

The American Doctrine: A Concept Under Siege

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Setting the Stage

I have been interested for many years in the way and manner that Grand Lodges exercise jurisdictional power. By custom, practice, and law Grand Masters and Grand Lodges have in the past assumed, allocated, and implemented almost unlimited authority to the end that Masonic organization and operation has taken on near-monopolistic, if not near-oligarchic, characteristics. Seemingly, moreover, the resultant unique system has been subject, for the most part, to only minimal and periodic challenge.

In consequence Grand Lodges have become powers within themselves, answerable on occasion to the membership, but free, by and large, to rigidly control and protect their interests within the confines of proclaimed jurisdictional limits. In furthering this conception of power it has been a common practice for Grand Lodges to declare sovereign authority over all Masons and all lodges within their purview, and in some instances even to claim exclusive Masonic jurisdiction over every male — Mason or not — within their domain. These efforts, in short, while protecting parochial interests, have been undeniably restrictive.

In the past quarter-century, however, serious challenges to the authority of Grand Lodges have been launched by individual Masons, by some highly placed leaders in the appendant and coordinate bodies, and by many who themselves lead or have led Grand Lodges. These challenges have caused the initiation of efforts to review Masonic laws and customs, particularly as they pertain to the concept of exclusive territorial jurisdiction — the so-called American Doctrine — in several jurisdictions. In a number of Grand Lodges,

in fact, policy changes have already been implemented. It is therefore my purpose in this paper to review the American Doctrine, determine what it is and is not, to assess its applications, past and present, and to speculate, to the degree that current developments will permit, about a future that is by no means certain.

Definitions and Conceptions

Just what is this American Doctrine of exclusive jurisdiction of which we speak? At the outset we should recognize that it is a settled principle of American Masonic law, wherein it is proclaimed that Masonic and political jurisdiction is or should be co-terminal; in other words, the boundaries which delimit the territory of a Grand Lodge should be the same as those which define the political limits of the state in which it exists. It logically follows that if a state should change its political boundaries, the Masonic boundaries of the Grand Lodge should also change in identical manner.

Various sources claim that the American Doctrine had its origin in the developmental period coincidental with the American Revolution and its immediate aftermath. It was first enunciated as a principle, so far as I can determine, in New York in 1796. The Grand Lodge adopted a resolution at that time to the effect that it would not charter any lodge outside the state in any place where another Grand Lodge was in existence.

On September 13, 1797, the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts adopted a resolution that stated "the Grand Lodge would not hold any communication with, or admit as visitors, any Masons residing in the state who hold authority under, and acknowledge the supremacy of any foreign Grand Lodge, or who do not by their representatives communicate and pay dues to this Grand Lodge."

The early New York resolution was given additional credence in 1866 by John W. Simmons, Past Grand Master of N.Y., who stated that "The jurisdictional rights of a Grand Lodge do not extend beyond the boundaries of the country, State, or territory where it is

located, except where a country is Masonically vacant; that is, having no Grand Lodge established in it, in which case all the Grand Lodges in the world have concurrent jurisdiction there, so far as they may deem it proper to be exercised"

Simmons also stated that "When, however, a majority of the subordinates (being not less than three in number) choose to establish a Grand Lodge, then the territory is occupied; and not only are Grand Lodges in other States or countries forbidden to exercise any powers in the territory occupied by the new Grand Lodge, but their subordinates, if any, that may have refused to unite in the formation of the Grand Lodge, are to be withdrawn and left subject to the disposition of the local authority." This is a concept that Alphonse Cerza, writing in 1978, called the doctrine of *comprehensive jurisdiction*. It has application to recent developments in Hawaii and Alaska.

It should be noted that the American Doctrine has application only to the Grand Lodges of the United States, and even here, it has not been appreciated consistently in the same manner at all places and at all times. Furthermore, it must be recognized that the American concept of exclusivity has in this century, starting with the growing concern of Grand Lodges over the issue of recognition in the mid- to late 30's, been softened on occasion to permit the establishment or recognition of Lodges in territories occupied by lawful Grand Lodges that have given their "expressed consent" or authorized "permitted exceptions." Thus American Grand Lodges are enabled to justify exceptions to the rule, domestic and foreign.

The English interpretation of jurisdiction is quite different. The United Grand Lodge of England states only that it shall have sovereign jurisdiction over the lodges of its obedience, that is, that a recognized Grand Lodge shall be a responsible, independent, self-governing organization, with sole and undisputed authority over the Craft or Symbolic Degrees within its jurisdiction, and that it shall not in any way be subject to or divide authority with a Supreme Council or other power claiming any control or supervision over those degrees. The Grand Lodges of England, Scotland and Ireland have established

lodges in the same countries in many parts of the world. It should be noted that in these Grand Lodges the emphasis of control is placed on lodges and degrees, rather than people or political entities.

Exceptions to The Concept — 18th and 19th Centuries

During the last quarter of the 18th Century and through almost all of the 19th Century, the Grand Lodges of the United States, growing in numbers and territorial extent, regarded the American Doctrine, if they took cognizance of it at all, rather pragmatically. Their concern was to establish and perpetuate themselves at whatever cost was necessary. Hence in many areas violations or parochial interpretations of the American Doctrine, as we know it today, were common. Among the exceptions commonly noted by scholars are those that occurred in:

1. The District of Columbia, where Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22, located within the District of Columbia, was permitted, at its own request, to remain under the Grand Lodge of Virginia rather than subordinate itself to the Grand Lodge of D. C.
2. Georgia, where two Grand Lodges existed from 1827 until the anti-Masonic movement put one out of existence and threatened to exterminate the other.
3. Illinois, where the Grand Lodge of Illinois refused for some time to take jurisdiction over Western Star Lodge, Lawrence Lodge, and Lebanon Lodge chartered by Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and Tennessee, respectively, because they had not paid their dues to their chartering Grand Lodges. This Grand Lodge also allowed the Grand Lodge of Missouri to revoke the charter of Sangamon badge in Illinois for non-payment of dues.
4. The Indian Territory, where Alpha Lodge, chartered by the Grand Lodge of Kansas, refused to join the Grand Lodge of the Indian Territory, and was supported in that stand, the question not being settled until 1878.

5. Massachusetts, where there were two Grand Lodges until 1792 and where St. Andrews Lodge of Boston continued to work under the Grand Lodge of Scotland until 1809.
6. Louisiana, where it is impossible to say how often and how long duplication of Masonic authority existed. When the Grand Lodge of Mississippi deemed the Grand Lodge of Louisiana too erratic in its practices, it declared the Louisiana body spurious and proceeded to charter lodges there.
7. Minnesota, where the Grand Lodge chartered two lodges in the Dakota territory, one before and one after the formation of the Grand Lodge in South Dakota in 1875, and the Grand Lodge of Minnesota defended its claim to those lodges until 1879.
8. Missouri, where Bandalia Lodge, which was chartered in Illinois before the Grand Lodge of Illinois had been formed, appealed from a sentence pronounced by the Grand Lodge of Missouri suspending its charter, and the Grand Lodge of Missouri maintained jurisdiction in the case even after the Grand Lodge of Illinois had been formed. This Grand Lodge also chartered St. Clair and Marion Lodges in Illinois in 1842 and kept two lodges in New Mexico on its roll after the latter had been recognized by Missouri in 1877. When the Grand Lodge of Tennessee revoked the charter of one of its lodges in Missouri, the latter held the action invalid for the reason that it alone had jurisdiction.
9. New York, where two rival Grand Lodges existed between the years 1823-1827, 1837-1850, and 1853-1856.
10. South Carolina, where there were two Grand Lodges from 1787-1803.
11. West Virginia, where after the founding of the state and the creation of the Grand Lodge, several constituent lodges retained their charters from the Grand Lodge of Virginia and did not affiliate with the new Grand Lodge until required to do so by both jurisdictions.
12. Washington, where in 1897 the Grand Lodge reported recognition of African Grand Lodge, an act that resulted in the withdrawal of recognition of the Grand Lodge of Washington by several sister Grand Lodges, thereby inducing the Grand Lodge of Washington to rescind its action.

13. Wisconsin, where in 1864 the Grand Lodge issued a dispensation for a lodge in Illinois near the state line, claiming the right, because Illinois had not restrained Missouri for similar action.

Foreign Challenges to The Doctrine

In consequence of the inconsistent interpretation of jurisdictional mores at the Grand Lodge level, it is not surprising that some Grand Lodges outside the continental limits of the United States stood ready to take advantage of the situation. The exploits of two that did so, the Grand Lodge of Hamburg and the Grand Orient of France, have been duly chronicled in a number of Masonic sources.

Apparently the efforts of the Grand Lodge of Hamburg to interfere in American Freemasonry were less consequential and lasting than were those of the Grand Orient. According to reports the Grand Lodge of Hamburg recognized Prince Hall Grand Lodges in Massachusetts and Ohio in 1874-75, an act that was considered tantamount to invasion at the time. It also directly instituted three lodges in New York, and by so doing precipitated trouble that was to fester for many years in that jurisdiction.

The meddling of the Grand Orient, however, was more serious. It began in 1869 when the Grand Orient recognized a spurious Grand body known as the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite in and for the Sovereign and Independent State of Louisiana. This body claimed jurisdiction over the Craft degrees as well as over those of the Scottish Rite.

The explanation of the situation by the Grand Master of Louisiana in February 1869 is recorded by Mackey as follows:

In the month of December I received from the office of the Grand Orient through the post office an official bulletin containing a decree which certainly surprised me.

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It has, with a strange perversion, and unaccountable want of consistency, recognized a clandestine body in this city, calling itself the Supreme Council of the Sovereign and Independent State of Louisiana.

It will become your painful duty to take notice of this action of the Grand Orient of France, and make such decree as in your wisdom may be found expedient and necessary to sustain the dignity of this Grand Lodge and maintain its authority over Craft Masonry in this Jurisdiction. There can be no divided authority. Upon one principle we are all agreed, and while we have life we will sustain it. The Grand Lodge of Louisiana will never submit to a divided jurisdiction, and in this position she will be sustained by every Grand Lodge in North America, for all are interested alike in sustaining each other. This principle, once abandoned, the power of Masonry for good is gone. Discord and confusion will reign supreme, and the sun of Masonry will set in a sea of darkness.

At this session of the Grand Lodge relations with the Grand Orient were broken by the acceptance of the following resolution:

RESOLVED, That all Masonic correspondence and fraternal relations between the Grand Lodge of Louisiana and the Grand Orient of France cease and be discontinued, and no Mason owing allegiance to that Grand Body be recognized as such in this jurisdiction.

This action was supported widely, and the Grand Master of Pennsylvania, on December 27, 1869, remarked: "The facts are so clear, in this unjustifiable interference in Louisiana, that I deem it proper to state that all correspondence between the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania and the Grand Orient of France should cease till the latter recalls its presumptuous intermeddling with the affairs of our sister Grand Lodge of Louisiana and yields assent to that paramount principle of the supreme sovereignty of Grand Lodges of Freemasons in the United States."

By these words the Grand Master of Pennsylvania established a prophetic precedent which would prove useful at a later date in his own jurisdiction. In 1924 the Grand Orient of France struck again by sponsoring in Pennsylvania the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite Universal Free Masonry in Pennsylvania, a body which claimed the right to confer all degrees. One of the peculiar provisions of the agreement between the Grand Orient and this spurious body was that which gave the latter the right to institute new lodges in the United States, the warrants to be issued by the Grand Orient, thus virtually constituting the new body a Provincial, or District, Grand Lodge under the Grand Orient of France. It further provided that the Pennsylvania Council was not to create lodges in any state having a Grand Lodge with which the Grand Orient was in fraternal relations, naming expressly Alabama, Iowa, Minnesota, Rhode Island, and New Jersey.

Abraham Beiter, PGM, Chairman of the Committee on Clandestine Lodges in Pennsylvania, spoke of this matter to his Grand Lodge on December 27, 1924, noting that by the agreement the spurious Pennsylvania arm of the Grand Orient was to pay annually to the Grand Orient of France the sum of \$10.00 for each active lodge; that it was required to buy all diplomas it may require of the Grand Orient at the price of 15 francs each, the diplomas to be on parchment, printed in both English and French; that it was to have the right to institute new lodges in the U.S. wherever it may deem it convenient; that it was to receive for these lodges warrants issued from the Grand Orient of France.

But this body, Beiter reported, was not permitted to create new lodges in territories of the U.S. outside of Pennsylvania with which the Grand Orient was in fraternal relations (i.e., in Alabama, Iowa, Rhode Island, and New Jersey). Should there be at any time in the future a cessation of the relations of the Grand Orient of France with one or more of these states, however, the body in Pennsylvania would then be permitted "plentitude of action" therein.

At the conclusion of Beiter's report the following resolution was presented and adopted unanimously:

RESOLVED, That the Grand Secretary forward to each of the Grand Lodges in the United States a copy of this report, calling their attention to the fact that the body which the Grand Orient of France has "taken under its wings" is authorized by the Grand Orient of France to create lodges in every state, excepting Alabama, Iowa, Missouri, Rhode Island, and New Jersey, and that its power is extended to those slalom when the fraternal relations now existing between the several Grand Lodges of these states and the Grand Orient of France cease.

RESOLVED FURTHER, That this Grand Lodge, which has always firmly held and still holds the views expressed by our Right Worshipful Grand Master Brother Richard Vaux, respectfully and confidently ask its sister jurisdictions to adopt those views as fundamental in Masonry and requests those Grand Lodges which are in fraternal relations with the Grand Orient of France to give their adherence to those views and sever relations with the said Grand Orient.

Having made two approaches and lost, the Grand Orient is still trying to extend its influence in this country. Some three years ago a member of that Grand Lodge called on me in my office. It was a courtesy call, initiated by him, and initially the visit was very pleasant. We had a spirited discussion of our differences and of those basic factors which continue to make mutual recognition impossible.

Eventually, however, the conversation took a difficult turn when my visitor invited me to visit his lodge. I responded to the effect that my vows made this impossible. I also remarked that I had only been in Paris once in my life, and that I could not foresee another visit in the immediate future. His reply shocked me. To the best of my recollection he said that a visit to Paris was not necessary because his lodge was operating in Georgetown, a subdivision of the city of Washington, D.C.!

I reacted with more emotion than sense, I fear, scolding him for his audacity in breaching the rules of Masonic propriety. I was so incensed, in fact, that I never did learn when or where in Georgetown this illegal lodge meets. But it is in operation to this day, and members of it periodically approach foreign speaking Masons in the constituent ledges of the Grand Lodge of D.C. A day will come when we will have to seriously address this issue, if for no other reason than to satisfy the many legitimate French Masons posted to service in the District of Columbia.

Current Domestic Interpretations

During the course of the past decade or so the concept of the American Doctrine has been imaginatively interpreted to facilitate actions that have led to the sharing of the State of Alaska by two Grand Lodges, to the establishment, temporarily at least, of the Grand Lodge of Iran (in Exile) in Massachusetts, and to the sharing of territory, in a number of states, by regular (A.F. & A.M., A. & F.M., F.A.A.M.) and Prince Hall Grand Lodges. Each of these developments are attributable to the creative application of the American Doctrine and are thus worthy of comment.

Alaska

Masonry in Alaska was under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Washington until 1981. On February 3 and 4 of that year, at a Convention of Lodges called in advance for the purpose, 12 of Alaska's 19 Lodges (all chartered by the M.W. Grand Lodge of F. & A.M. of Washington) voted to form a Grand Lodge of Alaska. A code was adopted, copied mostly from the Washington Masonic Code, declaring exclusive territorial jurisdiction within the State of Alaska and allowing the seven Lodges voting "no" to retain their Washington Charters as long as they wished.

Five of the Lodges voting "no" were located in Southeast Alaska where a strong feeling of apartness and difference from the rest of the State has existed since the Territory of Alaska first became populated. In a report to the Conference of Grand Masters, Alaskan

authorities stated that the people of the Southeast look and travel south to Washington rather than north to the rest of the State. There is an historical sectionalism that will not die, they said, and it has been intensified by the desire of the northern residents to move the State Capital north. Eleven years later, in 1992, four of the lodges casting negative votes still maintained their administrative ties to the Grand Lodge of Washington. Hence the continued division of Alaska between two Grand Lodges seems certain.

The division of authority by regular Grand Lodges in Alaska is unquestionably unique in American Freemasonry. Furthermore, approval of the process of dividing subordinate lodges there among two Grand Lodges stands in stark contrast to the procedure that was followed in Hawaii just 8 years later. In the latter instance the Grand Lodge of California, whose position in Hawaii was analogous to that of the Grand Lodge of Washington in Alaska, held that creation of the Grand Lodge of Hawaii would necessitate the subordination to it of all lodges in Hawaii, without exception.

Grand Lodge of Iran (In Exile)

The second instance in which territory was voluntarily shared, to a degree, occurred in Massachusetts on March 26, 1985, when the Grand Lodge of Iran (in Exile) was authorized to operate there. The enabling decree read as follows:

To all the Fraternity to whom these Presents shall come:

Whereas the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Masons in Iran and subordinate Lodges, due to the extreme conditions and circumstances, could not continue to exist and do Masonic work, after 1978, in Iran.

Now, therefore, the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts, reposing special trust in the prudence and fidelity of the officers of the Grand Lodge of Iran and their members, and in witness of their continuing labor and effort during the past

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three years to promote the advancement of Masonry and the good of the Craft, and in order to extend most fraternal fellowship, hereby grants approval to the Grand Lodge of Iran (in Exile) to:

Convene Masons and hold meetings and conduct Masonic business within the City of Boston in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as provided by the Constitution and By-Laws of the Grand Lodge of Iran (in Exile) and their officers.

To re-establish and continue, for the time being within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the activity of Master's Lodges in order to receive and enter Apprentices, pass Fellow Crafts and raise Master Masons, all of Iranian nationality, and elect officers according to their Constitution and By-Laws and the ancient usages and customs of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons.

By order of the Grand Lodge

Attest:

Robert P. Beach
Grand Secretary

David B. Richardson
Grand Master

The Commission on Information for Recognition in commenting on this development stated that it recognized that the American Doctrine of exclusive territorial jurisdiction is subject to exceptions, one of which is an agreement on the part of the Grand Lodge located in a territory that another Grand Lodge may operate within that territory. It also stated that the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, being a sovereign Grand Lodge, had the right to grant to the Grand Lodge of Iran the approval set out above. Finally, the Commission claimed it was advised that any Iranian nationals who are made Masons in Massachusetts under the above order will be members of one of the constituent lodges of the Grand Lodge of Iran and will bear the credentials of one of those lodges.

While there has been general approval of the charitable motives of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts in extending a helping hand to the Grand Lodge of Iran (in Exile), the act has not received universal approval. In fact a number of Grand Lodges have not recognized the Grand Lodge of Iran (in Exile), and a number of Masonic leaders have privately expressed concern about how and where the petitions of candidates of "Iranian nationality," as stipulated in the Massachusetts order, are being obtained. Many Grand Lodges take their rules concerning residence to heart and demand that others do the same.

Prince Hall Accommodation

No discussion of the sharing of territorial jurisdiction would be complete without reference to developments in a number of regular Grand Lodges to establish better relations with Prince Hall counterparts. The movement had its origin, of course, in the early failed efforts of recognition initiated by the Grand Lodges of Washington (1898) and Massachusetts (1947). Severe criticism of the decisions on Prince Hall reached in those Grand Lodges quickly forced reversal of positions in both instances. In 1989, however, a new movement to that end was initiated by the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, which recognized the Prince Hall Grand Lodge in Connecticut for visitation purposes.

Since then seven other Grand Lodges have also established relationships with Prince Hall Grand Lodges, and at least two others are now negotiating with their Prince Hall counterparts. Those Grand Lodges which have already recognized Prince Hall Grand Lodges are as follows:

Year of Recognition	Grand Lodge	Conditions
1989	Connecticut	Visitation only
1990	Wisconsin	Visitation only
1990	Nebraska	Full recognition
1990	Washington	Full recognition

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1991	Colorado	Visitation only
1991	Minnesota	Visitation only
1991	North Dakota	Visitation only
1991	Idaho	Full recognition

In addition, the Grand Lodges of Montana and South Dakota are at this time studying the issue, and the jurisprudence committee of the Grand Lodge of South Dakota now has before it a proposal to amend the Grand Lodge code to permit that Grand Lodge to recognize a Grand Lodge in another jurisdiction. It seems that the Prince Hall lodge in South Dakota is subordinate to the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Minnesota.

In reaction to developments relative to Prince Hall Masonry in the United States, a number of Grand Lodges have deemed it appropriate to respond, some by edict and some by simple resolution. The first to do so was the Grand Lodge of Louisiana, which in 1989 severed all relations with the Grand Lodge of Connecticut.

A year later the Grand Master of Louisiana, in an address to his Grand Lodge, recommended that the 1989 edict be revoked and that fraternal relations with Connecticut be immediately restored. The recommendation was approved by a near-unanimous standing vote.

Nevertheless normal relations were not restored, and in 1992 the current Grand Master of Louisiana issued a new edict in which it is affirmed that Louisiana Masons are prohibited from visiting or being present in communications of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut or of its constituent lodges. It is interesting to note, however, that this edict does not prevent Louisiana Masons from sitting with Connecticut Masons in other Grand Lodges or in the constituent lodges and other Masonic bodies in jurisdictions recognized by the Grand Lodge of Louisiana.

The Grand Lodge of Georgia likewise reacted quickly by passing, in 1990, a resolution to complicate visitation in Georgia for Masons in Grand Jurisdictions recognizing Prince Hall Masonry. While such visits were not completely ruled out, the resolution made it necessary for such visitors to request (and receive) the permission of the Grand Master of Georgia before visiting a specific Georgia lodge. By this resolution Georgia Masons wishing to visit lodges in Grand Jurisdictions recognizing Prince Hall were also required to obtain the prior permission of the Grand Master of Georgia. Further, in 1992, the Grand Lodge of Georgia issued an edict to sever relations with the Grand Lodge of Idaho, thereby supporting the Grand Master of Oregon in the current Oregon-Idaho dispute.

In 1991 the Grand Lodge of West Virginia issued two edicts addressing the Prince Hall issue. In the first, issued in April, West Virginia Masons were forbidden to be present in lodges under the Grand Lodges of Connecticut, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and Washington, all of which had recognized Prince Hall, but it did not prohibit members of lodges in those jurisdictions from visiting lodges in West Virginia. The second edict, issued in September, extended the ban to include Masons in lodges subservient to the Grand Lodges of Colorado, Minnesota, and North Dakota.

The Grand Master of Mississippi in 1990 also responded to the growing movement to recognize Prince Hall Masonry by directing a course of action in case a Mississippi Mason should find himself in a lodge where there were black Masons present. In such situations, he said, the Mississippi Mason "should determine if said black mason carries a Prince Hall membership card." If he found that he did, the Mississippi Mason was to remove himself "from that lodge at once."

The United Grand Lodge of England has expressed an opinion on these recent recognitions of Prince Hall Masonry. At its quarterly communication on 1 March 1991, this Grand Lodge received a report from the Board of General Purposes relative to the recognition of Prince Hall Grand Lodges operating in Connecticut, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and the State of Washington. In this report the Board stated that "Until further notice,

Brethren of the English Constitution should not visit Lodges under the Grand Lodges named above."

Canadian Masons have also spoken to the issue. J.A. Fergusson, Conference Secretary of the Conference of Grand and District Grand Lodges A.F. & A.M. of Canada has announced that on March 21, 1992, that Conference unanimously passed a resolution which reads as follows:

The Conference of Grand and District Grand Lodges of Canada, held in Winnipeg on March 21, 1992, unanimously recommends the acceptance of Prince Hall Grand Lodges, as approved by the Conference of Prince Hall Grand Lodges, as being regular Masonic Lodges.

Lastly, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Oregon stated in June 1991 that the laws of his Grand Lodge prohibited Oregon Masons from engaging "in any Masonic communication with any persons not recognized as Masons" and from attending "a Lodge in any other jurisdiction where there are persons present belonging to an organization which is not recognized by the Grand Lodge of Oregon." While able to control Oregon Masons, the Grand Master was not able to influence the course of events whereby the Grand Lodge of Idaho, on September 20, 1991, adopted legislation to recognize "The Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Oregon, Inc." This Prince Hall Grand Lodge, which operates primarily in Oregon, also has lodges in Idaho and Montana (one each). Considering the action to be an invasion of its territory, the Grand Master of Oregon, on December 16, 1991, issued an edict to suspend relations between his Grand Lodge and the Grand Lodge of Idaho.

A concluding word on the issue of Prince Hall recognition may be useful. For the most part Prince Hall Grand Lodges are separated, one from the other, along state lines, not unlike other Grand Lodges. But there are significant exceptions. In addition to the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Oregon, several other Prince Hall Grand Lodges extend across state

lines. Those that do include the Prince Hall Grand Lodges in Colorado, Kansas, Minnesota, Washington, and Virginia. Moreover, several Prince Hall Grand Lodges have extensive networks of military lodges overseas. Hence it is possible that this factor alone — the non-conformity of administrative boundaries — may in time further complicate efforts to find a solution to inter-jurisdictional problems which are, to say the least, as emotional as they are complex.

Conclusions

In conclusion I should like to observe that this examination of the American Doctrine has revealed (a) that the Doctrine, as originally conceived, no longer exists; (b) that the historic application of the Doctrine, especially in the 19th Century, has been selective; (c) that inconsistent applications of the Doctrine have encouraged challenge; and (d) that when it has seemed prudent, American Grand Lodges have modified their interpretations of the Doctrine to satisfy challenges at hand. This process, I believe, is irreversible, and despite the attempts of a few Grand Lodges to stem the tide by punitive action, their efforts will fail, in the long run, and change will unquestionably prevail.