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Dear Mr. Mitchum:

I am writing to you to present a proposal for your consideration. The work that I am proposing will be of benefit to us both: to Masons, by increasing its relevance to the present world and arresting the decades-long slide in membership; and to me, by furthering my work in the field of protecting Earth's environment.

Some Background Information on Earth's Environmental Crisis

Before describing my proposal, I will present some background information on my interests, activities, and goals. For a number of years, I have been very concerned with the major world changes that are about to occur as the planet's fossil fuel supplies exhaust (petroleum and natural gas within 50 years, coal somewhat later). When that happens, the human population will decline from its current six billion to a few hundred million or less, since that is all that the recurrent solar energy resources of the planet will support. Solar energy cannot support the massive human population and global industrial society we know today. The future – just around the corner – is one of mass starvation and global war. The political structure of the world will be totally changed. If action is not taken quickly, there will soon be no large animal species remaining on the planet, including man.

I have written a book on this subject, called *Can America Survive?*. This book is available on the Internet, at web site <http://www.foundationwebsite.org>. It discusses in detail the current situation and the arguments underlying my conclusions. Recently, a number of other people are starting to take serious note of the situation. You may read much material related to the "energy crisis" at the web site <http://www.dieoff.com> and the Energy Resources discussion group, <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/energyresources/messages/> or <http://solutions.synearth.net> (the "CommUnity of Minds" tab).

The one thing that really amazes people concerned with the energy and environmental crises is that practically nothing is being done about them that is significant in the long run. The energy crisis gets much more attention from governments than the environmental crisis does, since energy is the key to industrial production. Attention focuses primarily on exploring for more oil, although virtually all oil geologists agree that all commercially recoverable oil will be gone in a few decades. No significant progress has been made on finding alternative energy sources that can replace petroleum, and no progress has been made at all in stopping the world environmental crisis (the "Sixth Extinction" – the loss of approximately 30,000 species each year caused by large human numbers and industrial activity).

My book, *Can America Survive?*, addresses not just the current energy and environmental crises; it also analyzes the likely social and political developments that will follow the exhaustion of fossil fuels. One of the items that I address is the issue of what groups might play a significant role in the world after the "free energy" of fossil fuels is gone, and the global industrial world has ceased to exist. I believe that Freemasonry might play a significant role in the post-industrial world, and that is why I am writing to you today.

I should point out that, in the long term, there is no energy crisis at all. Mankind will soon consume all of the planet's fossil fuels, and will or will not adapt to a new energy environment. Nothing essential will have changed. What is significant and of lasting effect is the environmental crisis. Mankind's large numbers and industrial activity are causing the mass extinction of other species, and perhaps itself (e.g., if global warming and species extinction continue unabated). Within just a few more decades, if nothing changes, all of the world's large animal species will have been made extinct. This bleak future can be changed only by concerted action now. If no significant change occurs very soon, the environmental diversity of the Earth's biosphere will be changed forever. If man survives at all, it will be on a planet devoid of other large animals. Most of the human population are in total denial over the seriousness of the situation. If significant action is not taken by a capable group that perceives what is happening, nothing will change and disaster will occur. This bleak future can be avoided, and Masonry can be the force that makes the difference.

Masonry's Current Situation and Potential Future Role in the Planet's Environmental Crisis

My uncle, Robert Burns Barter, is a Mason, but that single fact was about as much as I knew about Masonry while writing my book, *Can America Survive?*. Recently, however, I became much more knowledgeable about Masonry, from the writings of John J. Robinson (*Born in Blood* and *A Pilgrim's Path*). My belief is that Masonry can provide the basis and the leadership for a new and better world, when the current one "crashes." It has the heritage for good works, strong moral character, and discipline that will be required in the perilous times ahead of us. Furthermore, it is a worldwide organization and it transcends politics and religion. It has a history of playing crucial roles in setting up governments, such as our own United States of America. Finally, and most importantly, it recognizes the essential role of God in man's existence and activity.

In recent years, however, Masonry has to some degree lost its sense of purpose, or perhaps more correctly, the world has changed so much that Masonry's original purposes (e.g., survival of members in the face of religious and political persecution) are of diminished relevance. It remains a fraternal order that is committed to good works, but because of its strange customs and the lack of differentiation of Masonry's good works from those of other benevolent organizations, many people do not see its relevance in today's world, and membership is declining both absolutely and as a proportion of the population. The need for a secret fraternal order to promote survival and to assist widows and orphans of fellow members, is gone. There is in the world of today, however, a great deal that needs to be done, and I believe that Masonry – perhaps only Masonry – can do it.

The biosphere is being destroyed and mankind is in danger of extinction. To date, no national or international organization has had any effect on solving this terrible problem. All national and international leaders are committed to increased industrial production, and hence to more destruction of the biosphere (global warming, species extinction). I believe, however, that the Masonic Order, which transcends national and international financial interests, and is not tied to the economic system that has wreaked destruction on the biosphere, may be the only organization with the wherewithal to accomplish this.

What I propose to you, in response to the current planetary crisis, is the establishment of a new lodge, here in my hometown of Spartanburg, that is dedicated to working toward building a better world, in the context of the major world changes that are taking place as the biosphere is destroyed, and that will take place as fossil fuels deplete. The mission of the lodge will be to develop means for solving the world's catastrophic environmental problem. It will attempt to divert the course of civilization from its current destructive path to one in which the planet is managed in a long-term sustainable fashion. The objective of the lodge will be to take steps to reduce the likelihood that the biosphere will be destroyed, and mankind made extinct in the process.

In this new lodge, I propose that the format and content of the degrees be modified slightly from their traditional format and content to something along the lines of the format and content proposed by John Robinson in his two books (referenced previously). My reason for this is in part that many people do not see the relevance of the lengthy memorization of Masonic history, legend and ceremony in today's world. It was Robinson's view that, while it is very important to recognize the importance of history in providing insight and perspective, it is more important to stress the "Basic Masonic Principles" (page 146 of *A Pilgrim's Path*). My primary motivation for changing the memorization requirements is to enable spending more time on discussion of the current world situation and the mission of the new lodge in that context.

The initiate would be required to accept and recite the Principles of Masonry (e.g., Robinson's suggestion, or other similar). While some of the initiate's efforts would be oriented toward learning something of the history, legend and legacy of Masonry, the bulk of his efforts would be directed toward learning and understanding what is happening in the world today (energy crisis, environmental crisis, "Sixth Extinction") and the lodge's program for working toward doing something constructive and effective about it.

The purpose and mission of the new lodge – to build a better world – fits perfectly in the tradition of Masonry (the stonemason craft / building things, personal development, survival, fellowship / brotherhood / working together, good works).

Why Should a New Masonic Order Be Implemented?

I recognize that what I am proposing is a shift in emphasis from the current good works of Masonry (e.g., children's hospitals, help for those in distress) to addressing a major world problem (the destruction of the environment and the fall of global industrialized civilization). I am not proposing that Masonry cease its support of all of its current humanitarian activities, which mean so much to many people, and generate much goodwill. What I am asserting is that, as fossil fuels disappear, the industrial world will disappear as well, along with most of the world's population; and if the environmental crisis is not solved soon, there will not be a human civilization remaining on the planet at all. In either case the focus of Masonry's current program of good works will be irrelevant, since the object of its focus (hospitals, medically needy children) will have passed into oblivion. I am proposing that some portion of Masonry's efforts be shifted from current humanitarian concerns and directed toward saving the planet's biosphere and mankind from total annihilation. In other words, I am proposing a shift of the focus of Masonry's charity and activities from the present generation of humanity to future generations.

For some people and some organizations, the most that they can aspire to and are capable of doing in the area of altruism is extending charity, comfort and assistance to their contemporaries. Masonry has demonstrated that it has the ability to create the vision and take actions that have a profound effect on world institutions and future generations. Providing free medical care is admirable, but many organizations do this, and it will not make

a significant difference in the future of mankind on the planet. Masonry is demonstrably capable of contributing far more to mankind than medical assistance to a few of its contemporaries. I would charge Masonry to stand up to the limit of its capabilities, and accept the challenge to make a real difference in the future of the world and of mankind.

Over the last century, governments have taken over a function that was once a primary concern to Freemasons – care for widows and orphans, particularly of fellow Masons. In an era in which governments did not assume this role, Masonry stepped into the breach and served well. But the needs and challenges of today are different. Government by and large takes care of widows and orphans. What has really changed is that the world is being destroyed by industrial activity, and all governments are powerless or unwilling to stop this.

The current world situation has changed very much over the past two centuries, from the time when Masonry was a potent, thriving force. Other agencies have now largely assumed the traditional humanitarian role that once was a key Masonic domain. There is now a different mission that Masonry can accomplish – one that is of planetary significance, and that Masonry is uniquely suited to address. What I am proposing is that some portion of Masonic effort be directed toward that mission.

Even in Masonry's primary area of current charity – the Children's Hospitals – there is much competition from other sources, including private medical insurance, government medical programs, and many charitable and benevolent foundations. Times are good, charity is available from many sources, and there is now little to differentiate Masonry's goals and activities from those of many other organizations. Membership in Masonry is declining because its primary mission is no longer uniquely relevant to today's world, and the significance of its charitable activities, although of great value to the individuals who benefit directly, is now lost in a sea of similar charities.

In view of the strength of tradition in Masonry, you may be surprised at my proposals for change, and why I consider them desirable. Yet, as John Robinson noted (in *A Pilgrim's Path*), many changes are already taking place in Masonry, and more will be necessary if the organization is to survive as a meaningful force in a changing world. I propose to give the new lodge a mission that is relevant in today's world. The challenge is very ambitious. No other organization (government or nongovernmental organization) has been able to address it at all. I am not at all proposing changes to the essence of Masonry (belief in God; duty to family, nation, religion and the Craft; personal development; fraternity; good works; its very private nature) – it is that essence that convinces me that Masonry can be a significant force for positive change in the world today. What I am proposing is a new, additional mission for the Craft – a mission that is as urgent in today's world as Masonry's original mission was in an earlier time – along with a much simplified and clarified ceremonial format.

In *Morals and Dogma*, Albert Pike wrote: "When Solon was asked if he had given his countrymen the *best* laws, he answered, '*The best they are capable of receiving.*' This is one of the profoundest utterances on record; and yet like all great truths, so simple as to be rarely comprehended. It contains the whole philosophy of History. It utters a truth which, had it been recognized, would have saved men an immensity of vain, idle disputes, and have led them into the clearer paths of knowledge in the Past. It means this, -- that all truths are *Truths of Period*, and not truths for eternity; that whatever great fact has had strength and vitality enough to make itself real, whether of religion, morals, government, or of whatever else, and to find place in this world, has been a truth *for the time, and as good as men were capable of receiving.*"

The relevance of this observation to today's decline in Masonry's membership is that the needs of society, of the planet, and of individual men have dramatically changed since the

past few centuries, when Masonry flourished. The basic values of Masonry are timeless, but if Masonry is to thrive and to play an important role in the world of the future, its goals and mission and activities must relate to the needs and circumstances of current times, not to those of centuries past.

Good management has been defined as the ability to respond appropriately to change. History shows that organizations (and organisms and civilizations) that do not respond well do not survive (see Jared Diamond's book *Collapse* for much discussion of this). Masonry does not need to go the way of A&P, Oldsmobile, Yugoslavia, and the dinosaurs. It has a legacy of profound accomplishment, and a rendezvous with glorious destiny, if it simply chooses to respond meaningfully to the planet's pressing needs. Its destiny should not be determined by its recent, unchecked decline, caused by its atrophied purpose and vision, but by its demonstrated ability to accomplish change that can profoundly benefit the world and its future for all time.

My Proposal

Meeting this challenge will require a strong organization and some significant funding. By profession, I am a consulting scientist, and I do not have the financial wherewithal to underwrite this effort alone. I have worked long and hard to understand what is happening in the world today, and I can play an active leadership role in the proposed undertaking, but I do not have the personal funds to make it happen. Nor do I have the organizational resources that this significant undertaking will require.

And that leads to my specific proposal: Would you (i.e., the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina) be willing to sponsor (i.e., fund the opening and initial development of) a new lodge, in Spartanburg, with the proposed objectives?

Because of South Carolina's significant and growing population, and the increasing relevance of the environmental and energy crises, there is every reason to believe that this effort will soon draw sufficient support to make itself self-supporting. No other organization in the world is making a difference in stopping the "Sixth Extinction" or preparing in a meaningful way for a drastically different post-industrial age. I believe that the Masons can make a difference. Until now, my concern for the biosphere and mankind's future has been reflected in my writings and Internet web sites. Working alone, in my spare time, has not made a significant difference. I believe that, working through Masonry, with its long heritage of survival, good works, strength of character, God-based morality – and its significant resources – we can make a difference.

To a large extent, accomplishment of some of the actions and activities necessary for the mission that I am proposing may take place in a very public arena – e.g., announcement of the new (additional) mission for Masonry; encouragement for new members who share this vision to apply for membership; actions to conserve wildlife and reduce the severe environmental impact of global industrialization. In other areas, however, there may be a need for secrecy, e.g., planning for a new world government after the collapse of oil-based global industrial civilization or a global nuclear war. The Masonic tradition of secrecy may once more play a very significant role – as important as it played a few centuries ago when Masons and their putative predecessors (e.g., the Knights Templar, the mason guild) suffered political and religious persecution and economic vulnerability.

All organizations have secrets – trade secrets, customer lists, financial data, personnel information, strategic plans, and the like. There is nothing immoral or illegal in this. It would be impossible for most organizations to function effectively and to survive if everything were made public, and that is why privacy and confidentiality and secrecy are respected in custom

and in law. Masonry is no different from any other organization in this respect. But it should be recognized that as the sensitivity and importance of the mission increases, the need for secrecy also increases. If Masonry's primary works are staffing and operating children's hospitals, the need for secrecy is not very great – no greater than for an ordinary organization. In previous times, the very lives of fellow Masons were crucially dependent on secrecy. In planning for a new world order to succeed the collapse of global industrialization, it will once again be crucially important to maintain secrecy about certain things. World governments do not like for anyone to plan for after their demise, and many religions are against any effort to coordinate planetary management. Masonry has a tradition of secrecy, and will be able to accomplish this important function. Once again, secrecy will be a life-or-death matter – in this case, the life or death of the biosphere!

Recent Developments in Masonry

In 2001 I submitted this proposal to the Grand Lodge of Florida, for its consideration. I never received a response. Since that time, however, some significant events have taken place, that may cause my proposal to be more acceptable than it was in 2001. A 2004 report from the Masonic Information Center (MIC) to the Conference of Grand Masters in North America focused on the need for Masonic Public Awareness. The Conference of Grand Masters requested the MIC to move forward in this effort, and in 2005, the MIC conducted a study of public awareness and promotional campaigns and produced the report, *It's About Time!*. Here follow some comments on that report. (The *It's About Time!* report may be viewed at the Masonic Service Association of North America's website, <http://www.msana.com> .)

The conclusion of the MIC Task Force was that the core problem underlying the long-term decline in Masonic membership is twofold: (1) Loss of Masonic identity; and (2) Lack of energy invested in Masonry. I would assert that while these conditions may be very visible, they are not the fundamental problem, but simply visible symptoms of it. The real problems – as recognized but not emphasized in the *It's About Time!* Report – are the lack of relevance of Masonry's mission in today's world and the lack of differentiation of Masonry's good works from those of other benevolent organizations.

Lack of Relevance. As pointed out several times in the *It's About Time!* report (the "Report"), the fundamental problem is the lack of relevance of Masonry to contemporary life. In previous times, the Masons played a crucial role in the lives of the members – it made a significant difference in their lives and in the society in which they lived (e.g., the contribution of the Masonic Founding Fathers of America). There was, for example, no other organization on the planet that was calling for freedom of religion in government. Governments worldwide did not invest in social welfare programs, and Masonry represented world-wide social-welfare insurance (e.g., for widows and orphans). Today, there is freedom of religion, most people enjoy equal protection under the law, and most governments, through a wide variety of social-insurance programs, provide at least minimal support for widows and orphans. Most people now have a strong "social safety net." The industrial world is very wealthy, and there are now many organizations involved in charitable work similar to that of present-day Masonry.

Loss of Identity. The Report is correct that Masonry has lost its identity, because times have changed so much that people now receive, from a variety of other sources, the essential social services that only Masonry provided in earlier times. The personal-development ideals of Masonry, as listed in the Report (e.g., building community; constructing a positive environment for personal growth; character; fraternity; integrity; self-improvement; commitment to life-long learning; enrichment of body, mind and spirit through participation in a brotherhood committed to good works and personal growth) could be associated with a thousand different social and fraternal organizations. There is nothing here that

distinguishes Masons from other well-intentioned fraternal and personal-development organizations.

The Report makes the statement, in its foreword, that “a traditional PR campaign works only if you know what you want to communicate.” That may be necessary, but it is by no means sufficient. If you know what you want to communicate, but no one is interested in it, then the PR campaign will still fail. It is significant to note that in earlier times, Masonry did not have to communicate its existence. Even after 1717, when it became public, it continued to be a very private and secretive organization – and this was the time when it accomplished some of its greatest triumphs, such as inspiring the Founding Fathers of the United States to set up the type of government that they did. Regrettably, as is recognized by the report (and emphasized in Mr. Richard Fletcher’s audio tapes), present-day Masonry is not distinguishably different from many other organizations, and, as the world changed but Masonry did not, it has lost its relevance in today’s society. If a National Masonic Public Awareness Program tells it as it is, it cannot fail to communicate that Masonry, little changed from the past, has lost its relevance in today’s world, and the membership decline will continue.

To survive and thrive, Masonry does not need a PR campaign: much is now known about Masonry by the general public, and they simply are not buying what Masonry is selling. The Report notes that the public’s perception and opinion of Masonry can be summarized as confused (“Are the Masons a fraternity, a religious organization or an alternative religion”), mistaken (“Only grandfathers could be in such an old-fashioned organization”), and oblivious (“People are not even aware Masonry still exists”). There are vast numbers of books on Masonry, and much of the public – and certainly anyone who is considering joining – is generally knowledgeable about the Craft and its activities. In earlier times, when Masonry flourished, the general public knew even less about Masonry than it does today. It would appear that increased public awareness has not helped Masonry at all. *The level of public awareness of Masonry is not the fundamental problem, and conducting a National Masonic Public Awareness Program will not solve Masonry’s problem.*

It is widely known that there is much ritual in Masonry, and that Masonry reaches far back in history for symbolism and lessons (masonry guilds, Knights Templar, Solomon’s Temple, Egypt). This symbolism, mythic history, Mystery, and ritual may have been very appealing and important two or three hundred years ago, but it is not at all important and not appealing now. In fact, it is worse than unimportant: it is irrelevant and a definite turnoff to most people. Some symbolism, as taking the oath of office of a president, or a daily prayer or pledge of allegiance, or a marriage ceremony, or a funeral, is an important aspect of human life. But to dwell on ritual as a main activity – as a central process that is an end in itself – is severely detrimental.

Because of the ambiguity of its terminology, and because it is represented that a Mason is not at all bound by the violent oaths that he is asked to take, some Masons are embarrassed, and even ashamed, by the initiation ceremony they have undergone. Many people, both within Masonry and without, are disturbed over the ambiguity of Masonic ritual, terminology and oaths. Why does a Mason take a violent oath that everyone, including Masons, says does not mean what it says? In today’s world, the various degree ceremonies and false oaths are considered juvenile, an affront to many Christians and men-of-their-word, and downright embarrassing. In today’s world, there is little doubt in anyone’s mind – Mason or non-Mason – why Masonry would have tried to keep these archaic ceremonies and customs a secret. None of this ambiguity is necessary, and it is counterproductive.

As detrimental as an extreme emphasis on ritual and ceremony may have been, it was of less concern when Masonry was a secret organization. Now that all the world knows in

detail of the form and content of the extensive – and largely irrelevant – Masonic ritual, there is little surprise that Masonry, having lost the relevance of its mission and purpose, and existing in essence only as a ritual, charity, and self-improvement platitudes, has lost its appeal. Unless Masonry redefines a purpose and mission that is relevant to today's world, and sheds itself of ritual that is an embarrassment to current members and a definite put-off to prospective members, it will continue to decline in physical size and social importance.

The Report notes that Masonry is no longer considered an elite organization. It no longer attracts the leaders of society – the presidents, kings, community leaders and successful business and professional people that it did before. This has happened not only because Masonry has lost its relevance in terms of the significance of its goals in today's world, but also in terms of its process, structure, form, ceremonies, oaths and activities. The values of Masonry are important today as yesterday; the rituals that form a large part of the Masonic experience are not.

Alarmed by its declining membership, Masonry has lowered its standards for membership. It is recognized that the behavior of some new members does not reflect the traditional values and character of Masonry. In the past, in some countries, prospective candidates had to apply for membership – they were not sought out and asked to join. Why would anyone of strong character, seriousness of purpose, convictions and personality wish to join an organization that has lost its relevance, has not defined new goals to replace past achieved ones, and as evidence of its worth can point only to its glorious past or to some present charitable activities that are similar to those of many other organizations?

Masonry is no longer considered an elite organization because it no longer has elite goals, and no longer attracts elite men. Supporting charities does not distinguish it from a host of other organizations. If a man simply wants to “enrich his body, mind and soul,” he can work out, go to school, and attend church. In the past, Masonry offered these as side-benefits of working to achieve its relevant and important goals. Until Masonry sets forth a new vision that is admired and desired by men of today, it will not attract the best people, and it will continue to decline in relevance, strength and importance.

The very fact that the MIC has embarked on a National Masonic Public Awareness Program is a symptom of how serious the problem is. In the past, Masonry did not have to undertake public awareness programs, and it did not have to plead with people to join it. Masonry was strong and desirable, and good, able men sought to become a part of it. It thrived and grew even though it was very secretive, and even, at times, much maligned. The Public Awareness Program, without a reinvention of purpose and form, will not succeed in rescuing Masonry from its present moribund state.

The Report makes a strong point that Masonry is lethargic and apathetic, and has lost its energy. But why should members be enthusiastic or excited about activities and goals that they and everyone else view as irrelevant in today's world? Asking members to get excited, enthusiastic and energetic about an organization that was once great but has since failed to maintain a meaningful purpose is a waste of time. If people are excited about what they are doing, the excitement generates enthusiasm and energy. It is no wonder that many Masons are confused about their identity and the meaning of Masonry, when they are presented with ambiguous terminology and asked to take false oaths.

If Masonry continues down its current path, membership will continue to decline. The membership is old now, and as the old members die, the membership will decline, ever more rapidly. Finances will shrink, not just because of the membership decline, but because older members will be replaced by younger ones, and because Masonry no longer attracts the

elite of US society. The ability to pay \$1.5 million per day to the Children's Hospitals and other charities will soon come to an end.

As medical costs continue to skyrocket under the nation's ill-advised medical insurance system, the day of reckoning is not far off. As new members are being drawn less and less from the elite, the ability of a decreasing membership to pay the ever-increasing cost of a collection of medical facilities will continue to decline. As Masonry shrinks, it will become more and more difficult to support its medical facilities, whose costs will continue to rise. As membership declines and older members retire and die, Masonry is losing the high-income elite who can afford to support high-cost medical facilities. The decreasing membership will resist the ever-increasing cost (both total and per-capita) of supporting these charities, both because of the government's heavy participation in this area (people in poverty are now eligible for Medicaid), and because of the steady decline of the standard of living and real income for the American middle class (caused by government's program of open borders and massive international free trade). As Masonry's membership continues to decline, the high and increasing cost of the Mason's medical program will increasingly motivate existing members to leave, and dissuade new members from joining. At some point, as membership continues to decline and medical costs continue to skyrocket, the Masonic charity program will collapse. At that point, Masonry will have neither a relevant purpose nor a substantial charity program. How long will Masonry endure, as a vibrant fraternal organization, beyond that point?

In the context of a world whose biosphere is collapsing because of mankind's numbers and industrial activity, these charities are irrelevant, and Masonry's substantial resources could be put to vastly better use. Masonry's current charity work does nothing to help the countless future generations whose very existence is disappearing as the current generation of mankind destroys the biosphere. It would serve Masonry and mankind much better if Masonry would cease most of its current charity work, and invest its still-considerable resources in preparing for the massive changes that will soon occur in the post-petroleum, post-industrial world. Continuing to support Masonry's current charities is costly, drives members away, and does nothing to help prepare for the coming world changes. Preparing for this future costs very little, and will benefit mankind very much.

The implications of Masonry's situation are pretty dire, relative to the goal of undertaking a National Masonic Public Awareness Program. It is even more alarming that the Report fails to highlight the real causes of Masonry's decline, and focuses instead on trying to treat the symptoms, while clearly avoiding consideration of the real problems. As noted (but not emphasized) in the Report, and as discussed by others, the goals, objectives, and activities of Masonry are no longer crucial to the survival of its members, and they no longer distinguish Masons from members of many other fraternal and benevolent organizations. If a National Masonic Public Awareness Program is undertaken, it will simply make these facts even more obvious to the public than it is today to its declining membership, and membership will decline even further. In today's world, yesterday's Masonry has little to offer – that is what needs to be changed, if Masonry is to survive and contribute to mankind's future in a significant way. When that is done, new members will flock to join the New Masonry, and the National Masonic Public Awareness Program will become unnecessary.

In his closing remarks on the audio presentation of the Report, Mr. Fletcher makes the following statement: "There will come a time when financial investment will be necessary, and a note of caution: Until we improve our own lodges and personal Masonic skills, we need to be very careful about attracting too much public attention." Mr. Fletcher is right on the mark here. Before Masonry will be acceptable to modern society, it will have to reinvent itself by establishing a new purpose and form that is relevant to present times. Reinventing

Masonry is the necessary challenge. Undertaking a PR campaign to advertise the “Old Masonry,” which has lost its relevance and appeal, will simply hasten its demise.

World history is littered with examples of organizations that did not reinvent themselves as world conditions changed, and became extinct. Masonry has had many decades of warning time to see that it has a serious problem, and it has done nothing to solve it. If it does not reinvent itself soon, by accepting a new purpose and mission that are relevant and important to the present-day world, it will simply disappear into the pages of history.

Concluding Remarks

In 2005, I moved from Florida to South Carolina, where I have family (and where I attended high school in the 1950s). From the number of Masonic Lodges I have seen in this area, it is clear that Masonry is still very much alive in South Carolina.

Normally, I would have submitted this proposal to a national or international headquarters of some sort. Since the Grand Lodges in the United States are all autonomous bodies, however, and since South Carolina is my home, I am submitting this proposal to you.

A number of other organizations have attempted to address the global environmental crisis in the past, and all have failed. They have failed, in my view, and they will continue to fail, because they are not willing or able to make the difficult choices that will be required in the years ahead. Also, most of them are dependent on funding from the industrial world, and that world will not permit them to do anything that is against its vested interests – more economic activity and industrial production. Masonry is not tied to any single nation, political system or religion. Masonry has proved that it can survive in a hostile world. Masonry has proved that it can stand on principle. Masonry has proved that it can keep secrets. Masonry transcends the industrialized world – it existed long before it, and it will endure long after it has passed. Masonry can accomplish the goal of saving the biosphere from annihilation. I do not believe that there is any other organization in the world that can accomplish this.

I entreat you to accept the challenge to reinvent Masonry. The world is truly crying out, "Oh, Lord my God, is there no help for a Son of the Widow." Please hear this plea for meaningful change, before it is too late. By responding to it, you will provide Masonry with a meaningful purpose, and you will play a major role in saving the planet's environment and mankind from extinction. In saving the planet, Masonry will save itself.

Although Masonry has lost relevance in today's world, many people still admire its past accomplishments, and continue to respect it as an organization and philosophy. The great mystic, Edgar Cayce, held Masonry in high regard, and predicted that it would play an important role in mankind's future: "With those changes that will be wrought, Americanism – the ism – with the universal thought that is expressed and manifested in the brotherhood of man into group thought, as expressed in the Masonic Order, will be the eventual rule in the settlement of affairs in the world. Not that the world is to become a Masonic Order, but the principles that are embraced in same will be the basis upon which the new order of peace is to be established in '44 and '45."

If my proposal is of interest to you, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss it. This is a first draft, intended to provoke meaningful discussion. If you desire additional information, such as more details on any topic, I shall be pleased to provide it. If you are interested in discussing this proposal further, I would appreciate hearing from you soon.

Since I am not a Mason, you may wonder about my motivation and character. You may see my concern for the current world crisis by reading my book, *Can America Survive?*, and some of the other material posted on my website, <http://www.foundationwebsite.org> (not just on this book's subject of population, energy and the environment, but also on diverse subjects, including politics, religion, philosophy, metaphysics and music). A brief biography is posted at <http://www.foundationwebsite.org/BioJGC.htm> , and at the end of this letter.

Sincerely,

Joseph George Caldwell

Joseph George Caldwell

Professional Profile:

Career in management consulting, research, and teaching. Directed projects in strategic planning, policy analysis, program evaluation, economics, public finance, statistics, operations research / systems analysis, and information technology for US, state and foreign governments, and US and foreign organizations. Areas of expertise include health, education, vocational rehabilitation, welfare, public finance (tax policy analysis, Medicaid and AFDC financing), agriculture, civil rights, economic development, energy, environment, population, and defense (US Army, Navy, Air Force, Department of Defense). Considerable overseas experience.

- 2001- Management Consultant, Spartanburg, South Carolina, USA
1999-2001: Director of Management Systems, Bank of Botswana (Botswana's central bank)
1991-1998: Management Consultant (Wachovia Bank, Charlotte; US Agency for International Development, Egypt, Malawi, Ghana; Asian Development Bank, Bangladesh; Canada Trust Bank, Toronto, Canada)
1989-1991 President, Vista Research Corporation, Tucson, Arizona
1982-1991 Director of Research and Development and Principal Scientist, US Army Electronic Proving Ground's Electromagnetic Environmental Test Facility / Bell Technical Operations Corporation and Combustion Engineering; Adjunct Professor of Statistics, University of Arizona; Principal Engineer, Singer Systems and Software Engineering; Arizona
1964-1982 Consultant or employee to firms in South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, District of Columbia, Haiti, Philippines

Education:

PhD, Statistics, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
BS, Mathematics, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA
Graduate of Spartanburg High School, Spartanburg, SC

Personal:

Born March 23, 1942, in Kingston, Ontario, Canada
Married to Jacquelyn A. Caldwell
Three children
Religion: Christianity (Presbyterian)
Author of books on population and defense (*Can America Survive?*), tax reform (*The Value-Added Tax: A New Tax System for the United States*), and music (*How to Play the Guitar by Ear (for mathematicians and physicists)*).
See Internet websites <http://www.foundationwebsite.org> and <http://www.foundation.bw> to view these and related articles.

13 September 2006