

OFFICE OF THE SENIOR GRAND LECTURER

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and
Accepted Masons of the Philippines
1440 San Marcelino St., Ermita, Manila

**SGL Directive 2017 -
October 25, 2017**

ATTENTION: ALL JGLs, DDGMs, DGLs, GLIs,

**SUBJECT : MASONIC EDUCATION FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER
2017**

**TOPIC/S: EDICT NO. 317 – OFFICIAL DELEGATES TO DISTRICT AND
MULTI-DISTRICT CONVENTIONS AND SPECIAL AND ANNUAL
COMMUNICATIONS.**

The edict on the official delegates during District and Multi-District Conventions, Annual and Special Communications was issued primarily to define clearly and in accordance with the Constitution who are the official delegates who can speak and vote during discussions and deliberations during Annual and/or Special Communications including District and Multi-District Conventions.

Why? Because Masons from foreign jurisdictions who had the experience to witness the discussions during our Annual Communications say that ours is like a Mob. It has been the practice in the past that during Annual Communications (ANCOM), any Past Master can just approached the microphone, speak and express his personal views on any matter subject of discussion in the plenary. More often than not, these brethren tend to filibuster or engage in extended or prolonged debate over any subject of deliberation during the plenary session which tend to delay the voting on the subject matter.

If the practice in the past will be allowed to continue, the discussion and deliberations of any matter during the Annual and/or Special Communications will continue to be chaotic, lengthy, extended, prolonged, divisive and disharmonious.

Hence, this Edict No. 317 was issued defining the Official delegates during District and Multi-District Conventions, Annual and Special Communications.

And who are the Official delegates?

The only official delegates of lodges who can speak, comment, object, move, second, manifest and/or participate in any discussion and

deliberation and vote on any matter during the District and Multi-District Conventions and Annual and/or Special Communications are the following:

1. *Incumbent Worshipful Masters;*
2. *Incumbent Wardens;*
3. *Immediate Past Masters representing the Past Masters of Chartered Lodges;*
4. *Past Grand Masters; and*
5. *Incumbent Grand Line Officers except the Grand Lodge Inspectors;*
or
6. *In the absence of the delegates of the Lodge, Representative as defined under Part II, Ordinances.*

Past Masters are not included in the list. While it is true that Past Masters are members of the Grand Lodge, however **not all members of the Grand Lodge are official delegates** to the ANCOM. The following are the masonic legal bases thereto:

1. Under Section 3, Article IV Communications Part I Constitution, in the determination of quorum, **the presence of the Past Masters is NOT** even considered for the Grand Lodge to transact any business validly, either at an Annual or Special Communication. The pertinent provision is hereby quoted as follows:

“Sec 3. Quorum.

*The presence of the **Masters, Wardens and/or representative** of at least one-third of the chartered Lodges shall constitute a quorum for the Grand Lodge **to transact any business validly**, either at an Annual or Special Communication.”*

Thus, even if there are 30 Past Masters present during an Annual or Special Communication but no Master, Wardens and/or representative of the lodge, the lodge is not considered present to be counted in the determination of quorum for the Grand Lodge to transact any business. If Past Masters are not counted in the determination of quorum, then they are not official delegates of the lodge.

2. The consideration and inclusion of Past Masters as official delegates for the transaction of business will result to **uneven or unequal voting powers of lodges**. Imagine a 30 year old lodge will surely have at least 29 Past Masters but a newly chartered lodge will have none. Thus, the 30 year old lodge will have **more voting strength** than the newly chartered lodge if Past Masters are included as official delegates of the Lodge;
3. **Past Masters as members of the Grand Lodge shall be present at the opening of the Grand Lodge.** Yes, it is expressly stated under Section 5 Article IV COMMUNICATIONS that **members of the Grand Lodge shall be present**

but the same does not state that they are official delegates or representatives of the lodge. In fact the same provision allows Master Masons who are not even members of the Grand Lodge to attend and to be present during the sessions of the Grand Lodge but they are likewise not official delegates;

4. There is no provision in our Masonic Law Book that says that Past Masters are official delegates for the Grand Lodge to transact any business either at an Annual or Special Communication;
5. Under Section 1, Article VI Voting, Representation and Electoral Committee, Part I Constitution, **Past Masters are NOT** even qualified voters during the election of officers of the Grand Lodge during the Annual Communications;
6. Finally, under the Landmark Twelfth, **the representatives of the members are merely the Masters and Wardens of the Subordinate Lodges**. The provision of the said Landmark is hereby quoted as follows:

*The right of every Mason to be represented in all general meetings of the Craft, and to instruct his representatives, is a Twelfth Landmark. Formerly, these general meetings, which were usually held once a year, were called "General Assemblies", and all the fraternity, even to the youngest Entered Apprentice, were permitted to be present. Now they are called "Grand Lodges", and **only the Masters and Wardens of the Subordinate Lodges are summoned**. But this is simply as the **representatives of their members**. Originally, each Mason represented himself; now **he is represented by his officers**. This was a concession granted by the fraternity about 1717, and of course does not affect the integrity of the Landmark, for the principle of representation is still preserved. The concession was only made for purposes of convenience."*

In all masonic legal bases, not even Past Grand Masters or Grand Line Officers are included as official delegates or representatives. But since PGMs and Grand Line Officers are qualified voters during the election of officers of the Grand Lodge during the Annual Communications as provided for under our Constitution, the Edict deems it appropriate to include them as official delegates. **Technically speaking, they are not official delegates or representatives.**

Under Edict No. 317, the official delegates may only speak and participate in any discussion and deliberation in accordance with the resolution or instructions of their respective lodges on matters in the plenary. Being the official delegates of the lodges, they are the official representatives of the members and therefore **the views that they will bring up should be the general sentiments of the members or lodges on the issue involved and not their own personal views.**

Finally, the representative to be an official delegate under this edict should be in accordance with the definition thereof under our Masonic Law Book which is hereby quoted as follows:

“t. Representative – A member who has been elected by ballot by his lodge at a stated meeting or a special meeting called for the purpose to represent it at the next Annual Communication in the absence of the delegates of the Lodge. A representative of a Lodge Under Dispensation shall represent his Lodge but shall not be entitled to vote.”

Masonic History for the month of November:

- November 3, 1896 - Bro. Jose Rizal was detained in a cell at Fort Santiago prior to his eventual execution.
- November 19, 1938 - The Scottish Rite Temple in Taft Avenue, Philippines, was dedicated.
- November 30, 1863 - Birth of Bro. Andres Bonifacio, founder of the Katipunan.



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