

BOYZ 'N THE BRO

The art of keeping a secret is to a Freemason what flower-arranging is to a member of The Women's Institute. The Mason who dares to talk openly about his notorious organisation might as well hang up his garters and tuck away his apron.

And yet the society has, over recent years, been keen to change its public image: Masons would like us to see them as a group of middle-aged men in middle England who meet to raise funds for charity. The Grand Lodge claims that Freemasons are now encouraged to talk to their families, friends and colleagues about the society. Anyone is welcome to go and look around Freemasons' Hall in Covent Garden. There are lodges that hold open days and PR chaps have been retained to deliver the right spin.

No more secrets, you may think. But the reality is a little different. There are 300,000 Masons in Britain today — many of them holding influential positions in society — but only a handful (the "frontmen" of the society)

Its rituals and rites are both bizarre and secret, yet its members occupy positions at the highest levels of society. Pete Sawyer and Jon Paul Morgan report on the strange world of Freemasonry

not keep records of its members' professions. And the chiefs at The Grand Lodge also told Parliament that it had no means of identifying members who hold judicial office. That is nonsense, however. Our documents include copies of Freemasons' registration forms (see overleaf), showing that when candidates apply they are requested to give their occupation and the name of their employer (or former occupation, if retired). Indeed, a footnote on the form tells candidates it is "essential" for them to state their profession.

These registration forms, for lodge membership and for Royal Arch chapter membership, are submitted to the Grand Lodge with a registration fee. Details of new members' occupations are also printed on some invitations to lodge meetings, while

at the lodge? Who carries the sword? And when will a Mason find his tongue buried in the sand?

The roots of the society's rites and rituals lie largely in Judaism and ancient Egyptian lore. The symbols, ceremonies and language are mostly Jewish and relate to the building of Solomon's Temple, an allusion to the building of the temple of the mind. The higher degrees of Mason go to ceremonies that are more Christian in content.

Lodges are held in temples aligned east-west, and when Masons attend meetings the dress code often stipulates morning (or dark) suit and white gloves. The ceiling of the lodge is a mock-up of the sky. Three pillars support it, symbolising wisdom, strength and beauty. A chequered floor represents the diversity of the objects in the universe. The jewels of the

lodge consist of a square (representing morality), a level (equality), and a plumb-rule (justice).

The Master has the square, the Senior Warden the level, and the Junior Warden the plumb-rule. A tracing board is used by the Master to draw designs.

DEAR BROTHER,

Order of the Master, you are invited to the Meeting of this Lodge, to be held at the street, S.W.1. on Wednesday,

will be held for each day, 26th and fraternally. J. EDWARDS Secretary

Be very cautious whom you recommend as a Candidate for Initiation; one false step on this point may prove fatal. If you introduce a disputatious person, confusion will be produced, which may end in the dissolution of the Lodge. If you have a good Lodge, keep it select. Great numbers are not always beneficial. - DR. OLIVER

barristers and judges are referred to by their title in the Masonic yearbook.

And while the Masons insist there are no secrets, behind the scenes the message is clear. In a letter to members, the Grand Lodge pointed out that they should provide the information requested by Parliament but only under protest. It also said that if members were worried about being discriminated against in their workplace, they should resign from the craft and rejoin later. Lodges were directed to welcome them back.

According to the Grand Lodge's Book of Constitutions, if a brother resigns, he shall remain bound by the Masonic obligations entered into by him. Masons argue that they will be discriminated against in their work if forced to declare their membership — the opposite to the widely held public view that being a Mason brings positive discrimination. The Grand Lodge feels so strongly that Masons will face discrimination that it is prepared financially to support tribunal claims bought by Masons against their employers. And it is not just the identities of members that the Masons would like to keep secret. What rites and rituals take place down

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RW Bro His Honour Judge G. J. K. Coles, QC	Provincial Grand Master for Yorkshire, North and East Ridings
RW Bro J. S. Hill	Provincial Grand Master for Nottinghamshire
RW Bro Maj. I. D. Bruce, TD, DL	Provincial Grand Master for Norfolk
RW Bro T. R. Richards	Provincial Grand Master for Cheshire
RW Bro W. J. Bryen	Provincial Grand Master for West Kent
RW Bro M. V. L. Foss	Provincial Grand Master for Bedfordshire
RW Bro C. P. Wright	Provincial Grand Master for West Lancashire
RW Bro O. N. N. Hart	Provincial Grand Master for Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire
RW Bro P. A. Marsh	Provincial Grand Master for Gloucestershire
RW Bro A. M. Davison	Provincial Grand Master for Durham
RW Bro E. F. R. Moss	Provincial Grand Master for Hampshire and Isle of Wight
RW Bro the Rt. Hon. Lord Burnham	Provincial Grand Master for Buckinghamshire
RW Bro Sir John Welch, Bt	Senior Grand Warden
RW Bro the Rt. Hon. Lord Churston	Junior Grand Warden
RW Bro the Rev. Canon W. F. Roan	Grand Chaplain
RW Bro G. R. G. Purser, PJGW	President, Board of General Purposes
VW Bro J. Jeffs, QC	Grand Secretary
VW Bro J. W. Daniel	Grand Director of Ceremonies
VW Bro R. J. Lye	President, Masonic Sanaritan Fund
VW Bro Capt. N. Lloyd-Edwards	Grand Director of Ceremonies
VW Bro F. G. Lowndes	Grand Superintendent of Works
VW Bro T. Blackburn	Grand Inspector, Portugal
VW Bro M. G. Foster Taylor	Deputy Grand Chaplain
VW Bro the Rev. P. C. Protheroe	Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies
W Bro T. J. Caplin	Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies
W Bro A. C. Wilson	Deputy Grand Superintendent of Works
W Bro D. K. Williamson	Senior Grand Deacon
W Bro J. O. Trumper	Senior Grand Deacon
W Bro M. J. Price, CBE	Senior Grand Deacon
W Bro the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Darley	Senior Grand Deacon
W Bro Lt.-Col. N. J. Nuttall, RN	Junior Grand Deacon
W Bro I. R. Jacobs	Junior Grand Deacon
W Bro A. C. Ross	Junior Grand Deacon
W Bro J. Davy	Grand Treasurer
W Bro D. E. Bennett-Rees	Assistant Grand Chaplain
W Bro R. A. Crane	Assistant Grand Registrar
W Bro the Rev. P. E. J. McManus	Assistant Grand Secretary
W Bro His Hon. Judge K. C. Cutler	Assistant Grand Secretary
W Bro M. T. Penny	Assistant Grand Secretary
W Bro G. F. Redman, PSGD	Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies
W Bro B. P. Gould, PSGD	Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies
W Bro R. W. Betson	Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies
W Bro A. R. Gregory	Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies

SECRET SOCIETIES

BOYZ 'N THE BROTHERHOOD

Masons. However, the Home Affairs Select Committee may well have missed a trick. The Grand Lodge of England only administers Craft and Royal Arch Masonry in this country. There are at least four other Masonic governing bodies. On top of that there are irregular so-called black lodges, which have no overall governing body.

Action at the highest level of Masonry takes place just around the corner from Buckingham Palace. The Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Rite is based in St James's, while the Mark Masons and Royal Ark Mariners degrees are administered from the nearby Mark Masons Hall. The Royal Order of Scotland is run from Edinburgh; The Grand Council of Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests is administered from Newcastle.

Then there is the Order of the Secret Monitor, the Red Cross of Constantine, and the mysteriously named Operatives. It is these which contain the cream of Masonry in this country. Subscribers to these additional degrees are the real fanatics.

The government measures have not been a complete failure. Compulsory Masonic declaration will soon be a condition for all new appointments to the Bench. Last summer, Avon and Somerset Police set up a voluntary register for officers to sign if they are Freemasons. And, in September, the Chief Constable of Lancashire Police ordered a top-

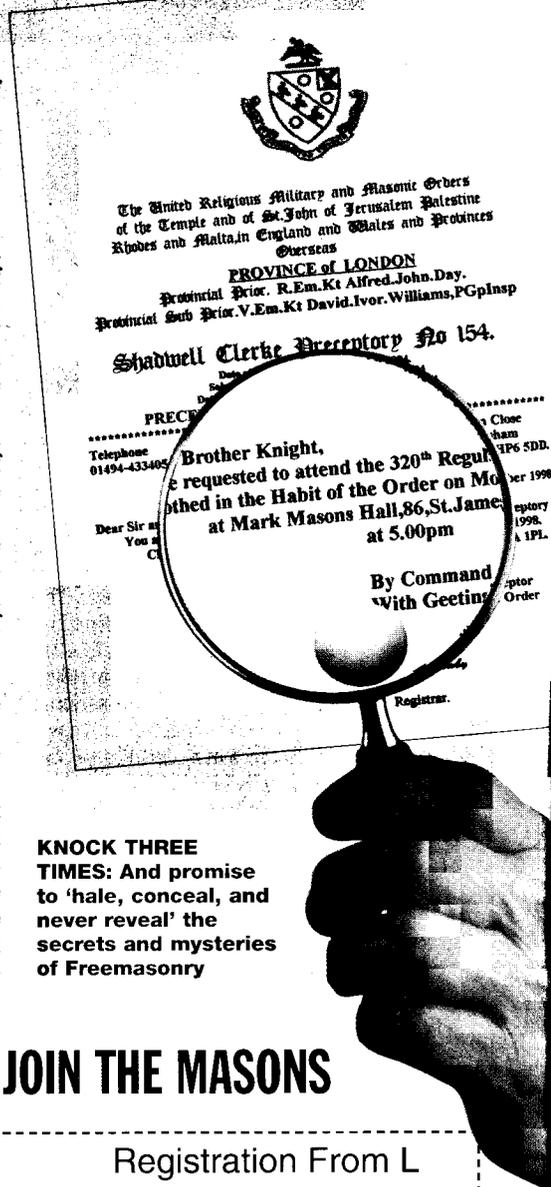
level investigation into the influence of Freemasons within her force.

A report into a corruption scandal on the Isle of Anglesey recommended that members of the local council disclose in the council's register of interests whether they are freemasons. Dorset County Council has also decided that Freemasons should be added to the lists of council members' interests. Similar moves are being contemplated by Essex County Council. Members of the new Welsh Assembly will also have to declare if they are Freemasons.

Yet, despite all this, there have been no firm moves to make Members of the House of Commons and House of Lords disclose whether they are Freemasons.

Many members of the House of Lords are active Masons and some regularly take paid-for trips abroad on Masonic business (see box on previous page). Not surprisingly, none of these trips is declared in the House of Lords' discretionary register of interests. MPs, too, have been less than forthcoming about the Masons in their midst.

As far as we are aware, only one MP, Tony Baldry, has outed himself as a Freemason. Baldry, whose Masonic title is Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies, made a speech last May suggesting that the government's proposals on Freemasonry were comparable to the persecution of Freemasons under the Nazis. He also pointed out that most golf and private clubs do not disclose their membership lists. □



KNOCK THREE TIMES: And promise to 'hale, conceal, and never reveal' the secrets and mysteries of Freemasonry

ROLL UP, ROLL UP (YOUR TROUSER LEG). HOW TO JOIN THE MASONS

United Grand Lodge of England

Registration Form L

FORM PROVIDED UNDER RULES 159, 160, 163 AND 164 BOOK OF CONSTITUTIONS

Application for admission to membership of the _____ Lodge No. _____

Meeting at _____

This form (when completed by the Candidate and his Proposer and Seconder) is to be handed to the Secretary of the Lodge previous to the Meeting at which the proposition is made, on which occasion sufficient particulars of the Candidate are to be stated in order that those present may be enabled to identify him. Subsequently it must be forwarded, with the Certificates of the Master and the Secretary duly signed, to the Grand Secretary together with the registration fee. In accordance with the requirements of Rule 163, Book of Constitutions, a Joining member must produce, for inspection by the Secretary, his Grand Lodge certificate and clearance certificates from all the Lodges of which he is or has been a member. In the case of a Joining member from another Constitution, the enquiry under Rule 163 must be made before the ballot is taken.

A To be filled up by the Candidate (In Block Letters)

Surname _____

Christian or Forenames in full _____

Place of Abode _____

Postcode _____ Telephone No. _____

*A FULL ADDRESS NOT P.O. BOX NUMBER SHOULD BE GIVEN

†(Profession/Occupation/Trade/Rank) _____

Employer _____

Business Address _____

Date of Birth _____

†A PRECISE DEFINITION OF OCCUPATION OR FORMER OCCUPATION IF RETIRED IS ESSENTIAL

To be filled up by candidates for JOINING and RE-JOINING only

Give the names and numbers of all Lodges of which you are, and at any time have been, a member, the year of your admission, and the rank you held therein. If joining from another Grand Lodge its name must be clearly stated.

To be filled up by Candidates for INITIATION only

Have you ever been proposed for membership in any Lodge, or has your admission to any Lodge ever been sought either by yourself or by anyone on your behalf?

Give the name and number of any or every such Lodge _____

I wish to become a Candidate for initiation in and membership of the _____ Lodge No. _____ and I declare that:-

1. My application is entirely voluntary.
2. I do not expect, anticipate or seek any pecuniary benefit as a consequence of my being a member of the Craft.
3.
 - a. I have never been convicted by a Court of any offence
 - b. I have never been the subject of a finding of dishonest or disgraceful conduct
 - c. I have never been disciplined by and professional, trade or other tribunal
 - d. I am do not awaiting the outcome of proceedings against me before a criminal court or a professional, trade or other tribunal
 - e. I am not, to the best of my knowledge, the subject of nay criminal, professional, trade or other investigation.
4. I am not and have not been in any way connected with any organisation which is quasi-Masonic, imitative of Masonry, or regarded by the Grand Lodge as irregular or as incompatible with the Craft.

*IF THE CANDIDATE CANNOT MAKE THIS DECLARATION WITHOUT QUALIFICATION, OR IS IN ANY DOUBT AS TO THE SCOPE OF THIS PARAGRAPH HE SHOULD CONSULT HIS PROPOSER AND SECONDER BEFORE SIGNING THIS FORM OR OTHERWISE CONTINUING WITH HIS APPLICATION. DETAILS OF ANY CONVICTIONS OR ANY SUCH PROCEEDING MUST BE DISCLOSED TO HIS PROPOSER AND SECONDER, AND PARAGRAPH 3 AMENDED AS APPROPRIATE.

*MEMBERSHIP OF A RECOGNISED REGISTERED FRIENDLY SOCIETY DOES NOT COME WITHIN THIS CATEGORY.