How the Freemasons Rule the World

Contributed by Mike Akpan
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The Society is not so visible in most countries where it exists but its members are men of immense influence and wealth

Freemasons rule the world. This assertion appears controversial but the facts are revealed in a recent book on Freemasons written by H. Paul Jeffers. In the book titled: Freemasons: Inside the World’s Oldest Secret Society, Jeffers states that most of the Freemasons who are the movers and shakers in various fields of endeavour, live in the United States of America, USA, the world’s only surviving super power. In his extensive research on the more than 400 year-old secret craft, Jeffers has found out that out of the 5.9 million estimated population of Freemasons worldwide, 4.1 millions live in the USA and Canada. Of the remaining 1.1 million Freemasons outside the two North American countries, 550,000 live in England and Wales; 400,000 live in Scotland, while 375, 000 are in Australia. India, Japan, Formosa, Africa and Israel account for 288,000 while Ireland has 47,000 Freemasons. Europe has 80,000 Freemasons while Latin America and the Philippines accommodate 50,000 and 10,000 Freemasons respectively. In the book, Jeffers refers to the United States as a Masonic project. His findings revealed that many of the founding fathers of the country were high degree masons. For instance, of the 56 persons who signed the Declaration of Independence document in 1778, 15 of them or 27 percent were Masons. Among them were Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock, Joseph Hewes, William Hooper, Robert Treat Payne, Richard Stockton, George Walton and William Whipple. Others were Elbridge Gerry, Lyman Hall, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Nelson Jr. John Renn, George Read and Roger Sherman. Jeffers has also found out that 28 of the 40 signers of the USA constitution were high degree Masons. They included Franklin, George Washington, Gunning Bedord, Jr. John Blair, David Brearly, Jacob Broom, Daniel Carrol, John Dickinson and Rufus King. The rest were Alexander Hamilton, Abraham, Baldwin, William Blount, Nicholas Gilman, James Madison, Roger Sherman, George Read and Robert Morris. Jonathan Dayton, James McHenry and William Patterson who were also signers of the constitution, became Freemasons later. From his extensive research, Jeffers has come to the conclusion that Freemasonry was at the heart of the American Revolution. More than 50 percent of the generals who fought and won the war of American independence from Britain were Freemasons. That explains why Freemasonry has continued to have an overwhelming influence in the government and politics of the country ever since. He gave instances. The national anthem of the USA has a Masonic input because Francis Scott Key, the man who wrote it, was a high degree mason. Noted Jeffers: “Freemasonry has become the cornerstone of the United States government. Masonic link evidences abound despite disputations by some historians. Masonic signs and symbols are everywhere in government. For example, the Great Seal of the United States and the street plan as well as designs of federal government buildings in Washington DC were laid out on the basis of Masonic beliefs. The symbol of an inverted triangle or pyramid can be seen in the street plan and the sites are connected to famous Freemasons such as Marquis de Lafayette, after whom a park opposite the north side of the White House is named. The Washington Monument and the Pentagon building were designed by Masons to conform to a Pentagram which is an occult symbol.” That was not all. Continued Jeffers: “The US one dollar note contains Masonic symbols. The Great Seal pictured on the back of the dollar bill has an eagle with 32 feathers (the degrees in Scottish Rite Freemasonry.) The eagle is also the symbol of St. John the Evangelist, the great patron of Freemasonry. The arrows in its left talon refer to Israel’s King David (father of Solomon). The olive branch in the eagle’s right talon is associated with Solomon. The 13 stars above the eagle’s head represent Jacob, his 12 sons, and the tribes of Israel. Thirteen stars, in a double triangle form are symbolic of the delivery of the children of Israel from their oppressors and their attainment of a glorious freedom. The Latin “E Pluribus Unum” (Out of Many, One) indicates the Masonic fraternity.” According to Jeffers, those who find Freemasonry on the mighty dollar also note that the largest symbol on the buck is the portrait of George Washington, a Mason. Cited as evidence of Freemasonry on the greenback is an unfinished pyramid. At the top, inside a radiant triangle is the all-seeing eye” representing “the Grand Architect of the Universe,” who is omniscient and watching the United States. “The Latin Motto: ‘Novus Ordo Seclorum’ (New Order of the Ages) inscribed beneath the pyramid in the Great Seal of America is suspected to be synonymous with a “new world order,” the author explained. Jeffers also explained: “The statue of Liberty is a Masonic goddess from top to bottom. The statue is said to have been conceived by Freemasons and built by Frederic-Auguste Bartholdi; a French Freemason, who had already made a statue of de Lafayette for the city of New York, for the occasion of the centenary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and installed by Freemasons in a Freemasonry ceremony.” In view of the overwhelming influence of Freemasonry in the American society, it is no surprise that Freemasons have dominated politics in the US. Out of the 43 presidents that have ruled America from 1789 to date, 25 of them were Freemasons. Among them was George Washington, who was installed the first president of the country in 1789. He was initiated in November 1752 into Frederickburg Lodge N0.4, Fredereickburg, Virginia. He is the first and only Freemason to serve simultaneously as a lodge master and president. Other presidents who were known Freemasons were James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, James Buchanan, Andrew Johnson, James A. Garfield, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, William Howart Taft, Warren G. Harding, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Gerald R. Ford, Lyndon B. Johnson and Ronald Reagan. (See Table A for details). Freemasonry has also produced people who served as vice-presidents, secretaries of state, chief justices and justices of the Supreme Courts at the centre and in the states. (See Table B & C for details). The security agencies were not left out. Very many Freemasons have occupied the top hierarchies at various times. Jeffers found out in the course of his research, that all the security agencies have Freemasonry lodges in-

house. The legislatures at the federal and state levels have also felt the strong influence of Freemasonry over the years. So also are the executive arms of government in the states. This is how Jeffers put it. “The involvement of Freemasons in the government of the Republic of Texas is found in the fact that all of its presidents were Masons, as were all its vice-presidents. The lowest percentage of Masons who had held executive positions in any of the four administrations was 85 percent. In the last administration that carried Texas into the Union, all those in executive positions in the government of the republic were Masons.” Outside government, Freemasonry also pervades the professions, arts and culture of the people. Garry A. Henningsen, past grand master and secretary, New York State Grand Lodge of Masons chose to say it this way: “Human imagination has always thrived in Freemasonry. We have enticed to our fraternity, artists, poets, warriors, inventors, manufacturers, explorers, pioneers, lawyers, government leaders, business tycoons, clergymen, astronauts, scientists and gentle-everyday family men made better because of their association with and love of our beloved Craft. It has been so from the very beginning,” (See Tables below). Henningsen is right. Freemasonry has attracted to its fold, eminent personalities such as Bill Gates, a philanthropist and chairman of Microsoft who is reputed to be the third richest man in the world, Henry Ford, a pioneer automobile manufacturer, and astronauts who have become famous as a result of their space missions. Among such great names are Edgar D. Mitchell, the sixth person to walk on the Moon surface, John Glenn, the first American to orbit the Earth in 1962, Leroy Gordon Cooper, the astronaut who made record breaking flights in Mercury 7, Mission in 1963 and in Gemini 5, in 1965. Virgil Grisson, a Mason astronaut, undertook the first manned maneuver in space in 1965 while James Benson Irwing along with three others, piloted the Lunar module “Falcon” on Apollo 15 Mission in 1971 and spent nearly 67 hours on the Moon surface. In Africa, the Craft has, as its members, such eminent sons as John Kuffuor, president of Ghana, Jerry J. Rawlings, his predecessor, Omar Hadj Bongo, president of Gabon, and Paul Biya, president of Cameroon. Others are Blaise Campaore, president of Burkina Faso, Idris Deby, president of Chad, Mamadou Tanja, president of Niger, Denis Sassou Nguesso, president of Congo Brazaville, his predecessor, Pascal Lissouba and Robert Guei, a general and late head of state of Ivory Coast. In South Africa where the country’s parliament is said to be located on a Freemasonry land, Nelson Mandela, the former president is on record as a member. The record shows that he was initiated into black obedience of American Freemasonry called Prince Hall. Kofi Annan, immediate past secretary general of the United Nations, is a prominent Freemason. In Nigeria, Freemasons were in the drivers’ seats in the public and private sectors of the economy from the colonial era up to the late seventies when the Yakubu Gowon military government promulgated a decree which classified Freemasonry as one of the banned secret societies. Its members in the public services were ordered to renounce their membership or resign. Newswatch investigation has revealed that Gowon was bowing to pressures mounted on his government by Islamic leaders, the Baptist and Catholic Churches that were not comfortable with the activities of Freemasons in their fold. Adewale Thompson, a high degree Mason and a high court judge in Oyo State, captured the under current that prompted the decree in his recent book titled: “Masonic Experience.” “Somehow some new converts into christianity aided and abetted by some organisations of questionable motives began an orchestrated persecution of Freemasons which they included in their definition of “ Secret societies.” The movement against the group began in Nigeria in the 1970s: “Sometimes in or about 1974, there was hue and cry in the press by some elements against ‘secret societies.’ It later dawned on us that the campaign was fomented by the church and the mosque using the government as agents. Government departments sent circulars to public officers to denounce membership of ‘Secret societies or be sacked. The church called on communities to swear to affidavits that they were not members of secret societies otherwise they could not hold offices in the church. Those who refused to sign were removed from office. The move to ex-communicate members of secret societies was shelved because of the negative turmoil that it could generate.” Not all the Christian churches accepted the definition of Freemasonry as a secret society. This is how Thompson reported it: “During this period, the Right Reverend F.O. Segun, Anglican bishop of Lagos, stood up in Lagos diocese to address his flock. He told them that he was not a Freemason, but that in Freetown he had lived in the home of Freemasons whom he knew to be the best exponents of christian virtues. He then warned that those priests who must have come from the hinterlands and have not had the exposure of travelling out to meet ‘men of the world’ should exercise restraint in denouncing Freemasons, whom he knew in Freetown and in the Lagos diocese to be great supporters of the church in every respect or face the penalty of being unfrocked.” Notwithstanding the negative campaign, Freemasonry still had in its fold many eminent Nigerians including great legal minds such as Udo Udoma, Emmanuel Araka, C. O. Madarikan, C. D. Onyeama, Adebayo Desalu, D.O. Coker, M. O. Oyemade, J. D. Daniel, all justices, and O.C.J. Okocha, a senior advocate of Nigeria, SAN. There are also many traditional rulers who still retain their memberships of the Craft. Among them are Solomon Akenzua Π, Oba of Benin, Alfred Nnameka Achebe, Obi of Onitsha, Okunade Sijuade, Ooni of Ife and Ogbuefi Alex Nwokedi a traditional ruler, (See Table F.). Lamented Thompson: “Time was when the Nigerian society was ruled by Masonic principles of friendship, charity and integrity. Those were better days.” Chukka Ifejika, a retired banker and current provincial grand secretary of Freemasonry in Nigeria, Scottish Constitution, agrees. Ifejika recalled with nostalgia that Nigeria was a better place when its civil servants, judges, lawyers, captains of commence and industry, politicians, clergymen and professionals imbibed the Masonic spirit of love, truth and integrity. “There was a time the Nigerian society was ruled by Freemasons,” he added. Although Freemasonic influence seems to be waning in the Nigerian society, the situation is different in other parts of the world. In Senegal, for instance, Freemasons are found in the seat of power despite the fact that majority of the population adhere to the Muslim faith. In Britain, Freemasonry has a strong influence on the monarchy. The current Duke of Edinburgh is a high degree Mason. Duke Michael of Kent is the traditional Grand Master of the Great United Lodge of England and a representative of the royal family. Both the House of Lords and the House of Commons have sizeable percentages of their members as Freemasons. The executive arm of government and the security agencies including the Scotland Yard Police have good numbers of Freemasons in its fold. Rowan Williams,

the archbishop of Canterbury, is a high degree Freemason. So also were his predecessors. In Canada, Latin America and many European countries, the influence of Freemasonry is said to be very strong in those countries.
“Freemasonry has produced an astonishing number of significant individuals throughout the history of Europe in all fields of human endeavour namely kings, presidents and politicians, tycoons of industries, doctors, journalists, writers, composers, educators, generals, scientists, philosophers, astronauts and other cultural, social and civic leaders,” said Jeffers Opponents of Freemasonry are equally many and powerful. Several documents have been published to discredit it. Some of the documents describe the Brotherhood as “the single largest vehicle for the perpetuation of the Luciferic consciousness on Earth. In their joint publications titled: The Brotherhood and the Manipulation of Society, Ivan Frazer and Mark Beeston write: “The basic recruitment of members to further the elite’s plan is through the secret society network of Freemasonry… the latest incarnation of the Christian/military order known as Knights Templars who gained staggering riches and a wealth of esoteric knowledge during the Crusades, in which the ‘righteous’ christians were dispatched to the Holy Land with a free reign to slaughter the Jews and Moslems in a series of campaigns between the 11th and 13th centuries.” Certain practices in Freemasonry have been used as justification by christians for their anti-Masonic posture. Jeffers stated that christian leaders attacked Freemasonry for promoting devil worship, leading religious men away from the right way to find God, or being inconsistent with the religious beliefs of certain denominations. Gary Maxey, founder and provost, West African Theological Seminary, Lagos, agrees. “Freemasonry shares a lot of tenets that are contrary to most of our christian beliefs. In essence, Freemasonry is not orthodox christianity and is not recognised as belonging to mainstream Christianity,” he told Newswatch, adding: “apart from being more secretive in its practices, the Order focuses on cosmic energy, circle of the Moon and soul which are contrary to christian beliefs. Echoing the same viewpoint, Gabriel Osu, a monsignor and director of social communications, Catholic archdiocese of Lagos, said: “Freemasonry has come to be identified as a place of reunion for individuals of radical anti-Catholic and atheistic spirit with doctrines and principles diametrically opposed to Catholicism and to any structure degrees society supportive of the church, natural laws and morality.” Another allegation which critics level against Freemasonry is that progress beyond the first three degrees by members is at the pleasure of the elites who also impose stiff penalty on any member who divulges the secrets of the Order. Asserted the authors of the Brotherhood and Manipulation of Society: “While the vast majority of the members are on the first three rungs of the 33 – level hierarchy and have no idea of the hidden agenda, they take a pledge of allegiance “ to the society above all else.” Most initiates are willing to do this because of the temptation of power, wealth and knowledge which (are) hard to refuse, that it is hinted that there are penalties to pay for betraying the society and revealing its secrets and that it is impossible to achieve high levels of initiation within Freemasonry unless one is handpicked by those of higher degrees.” They concluded: “At the apex of the pyramid of the Brotherhood,” these “select few” who know “the full agenda have become known as the illuminati (Latin for illuminated ones). All powerful, they “occupy all top level members of the police and military forces around the world. They are found in every area of society at all levels, but at the top, in the highest social and monetary bracket, the Brotherhood prevails….The Brotherhood owns the law, they own the military, they own the oil companies, pharmaceutical companies and just about everything which provides for the status quo.” Associated with this belief is the suspicion that Freemasons have a secret plan to control the world through the political and economic domination of the USA. In his book – The New World Order, Pat Robertson, an evangelist, finds a “Masonic connection” to the new order conspiracy by Freemasons. In it, the reader finds the use of such phrases as “Masonic power,” “dark side,” “international conspiracy,” “occult,” “wealth,” “secret society,” and “world power.” The new world order, according to anti-Masonic opponents, is the same as the Masonic / New Age ideal of Man’s divinity and self transformation in which one must awaken to the original sin of Lucifer, as opposed to Eve in the Garden of Eden, that “we can be as God.” They argue that Freemasonry practices the ancient mysteries of Egypt with the goal of their re-instatement in the world order. To bolster this argument, anti-Masons always refer to a quotation by W.L. Wilmshurst in 1927 in his book titled In the Meaning of Masonry. “In this new Aquarian age, when many individuals and groups are working in various ways for the eventual restoration of the mysteries, an increasing number of aspirants are beginning to recognize that freemasonry may well be the vehicle for this achievement… (a Mason begins his career) as the natural man; he ends it by becoming through its discipline, a regenerated man… This, the evolution of man into superman – was always the purpose of the ancient mysteries, and the real purpose of modern Freemasonry is, not the social and charitable purpose to which so much attention is paid, but the expediting of the spiritual evolution of those who aspire to perfect their nature and transform it into a more god – like quality.” Ifejika has dismissed all the allegations insisting that those who accuse Freemasonry of anti-christain practices did so either out of preconceived ideas, ignorance or misunderstanding of what Freemasonry is all about or out of mischief laced in hypocrisy. He told Newswatch that Freemasonry does not claim at any point in time to be a religion because it does not administer sacraments as churches. But Freemasonry encourages every member to practice his religion better. “Freemasonry is out there to help a bad man to become a good man and a good man to become even better. It is not a religion and has nothing to do with the devil because it does not admit agnostics or non-believers in God. One clear element you must have to become a Freemason is to believe in God, that all-seeing God. It does not say you are a free thinker. Rather, Freemasonry encourages you to practice your own religion perfectly well to obey the tenets of your own Holy Book – Bible, Koran, Torah etc. There is no Holy book that we know which says that people should kill,” he said. Ifejika said the preoccupation of Freemasonry is the building of the characters of its members. That is why, he explained, Freemasonry employs the instruments used by field masons in teaching morals in Lodges. He said the Mason’s instruments such as the compass, the trowel, the square, the shovel, the hammer etc have moral lessons for Freemasons who, he said, are

known as “speculative masons.” Said he: “When we say Freemasonry, it is based on building of morality in the society using allegory. We use symbols – the working tools of the operative field Masons, to impart moral lessons. For instance, the signs we use when we hold our meetings like the compass, the square, say a lot about the character of members. The square says anywhere you measure with it, what you get is angle 90, whether from the top, bottom, north, south, east or west. So it is perfect. The moral lesson there is that you must imbibe moral rectitude in whatever you do. The plumbline the field mason uses in making sure the wall is perpendicular, not curved, bent or tilted, says in Freemasonry moral lesson that if your character is tilted and not upright, you will surely fall sooner or later.” Chris Aniche Okorafor, a past deputy District Grand Master, said those who today accuse Freemasonry of anti-christian practices seem to be suffering from selective amnesia. He said the early christian churches in Nigeria particularly the Anglican and the Presbyterian, owe a great deal to dedicated Freemasons who were either missionaries, school principals or masters, colonial officials and merchants for their dedication to the principles enunciated in (our) Antient charges namely “Never to act against the dictates of his conscience….and to strive by the purity of his own conduct to demonstrate the superior excellence of the faith he professes” as a good christian. He said the practice of holding Masonic meetings in the college chapel was not new to them. “In Scotland where the Presbyterian church has it’s beginning, there are records of Lodges holding their meetings in parish churches.” One such Lodge, he said, was Lodge St. John Kilwinning which held some of its initiations in St. Mary's Parish church in Haddington. “ Today, in Scotland, Ireland and England, several Lodges still hold special services in their parish churches,” he pointed out. That was even the case in Nigeria up to the late seventies. Thompson documented these practices in his book on Masonic Experience. He wrote: “It is the custom of Lodge St. David even before Akinyele became Master of the Lodge for a Master to worship in his church on the Sunday immediately after his installation on the first Sunday of March every year. On Saturday, 6th March, 1971, after his installation Brother (Augustine) Ereme informed the brethren that he would hold his thanksgiving service at the St. Gabriel's Catholic Church, Mokola, Ibadan, and that he had the special dispensation of the church authorities for brethren to come to church in their Masonic paraphernalia. The news was a great surprise to us. The church in Nigeria used to accommodate Freemasons in their robes when they sought to worship there on anniversaries and any other occasion or occasions of thanksgiving or funeral.” He continued: “I should mention that concessions were also granted by Anglican Church, the Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church and in the case of the African Church, no caveats were attached. However, the Roman Catholics and the Baptists were adamant and uncompromising “enemies” of Freemasonry. The announcement, therefore, that Freemasons will worship in their regalia at St. Gabriel’s Catholic Church, Mokola, Ibadan, on 7th March, 1971, was regarded as perhaps, one of those cases of “First in Africa” for which Ibadan is noted, and we trooped to the church on that memorable Sunday to see for ourselves.” The surprise. “It was true not only did we robe in procession following the choir, we were given special seats and were well-received by the congregation which assembled for that morning service beginning at 10 a.m. Our surprise was multiplied when the sermon was preached by a Reverend Father (Rev. Father Dalley) a whiteman, who showered encomiums on Freemasonry and traced the history of the order distinguishing the Freemasonry practised by the Grand Lodge of Scotland, England and Ireland, which believes in the existence of God and Grand Orient of France which does not.” Thompson said “After that church service, it occurred to me that some of our antagonists in the church might be ‘ignoramuses’ who might have read about the Grand Orient of France and failed to appreciate the difference because of a defect of knowledge associated with indolence.” But the question many Nigerians keep on asking is. What is the origin of Freemasonry? According to some Masonic historians, Freemasonry is shrouded in myths, legends and almost impenetrable obscurity. Since the 18th century, Masonic writers have sought to establish a link between the Knights Templars and the Freemasons. In his publication titled: The Origin of Freemasonry, Mehmed Sabeheddin, an Eastern Masonic historian states: “Freemasonic lore and symbols have been traced to ancient Egypt and Phoenicia. Yet, despite all the books and articles exploring Freemasonry published over the last 100 years, there is one area that has not received attention. It concerns Freemasonry’s debt to Islamic mysticism and a shadowy tradition connecting the Masons with the Moors of North Africa. Argued Sabeheddin: “What is looked upon almost entirely as Freemasonry has been practised as part and parcel of the religions of the Middle East for many years. So we find that just as Europe borrowed considerably from the learning of the Moors, European Freemasonry took its “secret wisdom from the Muslim east. The star or pentagram which the Moors called the seal of Sulaiyman and coloured green to honour Islam, also figures prominently in Masonic art and architecture. The layout of the City of Washibgton DC, which was designed by Masons, incorporates the pentagram. When Freemasons travelled in Moorish lands, they quickly recognized a common bond.” Sabeheddin concluded by quoting John Porter Brown, an American diplomat in Turkey in the mid – 1980s who wrote sympathetically of the Sufi path. There is, however, no dispute of the fact that Freemasonry is found all over the world. It is not a monolithic organisation with a central authority figure like an international president or secretary-general. But it has a Grand Lodge which is the governing body in every country. What is generally known about Freemasonry is that in 1717, several Masons met in London to form the first United Grand Lodge of England as a governing force over groups of stonemasons in Britain. Later in 1725, there was a Grand Lodge of Ireland. In 1735 or thereabout, there was a Royal Order of Scotland later known as the Scottish Rite. It was a merger of the precepts of Knights Templars with ancient Celtic mysteries which had flourished in parts of Europe and later in America. Thereafter, Grand Lodges spread Freemasonry around the world. From the 1790s, Lodges were established in Europe, the West Indies and India. As the British empire expanded in the late 18th and into the 19th centuries, English Freemasons carried the Brotherhood into the Middle and Far East, Australia, Africa, and North and South America. When colonies eventually gained political independence in the second half of the 20th century, many of them formed independent local Grand Lodges while others still remained with their parent Grand Lodge resulting in some 750 Lodges overseas principally in

Commonwealth countries. “But it was in Britain’s colonies in North America that Freemasonry would not only take root and thrive, but also contributed significantly to history’s first successful anti-colonialist war and the emergence of the United States of America,” Jeffers noted in his book. As Freemasonry spread throughout the globe, it also garnered along with it formidable enemies. One of such enemies was the Vatican. Pope Clement XII started the war against Freemasonry in 1738 when he proscribed it ostensibly on grounds of its naturalism, demand for oaths of secrecy, religious indifference and a possible threat to the church and the state. Other Popes who reaffirmed the ban were Benedict XIV in 1751, Pius VII in 1821, and Leo XII in 1825. The Church under Pope John Paul II still condemned Freemasonry. By the Church Law, no Catholic is permitted to join a Masonic Lodge or an affiliated organisation without incurring ex-communication. Any Mason who wanted to enter the Catholic Church was required to sever all ties with Freemasonry. Before the papal Bull of 1738, several Roman Catholics served as Grand Masters in Freemasonry. That, perhaps, explains why the names of prominent Catholics still feature in Freemasonic records. For example, the Catholic Duke of Norfolk became a Grand Master in 1730. Robert Edward, Viscount Montagu and the 9th Lord Petre, the then head of the Catholic Community in England, was installed a Grand Master in 1772. He held the office for five years. Freemasonry had been practised in Ireland since 1725. Its Grand Lodge is reputed to be the second oldest in the world. Some Christian elements of worship such as the Lord’s prayer, are preserved in its ritual. Even though the papal Bull had proscribed Freemasonry since 1738, the order did not come into effect in the country until later in the century. Before then, Catholic laymen and priests participated in Irish Lodges. Daniel O’Connell, an Irish patriot who was initiated a Mason in 1799, served as master of Lodge No. 189 in Dublin. He later renounced his Masonic ties when the position of the church on Freemasonry was made known to him. Unlike in the past, Irish Lodges are today patronized by a Protestant minority. The papal Bull was not binding on Protestant churches. That is why, up till today, protestant clergymen are still counted among high degree Masons in Europe and America. In Nigeria, records show that L.G Vinning, Adolphus Williamson Howells and Adelakun Williamson Howells, all Anglican archbishops of Lagos and West Africa respectively, held the position of Grand Master of their Lodges at various times. Many other clergymen also participated in Freemasonry thereafter. When did Freemasonry come to Nigeria? The English Constitution, EC, was first established in Lagos. Its first Lodge known as Lagos Lodge No. 1171 EC, was warranted in 1878 and constituted in 1879. Thereafter, other EC Lodges were established in various parts of the country. Currently, Olorogun Moses Taiga, chairman, Execon Group of Companies and a retired managing director, Philips Oil, is the District Grand Master for Nigeria. His installation was performed in Lagos last October 31. Before then, the Irish Constitution, IC, had arrived in Nigeria to set up its Lodge in Calabar. Known as MacDonald Lodge No. 197 IC, it got its warrant in 1897 and was constituted on May 2, 1897. Its current Provincial Grand Master is Alabo T. O. Graham-Douglas, a traditional ruler and former minister of aviation, who was installed since 2000. The Scottish Constitution better known as Lodge Scotia No. 1166 SC, was a late comer. It came to Nigeria in 1918. Its first Lodge in Nigeria was Lodge Academic No. 1150 SC, Lagos. The charter of the lodge was signed by Sir Robert Gordon Gordon-Gilmore, a brigadier-general and British Knight, on November 30, 1918, the feast day of St. Andrew, the patron Saint of Scotland. The pioneer Worshipful Grand Mason of the Lodge was Robert Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont, then a captain. Currently, Adonye Anye Ibiama, Fine-country VI, of Grand Bonny, holds the position of District Grand Master. He took over from Ishola Musawir, an orthopaedic surgeon and the first Moslem to hold that position, in February this year. How does Freemasonry recruit its members? Answered Ifejika: “From time immemorial, Freemasonry does not solicit for membership. Exemplary lives of Masons outside attract other people to want to belong to the Craft. People see Masons outside; they see the way they behave, react to issues and they want also to belong. They begin to ask: What doest it take to belong to this society that makes all of you behave like this? Those of you we have seen are well-behaved and well-positioned in society. There must be a god in your society that gives you wealth.” Ifejika said every application for membership is thoroughly screened by a standing committee to ensure that any applicant who wants to join Freemasonry does not do so for the wrong motives of seeking power or wealth. Reported by Anthony Akaeze and Andrew Airahuobhor.