

# **NOTE OF GUIDANCE TO BRETHREN COMING WITHIN THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE RULES GOVERNING MASONIC DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE.**

If a Brother finds himself, as a result of his actions, involved in the process of Masonic Discipline, he has two options.

- a. To proceed with the Masonic Disciplinary Procedure as set forth in the Book of Constitutions
- b. To resign voluntarily from the Craft as a whole

These options are made necessary by the fact that even if a Brother resigns or is excluded from his Lodge he remains, of course, a Freemason. He can only avoid the consequences of this situation by choosing option (b) above.

*(If a Brother opts to do nothing, then the normal procedures of Masonic Discipline will continue in his absence and without his participation, and he will be informed of the outcome at his last known address.)*

## **Option (a)**

This option offers the Brother the opportunity to appear before a Committee of Inquiry, established by command of the Provincial Grand Master, where he will have the right to explain himself, bringing forward any matters or explanations in support of his situation, and to bring Brethren to speak in his support. The committee is conducted formally according to rules established in conformity with the understandings of natural justice.

The committee can recommend to the Provincial Grand Master that he take no action in the matter; or that he issue a reprimand; or it can recommend a period of suspension from the Craft, or that the Provincial Grand Master should recommend to the Grand Master that the Brother in question be expelled from the Craft.

This process, as it is conducted with scrupulous fairness, can take some considerable time to complete and the Brother in question finally hears of the outcome from the Grand, or Provincial Grand Secretary. He can appeal the decision.

## **Option (b)**

If a Brother would prefer to discharge himself immediately from further Masonic responsibility or proceedings, he is at liberty to resign from the Craft by completing Form VR (Voluntary Resignation) 1, and sending it, together with his Grand Lodge (and Grand Chapter) Certificate(s) to the Provincial Grand Secretary. Having done so, all disciplinary proceedings cease, as he is no longer a Freemason.

The Grand Secretary cannot accept such a resignation without the surrendering of the Grand Lodge (and Grand Chapter) Certificate(s).

IT IS ENTIRELY A MATTER FOR THE BROTHER IN QUESTION WHICH OF THESE OPTIONS HE CHOOSES, but in the absence of any indication from him, option (a) will be proceeded with until the matter is concluded.

As a result of the specific requirements of Rule 179A, Brethren should also note that in cases of convictions resulting in custodial sentence (immediate or suspended): Community Orders: Listing on the Sex Offenders' Register or any other conviction for an offence involving violence or dishonesty, pending the determination of their case by Masonic authority, they may not attend any Lodge or Chapter without the written permission of the Masonic authority having jurisdiction thereover.

*If a Brother would like to discuss any of these matters further, he is free to contact the Provincial Grand Secretary, who will offer every assistance.*