

The Council of the Stone

3 March 1998

Dear Companions,

The events of the last meeting of Emerald Lodge have highlighted a division among lodge members that has been evident now for some time. On the one side, the Council wishes to retain primary focus on the work of initiation and training in the Western magical tradition as the central activity of the COTS. On the other, many members appear to be willing to make room for this work only to the extent that it does not interfere with the social aspect of lodge membership. As the latter group is in the majority in Emerald Lodge, it is the considered opinion of the Council that the COTS as presently constituted is no longer able to carry out its functions under the constitution and bylaws of the Order.

We are aware, however, that its members have invested a great deal of effort, energy and feeling in Emerald Lodge. For this reason, we have decided that the best option is simply to sever the connection between Emerald Lodge and the corporate structure of the Order, and to allow the lodge and its members on the one hand, and the Order on the other, to go their separate ways.

The following actions have therefore been taken:

1. All legal connection between Emerald Lodge and the COTS has been terminated. The charter of Emerald Lodge #3 as a lodge of the COTS has been revoked by the Executive Committee of the Grand Assembly. All members of Emerald Lodge will cease to be members of the COTS at the expiration of the current term, March 21, 1998, except those whose membership is extended by specific action of the Council.
2. All current warrants of imputation of adeptship have been terminated by the Council. This has the effect of dissolving the Grand Assembly, since as of this date it has no members. All legal authority within the Order has therefore devolved on the Council in its capacity as board of directors. The inner plane contacts and structures of the COTS have also been dissolved. The Council has begun the process of restructuring the order to take advantage of the lessons learned from the successes and failures of the Emerald Lodge experience.
3. By vote of the Council, Emerald Lodge shall be permitted to continue to use the Outer Lodge, First Degree and Equinox Rituals in their present form, or to modify them as desired. However, the copyrights to the rituals remain with the COTS, and the rituals may not be distributed outside of lodge without COTS permission. The name "Companions of the Stone" is a COTS trademark and may not be used by Emerald Lodge.
4. By vote of the Council, the regalia, equipment and library of Emerald Lodge have been donated to the lodge's current membership for their use. All ritual equipment belonging to the lodge has been deconsecrated, in such a way that it may be reconsecrated by Emerald Lodge members as they see fit. All items loaned to the lodge by Ballard IOOF Hall, or by members of the Council, have been returned to their owners. Should the members of Emerald Lodge decide not to use the existing lodge regalia or equipment, please contact a member of the Council to arrange for their appropriate disposal. As required by state and Federal law, the COTS retains all records of Emerald Lodge.
5. All bills of Emerald Lodge up to 28 February 1998 have been paid, and dues checks received at the meeting of 27 February 1998 are being returned uncashed. As a federal tax-exempt corporation, however, the COTS cannot (except in the course of paying business expenses) disburse funds to individuals or groups unless these are tax-exempt entities registered with the IRS. We are therefore not permitted to distribute any moneys already deposited in any COTS account to Emerald Lodge or its members. Emerald Lodge will be responsible for scheduling and paying for any further use of the Ballard IOOF Hall, and for abiding by the hall's rules and

regulations. The rental cost for lodges is \$24 per night; contact the caretaker, Jessamyn West, at (206)782-9646 to arrange for the hall to be opened for meetings.

6. Finally, the members of the Council, wishing Emerald Lodge and its members the best of success in their future activities, resign from Emerald Lodge, effective immediately.

Yours in fellowship,

