

2006 Commission Report

ANDORRA

The Grand Master of Andorra has given approval to the founding of an English speaking lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Andorra. This lodge is being promoted by a Grand Lodge officer of English nationality with the intention that this lodge will have international appeal and will be able to offer work in an English speaking Masonic lodge in the Pyrenean region. The consecration is planned for the week ending June 3, 2006.

BULGARIA

The Grand Lodge AF&AM of Bulgaria has again petitioned the Commission to support their claim of being the legitimate Grand Lodge in that country, as opposed to the United Grand Lodge of Bulgaria. The controversy goes back to a contested election in November 2000, and the subsequent breakaway of several lodges to form a new Grand Lodge. It appears that both Grand Lodges use the same ritual and generally practice the same Masonry, but attempts to unify the two groups have been unsuccessful. Conflicting information from both groups has made it difficult to accurately assess the cause for this problem, but attempts to achieve unification are ongoing, and successful results are a possibility in the foreseeable future. It has previously been determined that the United Grand Lodge of Bulgaria meets the standards for recognition, and this Grand Lodge has been so recognized by most regular Grand Lodges worldwide. Until such time these two Grand Lodges unite, or agree by mutual consent to share the jurisdiction of Bulgaria, this situation will remain unstable.

MACEDONIA

The Grand Lodge of Macedonia was consecrated on September 30, 2005 in Skopje by the United Grand Lodge of England. The Grand Lodge was formed from Skopje Lodge No. 9721, Unity Lodge No. 9749, and White Plains Lodge No. 9765, which were consecrated by the United Grand Lodge of England in 2000, 2001, and 2002 respectively. This Grand Lodge is regular in its work, and meets the standards for recognition. The Grand Master is MW Bro. Vladimir Sukarov, and the Grand Secretary is VW Bro. Nikola Polenak. The address of the Grand Lodge is, 1000 Skopje, P.O. 544, Republic of Macedonia.

MAURITIUS

The Grand Lodge of Mauritius was consecrated on March 12, 2005 by the Grande Loge Nationale Francaise, and is comprised of eight lodges previously constituted by the GLNF between 1992 and 2004, one Scottish lodge dating back to 1864, one English lodge dating back to 1877, and one French lodge dating back to 1778. The consecration date was the 37th anniversary of independence for Mauritius. The Grand Master is M.W. Bro. Lindsay Descombes. The Commission is of the opinion that this Grand Lodge meets the standards for recognition.

MOROCCO

There continues to be two Grand Lodges in Morocco: the Grande Loge Du Rouaume du Maroc (GLRM), headed by Bouchaib El Kouhi; and the Grande Loge Reguliere du Rouaume du Maroc (GLRRM), headed by Saad Lahrichi. There is an attempt by the founding Grand Master, Emile H. Ouaknine to unify the two bodies, but until that is accomplished, the Grande Loge Reguliere du Royaume du Maroc (GLRRM) is still considered to be the recognized Grand Lodge in that country.

PRINCE HALL CONFERENCE OF GRAND MASTERS

A letter has been received from the Prince Hall Conference of Grand Masters requesting:

1. That all Prince Hall Grand Lodges be declared regular by the Conference of Grand Masters of North America, and
2. That the policy of Exclusive Territorial Jurisdiction be clearly defined so that universal Masonry can prevail while keeping the Brotherhood Man through the Fatherhood of God; a viable cause for Freemasonry as a whole.

It has become generally accepted that Prince Hall Freemasonry is regular in form and practice. The Prince Hall Grand Lodges derive their origin from African Lodge No. 459, which received a charter from the United Grand Lodge of England in 1784. There are approximately 40 member Grand Lodges of the Conference of Grand Masters of North America that have established a fraternal relationship with one or more Prince Hall Grand Lodges. Therefore, the question of regularity does not seem to be an issue any longer. A current list and addresses of the member Grand Lodges of the Prince Hall Conference of Grand Masters is being requested, and will be posted on the Commission website as soon as it is received.

The issue of Exclusive Territorial Jurisdiction is one of the standards for recognition that has been strictly observed by this Conference. It is held that only one legitimate Grand Lodge will be recognized in a particular state or country, unless by treaty or mutual consent two Grand Lodges agree to share the same jurisdiction. This is the mechanism by which our Grand Lodges have established a fraternal relationship with Prince Hall Grand Lodges. The terms of such an agreement are usually negotiated and ratified by the two Grand Lodges in question and no change in that process is recommended.

We continue to be of the opinion that establishment of fraternal relationships with Prince Hall Grand Lodges remains the prerogative of each individual Grand Lodge.

ROMANIA

The National Grand Lodge of Romania reported that the Grand Orient of France has invaded their jurisdiction and formed the Grand Orient of Romania, which is composed of six lodges previously formed by the Grand Orient of France. These are not recognized Masonic bodies. It should be noted that the National Grand Lodge of Romania is the only independent and sovereign Grand Lodge of regular Freemasonry in Romania. They have some 5,500 members and work in strict observance of the ancient Landmarks and Old Charges of the Craft in 170 active lodges. The Grand Master is Eugen-Ovidiu Chirovici.

UKRAINE

The Grand Lodge of Ukraine was consecrated on September 24, 2005 by the Grande Loge Nationale Francaise and the Grand Lodge of Austria. This Grand Lodge was constituted from four Lodges previously constituted by the GLNF, and one Lodge constituted from the Grand Lodge of Austria. The first lodge constituted by the GLNF was named after a lodge of the same name created two centuries ago, and whose officers are working with the regalia worn by Simon Pethura, President of the Republic of Ukraine and Grand Master of the Ukraine until 1922. The Grand Master of the new Grand Lodge is M.W. Bro. Oleg Kusan. The Commission is of the opinion that the Grand Lodge of Ukraine meets the standards for recognition.

OTHER INFORMATION

1. There is information that Serbia and Montenegro will be established as two separate governments in the near future. If that occurs, the Grand Lodge of Yugoslavia may be divided into two separate

Grand Lodges, namely the Grand Lodge of Serbia and the Grand Lodge of Montenegro. Information will be posted on the Commission website as it develops.
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2. Grand Lodges that do not meet the standards for recognition are being formed and promoted at an alarming rate. There are several of which you should be aware. The Regular Grand Lodge of England is creating lodges in many European and South American countries. There have been reports that plans are to create lodges in America as well. There is a movement called the United Grand Lodge of America of Accepted Free Masons that is also trying gain a foothold on this country. Another group calling itself the Grand Lodge of All England is attempting to create lodges in England. The Grand Orient of France has also created several lodges in this country. With the renewed interest in Masonry brought on by recent books and movies, it appears numerous clandestine groups are trying to capitalize on this situation.
3. In order to facilitate the requests of foreign delegations to meet with the Commission at our annual meeting, it will necessary to have all such requests submitted to the Commission by January 1st of each year. This will give us time to make arrangements with those interested parties. Time will scheduled on Sunday, prior to the Monday meeting of the Commission to accommodate those requests.