

United Grand Lodge of England

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GFR/01

20 July 2011

Dear Provincial Grand Master,

GRANDE LOGE NATIONALE FRANÇAISE

At the June Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge the President of the Board of General Purposes made a statement about the turbulence existing in the Grande Loge Nationale Française (“GLNF”) and indicated that the Board would continue to monitor the situation closely.

The Board regrets that the situation within the GLNF has deteriorated, with some 600 or more Lodges dissociating themselves from that Grand Lodge or indicating that they will be doing so. This means that it is now an impossible task for our Lodges to know which French Masons may properly visit our Lodges and which may not.

Harmony within Lodges and with fellow Masons has always been one of the customs and usages of Freemasonry. This is a fundamental principle urged upon candidates at their initiation. Indeed, it is so fundamental that it has never been considered necessary to enshrine it as a Rule in the Book of Constitutions, though the “Antient Charges” which are published as a part of the Book of Constitutions urge the cultivation of brotherly love, “avoiding all wrangling and quarrelling, all slander and backbiting”.

The Board considers that the GLNF may be in breach of Paragraph 8 of the Principles for Grand Lodge Recognition – “That the principles of the Antient Landmarks, customs, and usages of the Craft shall be strictly observed” – which are also included with the Book of Constitutions. While the evidence of substantial disharmony within the GLNF is overwhelming, the Board is reluctant at present to recommend withdrawal of Recognition, but will recommend in its Report to the September Quarterly Communication of the Grand Lodge that relations with the GLNF be suspended.

The consequences of such suspension will be that:

1. our Brethren will no longer be permitted to join or to visit Lodges under the GLNF; and

2. our Lodges will no longer be permitted to elect as a joining member or admit as a visitor any Brother who is a subscribing member of a Lodge under the GLNF, unless he is also a subscribing member of a Lodge under UGLE or under a Grand Lodge, other than the GLNF, recognised by UGLE.

This suspension will not force any of our Brethren who are currently also members of Lodges under the GLNF to resign from any such Lodges; nor will it prevent such Brethren from continuing to exercise, as members of Lodges under the GLNF, such rights, including those of visiting, as they enjoy under the GLNF.

The Board hopes that, although a formal suspension of relations with the GLNF cannot be achieved until Grand Lodge meets on 14 September, you will encourage the Brethren of your Lodges to act in the meantime as though the above restrictions were already in force.

If you or your Provincial Grand Secretary, to whom a copy of this letter is being sent, have any questions at all about the scope or effect of these restrictions, please get in touch with the Assistant Grand Secretary (gredman@ugle.org.uk; 020-7395 9222).

Needless to say, the Board also hopes that it will not be too long before harmony is restored within the GLNF so that we may resume normal relations with our Brethren in France.

Yours sincerely and fraternally,



Grand Secretary

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