therefore the harmony that is required is not the similarity in thought

but the equality in appreciation. One political ideology should not seek to destroy another, one class of belief should not assail another. For that would weaken both and stop the progress of the world, and end in the annihilation of the human race. Then God, in creating man out of His own image, should have labored in vain. What God has made, man should not destroy. The creature must glorify the work of the Creator. Hence the necessity of mutuality in appreciation; the one ideology, while loving its own, must not hate the other; the one class, while cherishing its own, must respect the other. Then there is that co-existence by which all can work together in harmony for the happiness of the human race and the glory of God.

Now the desire for supremacy of one political ideology threatens the peace of the world. And the foreboding that one religious belief has started attempts to put the Government under its thumb, portends disaster to the orderly life of our people. These encroachments upon the rights of a people will certainly result in the dislocation of the social activity of that people. The people must be on the alert to avert such trespasses. The citizens must take caution and be ready to ward off the intended intrusion. The social dislocation will bring about chaos upon the whole populace. The problem therefore is everybody's concern. Since in any fight the masses in the front, and not the leaders in the rear, receive the brunt of the assault, the masses must be impelled by reason in their obeisance to their leader who, spurned by selfish ambition, count not the consequence. Anyhow the evils of social unrest do not cause them suffering. They are not hungry even when the masses starve. Their security is assured in the midst of the insecurity of their constituents. While the leaders in their arrogance are propelled by the desire to oppress, the masses must be discreet and prudent by not allowing their intelligence to be dimmed by false arguments of logicians who are skilled in the art of logic as in the magic of the art, to avoid their reason being drawn away from the area of circumspection.

When you give a part of your strength to another, he is made stronger and you weaker. The weaker bows his head in submission to the stronger. Strength encourages ambition, and ambition brutality. Then ambition aspires an end. To brutality the means is not a concern.

In enthroning the tyrant, the people places their sovereignty at his feet. Then the tyrant makes out of the people fools. The people begin to feel on their shoulders the weight of oppression, in their hearts the consciousness of being fooled, in their conscience the per-

ception of danger. Then in their agony their reason commands them to protest. But the tyrant is unyielding. The masses must be weakened. For only the weak can be enslaved. Then the tyrant gives more vent to his whims, releases more of his strength, becomes more unmindful of the oppressed.

Have we not yet awakened to reality? Vigilance is the price of liberty.

Since the components of ideologies in politics as well as religions are men, it is uttermost that man as an individual evaluate himself. For only by knowing one's self as a man shall he be better qualified to understand the other man.

In the evaluation of himself, man must meditate as follows:

I was born free. I must be free. Free to know the truth; for only the truth can make me free. I must be free to move and think. The freedom to move is physical. The freedom to think is spiritual. Hence my being an indivisible unit of matter and spirit which, when divided, the former turns to dust while the latter improves to perfection during the course of its travel to eternity. The velocity of that travel is determined by the weight of the spirit in flight. That weight is what it got as load in the course of its union with the body. For the spirit itself is without weight. In itself it is perfection. The imperfections of the body cling to it and determine how heavy it becomes; and, consequently, the velocity of its movement. For the heavier travels slower than the lighter. That which is imperfect commits mistakes of indiscretion. The objective of life is happiness. Happiness is inversely proportional to indiscretion. The more of the one is the less of the other. More indiscretion, less happiness. No indiscretion, perfect happiness. But perfect happiness is not attainable in life. The aim therefore is to reduce indiscretion in its least for the attainment of happiness in its most.

As the load clings, it is not a matter of just wiping it off. For it clings hard; may be unyielding. It is either nourished or famished while it clings. If it is nourished by the commission of more wrong and the omission of more right, it grows in strength and size. It becomes heavier. But if it is starved by the commission of more right and the omission of more wrong, it becomes frail and this, gradually weakens its hold, eventually lessens its grip, and finally drops. The process therefore is a continuous lessening of the weight until it comes to naught.

But how can the wrong be determined from the right? Is there

something in me which enables me to distinguish the one from the other?

Yes; *conscience*. Conscience is proof that the spirit is present in the body. It is that part of the divinity that is injected into the flesh that flesh be imbued with the faculty of reason, and graced with the benefit of conversion from brute to man. As a man, I become a rational being. As a rational being, I am a part of humanity. Therefore I am free do to only what is right to that humanity.

Such is the essence of man irrespective of skin which is but determinative of the place where he is from. But the spirit of all is the same as the blood is red for all. This proves the brotherhood of man, and makes evident the Fatherhood of God. In this higher sense of consideration, it behooves upon men to enlighten each other by the force of logic rendered persuasive by the application of charity. Thus friendship and goodwill is attained in the mutual solution of a common problem. Since uniformity of thinking is an unattainable ideal, difference of ideals is no cause for dissension.

Harmony is not brought about by the sameness of things. The harmony of the heavens is the difference in sizes and distances of the stars. The beauty of the forest is the inequality of the foliage and the stature of the trees. The charm of the rainbow is the unity of its different colors.

Man in his humility realizes all these. But in his arrogance, he becomes proud. He wants to be a tyrant. Consequently someone has to be a slave. Then the trouble starts. Then the wranglings and the chaos which bring forth the unhappiness of man. Then the disorders, the revolutions, the wars, the annihilation of man.

The present threat to us as a people is not an invasion from without but the disorder within. We need not fear an invasion. An invasion will bring about a world war. A world war will mean a nuclear war. A nuclear war will be one without victor nor vanquished. It will be the extinction of the human race. Involvement in it is suicidal. None will ever attempt to get so involved.

The danger is the disorder within. If we allow ourselves to be divided into different camps because of a dogma, and fight against each other a war not of our making and in no way to our advantage, then we are doomed. A religious war certainly will not be of our making because as a people we made clear in our Constitution our belief of freedom of religious worship; and certainly not to our advantage because to cripple the minorities will not enhance the majority.

Of whose making then will be that war? Of allens whose selfishness and arrogance encourage them to take advantage of our meekness and fanaticism. And the few Filipinos who are used as mouthpiece for the predominance of a certain dogma. Yes; because those men have not made a real evaluation of themselves as individuals so they are being led away from the area of circumspection which enunciates loud and clear the cardinal rule of mutuality in appreciation.

False ambition craves for power. Dream of grandeur makes man selfish. Selfishness makes him arrogant. Arrogance makes him proud, By being proud he makes himself a kin to the devil.

So the poet has rightly wondered: "Why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

DOUBTS OF A PAST MASTER

Delivered by Wor. Bro. Carlos M. Ferrer during the Installation Ceremonies of Cabanatuan Lodge No. 53 last February 1, 1958

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Most Worshipful Grand Secretary, Worshipful Masters of Cabanatuan Lodge No. 53, Nueva Ecija Lodge No. 73, Memorial Lodge No. 90, Past Masters and Brethren of the three Sister Lodges in this province, ladies and gentlemen:

When the Past Master's Jewel was pinned on my breast by my wife, I have felt and I do believe that I have come to the cross-roads of my life as a Mason. In one way, I am consoled by the tradition and custom in this lodge of excusing a Past Master from attending regular meetings and degree works. It seems that non-attendance in any meeting of the lodge is a privilege. In my six years of masonic life, I have witnessed that such a practice seemed to be sanctioned altho not so provided by our ritual or permitted by any masonic virtue or principle. Some brethren used to say that a Past Master is a graduate of the Blue Lodge Institution and therefore has some privileges. Following this line of thought, I may say that I will now have a time of rest as many of the others who have preceded me have been doing.

On the other hand, the wise and kind words of our beloved Most Worshipful Grand Master, some two years ago, are still ringing in my ears. At that time Most Worshipful Brother Orosa said: "Once a mason has ceased to be a Worshipful Master, his work is just beginning." Viewed from the point of view of real masons, that wise counsel seems to suggest that after stepping down from the rostrum of the East of this lodge, my task has just begun. At