

1977
ANNUAL REPORT
of the
COMMISSION ON INFORMATION
FOR RECOGNITION
of the
CONFERENCE OF
THE GRAND MASTERS OF
MASONS IN NORTH AMERICA



A.D. 1977 / A.L. 5977

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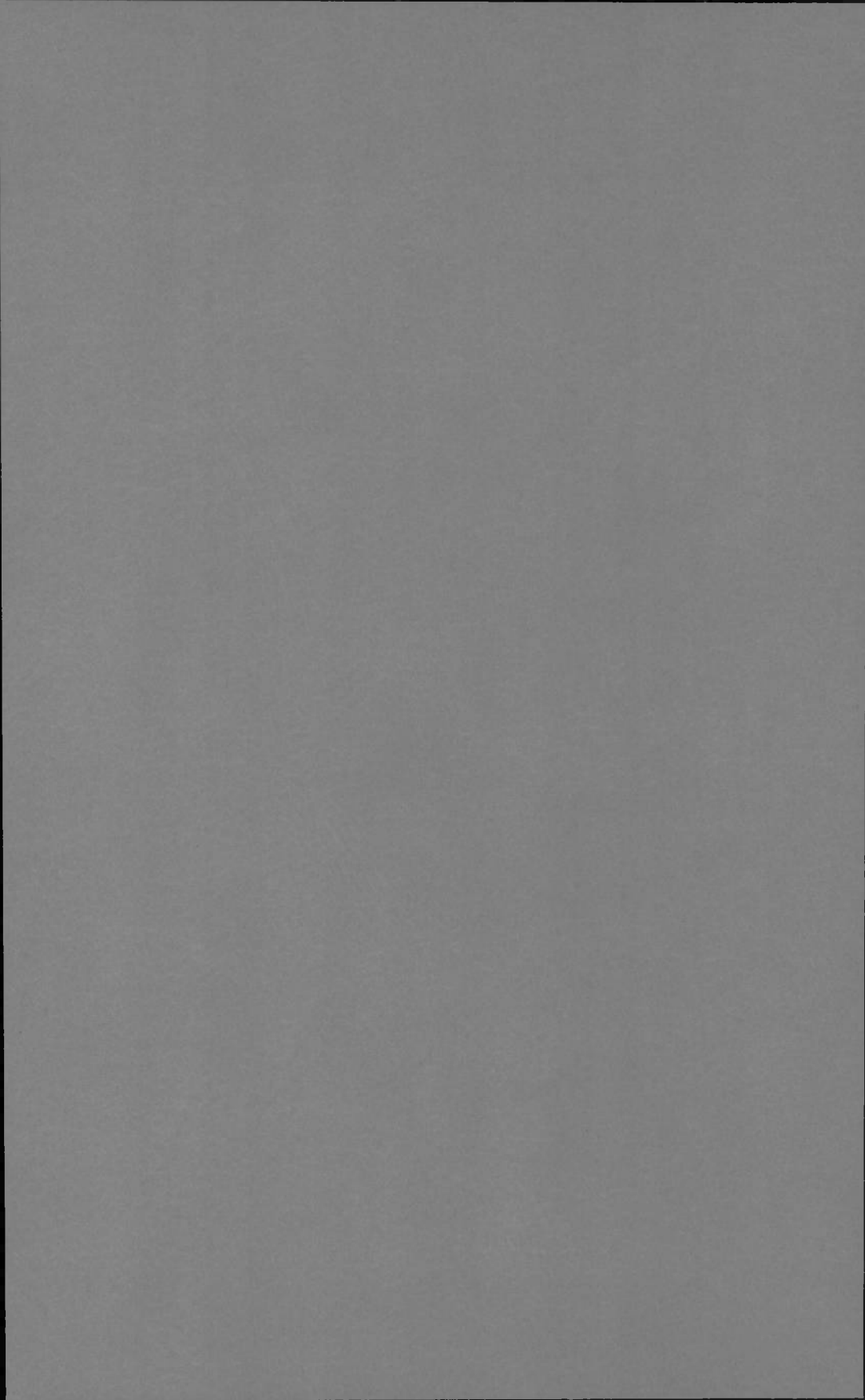
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A.D. 2022 / A.L. 6022

COMMISSION ON INFORMATION
FOR RECOGNITION
of the
CONFERENCE OF THE GRAND MASTERS
OF MASONS IN NORTH AMERICA

ANNUAL REPORT

given at
WASHINGTON, D.C.
February 23, 1977





PREFACE

The Commission on Information for Recognition was organized in 1952 as a facility to gather, collate, and from time to time revise information on Grand Lodges in other lands, as a service to the Grand Lodges of this Conference.

The Commission neither advises nor recommends that recognition be given to any Grand Lodges, but merely indicates whether or not it considers that a Grand Lodge in question satisfies the conditions of regularity.

The Commission consists of six members of wide geographical distribution. One new member, usually a Deputy Grand Master, is elected each year, and serves for six years.

After each Annual Meeting of the Conference of Grand Masters, the report, given to and adopted by the Conference, is printed and copies mailed to the Grand Secretaries, and to the Chairman of the Committees on Fraternal Relations of the Grand Lodges of the Conference. Copies are mailed to many interested brethren who are not members of the Conference.

This report is based upon the most recent information available, and in some cases after a conference with members of some of the Grand Lodges mentioned in the report.

All comments on this report, and all inquiries on other matters of information on Grand Lodges throughout the world, may be addressed to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Commission, Mr. Robert L. Dillard, Jr., 1105 Southland Center, Dallas, Texas 75201.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON INFORMATION FOR RECOGNITION

To the Conference of Grand Masters of Masons in North America:

Most Worshipful Brother Chairman:

Most Worshipful and Right Worshipful Brethren:

It is with pleasure that I present to you the members of the Commission.

M:W: Robert H. Danelson, Past Grand Master and Grand Secretary of New Hampshire.

M:W: A.D. Anderson, M.D., Past Grand Master of Wisconsin.

R:W: John McCain, Grand Master of Pennsylvania.

M:W: Eric W. Nancekivell, M.D., Grand Master of Ontario, Canada.

M:W: Kermit A. Jacobson, Grand Master of California.

R:W: Robert L. Dillard, Jr., Past Grand Master of Texas.

Brethren, with the filing of this report, I conclude my tenure as a member of this most important Commission. It has been a distinct honor and pleasure to have the privilege to serve as a member. I shall always be grateful to you for this great opportunity. To the members of this Commission, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to you for your kindness and consideration.

BELGIUM

Last year at the Conference in Philadelphia, information was presented to the Secretary of the Commission to the effect that the Grand Lodge of Belgium and its Grand Officers were not abiding by the Standards for Recognition adopted by this Conference. The Secretary brought to the attention of the present Grand Master of Belgium, Most Worshipful Brother Edwin Commins, the Standards as published by the Commission in the book entitled "Grand Lodge Recognition".

One of the principal charges was that the officers of the Grand Lodge of Belgium permitted intervisitations of members of its constituent lodges with lodges of the Grand Orients of France and Belgium and other irregular groups claiming to be Masonic.

Brother Commins discussed the charges with the Secretary both by correspondence and telephone and then arranged to visit with the Secretary in Dallas in September, 1976.

Brother Commins assured the Secretary that neither the Grand Lodge of Belgium nor its Grand Officers countenance such intervisitations and states that the affairs of the Grand Lodge of Belgium are conducted in accordance with the Standards of Recognition of the Conference and in the same manner in which they have always been conducted. Correspondence with knowledgeable Masons in Scotland and England indicate that these Grand Lodges have not been aware of any serious problem in the Grand Lodge of Belgium and have, in fact, met with Brother Commins on Masonic matters during 1976. The Commission makes no recommendation for action by members of the Conference with reference to the Grand Lodge of Belgium at this time.

BRAZIL

Brazil continues to be a difficult problem for the Commission. In its Report to the Conference in 1975 the Commission suggested that recognition of the Grand Orient and of those State Grand Lodges that qualify would seem to be in order. In recent weeks this suggestion has been called in question by at least one foreign correspondent of a member Grand Lodge of this Conference. The question was raised because of charges made by the Grand Master of the State Grand Lodge of Guanabara, Brother Heitor Coria de Mello, who is also the Chairman of the Inter-American Masonic Confederation which includes in its membership most of the State Grand Lodges of Brazil but not the grand Orient. The charge is that the Grand Orient permits the use of Masonic work which denies the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. In addition, it is charged that the Grand Orient includes both Symbolical and Philosophical Degrees. In addition to the charges of Brother Mello, the Grand Secretary for Foreign Relations of the Grand Lodge of Guanabara, Brother Valdemiro Liberato Pinto, charges that the Grand Orient Lodges include lodges organized for women and recognizes mixed lodges of men and women. These are, of course, serious charges; however, they are charges which have been made before and which have been repudiated by the responsible officers of the Grand Orient. One of the most reliable correspondents of this Commission over a great many years has been Brother Erwin Seignemartin. In correspondence with the Secretary of the Commission and others, Brother Seignemartin has expressed his unqualified approval of the 1975 Report of the Commission and the suggestion that the Grand Lodges of this Conference might well consider recognizing both the State Grand Lodges and the Grand Orient. Writing to the Secretary, Brother Seignemartin states, "After reading the chapter on Brazil in the 1975 Annual Report of the Commission, I could not resist the impulse of writing to express our satisfaction at the realistic approach to a problem that has for so long hampered the relations between Masons and jurisdictions of Brazil and those of other countries". Brother Seignemartin is the Grand Secretary for Foreign Relations for the Grand Lodge of Sao Paulo, a State Grand Lodge, and so cannot be charged with bias in favor of the Grand Orient. In the correspondence mentioned above, he also makes the following statement: "Therefore, the Report of the Commission, in our opinion, was very refreshing and we are sure that it will open a new concept in the so-far tight principle on the question of recognition". He goes on to express the hope that other jurisdictions, including England, will follow the opinion of the Commission.

Although the Brazilian Masonic situation is tremendously complex and it is difficult to determine the entire truth of the charges and countercharges, the Commission expresses the sincere hope that ultimately the Masons of Brazil will themselves solve their problems and become unified in their Masonry.

CUBA

Interest continues in the Masonic situation in Cuba and the Masons in Cuba continue with great courage to meet in their lodges and the Grand Lodge to carry on the business of the fraternity. While the Cuban government has not banned Masonry, it has limited the operations of the Grand Lodge and its constituent lodges through various governmental regulations and decrees. The Grand Lodge held its regular Annual Communication in Havana on March 15, 1975. The Grand Secretary, Brother Juan Varela Alvarez, reported that Grand Lodge, as of December 31, 1974, had 326 constituent lodges in six provinces in Cuba, 138 lodges being situated in Havana and environs. The membership was reported as

24,832. He also reported that constituent lodges initiated 783, affiliated 233, and reinstated 52, for a total gain of 1,068 with losses from suspensions, demits and expulsions of 1,964, a net loss of less than 900. The grand Secretary, in his report to Grand Lodge in March, 1975, included a chart showing the membership of the Grand Lodge of Cuba from 1959 to 1974. The decline in membership was from 33,639 in 1959 to 24,832 as of December 31, 1974. This decline in membership is not substantially different from that of the other Grand Lodges of this Conference. Past Grand Master Carlos Pineiro reported to the Commission last year that the Deputy Grand Master in 1975, Brother Juan Francisco Medina, left Cuba for Spain and consequently the Grand Lodge selected Brother Mario Oliva Rubio, Past Grand Treasurer, to serve for a period of two years from March, 1975 to March, 1977. Grand Lodge has had to terminate its semi-annual meeting in September because of economic and other difficulties. Brother Pineiro furnished a number of circular letters emanating from the Grand Secretary's office and directed to the various constituent lodges indicating that Grand Lodge maintains contact with the constituent lodges and their membership. The Commission notes that the Grand Lodge of Cuba and its Grand Secretary maintain contacts with Masonry in the United States. For example, the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Cuba in October, 1975 wrote the Grand Secretary of Mississippi requesting re-establishment of fraternal relations with that Grand Lodge. Pursuant to that request and other information, the Grand Lodge of Mississippi recognized the Grand Lodge of Cuba. This Commission has repeatedly stated that in its opinion the Masonic world should continue to stand by the Grand Lodge of Cuba in its time of trial. Our Masonic brothers in Cuba continue to exhibit great courage in their practice of Freemasonry.

CHILE AND MEXICO

The Commission reported in 1976 that fraternal relations had been terminated between the Grand Lodge of Chile and several of the State Grand Lodges in Mexico. Information has come to the Commission to the effect that amity has been restored between these Grand Lodges.

ITALY

A number of Grand Lodges received a letter dated June 28, 1976 on the letterhead of the Grand Master of "Massoneria Universale, Comunione Italiana, di Piazza del Gesu" in which it was stated that the "Family of Piazza del Gesu had resumed its Masonic workings". The letter continued by stating that this "Family" had joined the brethren of "Palazzo Giustiniani" after a division of 65 years, but that the union had not worked out and the brethren of Piazza del Gesu had decided to split from the brethren of Palazzo Giustiniani. The addressee of the letter was invited to attend the consecration of "our Temples" at the 1st of October, 1976. Further investigation of this situation indicates that it arises in part out of the expulsion of several prominent Masons in the Grand Orient. The expulsions (including that of the Deputy Grand Master) appear to have resulted from charges of misconduct made by certain Masons against Grand Master Salvini as early as March, 1975, in connection with the activities of an organization known as "P2 Lodge", an alleged "propaganda" and "influence peddling" group. These activities have resulted in extensive coverage by the news media of Grand Master Salvini and the Grand Orient and investigations by government authorities. Another contributing factor was the controversial reelection of Grand Master Salvini in which he received 220 white balls and 119 black balls with 26 abstentions. The Commission is greatly concerned about the

situation in the Grand Orient and expresses the hope that the internal problems of Freemasonry in Italy will be cleared up in the near future. Because of the still unsettled state of affairs, the Commission is not in a position at the present time to make a recommendation as to action on the part of the members of the Conference.

THE UNIVERSAL LEAGUE OF FREEMASONS

The Commission as early as 1967 warned the Grand Lodges of this Conference about an organization known as "The Universal League of Freemasons". Subsequently the Commission called attention to the fact that a number of Grand Lodges of this Conference had issued edicts and resolutions against membership in the "Universal League of Freemasons". We would again remind the members of this Conference that this organization purporting to be Masonic is indiscriminate in its selection of members and accepts members from irregular Masonic organizations not recognized by any of the Grand Lodges of this Conference.

NEWFOUNDLAND

Newfoundland does not have a Grand Lodge but Freemasonry is represented there by constituent lodges of the United Grand Lodge of England and Grand Lodge of Scotland. The Commission respectfully suggests that the Conference consider inviting representatives from lodges in Newfoundland to attend this Conference in 1978.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Washington, D.C.
February 23, 1977

TO THE CONFERENCE OF GRAND MASTERS OF MASONS OF NORTH AMERICA:

This report is an accounting of the funds of the Commission on Information for the year just passed. Since 2-17-76, 49 Grand Lodges have contributed \$2,825.00. Only five Grand Lodges did not respond to the reminders mailed by the Commission.

Balance from Report 2-17-76	\$5,158.74
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Receipts from Grand Lodges since 2-17-76:

New York	\$ 200.00
New Mexico	50.00
South Dakota	25.00
Alabama	100.00
Tennessee	100.00
Maine	50.00
North Dakota	15.00
Texas	100.00
Illinois	100.00
Utah	15.00
Indiana	100.00
Louisiana	50.00
Washington	100.00
Connecticut	50.00
Rhode Island	15.00
Nebraska	50.00
British Columbia	50.00
District of Columbia	15.00
Manitoba	15.00
New Jersey	100.00
Quebec	15.00
Saskatchewan	15.00
South Carolina	100.00
Virginia	100.00
Kentucky	100.00
Alberta	15.00
Minnesota	100.00
Delaware	15.00
Iowa	100.00
Maryland	50.00
Wyoming	15.00
Michigan	100.00
Massachusetts	100.00
York of Mexico	15.00
Oklahoma	50.00
Montana	15.00
Oregon	50.00
Nova Scotia	15.00

Puerto Rico	15.00	
Georgia	50.00	
Japan	15.00	
Idaho	25.00	
Vermont	15.00	
Nevada	15.00	
Ohio	100.00	
North Carolina	100.00	
Arkansas	20.00	
Florida	100.00	
Missouri	100.00	
		\$2,825.00
		7,983.74

Expenses:

Printing of 1976 Report	474.92	
Secretarial	300.00	
Travel & hotel for Secretary to Annual Conference	707.27	
Reprinting of letterhead	39.78	
Postage and miscellaneous	36.03	
		1,558.00

Current Balance \$6,425.74

Respectfully submitted,
R.L.DILLARD, JR., Treasurer

CONCLUSION

We strongly recommend that you carefully study the report of this Commission, that you may have this knowledge for the betterment of your lodges and for a stronger and more unified Masonry. Should you need further information, we recommend that you contact our illustrious Secretary-Treasurer, R:W: Brother Robert L. Dillard, Jr., a most able person and whom I believe to be the best informed Mason in the world concerning Lodges of other countries. Brother Dillard, we appreciate you and your untiring efforts.

Brethren, this concludes our report. Please accept my sincere appreciation for the privilege of serving with you for the past six years. If you are ever in the Great State of Mississippi, please favor us with a visit.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter L. Smith, Chairman
Robert H. Danelson, Vice Chairman
A.D. Anderson
John L. McCain
Eric W. Nancekivell
Kermit A. Jacobson
Robert L. Dillard, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer

ORGANIZATION OF COMMISSION FOR 1977

At a meeting of the Commission the following organization was voted for the ensuing year:

Chairman — M: W: Robert H. Danelson, Past Grand Master and Grand Secretary of New Hampshire
Vice-Chairman — M: W: A.D. Anderson, M.D., Past Grand Master of Wisconsin
Secretary-Treasurer — R: W: Robert L. Dillard, Jr., Past Grand Master of Texas

NAMES, ADDRESSES AND YEAR OF RETIREMENT OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

- 1978 — M: W: Robert H. Danelson, Past Grand Master and Grand Secretary of New Hampshire, 60 Moulton Road, Hampton, New Hampshire 03842.
- 1979 — M: W: A. D. Anderson, M.D., Past Grand Master of Wisconsin, 2665 Marshall Parkway, Madison, Wisconsin 53713.
- 1980 — R: W: John L. McCain, Grand Master of Pennsylvania, 254 Parker Drive, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15216.
- 1981 — M: W: Eric W. Nancekivell, M.D., Grand Master of Ontario, Canada, 43 Knyvet Avenue, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L9A3J6.
- 1982 — M: W: Kermit A. Jacobson, Grand Master of California, 417 Ninita Parkway, Pasadena, California 91106.
- 1983 — R: W: Gus J. Vlasis, M.D., Deputy Grand Master of Tennessee, 115 Provident Building, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402.
- Secretary-Treasurer — R: W: Robert L. Dillard, Jr., Past Grand Master of Texas, 1105 Southland Center, Dallas, Texas 75201.

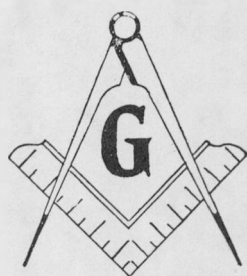
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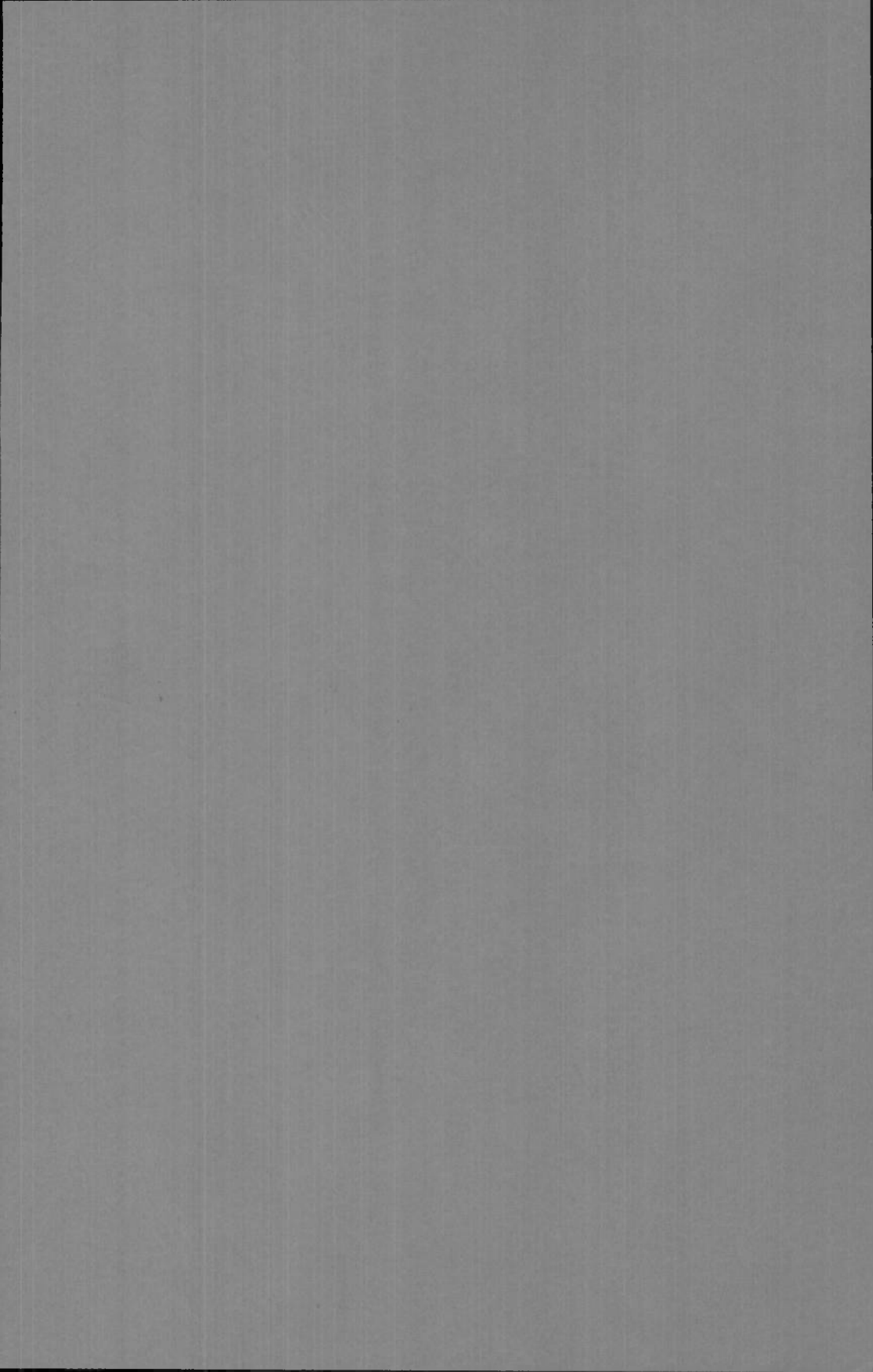
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