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To: "Leonard Carty" <dgs@anguillanet.com>  
Cc: "Andrew V. Thornhill" <avt@gwpc.com.bb>  
Subject: Proposed formation of Grand Lodge of Eastern Caribbean  
Date: Thursday, October 16, 2008 10:18 PM

Dear Sir & Brother,

I have received a copy of the papers which you asked our Bro. Secretary to circulate to all members. There is much in the proposal which I am yet to be convinced about. There does not appear to be a ground swell of our membership who see this development as desirable or even necessary. Indeed this appears to have been proposed and being pushed by the District Grand Officers. This would not appear to be the intent of the Law 186 of BOC.

#### Current Additional Expenses

We in the Barbados Lodges are still reeling from the sharp increase in the cost of meeting at our new Masonic Centre. For small Lodges and nearly all the Chapter rent will account for about BDS\$100.00 per member per annum. It may result in some of our numerous Chapters going out of existence. Remember that the membership of all these Lodges and Chapters are the same 400 persons who just wear many hats and the cumulative effect will possible cause many to reconsider their membership of some of the bodies they belong to. I really feel that we should first let the dust from this recent change, desirable though it may be, to die down before we launch out on anything which may commit us to additional expense.

#### Financial Considerations

Looking through the paper you circulated "Finance, Dues & Fees" there were a number of items on which I would like elucidation.

The author/s state

"In our present situation the cost per member in Subscriptions to Grand Lodge and District Grand Lodge on an annual basis stands at approximately BDS \$ 37."

However, when they proceed to produce a budget they assume 1200 members and use a figure of BDS \$ 138 to arrive at a revenue of \$165,600. How did we get from \$ 37 to \$ 138?

I checked with our Treasurer and he informed me that the current expenses per member are:-

UGLE      £ 4.75      approx BDS \$ 20.00

DGL (fee)    US \$ 6.00    BDS \$ 12.00

DGL (benevolence)      US \$ 2.50      BDS \$ 5.00    BDS \$ 37.00

This seems to confirm their first figure but does not explain the additional \$ 101.00

For additional information I would inform you that the equivalent costs for a Scottish mason are:-

GLS	£ 16.00	approx BDS \$ 64.00
DGL	BDS \$ 16.00	BDS \$ 80.00

So neither the English or Scottish masons currently pay the figure used in the budget.

Further the figures inserted under the various heads for the cost of our expenses seem very limited in the extent of the items considered and modest in the sum allocated for those items.

The various ideas and advantages expressed by Wor. Bro. Abel are very heady but those ideas do not go very far if we are unable to pay our bills. I suggest that this should be the most important consideration in reaching a decision on this matter.

#### CAN WE AFFORD A GRAND LODGE AT THIS STAGE?

##### The Mark & the Royal Arch

Your papers give no indication of the thinking of the arrangements which should be made about the Mark and the Royal Arch. The Royal Arch in the English Constitution is very closely connected to the UGLE, whereas in the Scottish Constitution the RA is controlled by a separate and sovereign body. While for the Mark both constitutions are subject to agreements with sovereign bodies other than the craft Grand Lodges.

Your papers boldly state that the new Grand Lodge would embrace 27 Lodges in 13 islands. However this ignores the fact that there are 25 Chapters in Barbados and 30 Chapters in the rest of the East Caribbean. Are these to be set adrift to fend for themselves? Possibly, in a more hostile environment, created by our decision to abandon the ties of our craft lodges to the original governing bodies. Those Governing Bodies have very close links with the Grand Chapters governing the other organizations.

I personally am loathe to abandon the long history enjoyed by many of our old lodges. This is particularly so when I feel that too little attention is

being given to the financial cost of being our own masters. I really do not see real advantages in this proposal that would not be achieved by petitioning UGLE to allow the formation of a District Grand Lodge of the Northern Caribbean. However, I am willing to sit and listen to the various ideas and arguments put forward before making my decision about the vote I will have in three of the lodges in the grouping being considered.

Yours faithfully & fraternally,

Michael S. Ridley