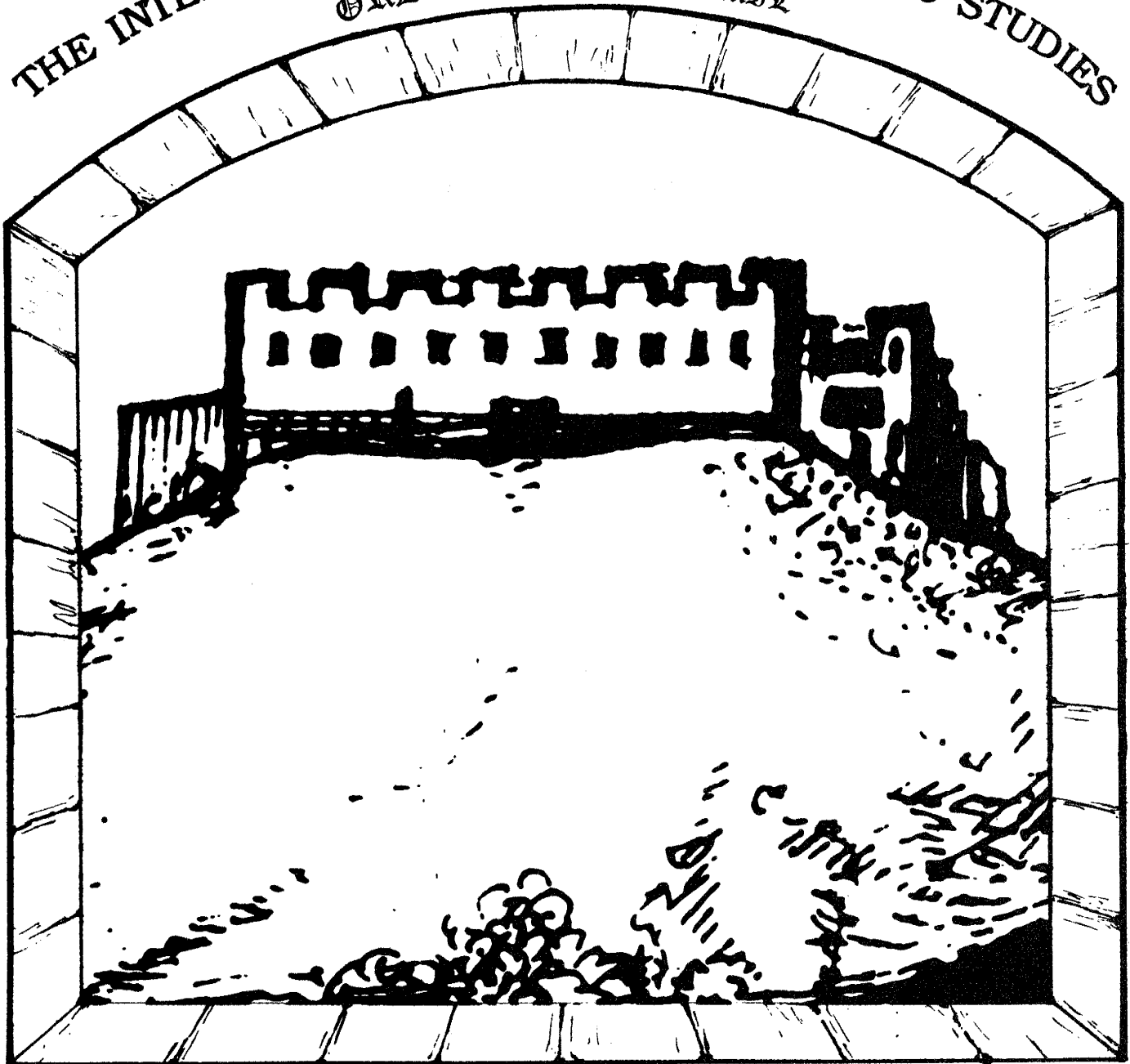


Custodes
Morum
Sacrorum

Worthing 31W
Barbados
West Indies

THE INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE OF ESOTERIC STUDIES
ORDER OF THE GRAIL



PLANE III

COMPANION

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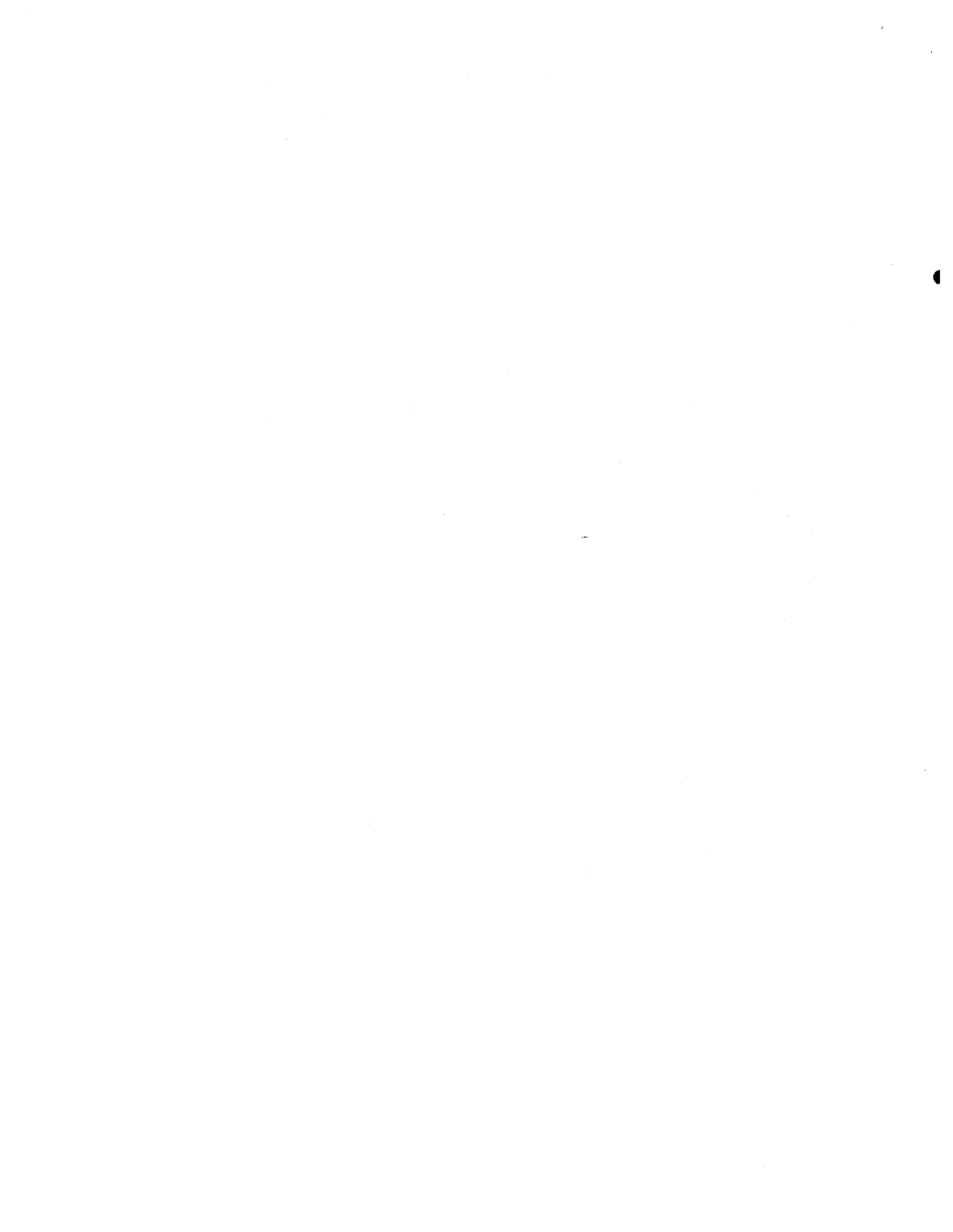
LIBER #
99 THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

Personal & Confidential

TENTH DEGREE

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DEVOTED TO THE ADVANCEMENT AND MYSTICAL ENLIGHTENMENT OF MAN

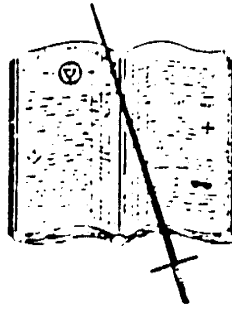


Custodes
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I.C.E.S.

International College of Esoteric Studies

Incorporated as a non-profit educational institution devoted to the advancement and mystical enlightenment of Man.



Worthing 31W
Barbados
West Indies

12.03 p.m.

Dear Companion on the Path

Here we are in the courtyard of the Castle. It is just past High Noon, the sun has slipped behind one of the battlements and you are standing in the shadow, face to face with the imposing structure. The atmosphere is cool and slightly damp. It is very quiet. There is a noticeable air of awe and mystery. Perhaps a slight feeling of loneliness too. We have brought you as far as we can! It is for you now, on your own, to take the remaining steps, to pass between the columns that flank the entrance - step into the parvis - and make your way inside the castle. May God be with you.

With this Liber you have come to the end of the course! There is a little feeling of sadness I must admit. For many moons we have travelled together. On some days the going was rough, on others it was easy. Sometimes there was enthusiasm and hope; sometimes doubt, even despair. Many days the mood was introspective, at other times extroverted ... with the group singing, laughing, and making merry.

Cast your mind back to the turn of the twentieth century, to the late 1800's and early 1900's. Imagine the social environment of that time. People were going about their lives just as they do these days. But life was somewhat different ... it was not as hectic ... the job situation was not as demanding, there was no T.V., no VCR's or home entertainment systems. Few people had motor cars, telephones, or even electric light. Continuing education classes (which many people must take these days just to hold their jobs), gyms (which many people spend time in to counteract the circumstances of today's living), sports & games and other activities that are part of the present-day landscape ... were not as organized ... in fact, most of them did not exist! So, after the work day was over ... what was a prime activity, especially for men? It was association with a fraternal Order. And there were many, especially in Europe. Although all were based on the Golden Rule and taught the virtues of ethics, morality, brotherhood and charity, some were socially oriented, while others were principally philosophic/esoteric.

With the outbreak of World War II great destruction followed. Fraternal work was disrupted. Many of the Orders and Brotherhoods became defunct. Then came the late '40's & '50's and a period of rebuilding. And on into our present day and age, in which developments in technology and instrumentation have brought a revolution to the way of life. And the life style continues, ever more rapidly, to change and change.

And change! Let's deviate slightly and talk a little about 'truth'. No one knows absolute truth. Each of us experiences reality, but reality is a personal experience to the particular individual and it may not even have a counterpart in actuality or fact. Why we are here? If we are here simply because we are here, or because of a divinely ordained reason; whether there is an ordained purpose to life; whether the Universe was created for a particular purpose; how one should live their life, if reincarnation is a fact ... and so on ... are questions the individual units of mankind called people have been asking for millions of years. (And continue to ask). And no one knows the answer. At least there is no universal answer. Of course everybody has their own idea. But each person's idea is only their reality. Some people feel their opinions, concepts and ideas are right, "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth" ... and everybody else should accept their view!

Great volumes of philosophical concepts, esoteric teaching, metaphysical education and scientific information are available today. Insights that some of our illustrious predecessors have had, have become the foundation stones of religious systems, many of which have become worldwide organizations. But remember: they were religions, philosophic views and tenets to live by ... that were great truths in their day ... that have been blown away by the winds of time, like a speck of dust, leaving no trace. And the much vaunted wisdom of today, will, not so far from now, be looked upon, by those coming, with the same expression of dismay, as we look upon stone age man... So: IS there an answer? Could it be that there IS NO reality, no actuality, and the things we think we know ... only SEEM to be?

In the meanwhile however, the search goes on and effort to rend the veil that obscures 'absolute truth' continues. Slowly, as the days pass, clearer and clearer light is being glimpsed. Shall there ever come a day when the full face of truth will be seen? I leave you to answer that.

The esoteric fraternities that were situated around the Mediterranean basin when the Second World War broke out had much valuable information. In 1982, this writer, "questing for truth" in Europe, was privileged to receive from several sources which shall remain anonymous, archives of lectures and knowledge papers that had been used by some of these Brotherhoods. Starting first as the ICOMS around 1986 to make some information on 'Martinism' available, the organization went on to become I.C.E.S. ... to a wider curriculum ... and to do what it has done. We feel somewhat awed that our effort has been so enthusiastically embraced and supported ... associates now number in the thousands and are situated around the world ... from Alaska to Australia and many points in between.

It is possible the I.C.E.S. may seem to those who are separated from us geographically, to be a much bigger operation than it really is. These are the facts that are being disclosed to you: there are three of us who do it all, who have supported it (and support it), and made, and make it possible ... by putting our hands in our own pockets to make up the short-fall ... since the "dues" do not carry it. Yes, there are the three of us, an office about fifteen feet square, lots of shelves, a photocopier, a typewriter and some filing cabinets. That's it! And it gets done in "spare time". So maybe you can understand now why letters aren't answered as promptly, as properly, or as neatly, as some would like.

We have so much more material in our archives than we have given out! And there are now volumes of wonderful and truly enlightening lectures and essays that associates have sent in. But there is no way we can undertake to do more. We are doing the best we can.

We sometimes give our imagination free rein and think how nice it would be, to somehow be able to make available all the material we have. And then we wonder too, if there is any point just going on and on, giving out information, much of which is generally obtainable these days?

Yes, historical information is interesting, even useful ... there's no denying that. And the traditional esoteric teachings as they were given by those who carried the banner in times before ours, do have worth. **But knowledge evolves! New discoveries are being made! Old concepts are giving way to new insights!** What we are seeing these days is: the realm of the psychic has been embraced and incorporated into mainstream science! Nowadays, subjects such as the nature of consciousness, its possible survival independently of the body, "out-of-the-body" experiences, the aura, etc., ... things that were once strictly in the domain of the 'esoteric' ... are now being studied in the Universities of the world! And because of the enormous facilities these institutions have, a great deal of new information, new 'truth', is being uncovered. Much solid, valid, vital and practical information that should be studied, known and used by mystics, can now be found in the fields of clinical psychotherapy, psychology, parapsychology, neuro-linguistics, psychiatry, biogenetics and so on. (Let us take this opportunity to strongly recommend you get a hold of ANY BOOK written by or about Milton Erickson and read it ... and you will see what we are talking about.)

We share with you this insight: there is a wave, it is moving across the ocean of time **AND YOU ARE IN IT. RIDE THE CREST OF THIS WAVE! THE PRESENT IS THE POINT OF POWER! BE IN THE HERE AND NOW!** Not in the backwater! To be in the eddies, the currents, the tides and the foam ... is to be drowning in the wash of yesterday. TAKE FROM YESTERDAY WHAT IS GOOD, USEFUL AND VALUABLE ... BUT DON'T GET STUCK IN THE MUD. DON'T GET LOST IN THE SAUCE!

We have shared with you a fairly broad panorama of traditional information. You need to take this information and extract from it what you can use and turn it into

knowledge. INFORMATION IS NOT KNOWLEDGE! A head full of **information** is not of much use. You've got to **KNOW!** And you've got to open your eyes to the produce of modern research as well ... and take from it what's useful ... **AND DO THE SAME THING!** 'Truth' is Universal! It's not confined or isolated to one group or person!

There was a time when 'esoteric instruction' was not readily available. You had to belong to an "esoteric group", lodge or Order if you wanted "certain information." This is not the case these days. Since around the 1960's occult/esoteric bookstores have been opening in almost every city and town. And nowadays you can go there and buy a book and find out whatever you want to know about.

And this brings me to speak about esoteric fraternities. **What is the value of an esoteric fraternity these days?** There was a time when 'esoteric information' was not available to the public. Some time ago you would even have been branded a 'witch' and executed if 'the authorities' suspected you dared contemplate esoteric ideas! Those days are gone. You no longer have to become a member of a "secret Order" or an esoteric lodge and climb stairs lugging suitcases of paraphernalia, set up a temple, don regalia, go through a ritual, and sit down to hear an 'esoteric lecture' ... you can go to a book store and buy a book and read the same thing presented in a much more twenty-first century sort of way ... which is clearer and more up-to-date!

Does this mean, then, that the death knell has sounded for esoteric fraternities. The answer is: **CERTAINLY NOT.** What it does mean is: esoteric fraternities must now concentrate on ceremonial and ritual activity; on theurgic work and group meditations; on forging the bonds of brotherhood; on mystical activities which are rendered more powerful and effective when there are a number of people on **SPIRITUAL UPLIFTMENT AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT.** The 'intellectual stuff'... the teaching of metaphysical and philosophical principles and study of the history of their particular organization ... can be accomplished at informally held study-group meetings and through individual study ... and by the way, we here at headquarters feel a sense of gratification that the lectures we are sending out in the Libers ... which (by and large) are lectures formerly used by many esoteric Orders ... are being used today as foundational material by many present-day groups.

I want to talk to you now about the future of I.C.E.S.. We are operating under very trying circumstances. We know the material we are making available is solid and we know it is well appreciated by the membership. And we have just as much in our vault as we have sent out! We know what we have done, and what we are doing, is shining a Light into the world and is a tremendous potential for good. It is making a difference and, along with the other organizations who are working for the upliftment of Mankind, we are helping to dispel the shadows of darkness. And we also know we have what it takes to build a top-class worldwide organization.

THE EXAM
DOCTOR OF DIVINITY

We have an arrangement with the *Ecclesia Gnostica Apostolica Catholica*, who grant the Degree. You send the exam to us, we pass it on to them, they correct it and issue the Certificate. The exam and all the requirements are nothing to do with I.C.E.S.. All we do is receive it from you, pass it to them, they sit on it, pass it back to us ... and we pass it back to you.

Here are the requirements: The work you submit must be your own but you can quote from any source, provided you indicate the source of your quotations. Your paper must be type-written, double spaced, on letter-size paper, using one side of the paper only and be a minimum of one hundred pages long.

Your submission must be accompanied with a payment of fifty dollars which is required by the E.G.A.C. to defray their costs in assaying and certification.

And now the subject matter: you are to write a dissertation on any aspect of Religion and/or God ... i.e. about any religion, ancient or present day, about God, beliefs in God ... or a combination of these ... and/or on similar topics, historical and factual, or speculative. Including any historical religious/spiritual personality(s). You can write on orthodox or on mystical concepts. In other words, your dissertation must be to do with spirituality, with God, with man's search for God and so on. The parameters are broad, do not feel confined to narrow boundaries.

No attempt is being made to influence you but you may find such subjects as the Essenes, the Gnostics, (especially since the 'Dead Sea Scrolls' and 'Nag Hammadi library' have been found), to be fruitful and interesting areas to research and write about.

The field is wide open and there are no restrictions, you have full rein to write about whatever you please, within the basic parameter given. All work submitted becomes the property of the E.G.A.C.. Be sure you keep a copy of your submission and make sure your full name and address is included.

-o-o-o-o-o-

And so dear friend, we bid you farewell but not good bye.

May the road rise up to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rain fall softly on your fields,
And until we meet again -

May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Even in Service to the Light
Sarason

We also know to build a top-class worldwide organization from our present geographical position is difficult, given the high costs and particular problems inherent in operating from a small island in the Atlantic, thousands of miles from the major English-speaking cities of the world. For example, as we write this there are no 4x9 envelopes available on the island!

We want to say to you right now ... we are willing to hand over what we have to anyone, in another country where operating circumstances are more viable, who would be willing to take it ... provided we can be assured of the sincerity of such person and of their means to be able to develop it into the organization it has the potential to become.

As we have just said, we know the usefulness of this operation. We know the great difference it is making in the lives of very many people all over the world and we will carry on as long as we can. But we also know the world needs all the Light it can get. And if an opportunity comes that can allow the Light of this organization to shine from a taller mast, we are willing to hand over what we have started, to pass it on ... just as the material we are using was received by another and passed on to us ... so it can go from strength to strength. If you, dear Companion, are the person to receive this torch, please communicate with us about it, without delay.

Well, let's talk a little about the future as far as we can actually see it. As we have intimated, our hands are very full and we cannot extend the curriculum of Libers any further. We would like to hope, however, that perhaps we can publish some useful books from time to time, material and information you will appreciate. So we would like to keep in touch with you. We are going to place your name in the Graduate's Ledger so we can send you notices from time to time, but we will miss hearing from you and receiving your little notes and comments. Would you please drop us a few lines whenever you have the chance? Just to receive a post card from you would be wonderful and encouraging. We will always answer, according to our ability to do so and if you don't get an answer to every note you send, you'll know why and say a prayer for us. Also, if you change your address please remember to send us the new one! And although this sounds rather mundane, we do appreciate any financial help you can send us occasionally. Whenever you write, kindly write 'Graduate' after your name ... this will help us to find you in our records! We do not have a computer and a button to press! We have to look through many pages.

Now two other matters. As you go along you may meet other students who may tell you "Oh I finished the course". We thought we would institute a test question that you can use to determine if this is so or not. If you ever meet someone who says they finished the course you can ask them: "How many steps are there to the castle?" The official answer is "One hundred less one." If they can't give you that exact answer you'll know they never did complete the course! And now to the exam, Doctor of Divinity - - -

Dear Graduate — this will be the last official report. We ask that you set forth your thoughts on your journey with us. Wishing to make the Libers as interesting and as useful as possible, we would appreciate knowing what subjects interested you most. Also, share whatever thoughts, ideas or suggestions you may have, which will enable us to improve.

