

Rosicrucian Chronicles

Serving the Ideals of the Rosicrucian Movement

In this issue:

Discussing the Constitution and the Bylaws

Reflections...

The Downgrading of the Supreme Temple

Letters from the Readers

Discussing the Constitution and Bylaws
by *Kenneth A. Thompson F.R.C.*

In the last issue you were promised a discussion of the AMORC Constitution and Bylaws. First, I'd like to discuss these documents in general terms and then as they have been handled by the Supreme Grand Lodge and English Grand Lodge boards and their attorneys.

The Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, the Statutes and the Bylaws are called the "governing documents" of a non-profit organization in the State of California and list the rules under which the group is supposed to operate in order to maintain their non-profit and tax-exempt status.

In general, the Articles of Incorporation are drawn up by the group seeking incorporation, state the purpose of the organization, pledge to abide by the Not-For-Profit/Public Benefit (non-profit) Law and are submitted along with other documents to the State for review. If they comply with the law, the State will grant incorporation and the Federal Government will grant tax-exempt status.

In order to insure compliance with the purposes under which incorporation was granted, the next two documents are also composed by the group and submitted to the State.

The Constitution contains the main overriding rules that can keep the officers firmly on course with the purposes of the organization.

Discussing the Constitution and Bylaws
....continues on page 2

Reflections...

By Curt Warren F.R.C.

(Thoughts, Opinions and reminiscences of a student on the Path)

In Christian Bernard's so-called Emperor's Proclamation for the R+C year 3345, he states: "...from now on the Supreme Temple shall be above all located on a spiritual plane..."; and, "Physically and materially speaking, the Supreme Temple is any Rosicrucian Temple where the Emperor holds a Convocation."

There seems to be a contradiction in terms here unless the illustrious Christian Bernard can transfigure himself into the heavens under the gaze of the assembled membership.

Oh, that Gallic mentality! So conditioned by traditions of the Divine Right of Kings... so noble and so ridiculous. Or, perhaps-- to be generous -- Christian simply doesn't perceive the profound difference between the Celestial Sanctum and the Supreme Temple; the one in the Cosmic and the other on this plane. I suggest he read the AMORC publication Liber 777.

I am sure that Christian's message brought great joy to the hearts of hundreds of long time members who sacrificed to contribute to the construction fund of the Supreme Temple during the 1940's; and, who received a certificate reading in part (and signed by Ralph M. Lewis):

Reflections...continues on page 6

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While a short statement of the "spirit of the law" (the guiding ideals of the group) is often in the Articles, a more complete statement of the "spirit of the law" as well as a foundation for the "letter of the law" (the specific rules) is in the Constitution and the mechanisms for the "letter of the law" are contained within the Statues.

Finally the Bylaws (from the Old Norse words - byr log, meaning town laws and represent laws adopted by the local group) which contain an affirmation of compliance with the Constitution and Statues while adding specific rules needed for local conditions.

Please note the hierarchial nature of the documents. While a lower document may explain and amplify aspects of a higher one, each must comply with their next superior document and no document may legally be inconsistent or out of compliance with the rest. Just as no state or city law can be out of compliance with the Federal Constitution.

Otherwise, knowingly or unknowingly, many kinds

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of mismanagement, some as serious as grand theft and/or felony fraud, may be engaged in by the organization's officers and inevitably damage the organization beyond repair.

If an organization is managed honestly, the constitutional structure will help to ensure the long term stability of the organization, even in the face of the most emotionally volatile of situations. These processes can allow the time and the opportunity for all relevant information to be discussed and the time necessary for thoughtful consideration by all.

As well as assisting the long term stability of the organization, this structure also gives the group short term protection against the type of unseemly manipulation that uses emotional incidents in attempts to unsettle the process and overwhelm the facts. History has given names to some of these people. Some are called quislings and others are called provocateurs.

Many people believe that all constitutions contain honest and fair rules and that the rules are always applied justly. In fact, the statement that some rule or action is "constitutional", for some people, is equivalent to saying that the same rule or action is unquestionably fair, honest and just.

Unfortunately, this is not always true. Many Constitutions have been constructed to contain provisions that "legalized" many terrible injustices. While other fair and just statutes, have been misused or otherwise circumvented (agreement by "resolution" within closed meetings is the tactic most often used to accomplish this end).

For example, a certain father and son on a certain Caribbean island included in their constitutions provisions that declared them "president for life", gave them unquestioned dictatorial authority and provided no financial safeguards.

The lack of safeguards literally created "licenses to steal", which these two used to move millions of dollars of the country's money into personal Swiss bank accounts, which in turn drove the island into bankruptcy. These incidents occurred many years ago and yet the island has not recovered. These types of activities constitute "constitutionalized crime".

The current boards and their lawyers have refiled AMORC's governing documents and instituted major changes in all of them.

When Ralph Lewis was alive and until early in last year (1991), AMORC's Articles of Incorporation contained passages stating that AMORC's purpose

was "To teach, foster and perpetuate the traditional principles of the Ancient Rosicrucians...", it then continued with a detailed exposition of that statement and the rules for the Board of Directors. All of this information was restated in the Constitution of the Supreme Grand Lodge.

Also included in the Articles were the following statements "THIRD: That the place where the principal business of said corporation is to be transacted and where its college or seminary is to be conducted is in the City of San Jose, County of Santa Clara, State of California. FOURTH: That the term for which said corporation is to exist is perpetual."

The original 1928 Supreme Grand Lodge corporation has been changed to the English Grand Lodge and The Supreme Grand Lodge filed as a new corporation in 1991.

When asked to describe the rationale behind the changes, every answer given was illogical, inconsistent with the law, with previous answers and/or with observed actions. The claim offered most often was that the changes would save the organization a great deal of money. When it was conclusively shown that the changes had unnecessarily cost many hundreds of thousands of dollars, Mr. Soderlund, Mr. Schaa, Mr. Bernard and the attorneys refused to discuss the matter further. The American membership, alone, has paid all of the costs.

Only a perfunctory reference to the Rosicrucians has been left in the Articles of Incorporation and they now only contain statements affirming AMORC's compliance with the law (standardized phrases called "boiler plate" that almost anyone could have put together from books on the subject and did not require the State's most expensive lawyers to compile).

Some of the original references to the Rosicrucians have been included in the Constitution. Most of the remainder of the current Constitution, again, consists of standardized phrases, that anyone could have researched from self-help books on the subject.

But, all references to maintaining AMORC perpetually or to maintaining AMORC's assets for the purposes of teaching the Rosicrucian Principles were completely removed.

In the new application for non-profit status, the SGL board and their lawyers swore an oath that, among other things, the headquarters would be maintained in San Jose, California.

But, the headquarters has been moved to Montreal, Canada, in violation of the governing documents, of the oaths sworn to State of California, and in direct contradiction to statements Christian Bernard swore to the officers and members on the occasion of his installation. Also, the move has not yet been officially reported to the State.

Directors are charged with the responsible management and oversight of the financial resources of an organization by law. They are to ensure that all of the assets are used for the purposes of the organization.

While the previous Articles, Constitution and Statutes contained provisions specifically for the handling of property and other assets of AMORC, the current documents have had those sections removed.

The current governing documents of the SGL state that the organization will give no grants or scholarships. The EGL Constitution is subordinate to, and is supposed to comply with, the governing documents of the SGL. And yet, the current EGL Constitution contains a provision to give grants. There are no guidelines as to the qualifications of the recipients or the uses of the grants. There are also no mechanisms for any reporting or tracking, none at all.

The current SGL Constitution contains within it Article VI, Section 4, Reports to Directors. The Section states that the Emperor shall provide a written report, to all directors, that contains certain financial items and the subsections list the items. Subsection "(5) Any transaction during the previous fiscal year involving Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) or more between this corporation and any director or officer..." This subsection contradicts and circumvents Article III, Section 12: Standard of Care and Section 13: Prohibited Transactions, B. Self-Dealing Transactions.

This provision allows the directors to engage in an unlimited number of self-dealing transactions (including grants to oneself) as long as they are \$49,999 or less. All of the transactions can be completed, totally unsupervised and unreported. Therefore, this section effectively neutralizes all financial safeguards and allows any type of activities to be hidden by using it. Such a section was never included in any past documents and should never be contained within a public benefit organization's documents.

In addition, AMORC's previous accounting firm, the highly respected Arthur Anderson and company, pointed out in their formal reports that most of the

normal financial safeguards and controls had been removed from AMORC's systems and insisted that they be replaced. In response, Christian Bernard, Irving Soderlund, Charles Parucker and Burnam Schaa fired Arthur Anderson and removed all of the remaining financial controls.

There is now nothing in place to ensure that the assets are used for the purposes of AMORC. Further, there is now nothing to stop anyone from removing all of the assets, putting them in their pocket and walking away.

As a result of the above, during the last three years most of AMORC's member staff has been removed and replaced by people who have neither experience working in non-profit organizations nor in the functions for which they have been hired. For some time now, these less-than-qualified people (most of whom are non-members) have been placed in charge of your assets and your monographs (violating the Emperor's Avertment). These same non-members (most of whom are paid more than most of the member employees have ever been paid) also regularly serve the members badly.

If you wish to further explore examples of the above, ask Ms. Knutson to prove her claimed degree and Phi Beta Kappa, etc., ask Mr. "chief financial officer" John Hinton to prove his accounting background and claimed CPA (he joined AMORC after he was hired). Ask them what they have been paying themselves, both before and after the recent mostly member employee layoff. In the face of the continuing financial and management failures, ask them to document and justify salaries that are nearly double that of Ralph Lewis'.

The SGL board, two on the EGL board, their non-member attorneys and others, in essence, are leading an invasion into AMORC (an invasion of people who are behaving both covertly and overtly hostile to AMORC). Any question of their membership is not the issue. Many non-members have worked for AMORC for years and their performance has been exemplary. Everywhere the members of this group have worked within AMORC, they have left a trail of destruction behind them, and that is the issue.

The above violates all of the trust that the membership has placed in these officers.

All of the individuals who are aiding the boards to operate AMORC as if it were their own personal company, are profiting grandly (for example, the lawyers receive half to two thirds of your dues, on average, more than \$500,000 a year and their

services to AMORC amount to considerably less than that amount). To the best of my knowledge, only the thinnest minimal facade of AMORC's resources are being used for AMORC purposes, while the bulk of the available assets are being used for the personal benefit of a few individuals.

The above demonstrates how a badly constructed and poorly run constitution (especially one lacking financial controls) can damage an organization.

The Constitution for the Netherlands was changed to state that the Grand Lodge officers are appointed by the Emperor alone (as well as other inconsistencies). The SGL Constitution states that the SGL board is supposed to elect all of the Supreme and Grand Lodge board members and officers (including the Emperor). When Irene Beusekamp-Fabert (the Dutch Grand Master) was asked to comply with the SGL documents she refused and Christian Bernard, etc. refused to enforce compliance.

Therefore, after first manipulating the SGL documents and ousting Mr. Stewart; Mr. Bernard, etc., are now again changing the documents to a point where he cannot be removed, regardless of his behavior (president for life?).

During the discussions of these and other concerns, I was told by Mr. Bernard, Mr. Schaa, Mr. Soderlund and others that these concerns were all caused by Gary Stewart, Mr. and Mrs. O'Neill, Gary Kern, the attorneys and just about anyone and everyone who is no longer with the organization.

To the best of my knowledge, every one of the anti-AMORC employees that was hired, caused damage to the Park and then left, has sued and been rewarded with very large separation settlements.

To the best of my knowledge, the attorneys have "lost" these and every other significant lawsuit, costing the members hundreds of thousands of dollars in settlements and hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees. To the best of my knowledge, the attorneys have consistently put forth a less than effective fight for AMORC's benefit and yet they continue to be rewarded and praised for their work. I personally witnessed the board members and the attorneys take great pains to conceal this situation.

Mr. Schaa, Mr. Soderlund and Mr. Bernard complained bitterly and often about their lawyers causing this problem or that, and yet they consistently refused to replace the attorneys.

Even then, it was painfully clear that their statements were not factual. The problems continued then, and

continue now, unabated.

Their explanations and excuses are, of course, irrelevant. These people were in charge. They were afforded all of the authority needed to correctly manage the situation and yet they did not. The continued failures in AMORC's organization only serve to give weight to the argument that they either would not or could not manage the situation.

Regardless of the causes of the problems, the refusal to correct them, places full responsibility for the damages on the board members alone. They should, therefore, be required to reimburse AMORC for all of the losses.

To date, the only board members who have acted responsibly, according to the law, the Constitution and the best interests of AMORC, have been Warren Russeff (the only member of the board who attempted to stop GLS before the losses occurred and who was removed under false pretenses)(If Mr. Bernard, Mr. Bindon and Mr. Schaa had any integrity at all, they would have resigned in embarrassment for being so wantonly negligent as to allow the GLS scandal to occur); George Graham (whose reasons for resigning are similar to the concerns raised here and elsewhere in the Chronicles); and yours truly (who unearthed much of the current boards' questionable activities, confronted the board with the facts, gave them every fair opportunity to comply and was answered with refusals and personal threats (some of which the board has attempted to carry out)).

Many others, who were not on the board, also acted responsibly and in the best interests of AMORC. Most of these have also been removed, and removed under false pretenses. These members and non-members have shown great courage in resisting the destruction visited upon AMORC. If you know any of those to whom I refer, make it a point to tell them how much you appreciate their sacrifices. Most of them have been savaged by the anti-AMORC people and their minions, and many are still unemployed.

There is one final question to consider concerning the governing documents. That is, even if the documents are flawed, can the current officers be relied upon to act responsibly and rise above the flaws?

First, consider that the current boards have worked so very hard to put the inconsistencies in place and to keep them there.

Second, consider the track record of negligence and destruction. Burnam Schaa was the Treasurer and Secretary/Treasurer during the GLS scandal. Mr.

Schaa signed all of the loan documents, effectively making him more responsible than GLS, yet he is still on the board (Christian Bernard and Peter Bindon were also on the board at that time and are equally responsible). There are also a large number of unanswered questions concerning bequests which Mr. Schaa personally managed and questions concerning the removal of the financial safeguards. Yet, all the while, Mr. Bernard's Swiss and other bank accounts grow. Yet, none of these officers have been held accountable for anything (remember the father and son in the Caribbean?).

AMORC is, supposed to be, a Public Benefit organization, not a "Christian Bernard benefit organization".

Finally, consider the large number of statements that board members have made to officers, members and government officials that have revealed themselves to be false and misleading.

The current boards are in full knowledge of all of the concerns that have been raised here and were given more than fair opportunity to rectify the situation. Their refusal to fulfill their obligations as directors constitutes a direct violation of the law, the Constitution and their oaths as members and officers; as well as automatically and sufficiently disqualifying them as officers, directors and members of AMORC.

We have examined some of the theoretical and practical purposes of Constitutions, etc. and have seen that they can be powerful tools for good or terrible weapons of destruction. As is true for all tools, it is a person's use or misuse of a tool that solely determines the result.

These comments will, perhaps, also serve as the beginning of a discussion and future formulation of a new Constitution. A Constitution that will complete the democratizing process begun long ago, when Lodge Mastership was transformed from a lifetime position appointed by a Grand Master to a one year term elected by the board of a local Lodge.

Coming up in the next issue:

Empowering the Membership--a change from Autocracy to Democracy

By Susanne Mohs Boyer, F.R.C.

Reflections...

Martinist Affiliations

By Curt Warren, F.R.C.

Letters from the Readers

"...That (name) having been motivated by Cosmic impulse, has generously contributed to a fund for the erection of a beautiful, symbolic edifice, to serve and perpetuate the Supreme Temple of the Ancient Mystical Order Rosae Crucis."

"To serve and perpetuate", Christian; not be carried around like some supernal aura. Have you forgotten your own address at your so-called installation? You spoke of your first visit to the Supreme Temple twenty-five years earlier when Ralph Lewis escorted you into it. You said it was one of the most memorable events of your life. Why should you think that others do not or would not feel the same way? What Grand Temple has the same mystique, the same symbolic value?

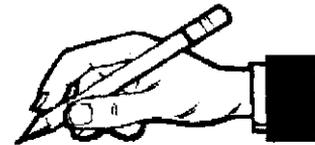
On the Shekinah of the Supreme Temple stands a simple spunbrass orb containing sand collected by Dr. H. Spencer Lewis from the mystical sites in Egypt. This orb symbolizes the physical center of the Rosicrucian Order. It did not travel with the Imperators. And what shall we do with the Supreme Colombe? Perhaps we should send her on Christian's trips with a suitcase in one hand and the orb in the other?.

Christian's actions are not unlike comparing a Pope, upon taking office, removing the Vatican Library (AMORC's archives) and the Throne of St. Peter from Rome to Warsaw. A particularly apt illustration from history recalls a time when there were two Popes; one in Rome and the other in Avignon, France. Church history refers to this time as the Babylonish Captivity of the Papacy. Perhaps one day, Rosicrucian history will refer to this time-- our time-- as the Babylonish Captivity of the Imperatorship.

A month ago, in the September 2nd issue of the Rosicrucian Chronicles, the Imperator's Averment was published. This is the document to be signed prior to the installation of an Imperator. And, the question was raised: Did Christian sign it? TO date, as far as we know, the silence from Paris and San Jose has been deafening. The question has not been answered. In the absence of documentation to the contrary, we can only assume that Christian Bernard was (to be extremely generous) irregularly installed. Since the transition of Ralph M. Lewis on January 12, 1987, it seems that we have not had a legitimate Imperator; and, all items of a doctrinal and ritualistic nature since that time have no validity.

Where the membership has been led to believe that the leadership of the Order is in synch with a Celestial Hierarchy--leadership by a mystical aristocracy-- it has, of late, been led by little more than a collective of peasants with an attitude!

Letters from the Readers



A Soror from Pennsylvania writes:

This is incredible! We survived the Gary Stewart schism - now we have this! Where our beloved HS Lewis restored the worldwide Order, he created a worldwide center for the Order. Like the UN bldg in NY, or the Vatican in Rome.

Yes, the English Grand Lodge should be independent, BUT, it must remain the caretakers of Rosicrucian Park. The Pope is both the Bishop of Rome and the head of the worldwide church, and, despite his nationality works out of Rome. As must it be with the our Park. If the Imperator is unwilling to reside in the Rosicrucian Central Headquarter, let him resign the position to someone who is willing!! If the Imperator is to work out of the Grand Lodge of his (or her) own native country, then there is no need for a central headquarter and the Park should be given over fully to the English Grand Lodge.

A Frater from California writes:

Thank you for the first issue of the Chronicles. I am concerned for the Order and want to stay well informed. Looking forward to more information. Thank you.

A Frater from New Mexico writes:

I just received and read your first copy of The Rosicrucian Chronicles. With all the recent going on with Gary Stewart, the restructuring of the Grand Lodges, and the change of the Supreme Grand Lodge to Canada, etc. I and I believe a great many other Rosicrucians are subjected to a great many rumors, and are simply at a loss as to where the future or the truth lays. The Order suffered great membership loses because of these upheavals, but more importantly the Order suffered a great loss of trust and respect. I see no great effort by the Supreme or Grand Lodges to ease this confusion or to restore lost confidence. This lack of action leads to additional rumor, speculation, distrust and greater

Letters from the Readers...
(continues on page 7)

confusion. What the Order needs desperately is its own version of Glastnost, or openness, without which I too fear for the future of Rosicrucianism in America. While I applaud and support unbiased efforts to inform the membership, I find it quite sad that this effort has to come from the efforts of individual members.

Also one last comment. To be well informed is great, but seeing as we, the individual membership, have no say in these going on, I have to really wonder the value of being informed.

The End



by
Susanne Mohs Boyer, F.R.C.

Introducing: The S.E.T.I.

(Safeguard of the Traditional and Initiatic Teachings)

We have received information that apparently there is a similar group of concerned Rosicrucians active in France. We have anonymously received copies of two S.E.T.I. newsletters and various articles from French newspapers.

The Grand Counselor and the Regional Monitors of the Poitou-Charents region, having discovered at the time of the 1989 Convention that the actions of the leaders of AMORC were contrary to the Rose-Cross ideal, resigned voluntarily from their duties.

The S.E.T.I. say that they hope to create a "hold on conscience" at the highest level of the Organization. According to S.E.T.I., "the President for Life," Christian Bernard has worked hard to discredit them. Further more, "In spite of rumors and numerous attempts of intimidation many Rosicrucians rallied around the courage and will of the founders of S.E.T.I., whose primary aim remains to Safeguard the Traditional and Initiatic Teachings."

In 1990 the S.E.T.I. claim they informed their readers of the financial scandal, which lead to the eviction of Gary Stewart. These facts were bitterly denied by those who, for unconfessed reasons, tried to hide the truth from the members.

In 1991 the S.E.T.I was informed by correspondents at the Parisian Newspaper ("The Parisian") that

investigations concerning fiscal fraud had taken place at the homes of former and present leaders of AMORC in France.

The following is a quote from one of the several newspaper articles (enclosed with the S.E.T.I. newsletters):

"The Rosicrucians teach their members how to live in harmony with the Cosmic laws, but apparently they do not respect the laws of the Republic. The Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis (AMORC) is in fact engaged in commercial activities...but they have omitted to declare them to the Fisc [tax authorities]....At this hour, at the Chateau d'Omonville, an officer denies having undergone a fiscal investigation: 'We simply were the object of a fiscal control, like everyone else,' affirms an officer. Affairs are not very worthy of some supposed ancient members of the Order who have the name of Leonardo da Vinci or Napoleon I".

-The Parisian July 18, 1991

The R+C Chronicles will continue to follow the S.E.T.I. and share our findings with our the readers. We have sent copies of the R+C Chronicles to the S.E.T.I.

Confidential Mailing list

Members have asked us to keep their subscription to the R+C Chronicles confidential. We want to emphasize that the R+C Chronicles mailing list have been, and will continue to be confidential. We keep the names of persons submitting letters and articles confidential, unless otherwise instructed by the author.

125 new subscribers!

The R+C Chronicles have added 125 new readers to our mailing list during the last two months. We are very grateful for the interest in the R+C Chronicles and for the donations of funds and stamps we have received. So far these donation have covered the printing and mailing costs. We want to continue to mail to all interested readers and therefore we encourage all readers to contribute stamps to cover the postage cost of their own newsletter.

The R+C Chronicles is an open forum. Your response is important! Share your vision for our Order or voice your concern. We are confident that the R+C Chronicles is being read.