

## 2008 Commission Report

### **BAJA CALIFORNIA**

A serious split exists in the Grand Lodge of Baja California. Two sets of Grand Lodge officers claim to be the legitimate officials of this Grand Lodge. The Confederation of Mexican Grand Lodges and the Interamerican Masonic Confederation has selected Lino Chavez as the legitimate Grand Master. The Grand Lodge of California, after an extensive investigation has determined that Lopez Mendoza is the legitimately elected Grand Master of this Grand Lodge. The Commission applauds the efforts of the Grand Lodge of California in trying to affect a resolution in this situation. It is clear that additional work must be done to resolve this problem. The two sets of Officers must work toward a unification agreement for the good of Freemasonry in Baja California. Until that occurs, we would recommend restraint in establishing further fraternal relations with this Grand Lodge.

### **BULGARIA**

Freemasonry continues to function in two Grand Lodges in Bulgaria, namely the United Grand Lodge of Bulgaria , and the Grand Lodge of Bulgaria. The Grand Lodge of Bulgaria with Grand Master Alexandrov has asked the Commission to advise on the regularity of their Grand Lodge. We must state again that even though a Grand Lodge may practice regular Masonry, we only determine whether the Grand Lodge meets all the standards for recognition, as established by this Conference. The Commission has for the past several years strongly encouraged the two Grand Lodges to actively meet and work toward the resolution of their differences and unification of their Grand Lodges for the best interests of Bulgarian Masonry. These attempts have not been successful largely due to some unusual demands on the part of the United Grand Lodge of Bulgaria. We now recommend that another joint meeting be scheduled within the next six months to work toward resolution of this problem. We further recommend that Bros. Jean-Claude Tardivat of the GLNF, Robert Heyat of the District of Columbia, and Thomas Jackson of Pennsylvania serve as independent observer/mediators to aid in this endeavor, as they have successfully done in a similar circumstance previously. If this attempt is unsuccessful, a final course of action may be to recommend suspension of recognition of Bulgarian Freemasonry until a resolution is achieved.

See [Supplemental Report](#)

### **YORK GRAND LODGE OF MEXICO**

A schism has developed in the York Grand Lodge of Mexico. A group that was separated from the York Grand Lodge, now call themselves the Very Respectful Grand Lodge of the York Rite in Mexico, AF&AM, and practice Masonry in Spanish only. There are indications they have some ties to the unrecognized United Grand Lodge of America. The dissidents had previously been expelled by the York Grand Lodge of Mexico for various infractions. At this point, the York Grand Lodge of Mexico is still considered to be the recognized York Grand Lodge in Mexico.

### **MONTENEGRO**

The Grand Lodge of Montenegro was legally consecrated on May 12, 2007 from three lodges that worked under the auspices of the Regular Grand Lodge Yugoslavia and was chartered by the United Grand Lodges of Germany. The ritual work of the consecration was performed by the United Grand Lodges of Germany, the Grand Lodge of Serbia, the Grand Orient of Italy, and the Grand Lodge of Austria. There are now four Lodges working under this obedience. This new Grand Lodge meets the standards for recognition. The Grand Master is Novak Jaukovic.

### **PARAGUAY**

A split has developed in the Grand Lodge of Paraguay. A group of dissidents have now proclaimed themselves to be the Grand Lodge Symbolic of Paraguay. After a questionable investigation, the Interamerican Masonic Confederation has declared this group headed by Mendoza Unzain to be legitimate. This was an unusual act since the by-laws of the CMI prohibits the interference in the internal affairs of a Grand Lodge. This ruling is being contested by the existing Grand Lodge of Paraguay, but they have not allowed to see the report of the investigation, or to offer a response. Nemecio Lichi was legally elected to

be the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Paraguay, and the Commission is of the opinion that this Grand Lodge is still the only Grand Lodge in Paraguay that meets the standards for recognition.

#### **PHILIPPINES**

The Grand Lodge of the Philippines has provided additional clarification on the situation with Freemasonry in that country. Members in seven of the eighteen Lodges in the Cavite District formed Lodges with the same name, but different numbers, and formed what they call the Independent Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands, without a legitimate charter. All those members have been expelled from the Grand Lodge of the Philippines. As stated last year, the Grand Lodge of the Philippines is the only Grand Lodge in that country that meets the standards for recognition.

#### **RUSSIA**

The legitimate Grand Lodge of Russia continues to operate in the confusion of having a self-proclaimed group operate under the same name. This group, headed by Roman Gorodnitsky, has sent numerous letters to Grand Lodges around the world claiming legitimacy. It is still the opinion of the Commission that the Grand Lodge of Russia with Andrei Bogdanov as Grand Master is the only Grand Lodge in Russia that meets the standards for recognition. It has been learned that Grand Master Bogdanov has announced himself as a candidate for the Presidency of Russia. The Commission is grateful to Brothers Tardivat of the GLNF, Robert Heyat of the District of Columbia, and Thomas Jackson of Pennsylvania for their efforts in helping resolve the difficult situation that has existed in the Grand Lodge of Russia.

#### **OTHER INFORMATION**

1. The Grand Lodge of the Czech Republic has filed a protest with the United Grand Lodges of Germany for a claimed invasion of their territory. During January of this year, a Lodge in Passau, Germany, initiated three candidates from Slovakia. After the Grand Lodge of the Czech Republic lodged their protest, the United Grand Lodges of Germany stated they will initiate another class of candidates from Slovakia in February. The Grand Lodge of the Czech Republic is claiming Slovakia as their territory since they announced they planned to constitute the District Grand Lodge of Slovakia, which is scheduled for March 8, 2008. Since this District Grand Lodge has not yet been formed, and since Slovakia is an independent country, The United Grand Lodges of Germany believe it to be open territory at the present time. This is an issue that must be resolved between these two Grand Lodges, and it is hoped these they will come to an agreement on territorial jurisdiction as practiced by all regular Grand Lodges.
2. Lodges and Grand Lodges continue to spring up around the world from unrecognized sources. A number of Lodges have been chartered in this country from foreign Grand Lodges of this nature. A new supreme Council, whose origin is unknown, has also been established in America, called the Supreme Council of North America, with bodies located in Virginia, North Carolina, and Illinois. We need to be very diligent in examining dues cards when accepting visitors to your Lodge, and in determining the legitimacy of a Lodge you may wish to visit.

### **Supplemental Report (06/2008)**

#### **BULGARIA**

A special called meeting was held in Washington, D.C. on May 8, 2008 to hear the report of the three mediators suggested by the Commission at the regular annual meeting in February. Bro. Thomas Jackson reported that the three mediators, consisting of himself, Jean-Claude Tardivat of the GLNF, and Robert Heyat of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, had met with the Grand Master, Petyo Penkov, and the Grand Secretary, Vasil Kolev, of the United Grand Lodge of Bulgaria. In summary, they clarified and explained the information that was provided to the Commission in February by the Grand Lodge AF&AM in Bulgaria. The United Grand Lodge of Bulgaria (UGLB) is working toward unification of Freemasonry in Bulgaria, and has established a process for the "regularization" of those brethren and Lodges of the Grand Lodge AF&AM in Bulgaria who wish to return to the UGLB. This process is the same for those who are joining or rejoining the UGLB; however some special provisions are made for those who were initiated

prior to the split of the Grand Lodge in November, 2000. They are also reducing the time requirement for those who are already Master Masons. To date, over 400 brethren have completed the regularization process and are members in good standing in the UGLB.

The Commission members present then met at length with Grand Master Penkov and Grand Secretary Kolev and verified the report of the mediators. The Commission is satisfied that the UGLB is working in good faith and in a logical manner to again achieve unification of Freemasonry in Bulgaria, and reaffirms the previous findings that the United Grand Lodge of Bulgaria is the only Grand Lodge in that jurisdiction that meets all the standards for recognition.