

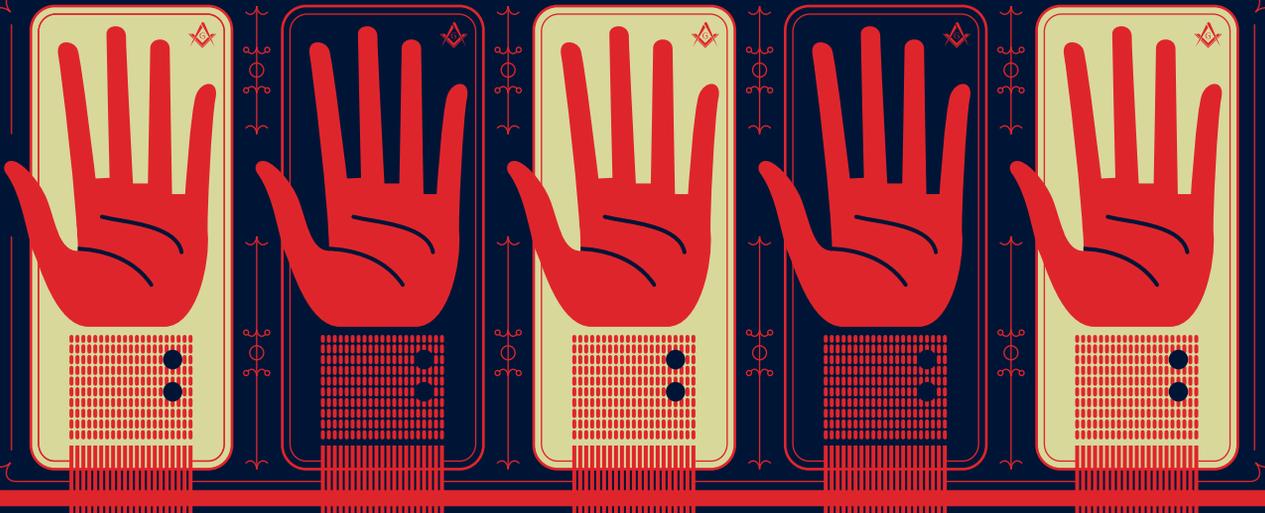
CALIFORNIA

FREEMASON

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DEMOCRACY



FREEMASONRY

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EQUALITY,
& SELF-GOVERNANCE

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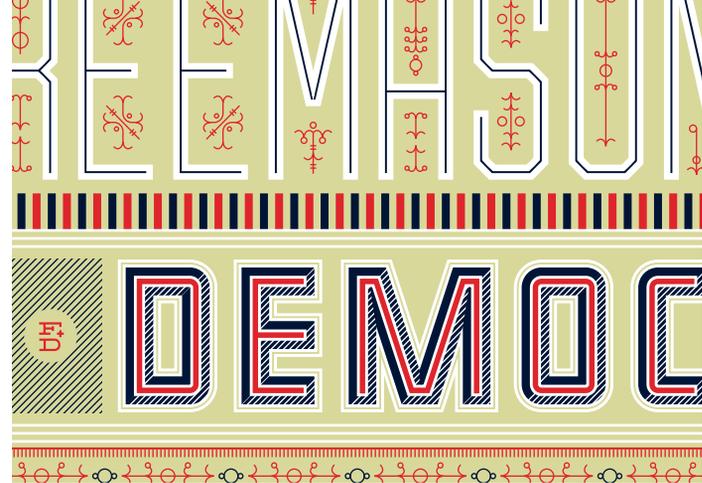
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FREEMASON

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EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

John L. Cooper III, Senior Grand Warden



The Level of *Equity*

Most toolboxes contain a spirit level – a bubble floating in a liquid and encased in a transparent capsule, which is in turn embedded in a piece of wood or metal. The purpose of the spirit level is to “prove horizontals”; that is, to determine if a surface is level. The senior warden of a Masonic lodge wears a level as the jewel of his office, but the design is that of an older version of the level – one that combines a plumb bob attached to a horizontal frame. When the plumb bob on this device is perfectly aligned, the horizontal frame is level – and the user is able to prove horizontals. There is a connection between this Masonic symbol and equality in a political society.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the concept of equality to the proper functioning of a free and democratic society. And it is impossible to exaggerate the importance of an upright life, represented by the plumb bob on the senior warden’s jewel, to the proper functioning of that free and democratic society, for they are intimately connected. Without the fundamental idea that all participants in a political society should have equal rights and privileges, democracy cannot flourish. And without the fundamental idea of a “just and upright life,” equality cannot truly exist.

Freemasonry believes that equality cannot survive where injustice exists. In the Entered Apprentice degree we are taught that justice is “that standard or boundary of right which enables us to render unto every man his just due.” It should be no surprise that the concept of justice is often illustrated by a set of scales held in balance. The very nature of justice is equality. And a political system that does not value justice as one

of its cardinal virtues is by its very nature one that is unequal. Equality and justice are intimately connected. One cannot exist without the other.

It is all too easy in a democratic society to forget or ignore this important teaching. But as Freemasons, we cannot ignore it. We need to be clear that the principle of justice is essential to the concept of equality. And the principle of justice is based on the “just and upright” conduct that is the basis of Masonic equality.

There is the oft-told story that, while he was president of the United States, Franklin Roosevelt attended a Masonic lodge where the gardener on his estate was the master. Whether or not the tale is historically accurate is not the point. The point of the story is that in a Masonic lodge, even the president of the United States has no rank that exceeds that which we freely entrust to the master. At the closing of a lodge the master asks, “How should Masons meet?” And the answer – “on the level” – has implicit in it the further statement: On the level, because all Masons are committed to that “standard or boundary of right which enables us to render unto every man his just due, without distinction.” It is only with this principle in mind that the level of equality works.

Political society could learn something from Freemasonry. Equality is important to a democratic society – but justice is even more important. And without justice, equality will never truly exist. And lest we forget it, the Masonic level – a plumb bob attached to a horizontal frame – is a constant reminder that justice is the foundation of equality. The Declaration of Independence proclaimed that all men are created equal. But justice, as all Freemasons are taught, is the essential principle that makes this possible. ✧

FACES OF MASONRY

MEET JIM CHAPMAN COUNTY SUPERVISOR MASON SINCE 1980

by Laura Normand

Some 38 years ago, the citizens of Susanville, Calif. opened their doors to a fresh-faced Jim Chapman, standing on the stoop in the middle of a snowstorm, asking for their vote for city council. Chapman was 19 years old.

Chapman won the election, and became the youngest person in state history to serve on a city council. It was not the last record he would break: At age 21, he was elected mayor, and shortly after, county supervisor. At the time, he was the youngest person to serve in either position in the history of California.

This year, Chapman – who, besides serving as Lassen County supervisor, is past master and current secretary of Lassen Janesville Lodge No. 149 – is approaching his fourth decade as an elected public official. Among his proudest accomplishments are opening up the democratic process for younger people, and getting his constituency more involved in the decision-making process. He is also an avid educator and proponent of democracy.

“If I’ve achieved anything in my life,” Chapman says, “it’s the demonstration that a young person has the same opportunity and the same right to get involved in democracy as anyone else. You do matter, you do have a voice.”

In his own words:

Starting young: *I was nine years old when John F. Kennedy was assassinated. It awakened my inner consciousness. I knew then: I wanted to be a politician. “Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country” made a big impression on me.*



Finding Masonry: *My grandfather was a Mason. I grew up a block away from a Masonic lodge. The Oakland Scottish Rite awarded me a four-year college scholarship. But it wasn’t until I was county supervisor that I approached the fraternity. My wife – then, my fiancé – wanted us to get involved in Eastern Star. First, I had to become a Mason. It’s one of the best things that ever happened to me.*

Masonry in public office: *In the first degree, there’s a line: “Masonry causes true friendship to exist among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance.” Masonry has given me the chance to know a lot of people at a personal level from a wide range of backgrounds. As a representative, it’s imperative that you understand what your work means to the average citizen. What you’re doing can have a definite impact. ♦*

DEMOCRACY FOR ALL

HOW TODAY'S MASONS SUPPORT DEMOCRACY

Across centuries and countries, Freemasons have been champions of democracy.

The legacy lives on. We asked our 8,000-plus Facebook fans how modern-day Masons advance democracy. Here's a sample of what you said.

Jason Byron Lee

We become the leaders of tomorrow by being active members of our communities, leading when needed, and speaking out when so moved.

Maria Christina Mendes Caldeira

By allowing people to choose: Choice, truth, and justice are the pillars of democracy.

Stu Allen

By not being the problem but the solution, and by being active in the democratic process.

Sotoyome Curtis Lodge

By being open to all faiths and points of views and working together to see what we have in common instead of what our differences are!

Stephen Curameng

By teaching our children our history as a nation and the ideals of our forefathers that led to the founding of our great republic.

Oscar David Arguello, Jr.

By being against ignorance, tyranny, and fanaticism and always upholding the laws of our republic.

Erik Andresen

By remembering that virtue is a path to be freely chosen, not imposed on others.

**San Gabriel Lodge #89, AF&AM,
Georgetown Texas**

By voting, serving in state and local governments, serving in uniform, and just being good citizens.



CHAMPIONS OF DEMOCRACY

MASONS WHO LED THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

by *Laura Normand*

Throughout the world, Masons have fought heroically for democratic ideals. Here are four brothers who led the fight in their countries.

GEORGE WASHINGTON [1732-1799]

When diplomacy failed to resolve increasingly harsh laws and taxes levied on the American colonies by Great Britain, George Washington was selected to lead a war of independence. As commander in chief of the Continental Army, he became the de facto leader of the American Revolution.

Washington helped build a strong democracy in the United States, acting as a prime mover in the steps leading to the Constitutional Convention in 1787. When the Constitution was ratified, the Electoral College unanimously elected him the first president of the United States.

SIMÓN BOLÍVAR [1783-1830]

This Venezuelan military and political leader was known as “El Libertador”: The Liberator. During his lifetime, Simón Bolívar led revolutions against Spanish rule in what are now Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela, successfully achieving independence for those countries.

Bolívar helped found the first union of independent nations in Hispanic-America, a republic named Gran Colombia, and served as its president from 1819 to 1830.

Together with José de San Martín – a fellow Freemason– Bolívar helped lay the foundation for democratic ideology in much of Latin America.

MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE [1757-1834]

The Marquis de Lafayette was 19 years old when, inspired by the American cause for independence, he traveled from his mother country of France to South Carolina and offered to serve in the Continental Army. During the war, he also persuaded his own government to aid the colonists, laying the groundwork for sending French troops to serve under George Washington.

Lafayette played an important role in the French revolutions of 1789 and 1830, which set a precedent for the development of French democracy.

BENITO JUÁREZ [1806-1872]

A Zapotec Indian born in a remote Mexican village, Juárez was a lawyer and politician who served as president of Mexico from 1858 to 1872, during which time he helped establish the country as a constitutional democracy.

In 1861, as civil war raged in Mexico, France invaded, eventually capturing Mexico City. Juárez led the revolt against the French monarchy and successfully freed his country from foreign occupation.

Juárez promoted equal rights for the Indian population, reduced the political and financial power of the Roman Catholic Church, and raised living standards for the rural poor. Perhaps his most ambitious plan was the creation of the Mexican constitution, based largely on the principles of the American republic. ✦



WEB EXTRA

To learn more about George Washington's life as a Mason, check out the February/March 2010 issue of California Freemason magazine at <http://www.freemason.org/newsEvents/index.htm>.

NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM

MASONIC PRINCIPLES POINTED THE WAY FOR A NEW REPUBLIC

by John L. Cooper III, Senior Grand Warden

The role of Freemasonry in the founding of the United States of America is well known. Not only were some of the leading Founding Fathers members of the craft, but the principles of Freemasonry were instrumental in the intellectual and social revolution that led to the Declaration of Independence, with its ringing statement: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Not so well known, however, is the role that Freemasonry played in the formative years of the American republic.

Lessons from a moral institution

On Dec. 24, 1793, Bro. DeWitt Clinton was installed as master of Holland Lodge No. 8 in New York City. In his inaugural address as master, he said the following:

It is well known that our Order was at first composed of scientific and ingenious men who assembled to improve the arts and sciences, and cultivate a pure and sublime system of morality. Knowledge at that time,

was restricted to a chosen few; but when the invention of printing had opened the means of instruction to all ranks of people, then the generous cultivators of Masonry communicated with cheerfulness to the world those secrets of the arts and sciences which had been transmitted and improved from the foundation of the institutions[.] [Our Fraternity then bent its] principle attention to the cultivation of morality. And Masonry may now be defined as a moral institution, intended to promote individual and social happiness.

Clinton went on to become a United States senator and the sixth governor of the state of New York. In 1812 he was the Federalist Party candidate for president, although he was defeated by James Madison. He was also the father of the Erie Canal. In his inaugural address, Clinton was expressing sentiments that would become the foundation of Freemasonry’s association with the new American republic.

Template for character-building

In his book “Revolutionary Brotherhood,” author Steven C. Bullock notes that:

Moral training had been a goal of Masonry since its creation, but post-Revolutionary Americans gave this activity powerful new ideological meaning. Virtue, the rejection of self-interest in favor of moral rules and the good of the whole, seemed to provide the essential foundation of a republican society. Leaders had always required self-control to withstand the temptations of power and corruption. But republics, unlike monarchical or aristocratic governments, did not depend solely upon their leaders. The people’s character ultimately determined the health and prosperity of a society without the strong government and traditional restraints that had previously undergirded the social order. And many post-Revolutionary Americans feared that virtue could not be sustained, allowing the Republic to degenerate into either despotism or anarchy. George Washington’s 1796 Farewell Address thus called morality one of the “great Pillars of human happiness” and “political prosperity.” Masonry helped to provide the foundation for this building, training

and teaching Americans to reinforce “the duties of men and Citizens.” As Washington noted to his brothers only a few months later, America needed to become what Masonry already was: “a lodge for the virtues.”

Principles to guide a country

Non-Masons have often speculated whether the motto of the United States of America, found on the Great Seal – “Novus Ordo Seclorum” – has any Masonic significance. It has – but one that few Masonic authors have noticed.

Anti-Masons are fond of suggesting that this phrase means that Freemasonry is a secret conspiracy to create a world government under its control, and that the United States of America was the first step in this process. That is nonsense. But it is quite accurate to say that Freemasons were hoping that the United States of America would become a “new order of the ages,” a republic that would not “degenerate into either despotism or anarchy,” as Bullock noted.

Only a few months after leaving the office of president of the United States, Bro. George Washington responded to a request from the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania for his views on Freemasonry and the new American republic. It was from his reply that Steven Bullock has quoted an excerpt, above. However, President Washington’s full remarks on this occasion are worth noting:

Fellow Citizens and Brothers of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania: I have received your address with all the feelings of brotherly affection, mingled with those sentiments for the society which it was calculated to excite. To have been in any degree an instrument in the hands of Providence to promote order and union, and erect, upon solid foundation, the true principles of government, is only to have shared with many others in a labour, the result of which, let us hope, will prove through all ages, a Sanctuary for Brothers and a Lodge for the Virtues.



Our first president is not here expressing a hope that Freemasons will govern the new republic; far from it. What he is expressing is the hope that the *principles* that guide Freemasonry will undergird the new country in such a manner that America will become a place where brotherhood is the hallmark of citizenship, and where virtues will find a home.

The United States of America – the world’s first large-scale democratic republic – has survived to become the paradigm of freedom because these Masonic lessons became a part of the fabric of the new American republic. This is the true Masonic “secret” that we passed on to the United States of America at its founding. And so it has been for more than 200 years. The American republic was truly a “New Order of the Ages.” ✧

A RIGHT TO BELIEVE

FREEMASONS, THE FOUNDING FATHERS, AND THE ROAD TO RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

by *Laura Normand*

In 1734, at a printing press in Philadelphia, a young Benjamin Franklin published the first Masonic book in America. “The Constitutions of the Free-Masons,” a reprint of the original James Anderson publication, became the seminal work of American Masonry.

Four decades years later, an 81-year-old Franklin was back in Philadelphia, poised to complete another seminal work – this time, of the Republic. On the last day of the Constitutional Convention, in a speech that he was too weak to give himself (he asked a fellow Pennsylvania delegate to deliver it), Franklin urged every member of the Convention to set aside any objections, and “put his name to this instrument.” The U.S. Constitution was born.

Both constitutions paved the way for one of our most cherished rights as Americans: freedom of religion.

Great Architect, great consequences

“The Constitutions of the Free-Masons” was first published in London in 1723 by James Anderson. For the first time, it called out a theological element to Freemasonry:

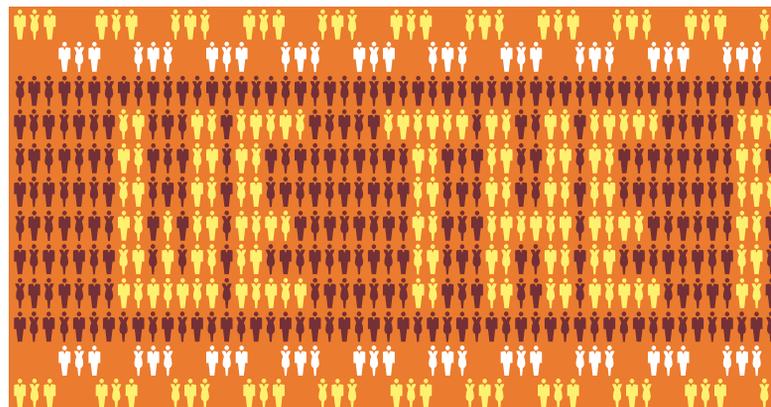
The only Supreme Being named was “The Great Architect of the Universe.”

Then, as now, self-education and self-improvement were central to Freemasonry, and its members pledged brotherhood with open-mindedness and tolerance. Within the lodge room, all men were equal, and this extended to religion. By using the general term “The Great Architect of the Universe,” the fraternity signaled its openness to men of all different faiths.

In Europe in the 1700s, this religious tolerance stood in stark contrast to the climate outside the lodges. For the past century, Europe’s civil authorities had commonly believed that society must have a uniform religion. Many felt, with deep conviction, that there was one true religion and that it was the duty of the civil authorities to impose it – forcibly if necessary – to save the souls of their citizens. In some areas Catholics persecuted Protestants; in others, Protestants persecuted Catholics. And although England formally renounced religious persecution in 1689, it persisted long after on the European continent.

When the first Grand Lodge was formed in London in 1717, Freemasons protected the fraternity from such clashes by expressly prohibiting religious discussion in the lodge. Anderson’s constitutions in 1723 reaffirmed this promise of religious tolerance.

This decision led to trouble for the Masons. The fraternity’s private meetings had always worried the Catholic Church. By





not pledging belief in a Christian God – and, worse, by openly condoning belief in other gods – Freemasons seemed to confirm the church’s suspicions. Anti-Masonic theorists and the church claimed that Masons were secret deists, or that the Great Architect really represented Satan. Even if that wasn’t the case, the Catholic Church wanted to protect its authority, and the fraternity was a threat.

In 1738, Rome issued a Papal Bull, forbidding men from attending lodge meetings on penalty of death. Harboring a lodge, neglecting to inform the state about lodge meetings, or even being invited to attend a lodge could mean imprisonment.

Throughout Europe, kings and city councils followed suit, issuing a landslide of decrees against Freemasonry. This was followed by mob violence, official executions, and exile.

Across the Atlantic, American Freemasons, including many Founding Fathers, took notice. They would see to it that history did not repeat itself in America.

Pilgrims’ promise

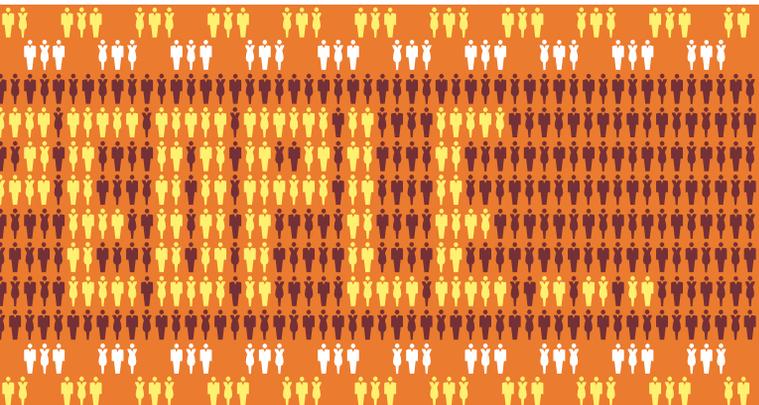
American colonists knew a thing or two about religious persecution. After all, many of the British North American colonies that eventually formed the United States were settled by men and women who had fled Europe to escape such persecution.

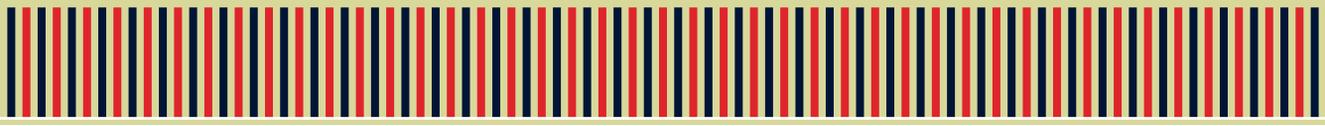
In the colonies, there was a confluence of New England settlers – who’d left Europe because they wanted freedom to worship as they chose – and Freemasons – who welcomed men of all religious beliefs, and had been punished in Europe for it. And so, when it came time to create a new government, the Founding Fathers were careful to protect religious beliefs.

At the Constitutional Convention, an 81-year-old Franklin urged his fellow delegates to ratify the U.S. Constitution. The constitution – even with its flaws – would strengthen the government, he argued, and better protect the rights of its citizens.

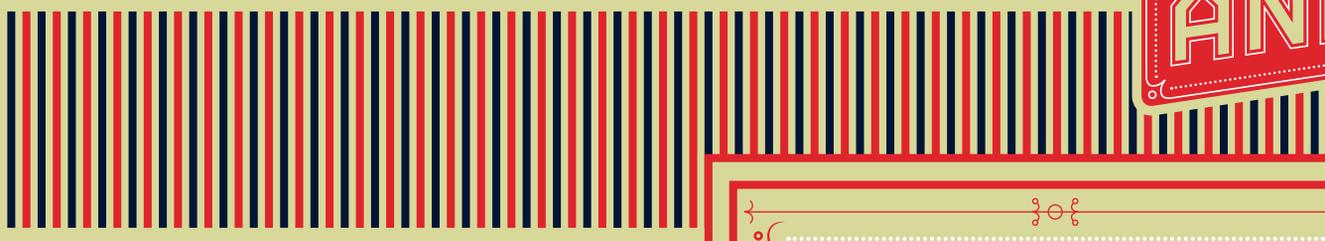
But aside from Article VI, which stated that “no religious Test shall ever be required as Qualification” for federal office holders, the Constitution said little about religion. Five Masons initially refused to sign because the document failed to guarantee separation of church and state. They, and many of the other delegates, had observed and experienced religious persecution, and they would only ratify the Constitution with the proviso that a later amendment could address freedom of religion, and other individual rights. The proviso was granted.

Two years after the Constitution was ratified, Congress adopted the First Amendment, which forbade Congress to make any law “respecting an establishment of religion.” Religious tolerance was now woven into the fibers of the country, as well as the fraternity – protected by law, and embraced within a steadily growing number of American Masonic lodges. ✧





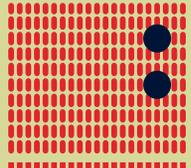
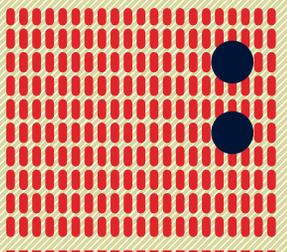
FREEMASONRY



AND



EARLY
MASONIC
LODGES WERE
A BREEDING
GROUND FOR
DEMOCRACY





DEMOCRACY

BY

MARGARET C. JACOB, DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, UCLA

IN the 18th century, Masonic practices such as elections, majority rule, orations by elected officials, national governance under a grand lodge, and constitutions owed a specific debt to political events in 17th-century England. Two revolutions had placed republicanism and the will of the people squarely at the center of English politics: In the 1640s, Parliament revolted against the crown; some 50 years later, the Whigs led a revolt against monarchical absolutism, expelling King James II and insuring Parliament's independence. By no small coincidence, the earliest Masonic lodges in London suggest Whig affiliations. Were Freemasonry and democracy the twin offspring of England's revolutionary history?

The answer is by no means straightforward. But this much seems certain: Early Masonic lodges were a breeding ground for democracy. Here's a look at some of the reasons why.

Continued next page



**OF (MOST OF)
THE PEOPLE**

Freemasonry bore the marks of the era in which it was founded: It had tendencies that were proto-democratic, but it could also reinforce distinctions based upon birth and wealth. Anderson's Constitutions of 1723 justified egalitarian fraternizing among men, but at the same time, this did not prevent the lodges from being hierarchical. Breaking bread with one's betters could induce a false sense of equality, an illusion that one was being egalitarian while still excluding all sorts of men – and not least, of course, women. Regardless, Masonic lodges played an important role in introducing the democratic notion of equality.

On the European Continent, a lodge appealed to the uprooted, the mercantile, and the cosmopolitan. It was supposedly of ancient origin, democratic in its ethos, associated with the most advanced form of European government to be found – across the Channel – and capable of being molded to one's tastes while offering charity and assistance to all brothers.

**ENTHUSIASM FOR
THE ENLIGHTENMENT**

In deference to the deep religious divisions in Britain, as in much of Europe, Freemasonry endorsed a minimalist creed – everything from theism to pantheism and atheism. Not surprisingly, the lodges in England had a high representation of

pro-1688-9 Whigs and scientists, while in Paris by the 1740s the philosopher and Freemason, Claude Helvétius, was a materialist. The leader of Amsterdam Freemasonry, Rousset de Missy, was a pantheist. Montesquieu, also a Freemason, was probably some kind of deist. In both London and Amsterdam Jewish names can be found in the lodge records. In France there were lodges for teachers and doctors; even actors were admitted. Even in Catholic countries, lodge ceremonies rarely contained overtly Christian language.

When the Catholic Church condemned lodge membership in 1738, it objected that Freemasonry constituted a new form of religion. It also condemned frequent elections as being republican with democratic tendencies. The Church's condemnation only made the lodges more attractive to the secular-minded and the progressive. For some men, Freemasonry did indeed express beliefs that were new, and inculcated practices ultimately at odds with traditional religiosity and monarchical absolutism. It is hardly surprising that by 1750, membership in a Masonic lodge had come to denote enthusiasm for the new, enlightened ideas.

**SELF-GOVERNANCE
AND STATUS**

Outside of confraternities or town councils, the 18th-century European populace had few opportunities for self-governance, especially on a national scale. But that changed as Masonic lodges spread – to the Dutch Republic and France, as far east as Prague and Moscow, and as far west as Philadelphia and Cap Français (Haiti). Increasingly, secular-minded, affluent white men began governing themselves: in colonial settings, as part of their empires; at home, as part of their localities; and, through the grand lodges, their nations. Lodge membership became a symbol of independence from clerical authority and a sign of political maturity. It also became one means of ensuring cultural cohesion among Europeans in their colonies – an expression of imperial status.



Governmentality appealed to Freemasons. Government ministers, state employees, liberal professionals like lawyers, doctors, and teachers, as well as merchants, flocked to join the lodges. In Sweden the entire court, from the king and his ministers on down, joined lodges that were feted at the royal palace. There, as in Britain and the American colonies, the lodges paraded in public, a sign of their acceptance. In Paris and The Hague, British ambassadors played a role in spreading the fraternity: In Berlin by 1750, Frederick the Great used the lodges to enhance his cult-like following. In Vienna in the 1780s, Joseph II's influence permeated the lodges where Mozart sought out musical commissions.



DEVELOPING DEMOCRATIC HABITS

Everywhere they spread, the lodges denoted relative affluence, drinking, and merry-making. Despite their conspicuous consumption, the lodges were also places that sought to instill decorum, at least before dinner, putting a priority on discipline and manners. In London, lodges would sometimes take over the seats of a theater, typically behaving better than the audiences. They were setting an example that would prove vital. The habits of listening and silence in theaters and concerts developed slowly, largely by the second half of the 18th century, as part of a general growth of decorum and interiority. The Masonic lodges played a role in that process, which, in turn, was deeply related to democratic habits: listening and debating with civility, voting and regulating in an orderly fashion.

The habit of being governed by laws derived from a constitution may seem commonplace today. But the very term *constitution* as we know it first appeared in French in a Masonic document of 1710. (In the Masonic document, *constitution* meant “rules and statutes of our order” for the first time, and not, as it did in French then, “one’s health.”) In the American colonies, many of the first constitutions were Masonic ones.

As such, the Enlightenment in its Masonic setting was a complex process of new ideas as well as habits: public discussion; sociability; private, uncensored reading. All required a new, more commonplace sense of politeness, of discipline and decorum, and not least, the rule of law.



A RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE

In every European country Masonic dues were substantial (although graded by ability to pay), and each lodge came to possess a social persona, and to give loyalty to a national grand lodge. Some lodges spurned anyone but the noble born; others were entirely for students or doctors. Some lodges admitted lowly merchants, even actors; others banned them. In Philadelphia, Benjamin Franklin had to playfully draw attention to the new lodges before they paid him the courtesy of membership.

The relationship between the lodge and a brother was partly contractual – based upon dues paid – and partly filial, based upon birth and deference. In this way, lodge membership began to resemble citizenship in a democratic state, where members felt a presumed right to participate, and even to govern. As in the polity, brothers faced consequences when they broke Masonic laws, told secrets, gave away passwords, or failed to pay dues or give charity donations.

Continued next page

THE LODGES COULD BECOME BEACONS

**SHOWING THE WAY TOWARD
A MULTIRACIAL AND EGALITARIAN
FUTURE FOR AMERICAN SOCIETY.**

Sometimes, even the practices within the lodges themselves overlapped with those of the state. When Dutch Freemasons organized the Grand Lodge of The Netherlands in 1756, they borrowed the decentralized structure of the republic’s main legislative body, which contained elected representatives of most provinces, preserving a high degree of sovereignty for each province. (The Grand Lodge even recommended this system to German lodges, which were having difficulty arriving at a comparable system of national cohesion.) Just like its legislature, the Grand Lodge of The Netherlands adopted a decentralized governance, permitting independence among Dutch lodges – one likely model for the American system of state-wide grand lodges.



**FIRST, THE NATION;
THEN, THE WORLD**

In the 1750s, the grand master in The Hague, the Baron de Boetzelaer, spoke about the Freemasons holding a “national assembly at The Hague.” At these assemblies, brothers were organized into ceremonial rows. The first row symbolized the “Staten van Holland,” the legislative body of the province of Holland. Behind this stood a row of

brothers described as representing the national grand master. The officers of the lodge, visitors, and all the other brothers stood behind. So arranged, they sang and affirmed their symbolic unity. Were they unifying the nation as well as the lodges? Perhaps unconsciously, they were doing both. By the 1750s nationalism was rising throughout Western Europe. In the American lodges, loyalty to local bodies gradually came to seem more real and relevant than did the edicts coming from London.

But more than nationalism was at work in Masonic sociability, and the democratic ideals that followed. The scope widened to encompass the world. This cosmopolitanism meant that in every major city, lodges might have regular visitors from anywhere in the Western world and its colonies, and yet, simultaneously, see the nation as a site where virtue and merit should be rewarded. The Enlightenment initiated reforming impulses that were felt in many areas, but its assault on privilege and corruption also suggested that new men were needed in government service.



SCHOOLS OF GOVERNMENT

And so, more than any other new form of sociability, the lodges became schools of government – places where the reformist impulses of the Enlightenment could be focused on one’s immediate surroundings, potentially on one’s immediate province or state.

In the 1770s the French Grand Lodge sought to contribute to the common good by having a public presence in Paris. In addition to a national representative assembly with one man, one vote, the Grand Lodge set up charity funds for brothers and sisters fallen on hard times. It was an important shift in their role.



By seeing themselves as capable of constituting the polity and tending to its needs, Freemasons were becoming a new breed of political men – with a new confidence about self-governance and with the experience of writing laws and bending them to the needs of a larger, more binding constitution.

In these ways, Freemasonry made abstract ideals like reason, equality, and self-governance concrete for the first time. By 1750 around 50,000 European and American men had joined lodges; by 1785 there were probably more than 1,500 women Freemasons. The colonial numbers are unknown, but the lodges, like the churches, spread with empire. They expressed the highest ideals articulated during the age of Enlightenment. At the same time, they could still be places of exclusion, purposefully remote from peasants; workers; in many places, women; and in all places, slaves.

Yet in their search for equality and merit, for self-governance, free speech, and religious toleration, the lodges looked to the future, toward human rights and egalitarian ideals. For that reason alone they would be hated by the enemies of democracy, both in the 18th century, and even late in the 20th, in some of the newly emerging Eastern European and Russian democracies. Today the 28th article of the covenant of Hamas sees Freemasonry as a tool for Zionist world domination.



AMERICAN FREEMASONRY

In the American colonies Masonic lodges split into “ancients” and “moderns.” Such seemingly innocent terms denoted a turn away from the aristocratic character of so-called “modern” British Freemasonry and a return to pure, or “ancient,” Freemasonry.

In symbolic political language, American Freemasons from the 1760s onward were on a search for an original ancient constitution that justified Anglo-Saxon freedoms. This development in the colonies allied the lodges with a new generation of men like Paul Revere, who were concerned with reform and economic progress and hostile to notions of blood and birth as

determinants of one’s civic importance. The strength of colonial civil society, with the lodges being the most formally “legal” of all the various meetings and reading societies, gave the first generation of Americans a social infrastructure that vitally contributed to social stability and cohesion.

When we look around the world today and see revolutionary movements – think of the Arab Spring – we look to see the emergence of a strong civil society out of the wreckage of decades of repression. Therein lies the hope for legal systems that respect individual rights and property.

Today’s American lodges may no longer be at the forefront of democratic renewal, but they could be. Their historical legacy awaits reclaiming. With Masonry’s legacy firmly in mind, the lodges could become beacons showing the way toward a multiracial and egalitarian future for American society. ♦

Editor’s note: Dr. Margaret Jacob is among the world’s foremost Masonic scholars. Her work, including the book “The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons, and Republicans,” provides important research into the early development of Masonry, and is largely responsible for documenting and establishing connections between early European Freemasons and the craft today.

Through the Grand Lodge of California’s partnership with the University of California, Los Angeles, Dr. Jacob has led research and the development of academic courses on the history of Freemasonry and civil society.

LIVING BY THE LEVEL

THE MASONIC AND LEGAL WORK OF EARL WARREN

by Heather Boerner

By the time he retired from the bench of the U.S. Supreme Court, Earl Warren had stared down plenty of adversity. But even in the face of opposition – including a campaign to impeach him from the Supreme Court by the John Birch Society and other conservative groups – his Masonic ethics never left him.

“The man of character, sensitive to the meaning of what he is doing, will know how to discover the ethical paths in the maze of possible behavior,” Warren said. He also famously noted, “Everything I did in my life that was worthwhile, I caught hell for.”

Without his leadership and moral compass, our democracy might look very different today.

Passionate servant

Warren became a Mason in 1919, after earning a law degree and doing a tour in the U.S. Army. He served in many capacities in the fraternity over the years: At Sequoia Lodge No. 349 in Oakland, where he was raised, he held positions from steward to master. In 1935, he served as grand master of California.

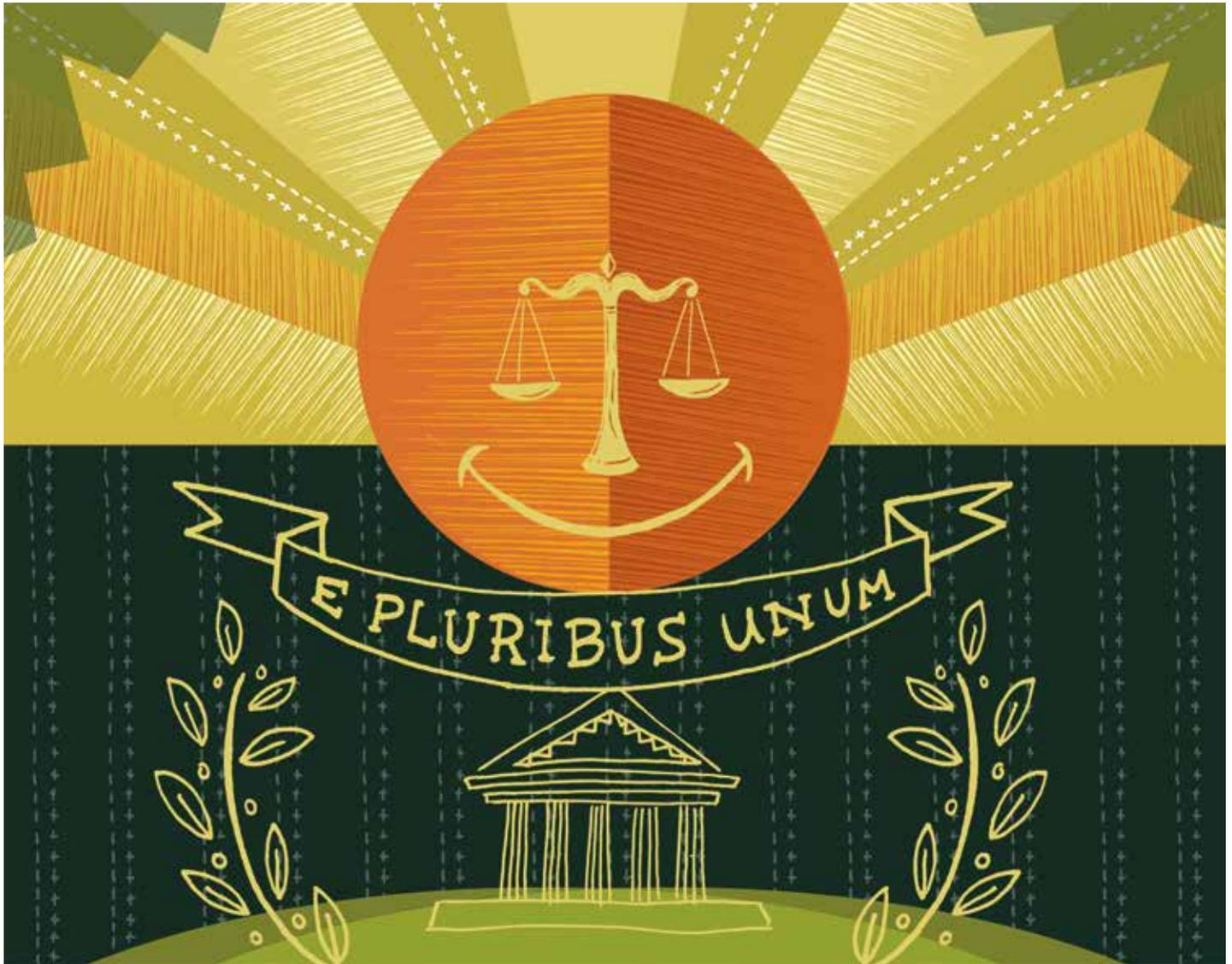
Perhaps as a result of his dedication to the fraternity, Warren exhibited a passion for service, equality, and forthrightness in his public life. He was chiefly concerned with justice in his work as a district attorney and then the state’s attorney general. He was a unifying force in California politics – the only California governor ever elected to three consecutive terms, earning the approval of Democrats, Republicans, and Progressives alike. What’s more, he lived by the level, convinced that in his Masonic work as in his legal work, “he who is on the lowest spoke of fortune’s wheel may be entitled to our regard.”

Leveling the playing field

During his 14 years as a district attorney, Warren earned a reputation as a tough, no-nonsense crime fighter who railed against corruption in the government. In his work as a prosecutor, Warren had a track record of protecting the rights of accused individuals, and ensuring that police and prosecutors acted ethically. Those principles showed later in his work on the Supreme Court: In *Miranda v. Arizona*, Warren presided over the Supreme Court decision to guarantee the legal rights of an arrested person.

Warren’s enduring legacy is one of fairness and high ethical standards, but he was not without flaws, particularly early in his career. Like many of the state’s politicians at the time, he was a member of the Native Sons of the Golden West, which demonstrated pride in California heritage. Although Warren skirted many of the group’s ideological positions – some of which had ties to white supremacy – he aligned with them in advocating for the relocation and internment of the Japanese after Pearl Harbor. It was likely a political move: Public opinion was overwhelmingly in favor of the internment program.

It was a rare instance in Warren’s career when he bent to popular opinion. Later, he would endure criticism and even an impeachment campaign without wavering from his ethical standards. On the Supreme Court, he was a powerful advocate for racial equality. As chief justice, he presided over the decision



in *Loving v. Virginia*, which banned laws that enforced racial segregation in marriages and intimate relationships.

He would seal this legacy of racial equality with his landmark opinion in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, which ruled racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional.

Calling on fraternal roots

In 1935, in his grand master's address to the Masons of California, Warren spoke passionately about the right to equal access to public education. "I am convinced that the hope of the future lies in the education of our youth," he said, "not of some

children but of all children – not according to so-called classes of society..."

Two decades later, as he issued the Supreme Court's opinion on *Brown*, he echoed that sentiment, and indeed, many of his own words.

For example, in his grand master's address, Warren had said, "[public education] prepares the foundation of a liberty loving people for free government." As chief

Continued next page

When Warren Met Marshall

As chief justice of the Supreme Court, Earl Warren presided over numerous cases argued by attorney Thurgood Marshall, including *Brown v. Board of Education*.

But the two men had more in common than jurisprudence. Both practiced the craft.

Marshall, a graduate of Howard Law School, didn't become a Mason until later in his career. At the urging of Amos T. Hall, a Prince Hall Mason based in Oklahoma, Marshall joined the brotherhood in 1951. He later served as grand minister of the State of the United Supreme Council, Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction.

When Marshall was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1967, he had one very staunch brother in arms. In a letter to President Lyndon B. Johnson, Earl Warren voiced his support for Marshall. "Few men come to the court with better experience or a sounder preparation for our work," Warren declared.

justice in the *Brown* decision, he wrote that public education was "the very foundation of good citizenship."

In his grand master's address, Warren advocated for public education to give "every child, regardless of his station in life, an equal opportunity to study, learn, and progress upon his own merits in this complicated and ever changing world." In *Brown*, he repeated the statement: "[Education] is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment."

As grand master, Warren called public education, "one of the greatest leavening influences on society," something that did "more to break down distinctions between social and economic groups and to eliminate class consciousness than any other man-made institution."

Nearly 20 years later, in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, he protected that right. And so, armed with the ethics of Freemasonry, Warren changed the world. ✧



GOVERNMENT OF THE PUEBLO

IN 19TH-CENTURY MEXICO, MASONS LED THE PUSH FOR DEMOCRACY

by *María Eugenia Vázquez Semadeni*,
Visiting Assistant Professor, UCLA

In the years following Mexico's independence from Spain, a power struggle ensued over how the newly established republic would function. One side, led by the country's elites, wanted to keep government in the hands of a powerful few. But another, comprising individuals of all classes and origins, wanted to root Mexico's republic in its people and establish equal rights for every citizen. Freemasons led this group.

A rift in the Rite

Organized Freemasonry arrived in Mexico in the midst of revolution. Masonic sources seem to show that York Rite lodges appeared in Mexico – then called New Spain – during the 1810s, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana.

At the time, the nation was immersed in a war against Spanish rule.

In 1821, after a decade of fighting, Mexico achieved independence. Within a year, two Scottish Rite grand consistories appeared in Veracruz and Yucatán, absorbing the York Rite lodges in the area.

Scottish Rite Masons, or “escoceses,” quickly became the most important Masonic force in Mexico. Among their members were several Spaniards, some who wanted to recover the link to Spain. They lobbied to put Mexico under a constitutional monarchy with a prince from the Spanish royal family on the throne.

In protest, a group of Freemasons broke off from the Scottish Rite. Led by prominent politicians and the American minister Joel R. Poinsett, the breakaway group established three new York Rite lodges under the jurisdiction of the American Grand

Continued next page



many achieved important positions in the army, militias, municipalities, local legislatures, and even the national congress.

The lodges also distributed pamphlets and newspapers to the masses, advertising York Freemasonry as a privileged space in which to educate men in civil life and in “the science of the world”: a space to create committed citizens.

By spreading this sentiment, and with many of their members in public office, the yorkinos earned a loyal following – and a chance to wrest control from the elites.

Legacy of democracy

In 1828 the yorkinos led an armed popular movement and succeeded in putting one of their leaders in the Mexican presidency: Vicente Guerrero, a mestizo of very humble origins.

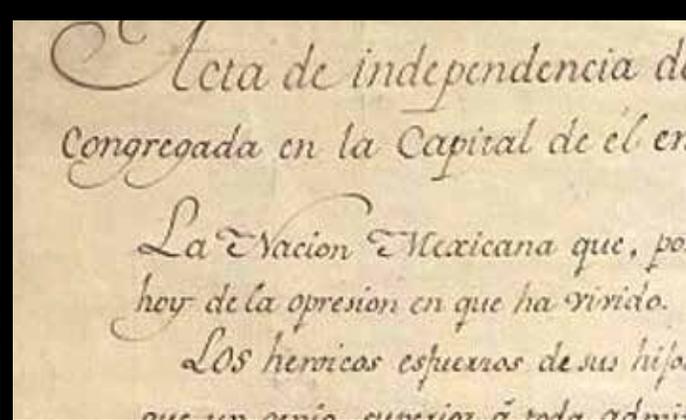
It frightened the elites. As they saw it, the constitutional order had been disrupted. The president was a man of black and indigenous blood. The yorkinos had created an image for themselves as the voice of the people, and the masses were mobilizing.

The elites were not ready to see common citizens acting politically. For them, the republic was not synonymous with democracy. At the end of 1829, the military elites retaliated with their own armed movement. They overthrew Guerrero and spread

an anti-yorkino sentiment, discouraging the masses from further political participation.

With political power shifted back to the elite few, the yorkino’s democratic values and practices receded. Nonetheless, the York Freemasons had helped to transform the perception among many Mexicans about what a republican form of government should be. Their actions and pro-democratic ideology had changed the political landscape of the country, and would serve as an inspiration for many leaders to come. ♦

Editor’s note: María Eugenia Vázquez Semadeni is a visiting assistant professor and postdoctoral fellow at the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research, which is sponsored by the Freemasonry and Civil Society Program created by the Grand Lodge of California, investigates Freemasonry in the Mexican political culture of the 19th century.



GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION AT WASHINGTON LODGE NO. 20

by Heather Boerner

When David Cameron was a child, he gave little thought to the photos of the august men lining the walls of Washington Lodge No. 20 in Sacramento. He was more concerned with the pool room and the secret passageways. But once Cameron became a Mason in 2004 – following in the footsteps of his father, a past master of Washington Lodge – those faces suddenly came into sharp focus.

“Wow, look at this,” he remembers thinking, scanning the list of past masters going back to the lodge’s founding in 1852. “Bigler was a governor. Johnson was governor. Wow, this is really amazing.”

On the shoulders of giants

Bigler and Johnson, of course, were John Bigler and Hiram Johnson – two men whose faces line the walls of both the lodge and the statehouse.

Self-educated, Bigler became a newspaperman and then a lawyer in his native Pennsylvania before moving west. In 1849 he was elected to the California State Assembly, the lower house of the California State Legislature. He took the highest position in the state in 1851, becoming California’s third governor. He was the

state’s first incumbent governor, winning his reelection bid, and the only person in the 19th century who was reelected to a second term as governor. At one point, Lake Tahoe was named after him (although the name was later changed).

Johnson, a reformer, acted as special prosecutor to convict city boss Abe Ruef of bribery – after the previous prosecutor was shot in the courtroom. He served as governor in 1910 under a reform ticket. He supported women’s suffrage and the now-erstwhile referendum system for California voting before moving on to found the national Progressive Party and serve five terms in the U.S. Senate. Johnson was also the governor who supported reforming the way the state elected U.S. senators: Up to that point, senators had been appointed by the state legislature.

But those aren’t the only governors who did their work at Washington Lodge. The lodge served as a meeting place for several people dedicated to making California a true democracy in the Masonic tradition.

There was Milton Latham, a past master of Washington Lodge who has the distinction of being the shortest-serving governor of the state. He was elected in 1860 with the promise to rein in the young state’s growing debt. He resigned five days later, when the state Legislature appointed him to fill a U.S. Senate seat left vacant after its former occupant died in a duel. He was the state’s sixth governor.

And finally, there was Romualdo Pacheco, California’s only Latino governor to date and the state’s first native Californian to serve as governor. Pacheco served in a variety of high-profile positions before taking his role as the state’s 12th governor in 1875: state Senate and Assembly member, county judge, state treasurer, and lieutenant governor. Later, he was appointed the U.S. minister to Guatemala. According to “Fifty Years of Masonry in California,” Pacheco was just the second native Spanish-Californian to receive his Masonic degrees in California. Although he was made a Mason at San Luis Obispo Lodge No. 148, he became an active member of Washington Lodge.

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Democracy from the ground up

Perhaps it shouldn't come as a surprise that men who sat in seats of power also served on the line at Washington Lodge. When the lodge was founded in 1852 it was at a time of crisis in the city: A cholera epidemic was sweeping the city, causing a state of emergency and putting a tremendous burden on the three established lodges – Tehama, Jennings, and Sutter Lodges.

Still, the new Washington Lodge, led by first Master Charles Denscombe, swung into action. Governor Bigler was active in the relief effort then, as well. Once the epidemic passed, and as early as 1853, the brothers of Washington Lodge paid for the schooling of the children of a brother who had passed.

“Masonry is this kind of mutual, symbiotic thing. It makes men great and they make Masonry great – and that creates a strong, positive effect on society,” says Past Master Richard Wilson, 66, who joined the lodge at age 23. “The fact that we have been involved in the fabric of the community for so long means a lot to me.”

“I'm reminded of the past masters in the pictures on the walls, in the aprons in the cases out in the lobby,” says Cameron, a past master himself. “I'm really honored to be in the position to share space with men who are governors, attorneys, doctors – men of various backgrounds, who led with such great enthusiasm.”

And while current members may not hold such high profiles outside the lodge as some of those members from the lodge's

founding, Cameron says he is as inspired by the current members as by those from history.

“A lot of men are attracted to the lodge for its history, and you can see the gears turning as they read the list of past masters,” he says. “But to me, the honor is meeting great men who may not be ‘great’ to the outside world. They're great men in their actions and in their everyday walks of life: honorable, upstanding men who share a common love and respect for each other, no matter what.” ✦



BY THE RESIDENTS, FOR THE RESIDENTS

RESIDENT COUNCILS SERVE THE GOOD OF THEIR COMMUNITIES

by *Laura Normand*

With cranes and bulldozers still crawling over the land marked for the Acacia Creek apartments, a group of men and women came together and made plans for a new community. It would be months before construction would be completed and they could move in, but still, they set about drawing up the rules for a resident council. It would be of the residents, by the residents, for the residents: a system of oversight, a mode of communication, and a chance to shape their environment with their ideas and ideals. In short, it was for the good of the community.

The three Masonic communities in California – Acacia Creek, Union City, and Covina – all have resident councils. The councils share some characteristics – basic structure, similar term limits, election processes – but in other ways, are uniquely tailored to each community’s distinct environment. One thing is certain: Their presence is highly valued, for practical purposes and also on democratic principle.

“We want to have a say”

“Almost everything that happens here, the residents are actively involved in it,” says resident Richard Thompson, president of the Acacia Creek resident council. “We have a strong feeling that we do not want somebody telling us what we want to do. We have around 20 to 25 different programs that residents have started.”

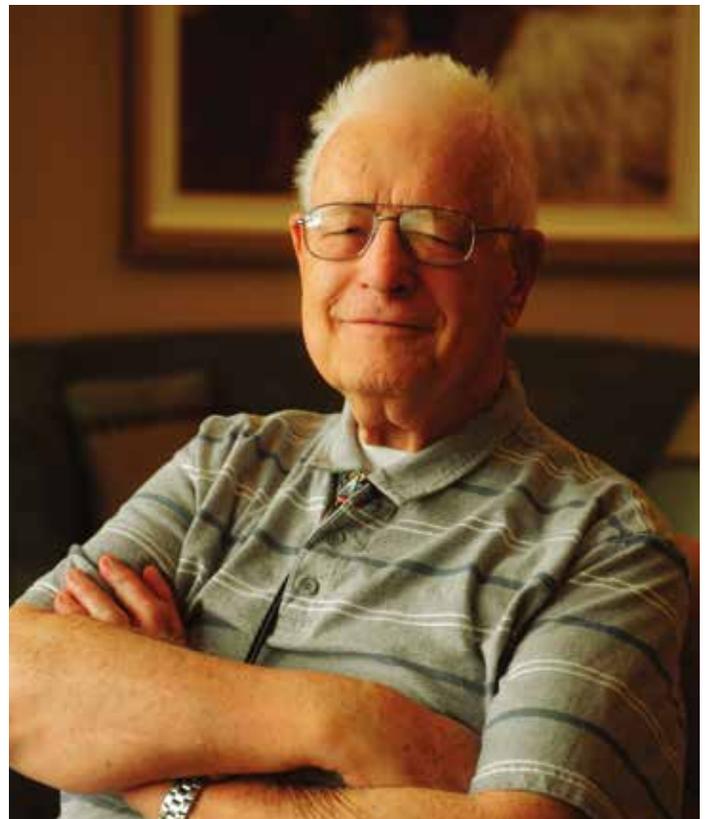
The Acacia Creek resident council is at the center of this hands-on culture.

Thompson, who is also organist at nearby Siminoff Daylight Lodge No. 850 on the Union City campus, was among the group

who met in the months before Acacia Creek construction wrapped. The seven-person council has had a major hand in the start-up and operations of the new community.

“Here in Acacia Creek, we are creating an environment. It changes and it’s dynamic,” says Thompson. “The council serves an important purpose as a springboard, a transfer of information, and a sparkplug to get things to happen.”

Continued next page



RICHARD THOMPSON, PRESIDENT OF THE ACACIA CREEK RESIDENT COUNCIL, ENSURES THAT RESIDENTS HAVE A VOICE.

MASONIC ASSISTANCE

“Many of us [at Acacia Creek] have been in the industry, manned a department, or had our own business,” he adds. “We want to have a say in what’s happening.”

The council has established a long list of committees and groups, which are maintained and controlled by individual residents. Among them: a resident welcoming committee, food committee, sunshine committee, and bar committee (Acacia Creek recently received its beer and liquor license, and residents run the bar). The council has helped get a pool railing installation written into the budget for next year. It’s started a resident-driven newsletter.

The council meets twice per month: One is a private session with the Acacia Creek executive vice president, Charles Major. The second is an open forum, which Major also attends, along with about 50 to 70 percent of Acacia Creek residents.

Thanks to Major’s support – not to mention a highly engaged constituency – there is open, productive communication between the Acacia Creek administration and the resident council.

“I meet with the administrator every Tuesday,” says Thompson, “so we have a tight link between him and the council.”

Straight from the source

Open communication is a core purpose of the resident council in Covina, too. Here, the nine-person council serves three-year terms, with staggered rotation. (Acacia Creek’s council serves two-year terms, with the opportunity for re-election.)

“Our purpose is basically to keep open communication between administration and residents,” says resident Lois Gray, who completed a three-year term on the Covina council in December. “We meet with our administrator, Judy, to exchange thoughts and ideas and any questions that we might have. She carries them back to her committees or department heads.” (A recent example: Residents will soon be getting safes in their apartments.)

The Covina council meets once a month in an open forum, which kicks off with an update from Senior Care Administrator Judy Figueroa. As in Acacia Creek, the Covina council has a resident representative for each department on campus – food service, maintenance, housekeeping, etc. – who attends department meetings throughout the month. At the council meeting, they report on their findings. Finally, the floor is opened



JIM LEGGATE, SECRETARY OF SIMINOFF DAYLIGHT LODGE, JUST FINISHED HIS FIRST YEAR ON THE RESIDENT COUNCIL IN UNION CITY.



LOIS GRAY VALUES THE OPEN COMMUNICATION BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND STAFF IN COVINA.

for residents to ask questions or make comments. Meeting minutes are published and delivered to every resident.

“The community is run so democratically,” says Covina resident Virginia Nash, who is also former vice chairperson and secretary of the council. “The administration brings their plans before all residents once a month at the meeting, and often we get to vote on the plans.”

“It’s important for residents to get the real information, straight from the source,” adds Gray.

Get out the vote

The Union City council follows a similar format for its once-a-month meetings, which are attended by Executive Director/Administrator Dixie Reeve and include an open forum for all residents. In addition, the administration holds a fireside chat and a community meeting on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month – extra measures to keep residents involved and in the loop.

Resident Jim Leggate, who is secretary of Siminoff Daylight Lodge, just finished his first year on the resident council. He points out that the Union City council seems to have fewer demands on its attention, in part because of its community’s longer history. After all, he notes, the Union City campus has already had more than 100 years to hone policies and procedures.

Regardless, the council remains an important representative body for residents. At all three Masonic communities, the council is elected by secret ballot – a landmark of democratic elections, as well as the application process for a Masonic lodge – and every resident is encouraged to vote.

And so, within each Masonic campus, the three resident councils serve as examples of democracy in action – where every resident is represented.

“The purpose and function of the resident council needs to be for the community. That’s what’s important,” says Leggate. ✧

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ACACIA CREEK

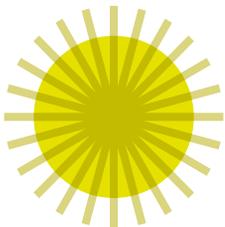
To learn more about Acacia Creek, our new senior living community in Union City, visit acaciacreek.org or call 877/902-7555.

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