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La Masonería en el mundo – Alemania nazi (3)

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THE GESTAPO HANDBOOK – FREEMASONRY

[During WWII before invading any particular country the Nazis prepared a handbook for the Gestapo. This book, known as the Black Book, detailed the Nazi's enemies in that country and gave directions as to how to deal with the 'problem' groups. It also provided general information on: the economy, political institutions, infrastructure, the press, churches and so on.

Part of the planning for the invasion of Britain in 1940 was the preparation of a Black Book by the SS General Walter Schellenberg.

Needless to say Freemasonry was considered a 'problem' group. Below is what he had to say about Freemasonry in Britain - Ed.]

England is the country of Freemasonry; English clerics of the Enlightenment era were the foundation upon which the Freemasons' ideology was built. However, it was not only an organisation which enabled Freemasonry to spread overseas so extensively; it was Britain's overseas trade and political power, and cultural influence, which enabled Freemasonry to follow Britain's success. Today English Freemasonry is far greater in number and in reputation than its Latin branch. Highlighting the grand lodges, its membership is found in Germanic and Anglo-Saxon countries as well as in the Empire and South America. Single lodges are found all over the world, especially in areas under the influence of the UK.

The historical significance of Freemasonry, which spread from England to the Continent, is the advancement of Jewish emancipation in Europe, born from the intellectual and political heritage of the Freemasons. They include a large number of the social-political leaders and are the carriers of British imperialism. The Field, Colonial and Military lodges play an especially important part as gateways for colonial and political enterprises and as bases of English lifestyle across the Empire. The Freemasons' lifestyle in the colonial lodges attracts the natives in an imperceptible way to a close 'apolitical' link with the rulers of their country and puts them under the spell of England's political grandeur and its noble traditions. With their adaptation to the English style of life, they become denationalised and fall more and more into political sterility. But the lodge is not only a connection between the natives and the English, servants and masters, but represents a binding link between Britain and her Dominions.

The King and his family are the strongest connection between Britain and the member states of the Empire by being simultaneously the Empire's political and masonic leadership. Freemasons drawn from the political classes provide the link between politics and the royal family. The deep roots of this ruling class in the English population, and their complete acceptance, is due to a large extent to tradition and to masonic solidarity. The numerous and politically significant middle classes provide the main constituency of Freemasons in England, and are bound by their masonic leadership. Apart from the Society and its following, masonry links Scotland and Ireland (whose Grand Lodge, in contrast to its national divide into Irish Free State and Ulster, unites the whole of Ireland) with England.

Unique to English Freemasonry are the lodges whose members are composed of people from the same professions or the same areas.

They build these masonic bases in individual areas, and through them the possibility of influencing that area — or even the entire life of the British Empire — is made relatively easy. There are lodges which are composed mainly of members of the royal family and members of Society. The university lodges in Oxford and Cambridge and the public school lodges (especially those of Eton and Harrow) form masonic centres for the socio-political ruling classes. Apart from these, there are lodges of purely political significance: the New Welcome lodge unites the parliamentary members of the Labour Party. In the military lodges and masonic temples, where only members of specific professions or professional groups can work, there are fraternal committees which influence political life on behalf of Freemasonry.

Freemasonry is thus an invisibly effective, important political instrument for the internal structure of Great Britain and its Empire, and for British imperialism. What concerns us is that in its ideological orientation and its political effectiveness — as long as it lasts — it is a dangerous weapon in the hands of Britain's plutocrats against national socialist Germany.

To what degree English attitude and masonic spirit have coalesced became clear with the establishment of lodges in England. Then English Freemasonry sought to hold all the most important political posts in State and Church as well as in economy and culture. Freemasonry stood for the liberal and democratic tendencies which spread from England over France and finally over the whole of Europe in the eighteenth century. The connection between masonic ideas and English Liberalism became closer in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The belief in a world religion purely based on reason, in which all people were equal, irrespective of racial and national differences, had particular influence on Jewish emancipation.

The lodges defended the equality of the Jews, and their unconditional acceptance into the lodges helped their social and civic emancipation in England, because in the Freemasons' organisations the Jews were able to get in touch with the leading classes of English society.

Freemasonry maintained not only close contact with the Jews but with the English churches and sects. This is linked to the essence of Puritanism which is close to ideas from Judaism and the Old Testament. The Jews saw themselves as the chosen people on earth and in consequence of this Puritan tradition the English regarded themselves as the chosen people of the world. This belief in being chosen is the basis of England's world rule and therefore of a world empire. English Freemasonry regards itself as the organisation for the realisation of this idea. From this stems a particular spiritual Christianity of the English, which has also left its mark on Freemasonry. In the lodges the open Bible lies as a symbol on the altar, and all lodge members have to obey the omnipotent builder of all worlds through the moral laws set out in the Bible. Indicative of the close connection between Freemasonry and the English Church is the fact that a great number of bishops, many clerics and the laity are Freemasons.

Even at the beginning of its development English Freemasonry was extraordinarily adroit politically. Like the Jesuits, the Freemasons sought to penetrate the higher

political classes. Slowly, it won over nobility, leading statesmen, politicians and diplomats, the senior officers of the armies and the navy, leaders of trade and the economy, captains of industry and principal businessmen, parliamentarians and journalists, and finally advocates and the clergy. It paid special attention to getting as many members as possible of the royal family, and to understand the position of English royalty towards Freemasonry the close synthesis of masonic politics with politics of English imperialism must be considered. In theory, there should have been opposition between purely humanitarian politics and power politics, but in practice these contrasts were eliminated through Freemasonry. Humanity became a power-political slogan against states which opposed England's claim to world domination, or stood in the way of English politics in general. This became obvious in the English press's propaganda against Germany during the First World War. Over and over again, the old (but for ever new) slogan of Freemasons about the struggle of 'democracies' against 'autocracies' was used. There were endless calls for the 'liberation' of the 'suffering peoples', and so often the 'freedom of the world' threatened by autocratic states was defended. This struggle of English Freemasonry is unchanged; autocracies have been replaced by 'authoritarian states'.

The close connection between English Freemasonry and imperialism is especially clear in the development of the English military and colonial lodges. A short time after the establishment of Freemasonry in England in 1717 — similar lodges also developed in Ireland and Scotland — the lodges tried to acquire connections to senior military personnel, and these attempts were well received not only in England, Ireland and Scotland, but in Canada and the former English colonies in North America through regiments of the British army. Special military and field Lodges were founded within individual garrisons and at more senior levels in headquarters.

These lodges often recruited almost the entire officer corps of the regiments or military headquarters where they were established. The lodges accompanied the units in their different military operations and thus played a significant role in the growth of English Freemasonry in countries outside of England, Ireland and Scotland. English field lodges also accepted civilians as members; when the regiments departed, those left behind created civil lodges. Relations between the army and Freemasonry in Britain became ever tighter during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with many high-ranking officers playing a leading role in Freemasonry, as Great Master or Grand Lodge Officer. Lodges developed not just for the land forces, but in the navy. At an early stage there were special ones for naval officers in Bristol and Liverpool.

The list of military, field and navy lodges increased year by year and through these lodges Freemasonry established itself not only on the American continent, but in the British possessions in Asia, and especially in India. The establishment of Freemasonry was also promoted by the regiment lodges of the British units deployed there. In English colonial politics these military lodges were the ideological and political centres for the expansion of British interests. Wherever English businessmen, soldiers or colonists settled, the founding of lodges followed. They offered a social and cultural centre for colonial pioneers in foreign countries, and association and uniform spiritual convictions within British Freemasonry gave this work extraordinary impetus. Above all, it enabled English colonists to confront the native population with a united front. Simultaneously, it also maintained contact with the motherland.

At the beginning, only whites were admitted as members of the colonial lodges, natives being excluded, but this arrangement was in direct contradiction to the most basic masonic principles. Thus, during the course of the nineteenth century the Grand Lodge of England decided to allow full access to Indians. This acceptance of natives conferred on British colonial politics an advantage not to be underestimated. Not only were leading Indians admitted, but the blacks in the African possessions who had attended English schools and universities? They too became part of the society of English Freemasons, some in lodges purely for the coloured, and some in mixed race lodges. The Indians, who had been brought up in the English tradition, through their attendance at English schools, were excluded from Indian nationalism and were alienated from their own Indian traditions.

Here English Freemasonry can be seen to have used the same political tactics as practised by the English government, and to have attempted to win over to their organisation India's most important princes and other leading figures.

British lodges in the overseas possessions obey the principles of the English mother lodges in their activities. Considering English domination of vast areas of the world, it is not surprising that world Freemasonry is also under English control. This is mainly due to the fact that England is the motherland of modern Freemasonry. Not only in Europe but in Africa, Asia, America and Australia there are Grand Lodges, which are now independent, but owe their original establishment to the activities of British Freemasons. In the United Grand Lodge of England they still worship the 'Mother Grand Lodge' of world Freemasonry.

Even if there have been tensions between the English and the Scottish and Irish Grand Lodges, they form a complete unity in a spiritual sense. Characteristic of the dominant position that English Freemasonry holds within worldwide Freemasonry is the fact that the Highest Council for Britain and its overseas possessions is a member of the international organisation, the Confederation of Lausanne, but up to now it has never participated in the congresses held by the Confederation. Here the English group does not have as dominating an influence as the Johannis Freemasonry.

With its multiple connections and relations, British Freemasonry can afford to portray itself as apolitical. It does not require specific political goals, since it significantly controls the domain of English politics. Under the guise of a humanitarian welfare organisation, English Freemasonry is a pivotal element of English Imperialism and therefore of the British World Empire.

A list of the known British lodges is contained in the subject index of the Special Search List.