

## **Speech to the 13 Oct 2018 Grand Communication – MWBro Dr Neil Jensen GM**

Most Worshipful Brethren, Leaders and Representatives of Visiting Delegations and Sister Jurisdictions, Most Excellent First Grand Principal, Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Lodge Mark Master Masons, Heads and Representatives of other respected Masonic Orders, Worshipful Masters of our Lodges in South Australia and the Northern Territory, Ladies, Gentlemen and Brethren,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this Communication – though poorly advertised as such, it is an open Ceremony. We Freemasons have nothing to hide but plenty to give: brotherly love is a pledged part of our training to become Freemasons – a brotherly love which we extend quite unreservedly to each other and to society for the betterment of mankind.

Let me begin by acknowledging the Kurna people, their elders past and present; the traditional custodians of the land on which this Freemasons Hall stands.

Mahatma Gandhi once stated that: “love never claims, it ever gives. Love ever suffers, never resents, never revenges itself.”

I will prefer to think that he was referring to the brotherly love which we teach. To be a Freemason, one must believe initially, and on a continuing basis, in the Great Architect of the Universe; we are all taught to be Freemasons through the teachings of the same Ritual book; one is then expected to practice brotherly love as referred to at the start of my address. These then form the basis of the next steps in our wonderful Voluntary, Ancient and Traditional Organization.

But, how does one enter the hearts and minds of our members to exercise this brotherly love? One is guided by three great pillars which we call wisdom, strength and beauty.

Wisdom to recognize our own needs and the needs of other.

Strength of mind to settle disharmony.

Beauty refers to our powers of persuasive eloquence in promoting all things good in society.

With these assets, one can begin to exercise brotherly love in its most meaningful and comprehensive sense.

There exists in Freemasonry a problem of interpersonal relationships - a problem which has extended unaddressed for more than a generation of Freemasons; unaddressed because it had never been openly identified.

As Grand Master, with the help of the leadership team and the practice of brotherly love, I will now execute the solution.

To assist me in this task, I have invited the Grand Chaplain VWBro Brenton Daulby OAM. He has accepted. To give him the necessary authority, so serious do I view this problem, I invited him to the Office of Pro Grand Master ie the same powers and authority that I have. He refused, advising me that he does not require such power and authority.

His power comes from the Great Architect of the Universe; on contemplation, he is wise; my power comes only from the Brethren. Padres in the Armed Forces and in the community, talk openly with, listen to, and give counsel to all persons from Privates to Field Marshalls and from apprentices to Captains of Industry.

On a different note:

Since my last public address to you significant steps have been put in place to raise the standing of Freemasonry.

Considerable effort has been applied to refurbishment of the Freemasons Hall; this involves gaining money to perform this task while addressing emergency needs such as flooding, overflowing hot water systems damaging the ceiling, furniture and flooring of the Office area; and faulty electrical system; it also involves developing appropriate advertising and renting out our enormous and readily accessible function spaces. 254 North Terrace is our show case to the thousands of people who pass it negotiating North Terrace.

Last week, four days were spent looking carefully at all Masonic operations ie AF and AM Inc., Masonic Homes, Masonic Charities, Freemasons Foundation and Centre for Men's Health and Lodge assets/trusts. Outcomes will be presented after they have been distilled further and considered by AF and AM Inc. BoM.

I can advise that the position of CEO has been abandoned by the BoM and that applications have been called for the position of Grand Secretary – a paid position. I must thank VWBro. Michael Olive, our previous Grand Secretary, for his enormous contribution to Freemasonry: hours and hours of unpaid work, wisdom, wit and application to task.

Also, the Masonic Charities and Masonic Homes will be employing an Executive Assistant, common to both companies, and an Office established in the Freemasons Hall. This is an example of Masonic operations being considered conjointly and intercompany cooperation.

The Freemasons Foundation meets next week and will report after that. We must never forget that all of our companies operate under the square and compass; we must operate our large companies accordingly.

You have already been advised of my five Task Forces. A sixth has now been added following discussion with our Grand Chaplain and VWBro. Rev. John Watson: this Task Force will hold discussion with as many member Ministers of Religion as possible and proffer advice from their points of view, including brotherly love. This advice, as with all Task Forces, is passed to the BoM under matters from the Grand Master for their consideration.

Freemasonry is a very large organization with many companies under its shield. This organization has occupied the time of many talented men over the past six months; talent which has been pro bono; talent which we could never have afforded. I thank them for their enormous, but not yet obvious contribution they have strengthened our north east corner and we are about ready to move to our next step in raising the standing of Freemasonry; this involves the Lodges.

The future of Freemasonry lies in the Lodges: potential members, new members and old members stay or go depending on what they experience in any given Lodge. Men come to Freemasonry knowing that it is voluntary, ancient and traditional. They know that they have to believe in the GAOTU. They understand or will be told that we are taught to be Freemasons

from a common ritual book; generally speaking, they will have researched this on Google or other. The rest is up to the Lodge; the ambience, the interpersonal courtesies and respect, the men ready to be mentors and so on as the journey of self-discovery for each individual continues.

However, we should never forget that it is voluntary and that Lodge happenings are almost instantly transmitted by Face Book, Twitter, and Instagram; mostly in a subjective manner. It is up to the Lodge to ensure that every member leaves a Lodge meeting feeling that the opportunity cost for him has been met ie pleasures forgone to attend your Lodge. His comments on social media will then be positive and reinforcing of a Fraternal Freemasonry.

I encourage Worshipful Masters to consider the structure of their Lodges. You must remember that your members may gradually lose enthusiasm if they know that the Lodge actually has very few members: losing a Warrant is not different from a Regiment of the Army having to park its colours – the colours under which many good men fought and some died for our continuing freedom. Sometimes, however, the best interest of the Defence Force as a whole has to be considered.

There is a big difference, especially in perception by non Freemasons, between visiting a Lodge to share brotherly love and visiting, simply to prop up numbers.

Please remember the following:

We all work under the same Square and Compass

To be a Freemason, we must, believe in the Great Architect of the Universe

Learn from the same ritual book

Practice Brotherly love to each other

By doing that we can take our great organization to society in general and do great works for good.

Never forget that we are a voluntary, ancient and traditional organization designed to enable all members to join a journey of self-discovery and to constantly look to the needs of others.

Never look back; look upwards and forwards; a new world needs us and awaits us.

May God Bless you all

MWBro. Dr. Neil Jensen

Grand Master 12 Oct 2018