

Minutes, January 10, 1908

Convent General of Knights and descendants of Knights of Malta for the purpose of forming a Priory of the Knights of Malta in the United States, held Friday, the 10th of January the year of Our Lord 1908, 6:00 p.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in the City of New York.

Consul William Lamb, the former Mayor of Norfolk, Virginia, and a direct descendant of General Ivan Lamb, Grand Preserver of the Order and Commander for Military Valor under the 70th Grand Master of the Order, Emperor Paul I of Russia, read to the meeting the purpose of this gathering which was conceived by himself and many lineal descendants of hereditary commanders as discussed at previous meetings held here and in Europe since the year of 1890.

All of those present being vitally interested in the perpetuation and advancement of the ideals of the original Order of Saint John of Jerusalem.

Commander Lamb said: "As you all know, we have called this Convent General in response to an international appeal to and from members and hereditary members representing all the langues of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem throughout Europe, for the purpose of establishing the American Grand Priory in the United States, to continue the legal continuity of the Order.

"In addition to those knights present, letters of proxy voting, together with proper motions and seconds from members, descendants of members and hereditary members lay here before us ready to take part in the action we are about to discuss and decide.

"As you know, this convent general is the result of years of quiet consultations, deliberations, plans and preparation.

"Representatives of the nobility of Europe and descendants of noble families present here, who are and whose ancestors have been Knights of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, have expressed their united wish to gather for the purpose of officially organizing, maintaining and perpetuating a Grand Priory of the Order of the Knights of Malta in these United States of America, continuing with certain modifications, the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem as it was constituted under the 70th Grand Master, H. I. M. Paul I. Emperor of Russia.

"It is understood that our Order shall be open to qualified individuals of all recognized Christian denominations. The purpose of this organization is to be the perpetuation and maintenance of those great humanitarian principles and such military and religious obligations as were assumed and practiced by the founders of the Order from its very beginning in remote antiquity and which are compatible with present day customs, as well as political and economic conditions.

"It is the sense of this group that the American Grand Priory of the Order shall become the rallying point for all those imbued with the spirit of those great lights of history who became the valued leaders of the Order of Malta and to gather within its fold those noble souls whose noble conduct comport with the aims of the Order, with

particular emphasis on the membership therein of worthy individuals whose forefathers were members of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem in any of its divisions and who thus would be particularly interested in its perpetuation and glorification.

"Before continuing further, I would like to caution this group (just as I have cautioned previous groups) that the proceedings of our meetings be kept secret and free of any publicity whatever, until some future time to be decided by us. This secrecy has been concurred in by all of our members and associates in our preliminary meetings in order not to irritate the sensibilities of those who for various prejudiced reasons may resent our activity in gathering unto ourselves members from different and sometimes antagonistic branches of the Order.

"Before closing my remarks, I wish to thank all those members and associates, who from as early as 1890, have contributed so much in time, efforts and travel, arranging contacts, meetings, consents, proxies, etc., in Europe and America.

"These pioneers in our movement deserve a vote of thanks and a permanent place in our memories, our Order, and in our prayers.

"Among those to whom we are most grateful are: James A. Harden-Hickey, Baron of the Holy Roman Empire, and his good friend Comte de la Boissiere; Baron Rosen, Russian Ambassador to the United States; Charlemagne Tower, U.S. Minister to Austria-Hungary, and Ambassador to Russia and Germany; Count Alexander Boutourlin; Count Alfred de Choiseul-Gouffier; Prince Michel Khilkov; Ethelbert Watts, American Consul-General at St. Petersburg; Admiral Count Paul de Ligny; Clifton Rhodes Breckinridge, U.S. Minister to Russia; Prince Pierre Troubetzkoy; Count Dmitri Boutourlin; Baron L. Hengelmuller von Hengervar, Ambassador from Austria-Hungary to the United States; Count Alexander Warishkin; Grand Duke Alexander; Peter Jansen, well known Russian banker and sheep rancher from Nebraska; Major General Radomir of Serbia; and Nikolas Pashitch, Prime Minister of Serbia; Prince George Radziwill; and Prince Pierre Volkonsky."

Motion by Bishop Tucker, seconded by Bishop Scarborough, that the pioneers before mentioned, be given a rising vote of thanks. Motion passed unanimously.

Consul William Lamb was unanimously elected Chairman pro-tem and Baron Hengelmuller von Hengervar as Secretary.

Motion by Dr. Bullock and seconded by Baron de Longeuil that the aims and general program as outlined by Consul Lamb be passed by unanimous vote. Passed.

Motion by hereditary Commander Khilkov and seconded by hereditary Commander de Ligny, that acting as direct representatives of the descendants of the Knights of Malta created by Letters-Patent during the regime of the 70th Grand Master, H.I.M. Paul I. of Russia; this assembly considers the election of Paul I as the last legitimate free election of a Grand Master of our Order, and that we shall guide ourselves in the future by this legal concept. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Baron Rosen and seconded by hereditary knight commander Narishkin, that members not able to attend meetings be allowed to make motions and seconds, as well as votes by proxy, through the office of the secretary. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by the chairman and seconded by the secretary, that of this day, and by means of this chapter general, this group shall be officially known as the "American Grand Priory of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem," a Religious and Military Order, with legal continuity from the original Order of Hospitallers of Jerusalem. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Baron de Bode and seconded by Count von Wedel, that all persons participating in this meeting, are and shall be considered Knights of the American Grand Priory of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, and that proper rank and official diplomas be discussed and voted at some future meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

After an extended round-table discussion concerning the various ways and means to secure the objective previously discussed by the members, it was moved that the chairman pro-tem be empowered to name a committee to call upon William B. Stites, LL.B., whose interest in this noble objective as expressed by Consul Lamb is well known to the group and who would in connection with this committee investigate the advisability or method necessary to legally register the program discussed. This motion by Baron de Longeuil and seconded by the Vicomte de Valle was passed unanimously.

The Chairman called upon Bishop Theburn to unite the group in a Prayer for the successful completion of our mission, and to pray for the peaceful repose of the souls of our departed knights of the Order.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00 a.m. Next meeting to be held at the call of the Chairman pro-tem.



Respectfully submitted

(Signed) Hengemuller von Hengervar.