

A.A. COMES OF AGE JULY 1-2-3, 1955  
20th ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION, ST. LOUIS, MO.

The  
THIRD LEGACY MANUAL  
Of World Service  
As Proposed By  
BILL

NOTE

Many A. A. members will be especially interested  
to read the historical account of A. A. World Serv-  
ices in Part I of this booklet.

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Of World Service  
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BILL

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"Recovery, Unity and Service -- these are the Three Legacies of our A. A. experience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern. God, as He may speak in our group conscience, is our sole Authority. And World Service is the heart of our Third Legacy."

Please be sure to read Bill's Third Legacy  
Resolution which will be proposed to the  
Convention on Sunday, July 3rd. See the  
last two pages of this Manual.

D R A F T

Published by

GENERAL SERVICE HEADQUARTERS  
of  
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Post Office Box 459  
Grand Central Annex  
New York 17, N. Y.

June, 1955

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## FOREWORD

The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous and its related Services at New York are the means by which A.A. functions nationally and internationally and are therefore the heart of A.A.'s Third Legacy of Service.

Part I of this booklet should be of interest to all readers, for it is a fragment of A.A. history. How the World Services were born and how they function for the good of A.A. is a story worth knowing.

This Manual also contains in Part II the sum of our Fellowship's experience in the construction and operation of these vital over-all Services. It is primarily designed for the guidance of those who are actively engaged in the conduct of these Services. The principles, structure and procedures are shown in detail.

At St. Louis, in 1955, on behalf of A.A.'s old timers, I will deliver into the permanent keeping of our Fellowship all these Services, secure in the knowledge that A.A. has at last come of age and is fully capable of maintaining the course that our experience has set. That this Legacy will always be well-cherished and guarded, I am perfectly confident.

Ever yours,

BILL

## PART I

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## PART I

- A. What the Third Legacy is: World Service, Its Heart
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## WHAT THE THIRD LEGACY IS:

### WORLD SERVICE, ITS HEART

Our Twelfth Step - carrying the message - is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.

Hence, an A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer - ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a ten-cent 'phone call and a cup of coffee, and to A.A.'s General Service Headquarters for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy.

Services include meeting places, hospital cooperation and Inter-group offices; they mean pamphlets, books and good publicity of almost every description. They require committees, delegates, trustees and conferences. And, not to be forgotten, they need voluntary money contributions.

These services, whether performed by individuals, groups, areas or A.A. as a whole, are utterly vital to our existence and growth. Nor can we make A.A. more simple by abolishing such services. We would only be asking for complication and confusion.

Concerning any given service, we therefore pose but one question, "Is this service really needed?" If it is, then maintain it we must, or fail in our mission to those who need and seek A.A.

The most vital, yet the least understood group of services that A.A. has, are those which enable us to function as a whole; namely, the A.A. General Service Office, the A.A. Publishing, Inc., the A.A. Grapevine, Inc., and A.A.'s Board of Trustees, recently renamed as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our world-wide unity and much of our growth since early times is directly traceable to this cluster of life-giving activities located, since 1938, at New York.

Until 1950, these over-all services were the sole function of a few old time A.A.'s, several non-alcoholic friends, Doctor Bob and myself. For all the years of A.A.'s infancy, we old timers had been the self-appointed trustees for Alcoholics Anonymous.

At last we realized that A.A. had grown up; that our Fellowship was ready and able to take these responsibilities from us. There was also another urgent reason for change. Since we old timers couldn't live on forever, newer trustees would be virtually unknown to the A.A. Groups, now spread over the whole earth. Without direct linkage to A.A., future trustees couldn't possibly function alone.

This meant that we had to form a conference representing our membership which could meet yearly with our Trustees at New York, and thus assume direct responsibility for the guardianship of A.A. Tradition and the direction of our principal service affairs.

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Otherwise, a virtually unknown Board of Trustees and our too little understood Service Headquarters operations would someday be bound to face collapse.

Suppose, acting quite on their own, that future Trustees were to make a serious blunder. Suppose, with no linkage to A.A., that they tried to act for us in time of great trouble or crisis. With no direct guidance from A.A. as a whole, how could they do this? Collapse of our top Services would then be inevitable. And if, under such conditions, our World Services did fall apart, how could they ever be reconstructed?

The Trustees, Doctor Bob and I, finally saw in 1950 that this appalling risk must no longer be taken. A direct linkage between ourselves and A.A. had to be built.

These were the conclusions that led to the formation of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous, a body of about seventy-five elected Delegates from the States and Provinces of the United States and Canada. On a trial experimental basis, these Delegates commenced in 1951 to sit yearly at New York with our Trustees and General Service Staff members.

The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous has proved itself an immense success. Its record of achievement, during its four-year trial period, has been completely convincing.

Therefore, we who are the old timers of A.A., are now entirely ready to deliver the principal affairs of Alcoholics Anonymous into the permanent keeping of this well-tried and tested body.

Beginning, therefore, with our Twentieth Anniversary in 1955, the Third Legacy of World Service will henceforth be for all members of Alcoholics Anonymous to have and to hold for so long as God may wish our society to endure.

## HOW A.A.'S WORLD SERVICES GREW

Someday the history of Alcoholics Anonymous will be written. Only then will most of us finally understand what over-all national and international services have meant to our Society, how difficult they were to create, and how vital it is to maintain them over future years. For the purpose of this Manual, we can only supply a brief historical run-down, a simple time-table of the events that have brought our world services and A.A. Traditions into being, plus a condensed report of the total accomplishment.

One day in 1937, at Doctor Bob's Akron home, he and I added up the score of over two years' work. For the first time we saw that wholesale recovery for alcoholics was possible. We then had two small but solid groups at Akron and New York, plus a sprinkling of members elsewhere. How could these few recovered ones tell millions of alcoholics throughout the world the great news? That was the question.

Forthwith Doctor Bob and I met with eighteen of the Akron Group at the home of T. Henry Williams, a steadfast non-alcoholic friend. Some of the Akron Group still thought we ought to stick to the word-of-mouth process; but the majority felt that we now needed our own hospitals with paid workers and, above all, a book for other alcoholics that could explain to them our methods and results. This would require considerable money -- millions perhaps. (We didn't then know that millions would have ruined us even more than no money at all.) So the Akron meeting commissioned me to go to New York and raise funds. Arrived home, I found the New York Group in full agreement with this idea. Several of us went to work at once.

Through my brother-in-law, Dr. L. V. Strong, Jr., my only remaining friend and the confidant of the worst of my drinking time, we made a contact with Mr. Willard S. Richardson, a friend and long time associate of the Rockefeller family. Mr. Richardson promptly took fire and interested a group of his own friends. In the winter of 1937, a meeting was called at the offices of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Present were Mr. Richardson and his group, Dr. William D. Silkworth, alcoholics from Akron and New York, Doctor Bob and myself. After a long discussion, we convinced our new friends that we urgently needed money - a lot of it, too.

One of them, a Mr. Frank Amos, soon made a trip to investigate the Akron Group. (Frank has, by the way, remained a friend and Trustee of Alcoholics Anonymous to this day.) He returned from the West with a very optimistic report on the Akron situation, a digest of which Mr. Richardson quickly laid before John D. Rockefeller, Jr. This was early in 1938. Though much impressed, Mr. Rockefeller declined to give any large sum for fear of professionalizing A.A. He did, however, donate \$5,000. This was used to keep Doctor Bob and me going during 1938. We were still a long way from hospitals, missionaries, books and big money. This looked mighty tough at the time, but it was probably one of the best breaks that A.A. ever had.

In spite of Mr. Rockefeller's views, we renewed our efforts to persuade his friends of our crying need for money. At length, they agreed that we did need more money, certainly enough to prepare a textbook on our methods and experience.

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This decision led to the formation of the so-called Alcoholic Foundation, in the spring of 1938. The first Board of Trustees consisted of three of our new friends - Mr. Richardson, Mr. Amos and Dr. L. V. Strong. The alcoholics were represented by Doctor Bob and a New York member. Supplied with a list of prospects by our new friends, we alcoholics at New York began to solicit funds. Since the Alcoholic Foundation was tax free, on charitable grounds, we thought the rich would contribute lavishly. But nothing happened. After months of solicitation, we failed to turn up with even a cent. What could we do next?

In the late spring of 1938, I had drafted what are now the first two chapters of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous". Mimeographed copies of these were used as part of the prospectus for our futile fund-raising operation. At Foundation meetings, then held nearly every month, our non-alcoholic friends commiserated on our lack of success. About half of the \$5,000 Mr. Rockefeller advanced had been used to lift the mortgage on Doctor Bob's home. The rest of it, divided between us, would of course soon be exhausted. The outlook was certainly bleak.

Then Frank Amos remembered his old time friend, Eugene Exman, Religious Editor at Harper's. He sent me to Harper's and I showed Mr. Exman two chapters of our proposed book. To my delight, Mr. Exman was impressed. He suggested that Harper's might advance me \$1500 in royalties to finish the job. Broke as we then were, that \$1500 looked like a pile of money.

Nevertheless our enthusiasm for this proposal quickly waned. With the book finished, we would be \$1500 in debt to Harper's. And if, as we hoped, A.A. then got a lot of publicity, how could we possibly hire the help to answer the flood of inquiries - maybe thousands!

There was another problem, too, a serious one. If our A.A. book became the basic text for Alcoholics Anonymous, its ownership would then be in other hands. It was evident that our Society ought to own and publish its own literature. No publisher, however good, ought to own our best asset.

Yet the moment this idea was broached, opposition rose on all sides. We were told that amateurs should never go into the publishing business. They almost never succeeded, it was claimed. But a few of us continued to think otherwise. We had discovered that the printing cost of a book is only a fraction of its retail price. If our Society grew, so would the book sales. With such a big profit margin, real money would surely come in. (Of course we conveniently forgot all the other heavy costs of book production and distribution!) So went the debate. But the opposition lost out because the Foundation had no money and wasn't likely to get any, that we could see. That was the clincher.

So two of us went ahead. A friend and I bought a pad of blank stock certificates and wrote on them "Works Publishing, par value \$25." My friend, Hank P., and I then offered shares in the new book company to alcoholics and their friends in New York. They just laughed at us. Who would buy stock, they said, in a book not yet written!

Somehow, these timid buyers had to be persuaded, so we went to the Reader's Digest and told the managing editor the story of our budding Society and its proposed book.

He liked the notion very much and promised that in the spring of 1939, when we thought that the book would be ready, the Digest would print a piece about A.A., of course mentioning the new book.

This was the sales argument we needed. With a plug like that, the proposed volume would sell by carloads. How could we miss? The New York alcoholics and their friends promptly changed their minds about Works Publishing stock. They began to buy it, mostly on installments. Our biggest subscriber put in \$300. In the end we scraped up forty-nine contributors. They came up with about \$4500 over the next nine months. We also got a loan of \$2500 from Charles B. Towns, proprietor of the hospital where I had often gone. This kept friend Hank, myself and a secretary named Ruth, going until the job was finished.

Ruth typed away as I slowly dictated the chapters of the text for the new book. Fierce argument over these drafts and what ought to go into them featured New York and Akron Group meetings for months on end. I became much more of an umpire than I ever was an author. Meanwhile, the alcoholics at Akron, New York, and a couple at Cleveland, began writing their personal stories - twenty-eight in all. Out West, Dr. Bob was much helped in assembling these tales by a newspaperman member, Jim S. Here at New York, Hank and I kept prodding the amateur story writers on.

When the book project neared completion, we visited the managing editor of the Digest and asked for the promised article. He gave us a blank look, scarcely remembering who we were. Then the blow fell. He told how months before he had put our proposition to the Digest Editorial Board and how it had been turned down flat. With profuse apologies, he admitted he'd plumb forgot to let us know anything about it. This was a crusher.

Meanwhile, we had optimistically ordered 5,000 copies of the new book, largely on a shoestring. The printer had relied on the Reader's Digest too. Soon there would be 5,000 books in his warehouse and no customers.

The book finally appeared in April, 1939. We got The New York Times to do a review and Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick supplied us with another really good one, but nothing happened. The book simply didn't sell. We were in debt up to our ears. The sheriff appeared at the Newark office where we had been working, and the landlord sold the house where Lois and I lived. She and I were dumped into the street and then onto the charity of A.A. friends. We thought the printer, the Cornwall Press, might take over the book. But Edward Blackwell, the President, would have none of that. He continued to have faith in us, quite inexplicably. But certain of the alcoholic stock subscribers didn't share his faith. Sometimes they used strong words, not in the least complimentary. Such was the sorry state of our publishing venture.

How we got through the summer of 1939, I'll never quite know. Hank had to get a job. The faithful Ruth accepted shares in the defunct book company as pay. One A.A. friend supplied us with his summer camp; another with a car. We canvassed magazine publishers in a strenuous effort to get something printed about our Society and its new book.

The first break came in September 1939. Liberty Magazine, then headed by our great friend-to-be, Fulton Oursler, carried an article, "Alcoholics and God", written by Morris Markey.

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There was an instant response. About 800 letters from alcoholics and their families poured in. Ruth answered every one of them, enclosing a leaflet about the new book, "Alcoholics Anonymous". Slowly, the book began to sell. Then the Cleveland Plain Dealer ran a series of pieces about Alcoholics Anonymous. At once the Cleveland Groups mushroomed from a score into many hundreds of members. More books sold. Thus we inched and squeezed our way through that perilous year.

We hadn't heard a thing from Mr. Rockefeller since early in 1938. But in February of 1940, he put in a dramatic appearance. His friend, Mr. Richardson, came to a Trustee meeting, smiling broadly. Mr. Rockefeller, he said, wanted to give Alcoholics Anonymous a dinner. The invitation list showed an imposing collection of notables. We figured them to be collectively worth at least a billion dollars. Mr. Richardson told how John D. Jr. had been watching our progress with deep satisfaction and now wanted to lend a hand. Our money troubles were over - so we thought.

The dinner came off the following month at New York's Union League Club. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick spoke in praise of us and so did Dr. Foster Kennedy, the eminent neurologist. Then Doctor Bob and I briefed the audience on A.A. Akron and New York alcoholics scattered among the notables at the tables responded to questions. The gathering showed a rising warmth and interest. This was it, we thought; our money problems were solved.

To speak for his father, who was ill, Mr. Nelson Rockefeller then rose to his feet. His father was very glad, he said, that those at the dinner had seen the promising beginning of the new Society of Alcoholics Anonymous. Seldom, Nelson continued, had his father shown more interest in anything. But obviously, since A.A. was a work of pure good will, one man carrying the good news to the next, little or no money would be required. At this sally, our spirits fell. When Mr. Nelson Rockefeller had finished, the whole billion dollars worth of capitalists got up and walked out, leaving not a nickel behind them.

Next day, Mr. John D. Rockefeller Jr. wrote to all those who had attended and even to those who had not. Again he reiterated his complete confidence and high interest. Once more he insisted that little or no money was needed. Then, at the very end of his letter, he casually remarked that he was giving Alcoholics Anonymous \$1,000!

When the public read the press stories about Mr. Rockefeller's dinner, many rushed to the bookstores to buy the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous". The Foundation Trustees solicited the dinner guests for contributions. Knowing the size of Mr. Rockefeller's gift, they acted accordingly. About \$3,000 came in, a donation which, as things turned out, we solicited and continued to receive for just four years more.

Only much later did we realize what Mr. Rockefeller had really done for us. At risk of personal ridicule, he had stood up before the whole world to put in a plug for a tiny society of struggling alcoholics. For these unknowns, he'd gone 'way out on a limb. Wisely sparing of his money, he had given freely of himself. Then and there John D. Rockefeller saved us from the perils of property management and professionalism. He couldn't have done more.

As a result, A.A.'s 1940 membership jumped sharply to about 2,000 at the year's end.

Doctor Bob and I each began to receive \$30 a week out of the dinner contributions. This eased us greatly. Lois and I went to live in a tiny room at A.A.'s number one clubhouse, 334½ W. 24th Street.

Best of all, the increased book sales had made a National Headquarters possible. We moved from 17 William Street, Newark, New Jersey, where the A.A. book had been written, to 30 Vesey Street, just north of the Wall Street district of New York. We took a modest two-room office right opposite the downtown Church Street Annex Post Office. There the famous Box 658 was ready and waiting to receive the thousands of frantic inquiries that would presently come into it. At this point, Ruth Hock (though a non-alcoholic), became A.A.'s first National Secretary and I turned into a sort of Headquarters handyman.

Through the whole of 1940, book sales were the sole support of the struggling New York office. Every cent of these earnings went to pay for A.A. work done there. All requests for help were answered with warm personal letters. When alcoholics or their families showed continued interest, we kept on writing. Aided by such letters and the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous", new A.A. groups had begun to take form.

More importantly, we had lists of prospects in many cities and towns of the United States and Canada. We turned these lists over to A.A. traveling business men, members of already established groups. With these traveling couriers, we corresponded constantly, and they started still more groups. For the further benefit of these travelers, we put out a group Directory.

Then came an unexpected activity. Because the newborn groups saw only a little of their traveling sponsors, they turned to the New York office for help with their innumerable troubles. By mail we re-tailed the experience of the older centers on to them. A little later, as we shall see, this became a major activity.

Meanwhile, some of the stockholders in the book company, Works Publishing, began to get restive. All the book profits, they complained, were going for A.A. work in the office. When, if ever, were they going to get their money back? We had to find a way, too, of paying Mr. Towns his \$2500. We also saw that the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous", should now become the property of A.A. as a whole. At the moment, it was owned one-third by the forty-nine subscribers, one-third by my friend Hank and the remainder by me.

As a first step, we had the book company, Works Publishing, audited and legally incorporated. Hank and I donated our shares in it to the Alcoholic Foundation. This was the stock that we had taken for services rendered. But the forty-nine other subscribers had put in real money. They, and Mr. Towns, would have to be paid cash. But where on earth could we get the money?

The help we needed turned up in the person of Mr. A. LeRoy Chipman. Also a friend and associate of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, he had recently been made a Trustee of the Foundation. He persuaded Mr. Rockefeller, two of his sons and some of the dinner guests to loan the Foundation \$8,000. This promptly paid off Mr. Charles B. Towns, settled some incidental debts, and permitted the reacquisition of the outstanding stock. Two years later, the book "Alcoholics Anonymous" had done so well that we were able to pay off this whole loan.

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Impressed with this considerable show of financial responsibility, Mr. Rockefeller, his sons and some of the 1940 dinner guests, gave half the money they'd lent us back to the Foundation.

These were the transactions that put the book "Alcoholics Anonymous" in trust for our whole Society. Through its Foundation, A.A. now owned its basic textbook, subject only to royalties payable to Dr. Bob and me. Since the book income was still the sole support of our Headquarters, the Trustees quite naturally assumed the management of the A.A. office at Vesey Street. A.A.'s structure of world service had even then commenced to take on form and substance.

The spring 1941 brought us a ten-strike. The Saturday Evening Post decided to do a piece about Alcoholics Anonymous. It assigned one of its star writers, Jack Alexander, to the job. Having just done an article on the Jersey rackets, Jack approached us somewhat tongue-in-cheek. But he soon became an A.A. "convert," even though he wasn't an alcoholic. Working early and late, he spent a whole month with us. Dr. Bob and I and elders of the early groups at Akron, New York, Cleveland, Philadelphia and Chicago spent uncounted hours with him. When he could feel A.A. in the very marrow of his bones, he proceeded to write the piece that rocked drunks and their families all over the nation. It was the lead story in the Saturday Evening Post of March 1st, 1941.

Came then the deluge. Frantic appeals from alcoholics and their families - six thousand of them - hit the New York office, P. O. Box 658. At first, we pawed at random through the mass of letters, laughing and crying by turns. How could this heartbreaking mail be answered? It was a cinch that Ruth and I could never do it alone. Form letters wouldn't be enough. Every single one must have an understanding personal reply.

So volunteers with typewriters came to New York's old 24th Street club. They knew nothing of "selling" A.A. by mail, and naturally enough, they weakened in the face of the avalanche. Nothing but full time paid help could possibly meet this emergency. Yet the A.A. book income would never pay the bill. Again we asked, what would we use for money?

Maybe the A.A. groups themselves would help. Though we'd never asked anything of them before, this was surely their business, if it was anybody's. An enormous Twelfth Step job had to be done and done quickly. These appeals must never hit the waste basket. Money, we had to have.

So we told the Groups the story and they responded. The measuring stick for voluntary contribution was at that time set at \$1.00 per member per year. The Trustees of the Foundation agreed to look after these funds, placing them in a special bank account, ear-marking them for A.A. office work only. While the first returns weren't up to full expectation, they proved to be enough. The A.A. office took on two full time workers and, weeks later, we caught up.

But this was only a starter. Soon the pins on our office wall map showed A.A. groups springing up like mushrooms. Most of them had no experienced guidance whatever. Their worries and problems were endless. Moochers mooched, lonely hearts pined, committees quarrelled, new clubs had unheard-of headaches, orators held forth, groups split wide open,



members turned professional, selling A.A. by the copy, sometimes whole groups got drunk, local public relations went haywire - such was our truly frightening experience.

Then the amazing story got around that the Foundation, the New York office and the book "Alcoholics Anonymous" were nothing but another racket for which John D. Rockefeller had foolishly fallen. This was just about the limit!

We had thought we'd proved that A.A. could sober up alcoholics, but we were certainly a long way from proving that alcoholics could work together or even stay sober under these new and fantastic conditions.

How could A.A. stay whole, and how could it ever function? Those were the anxious questions of our adolescence. It was to take another ten years of terrific experience to provide the sure answers that we have today.

We had started the year 1941 with 2,000 members, but we finished with 8,000. This was the measure of the great impact of the Saturday Evening Post piece. But this was only the beginning of uncounted thousands of pleas for help from individuals and from growing groups all over the world that have continued to flow into General Service Headquarters to this day.

This phenomenal expansion brought another problem, a very important one. The national spotlight now being on us, we had to begin dealing with the public on a large scale. Public ill-will could stunt our growth, even bring it to a standstill. But enthusiastic public confidence could swell our ranks to numbers of which we had only dreamed before. The Post piece had proved this. It was not only a big problem, it was a delicate one. Blunders that aroused prejudice could cost lives. A carefully thought out public relations policy had to be formed and put into operation.

Of highest importance would be our relations with medicine and with religion. Under no circumstances must we get into competition with either. If we appeared to be a new religious sect, we'd certainly be done for. And if we moved into the medical field, as such, the result would be the same. So we began to emphasize heavily the fact that A.A. was a way of life that conflicted with no one's religious belief. We told the doctors how much we needed hospitalization, and we urged upon psychiatrists and drying-out places the advantages of co-operating with us. At all times, religion would be the province of clergymen, and the practice of medicine would be for doctors. As laymen, we were only supplying a much-needed missing link.

Maintained over the years since, these attitudes have brought heart-warming results. Today we have the unqualified support of nearly every religious denomination. Most medical practitioners who really understand A.A. send their alcoholic patients to us. A.A. members frequently speak before religious gatherings and medical societies. Likewise, the men of medicine and religion are often seen at A.A.'s large open meetings.

Important as they are, medicine and religion proved to be only a fraction of the total public relations field. How could we best cooperate with press, radio, motion pictures and, more recently,

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television? How would we deal with employers who wanted special help? What would be the right attitude toward the field of education, research and rehabilitation, private and public? What would we say to prisons and hospitals that wanted A.A. groups within their walls? What were we to say to A.A.'s who went into some of these fields and were tempted to capitalize the A.A. name publicly for advertising or fund-raising? What would we say or do if A.A. were ever publicly exploited, defamed or attacked by outsiders? Right answers and workable solutions to all these and many more such problems would have to be found or else A.A. would suffer.

Finding the right answers to all these public relations puzzlers has been a long process. After much trial and error, sometimes punctuated by painful mistakes, the attitudes and practices that would work best for us emerged. The important ones can today be seen in the A.A. Tradition. One hundred per cent anonymity at the public level, no use of the A.A. name for the benefit of other causes however worthy, no endorsements or alliances, one single purpose for Alcoholics Anonymous, no professionalism, public relations by the principle of attraction rather than promotion - these were some of the hard-learned lessons.

Thus, our Board of Trustees and the Headquarters office became the focal point around which the A.A. Tradition was formed. By 1945, order had come out of what had been a chaotic public relations situation. On all sides, the leadership of our society asked for the experience and guidance of the New York office in these matters. So much success attended these efforts that the average A.A. member has always taken our excellent public relations record for granted. That was natural since these services were largely invisible to him. Nevertheless, this unseen public relations activity has surely been responsible for much of A.A.'s unbelievable growth.

Thus far in our Society story, we have seen the Foundation, the A.A. book, the development of pamphlet literature, the answered mass of pleas for help, the satisfied need of groups for counsel on their problems, the beginning of our wonderful relations with the public, all becoming part of a growing Service to the whole world of A.A. At last, our society really began to function as a whole.

But the 1941-1945 period brought still more developments of significance. The Vesey Street office was moved to 415 Lexington Avenue, just opposite the famed Grand Central Terminal. Our new Post Office Box became 459, Grand Central Annex, New York. We made this move because the need for serving the many A.A. travelers through New York had become urgent. The moment we located near Grand Central, we were besieged with visitors who, for the first time, began to see Alcoholics Anonymous as a vision for the whole globe. These were only the vanguard of thousands of A.A.'s, their families, their friends, their clergymen, their doctors and their employers who have since visited the New York Headquarters.

Leaving the imprint of her devotion upon our society for all time, Ruth had left, in 1941, to be married. She was followed at the office by an A.A. member, Bobbie B., one whose immense industry was to acquaint her with uncounted thousands of A.A.'s during a period of almost ten years. Her's was to be a signal service in the exciting time of A.A.'s adolescence, when no one could be sure whether we could function or even hang together at all.

The expansion of Alcoholics Anonymous soon became nothing less than staggering. Reaching out into Canada, the U. S. possessions and numbers of foreign lands, we got under full swing. This foreign development brought us a whole new set of dilemmas to solve. Each new beachhead had to go through its flying blind and its pioneering period just as we had done in the United States. We ran into language barriers, so more and more of our pamphlet literature was translated into other tongues.

Then too, our foreign friends raised new and special doubts. Maybe A.A. was just a Yankee gadget that would be no good for Ireland, England, Holland, Scandinavia, Australia and the Pacific. Since their countries were so different, the alcoholics must be different too. Would A.A. work in their "cultures", they asked.

Again, we resorted to heavy correspondence. Sometimes we were helped by American members who could translate for us. We searched out and briefed A.A. travelers going abroad. By these means, we gradually made some headway. But it was long indeed before we knew that A.A. could surely cross all barriers of distance, race, creed or language. Nevertheless, the A.A. map shows us today in more than fifty countries and U.S. possessions. This is answer enough. We now know it is only a question of time when every alcoholic in the world will have as good a chance to stay alive and happy as we have had here in America. Serving the foreign groups has therefore become a major activity, though we've scarcely scratched the total problem so far. If A.A.'s Headquarters had never done anything else, this effort alone would be worth many times its cost.

Since A.A. was growing so fast, Headquarters had to grow too. The group contributions and our bulging literature sales soon demanded a full time bookkeeper. Letter and Kardex files began to appear in rows. The Group Directory began to look like a suburban telephone book. More alcoholic Secretaries were engaged. As they divided the work between them, departments began to be created. Today's office has a good many - group, foreign and public relations, A.A. Conference and office management, mailing, packing, accounting, stenographic and special service to prisons and hospitals.

Happily, though, the office did not have to grow as fast as A.A. did. The bill would never have been paid if it had. A.A. was getting so big that we couldn't possibly educate all its members on what we were doing. Therefore, many groups failed to help us at all. Less than half of them contributed anything. We had constant deficits which, luckily, could be plugged up with money from the sale of the Big Book, "Alcoholics Anonymous". That book was not only saving alcoholics, it repeatedly saved the Headquarters too!

The year 1944 unfolded another development of immense value. Down in Greenwich Village, a few literary, news-minded A.A.'s began to issue a monthly publication. They called it The Grapevine. It was by no means the first local A.A. bulletin or magazine. But, from the start, it was such a fine job that it caught on nationally. After a time, it became the mirror of A.A. thought and action, country-wide. It was a magic carpet on which all of us could travel from one distant A.A. out-post to another. It became a wonderful exchange of our current thought and experience.

But the Grapevine founders, after a while, discovered they

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had a bear by the tail. It was always fun to get in the material and edit the pieces. But licking all those postage stamps and mailing thousands of copies became impossible for them.

So the Grapeviners came to the Foundation and asked that we take over. The Trustees inquired of the groups if they would like to make the Grapevine their national magazine. The answer came back an emphatic "Yes". Forthwith, the journal was incorporated as "The A.A. Grapevine, Inc." Foundation Trustees were then seated on its Board, along with the editors. Funds from the Foundation Reserve took up a mounting deficit and, of course, the necessary special workers were hired. But the editors and their successors have continued to serve as volunteers without pay to this day. In ten years, the subscriptions, coming from all over the world, jumped to 30,000. In this fashion, still another Headquarters World Service was born and has grown.

As early as 1945, mediating and giving suggestions by mail for the solution of group problems had put a tremendous volume of work on Headquarters. With most of the metropolitan A.A. centers, correspondence files had grown six inches thick. Seemingly, every contestant in every group argument at every point of the compass wrote us in this period.

It was chiefly from this correspondence, and from our mounting public relations activity, that the basic ideas for the Tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous came. In late 1945, a good A.A. friend suggested that all this mass of experience might be codified into a set of general principles, principles simply stated which could offer tested solutions to all of A.A.'s problems of living and working together and of relating our society to the world outside.. If we had become sure enough of where we stood on such matters as membership, group autonomy, singleness of purpose, non-endorsement of other enterprises, professionalism, public controversy, and anonymity in its several aspects, then such a code of principles could be written. Such a traditional code could not, of course, ever become rule or law. But it could act as a sure guide for our Trustees, Headquarters people and, most especially, for A.A. groups with bad growing pains. Being at the center of things, we of the Headquarters would have to do the job. Aided by my helpers there, I set to work. The Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous which resulted were first published in the so-called "long form" in the Grapevine of May 6, 1946. Then I wrote some more pieces explaining the Traditions in detail. These came out in later issues of the Grapevine.

Meanwhile, at the Foundation, we had taken another significant action that was forthwith imbedded in these Traditions. In 1945, we had written Mr. Rockefeller and the 1940 dinner guests that we would no longer need their financial help. Book royalties would look after Dr. Bob and me; group contributions would pay the General Office expenses. Since that day when we declared for self support, the A.A. Headquarters has steadily refused "outside" contributions.

The first reception of the Traditions was interesting and amusing. The reaction was mixed, to say the least. Only groups in dire trouble took them seriously. From some quarters there was a violent reaction, especially from groups that had long lists of "protective" rules and regulations. There was much apathetic indifference. Several of our "intellectual" members cried loudly that the Traditions reflected nothing more than the sum of my own hopes and fears for Alcoholics Anonymous.

Therefore I began to travel and talk a lot about the new Traditions. People were at first politely attentive, though it must be confessed that some did go to sleep during my early harangues. But after a while, I got letters containing sentiments like this: "Bill, we'd love to have you come and speak. Do tell us where you used to hide your bottles and all about that big, hot-flash spiritual experience of yours. But for Heaven's sake, please don't talk any more about those damned Traditions!"

But time presently changed all that. Only five years later, several thousand A.A. members, meeting at the 1950 Cleveland Convention, declared that A.A.'s Traditions, by then stated in the now familiar short form, constituted the platform upon which our Fellowship could best function and hold together in unity for all time to come. They saw that the Twelve Traditions were going to be as necessary to the life of our society as the Twelve Steps were to the life of each member. The A.A. Traditions were, the Cleveland Convention thought, the key to the unity, the function and even the survival of us all.

Of course I realized that I had not been the actual author of the Traditions. I had merely mirrored principles which had already been hammered out on thousands of anvils of A.A. group experience. It was clear too that A.A.'s General Headquarters, its Trustees and its Staff had made the forging of these vital principles possible. Had there been no A.A. Headquarters to bring our problems into focus, the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous could never have been written.

By this time, A.A. had found still more favor in the world of medicine. Two of the great medical associations of America did an unprecedented thing. In the year 1944, the Medical Society of the State of New York invited me to read a paper at its annual meeting. Following the reading, three of the many physicians present stood up and gave A.A. their highest endorsement. These were Dr. Harry Tiebout, A.A.'s first friend in the psychiatric profession, Dr. Kirby Collier, also a psychiatrist friend and an early advocate of A.A., and Dr. Foster Kennedy, the world-renowned neurologist. The Medical Society itself then went still further. They permitted us to print my paper and the recommendations of these three doctors in pamphlet form. Very large numbers of this pamphlet have since been distributed all over the world, carrying the assurance to doctors everywhere that A.A. is medically sound.

In 1949, the American Psychiatric Association did exactly the same thing. I read a paper at its annual meeting in Montreal. The paper was carried in the American Journal of Psychiatry, and we were permitted to reprint it. It is today available in pamphlet form as "Alcoholism the Illness". This greatly increased our standing with the psychiatric profession everywhere. These medical papers have served the foreign groups especially well, saving them the years of time that were required here in America to persuade physicians of A.A.'s worth.

While on the topic of medicine, the part Headquarters has played in the field of hospitalization ought to be reviewed.

As all of us know, many hospitals have been reluctant to take us in for the short periods of treatment we usually need, granting our sponsors the necessary visiting privileges and cooperating with our area Intergroup Association.

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needs and afforded shining examples of how medicine and A.A. could co-operate. At St. Thomas Hospital at Akron, Dr. Bob, the wonderful Sister Ignatia and the hospital's staff presided over an alcoholic ward that had ministered to 5,000 alcoholics by the time Dr. Bob passed away in 1950. At New York, Knickerbocker Hospital provided a ward under the care of our first friend in medicine. Dr. William Duncan Silkworth, where he was assisted by a red-headed A.A. nurse known as Teddy. By 1954, 10,000 alcoholics had been referred to Knickerbocker by the New York Intergroup and had passed through this ward, the majority on their road to freedom. It was in these two hospitals and by these pioneering people that the best techniques of combining medicine and A.A. were worked out.

Since proper hospitalization was, and still is, one of A.A.'s greatest problems, the New York Headquarters has retained this early hospital experience, along with the many subsequent developments and ramifications, to groups all over the world - still another very vital Service.

Meantime, too, the great tide of public approval continued to sweep in. Nothing contributed so much to this as did our friends of the press, radio and, in recent times, television. Long since, the Headquarters office had subscribed to several clipping services. Magazine articles and a never-ending deluge of news stories about us continued to feed the Headquarters scrapbooks. Writers asked us to check their manuscripts; members were helped to appear anonymously on radio and TV programs. Hollywood wanted to do motion pictures. Making arrangements for public relations became more than ever a primary effort of the New York Office. How many lives all this saved, how many years of misery were averted for thousands of alcoholics and their families, only God knows.

About this time a serious threat to our long time welfare made its appearance. Usually meaning well, members began breaking their anonymity all over the place. Sometimes they wanted to use the A.A. name to advertise and help other causes. Others just wanted their names and pictures in the papers. Being photographed with the Governor would really help A.A., they thought. (I'd earlier been guilty of this, too.) But at last we saw the appalling risk to A.A. if all our power-drivers got loose at the public level. Already scores of them were doing it.

So Headquarters got to work. We wrote remonstrances, kind ones of course, to every breaker. We even sent letters to nearly all press and radio outlets, explaining why A.A.'s shouldn't break their anonymity before the public. Nor, we added, did A.A. solicit money: we paid our own bills.

In a few years the public anonymity-breakers were squeezed down to a handful - thus another valuable Headquarters' Service had gone into action.

To maintain all these ever-lengthening Service lifelines, the office had to go on expanding. In 1950, we moved to 141 E. 44th Street, still close to Grand Central. Today, it has the "Do It Now" Henry G., as part time Manager, and the five fine Staff Secretaries, Helen\*, Lib, Marian, Eve and Ann have been seen and heard by thousands

\*Helen resigned to be married in 1955. And I here record our thanks to all those others who have previously served at A.A. Headquarters. Our newest staff member is Hazel.

on speaking trips, often requested by large regional meetings. On its service staff, twelve non-alcoholics, sparked by Grace and Dennis, look after the office routines of bookkeeping, filing and stenography. The enthusiastic receptionist, Dolores, presides over the outer office. There the visitor sees the walls covered with sectional maps showing the world-wide stretch of our Fellowship. On a table stands a Winged Victory, symbol of the noted Lasker Award given to A.A. by the American Public Health Association in 1951.

The editorial offices of the Grapevine are on the same floor. Here, volunteer editors headed by Don G. meet with a full time Assistant to the Editor, Louise, and her own assistant, Sarah, to hit the monthly deadline. Further downtown, where rents are cheaper, there is a large floor space where Kitty and her staff look after the Grapevine's 30,000 subscribers and their needs - as well as their complaints!

Three blocks away from the main office, we have a good-sized loft space where all our shipping and mailing is done. Six busy young lads do nothing but this. Last year, they shipped about 40,000 books, hundreds of thousands of pamphlets, many of these newly designed and brought out, largely the work of Ralph B., our consultant on pamphlet literature. They mailed about 30,000 letters and bulletins and did huge quantities of mimeographing. Like our three other offices, this place has the best of modern equipment - and needs it!

Down one side of the long packing room, there are shelves reaching to the ceiling. On these can be found, boxed up, tons of the old files of our Headquarters, going clear back to the old days at Vesey Street. The whole world story of A.A. is hidden in these boxes, waiting only to be dug out. In fact, we have just begun this two-year job. In a partitioned-off corner office near those files, I now have two tireless assistants, Ed and Nell, researching the history of Alcoholics Anonymous, as well as doing much other essential editorial work. I hope the day will come when I shall be able to write our history. In any case it is now sure that the story of A.A. can never become distorted. Such is our newest vital service.

No description of our World Services would be complete without full acknowledgment of all that has been contributed by our non-alcoholic Trustees. Over the years they have given an incredible amount of time and effort; their's has been a true labor of love. Their's too has been the wisdom that has caused our affairs to make financial sense, and often in times of heated debate they have avoided the rash decisions that we volatile alcoholics would surely have made. Some of them like Mr. Jack Alexander, Mr. Fulton Oursler, Mr. Leonard Harrison, our former longtime chairman, and our devoted present chairman, Mr. Bernard Smith, have given much in their special fields of literature, social service, finance and law. Their example is being followed by more recent newcomers, such as Mr. Frank Gulden, Dr. John Norris and Mr. Archibald Roosevelt. The special contributions of Dr. Leonard Strong, Mr. Willard Richardson, Mr. A. LeRoy Chipman and Mr. Frank Amos have been noted earlier in this narrative.

Money-wise, our present array of Services may look like big business to some. But when we think of the size and reach of A.A. today, that isn't true at all. In 1940, for example, we had one paid worker to every 1,000 A.A.'s; in 1947, one paid worker to every 3,000 A.A.'s. Today, one paid Headquarters worker serves 6,000 A.A.'s. It therefore seems sure that we shall never be burdened with a bureaucratic and

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Here's another illustration of how really small, physically and financially, our Headquarters world operation really is. An A.A. friend of mine owns a garage, filling station and a small car agency in a suburban town. His building is a hundred feet long and fifty feet wide, about the same total floor space that we have at Headquarters. His showroom holds only two cars for exhibit. His mechanics do repairs out back, and, in front, stand four gas pumps. This is hardly big business.

Yet my friend tells me that on car sales, repairs, gas and oil, his business takes in and pays out more money yearly than A.A.'s whole World Headquarters, the A.A. Grapevine, A.A. Publishing and the A.A. General Service Office all put together.

Therefore, our Headquarters is hardly big business either. My friend's garage serves a small community; but A.A.'s Headquarters serves 150,000 members and nearly 6,000 Groups. And these services, well maintained, will continue to make the difference between sickness and health, even life or death, to uncounted alcoholics and their families who haven't yet found A.A. So let's now have an end to all that talk of big expense and big business at the New York Headquarters.

When we first opened for business at Vesey Street, \$1.00 per member per year was required to do the over-all job. But at that time, a dollar was a dollar. Today, a dollar is only fifty cents in purchasing power. If A.A.'s present membership actually sent us a dollar a piece every year, we would still have enough funds to run our Headquarters in spite of the present inflation. And we could pay all expenses of the General Service Conference besides. But we still have to ask our contributing Groups to give two dollars per member per year for the distressing reason that only about half of A.A.'s Groups support their World Headquarters. In fact Group voluntary contributions have fully paid office expenses in only about half of the last fifteen years. That Headquarters reserve of "book money" has had to foot all these deficits. This is not the fault of the Groups. We have grown so fast that the average member has lost touch, and does not understand his World Headquarters and what it does. So I deeply hope that this picture of mine, plus the great work the Conference Delegates and Committeemen are now doing will be graphic enough to arouse in non-contributors a continuing desire to help. Indeed, I'm certain that it will.

Until 1951 our Headquarters was constantly over-hung with an even greater threat to its existence. While this danger still loomed, and if the problem it posed wasn't solved, our whole World Service structure might someday have wound up in complete collapse.

The danger was this: During our infancy and adolescence, the Board of Trustees, all friends of Dr. Bob and mine, had been entirely responsible for the conduct of A.A.'s services, services which had accounted for at least half the size of Alcoholics Anonymous and for much of its unity. As early as 1945, some of us felt that our virtually unknown Board of Trustees had to be securely linked to A.A. None but a trifling fraction of our membership even knew who their Trustees were. The main linkage of Headquarters to the movement was through Dr. Bob and me, and we were perishable. The Board of Trustees had become an isolated island in the middle of a fellowship sprawled through fifty-two countries.

Hence, we began to debate the desirability of some sort of an advisory board of A.A.'s; or, maybe we needed a Conference of larger numbers elected by A.A. itself; people who would inspect Headquarters yearly, a body to whom the Trustees could become responsible, a guiding conscience of our whole world effort.

But the objections to this were persistent and nothing happened for several years. Such a venture, it was said, would be expensive. And worse still, it might plunge A.A. into disruptive political activity when Conference Delegates were elected. These objections had considerable merit. Therefore, the whole project hung fire until about 1948. But by this time, group contributions nowhere near supported the growing A.A. office. In a portion of this period the Grapevine was losing \$1,000 a month, and voluntary contributions for office expenses were sometimes in the frightening arrears of \$2,000 a month.

Then Dr. Bob fell ill, mortally ill. Finally, in 1950, spurred on by the relentless logic of the situation, the Trustees authorized Dr. Bob and me to devise the plan with which this booklet deals. It was a plan for a General Service Conference of A.A., a plan by which our society could assume full and permanent responsibility for the conduct of its most vital affairs.

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Nevertheless it was one thing to say that we ought to have a General Service Conference, but it was quite another to devise a plan which would bring it into successful existence. The cost of holding such a Conference was easily dismissed. Even though the outlay might be \$20,000 for each yearly session, this would be only fifteen cents a-piece extra for each A.A. member, and mighty well worth it. What member wouldn't give that much to be sure that A. A. didn't collapse at its center in some future day of great need or crisis?

But how on earth were we going to cut down destructive politics with all its usual struggles for prestige and vainglory? How many delegates would be required and from where should they come? Arrived at New York, how could they be related to the Board of Trustees? What would be their actual powers and duties? Whatever the plan, it had to be sound enough to work well on the first trial. No blunders big enough to create a fiasco could be allowed.

With these several weighty considerations in mind, and with some misgivings, I commenced work on a draft of a plan, much assisted by Helen B. of the office Staff.

Though the Conference might be later enlarged to include the whole world, we felt that the first Delegates should come from the U.S. and Canada only. Each State and Province might be allowed one Delegate. Those containing heavy A.A. populations could have additional representatives. To give the Conference continuity, the delegates could be divided into panels. Panel One, elected for two years, would be invited for 1951, the first year. Panel Two, elected for two years, would be seated in 1952. Thereafter, one panel would be elected and one would be retired yearly. This would cause the Conference to rotate. The election of State and Provincial Committeemen and Delegates could take place at large centers of population within each state and Province. Or, to save expense, such Assemblies of Group Representatives could be held at annual State or Provincial Conventions.

But how could Assemblies of Group Representatives choose their Committeemen and Delegates without terrific political friction? As veterans of many a group hassle and intergroup brawl, we shivered. Then came a happy thought. We remembered that the usual election troubles were often caused by personal nominations, whether from the floor or from some committee issuing from a back room. Another main cause of trouble was to be seen in close elections, hotly contested. These nearly always left a large and discontented minority. So we devised the scheme of choosing Committeemen out of Group Assemblies by written ballot, with no personal nominations at all. The Committee would then be placed in front of the Assembly, which could then elect from it the Delegate to the New York Conference.

But, sure enough, this was going to be the hottest spot of all! How could we pull the inevitable election pressure down? To accomplish this, it was provided that a Delegate must receive a two-thirds vote for election. If a Delegate got a majority of this size, nobody could kick much. But if he or she didn't, and the election was close, what then? Well, perhaps the names of the two highest in the running, or the three officers of the Committee, or even the whole Committee

could be put in a hat. One name would be drawn. The winner of this painless lottery would become the Delegate. Since the high candidates in the running would all be good ones, we couldn't miss getting fine Delegates by this method.

But when these Delegates got to New York, what would they do there? We thought they would want to have real authority. So, in the Charter drawn for the Conference itself, it was provided that the Delegates could issue flat directions to the Trustees on a two-thirds vote. And even a simple majority vote would constitute a mighty strong suggestion. It would become traditional too for the Trustees, thereafter, to submit the names of all proposed Board members to the Conference for confirmation. This would give the Conference an effective voice in the selection of Trustees.

Along with a temporary plan for financing the Conference, we put these ideas and their detailed applications into a pamphlet called "The Third Legacy". We shipped about 50,000 of these documents to the groups and asked them to form Assemblies for the election of Committee-men and Delegates.

With Dr. Bob's approval, I stumped the country for the Third Legacy Plan, talking to large A.A. audiences and watching Assemblies select their Delegates in more than two dozen States and Provinces.

About a third of the Delegates chosen were real old timers. The rest were active A.A.'s, sober four to eight years. The large majority named were chosen by a two-thirds vote, only a few of the elections being decided by lot. And when these few were so chosen, there was never any hard feeling. It was tremendously encouraging.

The first Conference was set for April, 1951. In came the Delegates. They looked over Headquarters, cellar to garret, got acquainted with the Service Staff, shook hands with the Trustees. That evening, we gave them a briefing session, under the name of "What's on your mind?" We answered scores of questions of all kinds. The Delegates began to feel at home and reassured. Seeing so much quick understanding and increased confidence, our spirits rose. To a man, we sensed that something very big was happening. One strenuous Conference session followed after another. The Delegates inspected our finances with a microscope. After listening to reports from the Board of Trustees and from all the Services, there was warm but cordial debate on many a question of A.A. policy. The Trustees submitted several of their own serious problems for the opinion of the Conference.

So went session after session, morning, afternoon and evening. The Delegates handled several tough puzzlers about which we at Headquarters were in doubt, sometimes giving advice contrary to our own conclusions. In nearly every instance, we saw that they were right. Then and there they proved, as never before, that A.A.'s Tradition Two was correct. The Group Conscience could safely act as the sole authority and sure guide for Alcoholics Anonymous.

Nobody present will ever forget that final session of the first Conference. We knew that the impossible had happened, that A.A. could never break down in the middle, that Alcoholics Anonymous was at last safe from any storm the future might bring.

And, as the Delegates returned home, they carried this same conviction with them.

Realizing our need for funds and better literature circulation, some did place a little too much emphasis on this necessity; others were a little discouraged, wondering why fellow members did not take fire as they had. They forgot that they themselves had been eye witnesses to the Conferences and that their brother alcoholics hadn't. But, both here and at home, they made an impression much greater than they knew. The interest of great numbers of A.A. Groups commenced to deepen, something which has continued in all the four Conference years since.

In the midst of this exciting turn of affairs, the Conference agreed that the Alcoholic Foundation ought to be renamed as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, and this was done. The word "Foundation" stood for charity, paternalism and maybe big money. A.A. would have none of these; from here out we would assume full responsibility and pay our expenses ourselves.

As I watched all this grow, I became entirely sure that Alcoholics Anonymous was at last safe - even from me.

Nearly all of the last dozen years of my life have been invested in the construction of our General Headquarters. My heart is there, and always will be. A.A.'s Headquarters seems that important to me. When, therefore, the hour comes at St. Louis for me to turn over to you this last great asset of the A.A. inheritance, I shall feel not a little sad that I must no longer be your Headquarters handyman. But I shall rejoice that Alcoholics Anonymous has now grown up and, through its great Conference, can confidently take its destiny by the hand.

So, my dear friends, you now have read my final accounting to you for the World Services of Alcoholics Anonymous.

NOTE: For detailed descriptions of the Conference structure and operation, please see Part II which next follows.

## PART II

### MANUAL OF WORLD SERVICE: THE CONFERENCE PLAN

- SECTION I - How The Conference is Formed
- SECTION II - Composition of The Conference
- SECTION III - What The Conference Does
- SECTION IV - Group Representatives
- SECTION V - State and Provincial Assemblies
- SECTION VI - State and Provincial Committees
- SECTION VII - Delegates
- SECTION VIII - Assembly, Conference and General Headquarters Finances
- SECTION IX - The Conference Panels
- SECTION X - The Conference Charter

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## PART II

### MANUAL OF WORLD SERVICE:

#### THE CONFERENCE PLAN

While our Tradition provides that A.A., as such, shall always remain unorganized, it does however allow for the organization of Services so that A.A. can function and carry its message.

Therefore, Part II of this Manual is designed to show exactly how the General Service Conference is organized - how its members are chosen, what it does for A.A. as a whole and by what principles it operates under its Third Legacy Charter.

Of course, this Third Legacy Plan, originally authorized in 1950 by Dr. Bob and me, and to be confirmed at St. Louis in 1955, is purely suggestive and traditional. It is not a body of rules or law.

The next following section is a general outline of the Conference Plan showing its overall principles and functions from the Group level up to A.A.'s General Service Board of Trustees at New York.

With a general outline clearly in mind, the detailed picture of the Conference operation shown still further on, can be more easily seen.

Basic authorization for the General Service Conference.  
A.A.'s Tradition Two states that "For our Group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our Group Conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants - they do not govern."

This Tradition is the basic authorization for all of A.A.'s Services, whether for Groups, areas, or for A.A. as a whole.

The General Service Conference is, therefore, just the practical means by which A.A.'s Group Conscience can speak and put its desires for World Service into operation. It is the voice of World A.A. and the permanent guarantee that our World Services shall continue to function under all conditions.

In 1955, the General Service Conference will assume permanently this full responsibility, which, during the first twenty years of our society, had been the sole prerogative of A.A.'s founders, their Trustee friends and associates.

Therefore the General Service Conference is, in fact, the successor to the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous.

## SECTION I

### HOW THE CONFERENCE IS FORMED

1. Every two years, in each U.S. State and Canadian Province, all A.A. Groups desiring to participate in the Conference choose Group or General Service Representatives.

Trustees

#### Representatives

2. These General Service Representatives convene at selected cities within each State and Province.

3. These meetings are called Group Assemblies.

4. These Assemblies choose Delegates for two year terms who are sent to the General Service Conference, held annually in April, at New York City.

5. Each Assembly also chooses officers and Committeemen who assist the Delegate: (a) to ascertain Group opinion in the area; and (b) to help the returning Delegate to make his report of the Conference to the Groups.

6. Each State and Province is entitled to a minimum of one Assembly and one Delegate. Where A.A. population is large, additional Assemblies and Delegates are allotted. (See detailed Plan, page 48.)

7. In Assembly meetings, Committeemen are chosen by written ballot, thereby avoiding political friction. (See page 33.) From these Committeemen, the Conference Delegate to New York is elected (a) by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly; (b) failing to obtain a two-thirds majority, then by drawing lots among (1) the whole Committee, (2) the three officers, or (3) between the two highest in the balloting. This also avoids political trouble. (See page 36 for this Plan, and for its several adaptations to special localities.)

8. One-half of the States and Provinces hold Assemblies in the even years, the remaining half in odd years. This creates Panels One and Two of the Conference, causing it to be "rotating."

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At present, our World Services center at New York. Similar centers of World Services are someday indicated for other parts of the globe. When these take shape, the New York Conference and its Board of Trustees will be known as the North American Section of the General Service Conference and a small cross linkage of Delegates between the several Conferences can then be arranged. There should be no attempt to make New York the "World Capital of A.A." Ultimately, it will only be the Senior World Service Center because of its longer experience.

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## SECTION II

### COMPOSITION OF THE CONFERENCE

#### The relation of elected Delegates to the General Headquarters Trustees, Directors and Service Staff members:

1. A.A.'s World Service Headquarters at New York (earlier described herein) is operated, as of 1955, by the following classes and numbers of personnel:

- (a) The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, composed of fifteen Trustees meeting quarterly, in custodial charge of A.A. Headquarters. Eight are non-alcoholic, seven are alcoholics. Subject to Conference confirmation, they appoint their own successors. (This was formerly The Alcoholic Foundation.)
- (b) A.A. Publishing, Inc. Its seven directors are chosen by, and partly from, the General Service Board.
- (c) The A.A. General Service Office. The Chairman and five women Staff members, approved by the General Service Board.
- (d) The A.A. Grapevine, Inc. Its five directors are chosen: two by the General Service Board; and three by the Grapevine editor and his associates, subject to General Service Board approval.
- (e) The A.A. Grapevine Staff; the Assistant to the Editor and her Assistant, chosen by the Grapevine Board of Directors, and also the Circulation Manager.

It should be here noted that the actual or beneficial ownership of A.A. Publishing, Inc. and The A.A. Grapevine, Inc. is in the hands of the custodial General Service Board.

All of the appointed personnel named above, Trustees, Directors, and Staff, are voting members of the General Service Conference at its Annual Meeting. This is because of their knowledge of A.A. and the Headquarters. At present - 1955 - these members are twenty-nine in number.

Since the elected Conference Delegates number seventy-five at present, the ratio of the elected to the appointed in the Conference is 75 to 29, or about three to one. This gives the Delegates abundant voting control.

By Charter provision (see page 54) it is agreed, as a matter of Tradition, that a majority vote of the Conference shall be a suggestion to the General Service Board but that a two-thirds vote shall be

absolutely binding upon the Board and the Headquarters, regardless of legal considerations.

The Conference itself is unincorporated. But the General Service Board is incorporated and so is A.A. Publishing and the A.A. Grapevine; this is necessary, of course, for the handling of funds and the conduct of business. Nevertheless, the Conference is actually in control because it could always, in a pinch, shut off Group contributions to the Headquarters and no doubt could, in actual practice, force whatever resignations might be deemed necessary, should a reorganization of the General Service Board ever become desirable.

Such is the practical balance of duties, responsibilities and powers, as they stand in the A.A. General Service Conference today. Though these arrangements can, of course, be changed by Conference action, we have every reason from experience to believe that they are approximately correct and can stand all future strains. (See Conference Charter page 54.)

Of course, it cannot be too often said that while the Conference can issue orders to A.A. Headquarters, it can never mandate or govern the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves. The Conference represents us, but cannot rule us.

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SECTION III

WHAT THE CONFERENCE DOES

Being assembled with the Trustees and Headquarters Staff at New York City, the annual April Conference plunges into its heavy schedule.

Here is a brief summary of its typical activities:

Newly elected Delegates serving their first term arrive at New York. They inspect the General Service Office and Grapevine premises and become acquainted with the Trustees and the Staff. To further inform them, an evening briefing meeting is held, a question and answer period called "What's on Your Mind."

For the next three days, morning, afternoon and night, the Conference functions approximately like this:

It first hears reports from:

- (a) The Chairman of the General Service Board. He greets the Conference and summarizes the year's work.
- (b) The Chairman of A.A. Publishing, Inc. A report in detail.
- (c) The Editor of The A.A. Grapevine. Complete report for the year.
- (d) The Staff members. Each reports on her department.
- (e) The Certified Public Accountant. Detailed financial report on all above services. Outlines the overall financial situation.

The Conference then discusses these reports and names Committees for a closer study of them, the Committees making their recommendations on the last day of the Conference.

The Conference next considers its agenda.

The Agenda is the sum total of a large number of questions, some presented by the Trustees, some by the Services, others by the Delegates themselves, who have participated by mail in making the Agenda and have seen its final draft some weeks before the Conference.

Here follow a few samples of typical matters that an Agenda might cover:

- (a) Any action proposed by the Trustees, liable to seriously affect A.A. as a whole, thereby needing Conference debate and approval.

- (b) Deviations from A.A. Tradition, liable to seriously affect A.A. as a whole.
- (c) Pending questions and decisions in the field of overall public relations.
- (d) Consideration of proposed new literature, also foreign language translations.
- (e) Conference approval for literature prepared.
- (f) Selling prices, discounts on literature, A.A. Grapevine, etc.
- (g) State of voluntary contributions - how non-contributing groups can be better informed.
- (h) Considerations of any local problem provided it does, or may, affect A.A. as a whole.
- (i) When, and with respect to what questions, should the Conference be polled by mail? When should all groups be so polled?
- (j) Special requests for advice from Trustees or Headquarters services.
- (k) How can returning Delegates best make reports and serve their States, Provinces, or areas?

The foregoing are just a few of the many questions the Conference deals with every year.

Respecting these, or any other service matters whatever, it will be seen that the Conference can pass resolutions, issue directions, give advice, direct Committees to further study or refuse to act at all.

Therefore, on over-all service matters the Conference clearly has all the final authority there is - the General Service Board, A.A. Publishing, Inc., A.A. Grapevine, Inc. and the A.A. Service Office are simply the incorporated arms of the Conference, a minority part of the greater whole.

But none of the Conference members are in the least like Senators of governing bodies elsewhere who represent local interests and pressures. Our Conference members are only the servants of world-wide A.A. - nothing more, nothing less. This, we think, should always be their sole mission.

On the last day of the Conference, its Committee reports and recommendations are heard and appropriate resolutions for action are passed.

Returning home, the Delegates meet with their respective State or Provincial Committees to devise the best means of giving their A.A. Groups a clear picture of the World Services; also of presenting the actions of the Conference to the Groups for their information and approval.

The Conference itself issues a detailed report of its proceedings, including complete financial reports, to all Delegates, a digest of which - "Conference Highlights" - is sent to all A.A. Groups in the hope that they will be read to each group in open meeting. The A.A. Grapevine also runs news stories about the Conference meeting.

Such is a very short sketch of what the General Service Conference is, and what it does.

In the Conference Charter (page 54) there will be found a more detailed statement of principles and structure.

At this writing (May, 1955) the Conference Charter is a temporary one, used during its four year trial period which now draws to a close.

It is, of course, my high hope that in the Twentieth Anniversary Convention at St. Louis next July, the substance of this Third Legacy Plan and Charter will find wide approval and will be ratified.

On coming pages there will be found carefully detailed suggestions for the formation and conduct of State and Provincial Assemblies. Questions of finances, Committee and Delegate selection are covered exhaustively and are well indexed.

It is urgently recommended that all who deal with State or Provincial Assemblies study these mechanical details with care - especially Assembly Chairmen.

Our four years of trial experience has abundantly shown that much delay, expense and political friction can be avoided if this Third Legacy Plan be well understood and followed.

## SECTION IV

### GROUP OR GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES

How and When Chosen: Their Personal Qualifications, Term  
of Office, Duties: What Groups Name Representatives.

Every A.A. Group in the U.S. and Canada is entitled to choose a Group or General Service Representative to be sent each two years to the nearest State or Provincial Assembly for the purpose of electing new State or Provincial Committees, officers thereof, and a Delegate to the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous

#### When Elected

Retiring State or Provincial Committees will send notices each two years to the Groups of their respective areas, naming the time and place of the new Assembly Meeting and asking all Groups who so desire to choose General Service Representatives to attend the Assembly.

#### Qualifications

A.A. Groups choosing their Representatives ought to take much care. Since any General Service Representative may be elected by the Assembly as a State or Provincial Committeeman, or even the Delegate, it is clear that members of experience, achievement and stability are needed. And none ought to accept these posts unless able to give sufficient time to their duties. Such a member, primarily, ought to represent his Group's interest in A.A. as a whole and this should be his main assignment. Older members who have already done their stint of local Group or Inter-group committee work, are ideal. This permits their individual attention to the needs of World A.A.

#### How Elected

An A.A. Group may elect its Representative in any manner it chooses, holding a special meeting for this purpose. Nominations can be made by the existing Group Committee or from the floor of the meeting, or both. A simple majority vote will usually suffice to elect him. It is recommended, however, that the Third Legacy procedure for both nominating and electing be used in the larger groups, thus avoiding political friction.

Important: In exceptional cases a Group may wish to name as its Representative a person who is actually a member of another Group in the area; one who might stand a chance of being elected a Conference Delegate, if he were first named as a General Service Representative and thus put in the running for election by the Assembly. Though this may seldom be done, there appears no reason why not, for the A.A. Group is its own authority in such matters.

## Term of Office

Ordinarily, General Service Representatives serve two years, corresponding in term to State Committeemen and Conference Delegates. But in the interval, a Group may choose another Representative if that seems desirable. Or, conversely, if there is a scarcity of available people for the post, a General Service Representative may serve more than one term of office.

Duties. The General Service Representative attends his State and Provincial Assembly every two years, participating in the election of Committeemen and a Delegate.

Helps instruct Delegate. But this is not all, by any means. He keeps in touch with the Committeeman from his district or the Delegate from his area, advising them of his Group's opinions on current A.A. problems affecting A.A. as a whole. This instructs the Delegate prior to the New York meeting of the General Service Conference in April of each year.

Helps with Conference Report. After the Conference he invites the Committeeman or the Delegate to present a report of its proceedings to his Group.

Group's Link to Headquarters. If his Group so desires, the Representative may be placed on the A.A. General Headquarters mailing list, receiving regular bulletins and communicating them to the Group. If and when a mail poll of total A.A. Group opinion is needed, he will ascertain the views of his Group and send them to New York.

Helps Fund Raising. He may also, if his Group desires, assist in raising funds twice yearly for the support of the New York General Office. He may, for example, wish to make a special appeal to old timers not so immediately active in Group affairs. Funds so raised can supplement the usual contributions made from the Group's Treasury at these periods.

Present Picture of World A.A. Many Groups hold Panel meetings to discuss A.A. Tradition. Twice yearly, the General Service Representative could present a picture of the General Service Conference and the A.A. Headquarters operation. This, if well done, could greatly inform and increase the interest of newer members in the overall functioning of World A.A., the heart of our Third Legacy of Service.

The General Service Representative can thus be most important to A.A.'s over-all welfare. For, in the end, our functioning as a whole will directly depend upon how well each A.A. Group is informed and how much it is interested.

## SECTION V

### STATE AND PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES

Who may be seated: Where held: When held: Preparation for  
Meetings: Suggestions to Chairmen: Conduct of Assembly  
Meetings for election of Committeemen and Delegates: Delegates  
and General Service Conference Expenses, how defrayed: Report  
of Assembly Proceedings to General Headquarters, New York.

#### Assemblies: Who May be Seated

General Service Representatives are customarily sent to the State or Provincial Assembly nearest the Groups that have elected them.

But in a State or Province having more than one Assembly, a Group may send its Representative to any Assembly it wishes, regardless of distance.

If desired, a Group may send its Representative across a national or state line to a conveniently nearby Assembly.

Each Assembly ought to be the final judge of whom it shall seat. But all questions of eligibility should first be referred to the appropriate State or Provincial Committee.

In exceptional cases, where a "district" has sent no General Service Representative but has nevertheless locally elected a Committeeman, the Assembly may seat such a Committeeman upon its State or Provincial Committee at the request of the absent district.

Or, if the expense of an Assembly must be saved, all districts may locally elect Committeemen who can then meet at a central point; where, acting as an Assembly, they choose officers and a Delegate, the latter by two-thirds vote or by lot, as hereafter suggested in this Manual.

#### Assemblies: Where Held

Where a State or Province is entitled to one Assembly only, the meeting is ordinarily held at the city or town of greatest A.A. population.

Where more than one Assembly is allowed, the additional Assembly meetings are customarily held in the next largest center of

A.A. population.

Assemblies may also be held at the time of annual State, Provincial, or Regional Conventions, thereby saving the travel and expense of a separate meeting.

Assemblies can of course be held at any convenient point at all. Or they may be rotated from city to city, when desirable.

For additional information on this subject, turn to Page 48, "The Conference Panels."

#### Assemblies: When Held

Each State or Provincial Assembly meets every two years for the choice of a Committee, Officers, and a Delegate to the General Service Conference at New York.

Since the General Service Conference meets yearly in the third week of April, it follows that all Assemblies entitled to elect Delegates should meet no later than March first, thus preceding the Conference by almost two months.

But Assemblies may meet much earlier than this, if desirable; in fact at any time in the twelve months previous to the April meeting of the Conference at New York.

This permits holding Assemblies at State or Regional A.A. meetings occurring all during such a year, thereby saving the travel and expense of a special Assembly meeting.

But the Delegates and Committeemen thus early elected do not take office until the following January, prior to the date of the Conference gathering at New York.

#### Assemblies: Preparation of Meetings,

##### Suggestions to Chairman

New Assembly meetings are sponsored by State or Provincial Committees already in office and serving their last year.

The State or Provincial Chairman is responsible for organizing and conducting New Assembly meetings. Close study of the following details will assure good results.

##### To Chairmen:

Organizing a new Assembly requires the following steps:

- A. In consultation with his Committee and the Groups of his area, the Chairman sets date, place and hour of the Assembly meeting.
- B. Notifies all Groups in the area, asks them to elect their Representatives, and forward names, addresses and telephone numbers of these to him (or the Secretary) for registration.

C. Registration book for General Service Representatives is procured and advance registrations entered by Secretary. (Those failing to register will do so on arrival at the Assembly).

D. Chairman holds meeting with his Committee to determine - on the basis of their recent experience - how many additional Committeemen the forthcoming Assembly ought to elect in order to properly service the Assembly area.

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E. Chairman and Committee then prepare a map of the Assembly area, sketching thereon all the "districts" that should, in their judgment, be entitled to choose Committeemen. Experience has shown that the number of Committeemen should be ample.

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F. Large blackboard should be procured - and chalk. At the Assembly election meeting the high candidates in the running are listed on the board after each ballot. This guides voting on following ballots. The "districts" Naming Committeemen are also listed on one side of the blackboard.

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Important note. An Assembly meeting following the Third Legacy method can scarcely be run at all without the blackboard and "district" map. Be sure to have both on hand.

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G. Tellers for the Assembly voting should be chosen and asked to serve. None of them should be Assemblymen. For large meetings, there should be as many tellers as there are "districts."

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H. This Manual of World Service should be secured in sufficient supply for each Assemblyman so that he can better understand and follow the procedure of the Assembly as it goes on.

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I. Finally the Committee should ascertain what the Delegates' fare to and from New York will be, and whether a different method than that proposed further on in this Manual will be needed to raise it.

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The Assembly Meeting: Suggestions to  
the Chairman

The smooth running success of an Assembly meeting directly depends on its Chairman and how well he has prepared for his task by close study of the following Third Legacy method.

Even chairmen who have had little experience in conducting business meetings will encounter no difficulty if they prepare well and follow these suggestions straight through, step by step.

An inexperienced Chairman should take care that all motions he suggests or proposals he makes to the Assembly should be in direct, positive form so as to permit a "yes" or "no" Vote. He should never say to the Assembly, "Shall we do 'this' or shall we do 'that'?" If he does, no vote is possible; only confusion can follow.

All Chairmen should specially bear in mind that the Third Legacy method for Assemblies is designed to prevent the hot political contests that arise out of personal nominations from the floor or from a committee, and from close elections.

Hence the Third Legacy Plan requires written ballots, no personal nominations, two-thirds vote to elect or the drawing of lots if voting fails.

Of course these principles apply only to the elective process: lesser questions before the Assembly can usually be decided by a majority show of hands.

While a certain amount of informality ought to prevail at Assemblies, all present should realize that the meetings must nevertheless proceed by logical steps and in an orderly fashion. Otherwise time will be wasted and nerves frayed. A well-handled Assembly meeting should not take more than two or three hours.

A final suggestion. Chairman ought to remember that basically an Assembly can conduct its affairs exactly as it pleases. Like an individual or an A.A. Group it has the "right to be wrong." And it has all the authority it needs to do just that.

Therefore an Assembly can deviate in any way it wishes from the Plan shown below. In rare instances some deviation may be necessary to meet unusual local conditions.

But it can now be said, on the basis of actual experience, that every time an Assembly has gone back to ordinary business and political practices permitting personal nominations and defeats, and allowing elections of Delegates to be won by close majorities, there has been needless trouble. The spirit of service is lost and Delegates so chosen have opposing and often hostile minorities at their backs.

Most of us think the Third Legacy method has elevated the conduct of A.A. affairs from partisan politics to statesmanship. So please give the Legacy Plan a fair trial.

## Assembly Meetings: How Conducted

Suppose that preparations are now complete, that General Service Representatives have all been supplied with Manuals and have registered. The Assembly has actually convened. What next?

Here follows a suggested plan for the meeting:

1. Meeting opens. Chairman calls for order, asks a moment of silence followed by A.A.'s Serenity Prayer.
2. Reports made. Last two years' activity summed up in reports by Delegate and Committee Officers.
3. Chairman asks Assemblymen to look at their Manuals of World Service while he briefly explains the essential features of the procedure to be followed.
4. District Map submitted. Chairman, referring to his map and list of "districts" on blackboard, describes "districts" from which Committeemen are to be named.
5. Chairman asks Amendments. Requests discussion of "districts" and amendments, if any, in relation to plan just proposed.
6. District Plan Approved. Chairman frames motion for adoption of "district" plan plus any amendments. Asks that such a motion be made, seconded, further discussed, if necessary, and voted upon.
7. Assemblymen from Each District Caucus for Respective Committeemen. Chairman announces recess for this purpose. Assemblymen gather in groups, by districts.

A "district" caucus may name its State or Provincial Committeeman by any of the following methods, one of which should first be selected.

- A. If the caucus is small, informal discussion and agreement is usually sufficient.
  - B. If the caucus is large, then written ballots should be cast and these counted by the teller assigned. Failing a two-thirds vote on several ballots, then lots are drawn between the two highest in the running.
  - C. General Service Representatives of any "district" are entitled to choose their Committeemen prior to the Assembly, if they wish. If this has been done, the Committeeman so named merely presents his credentials to the Assembly Secretary.
8. New Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary chosen. Meeting called to order. Secretary reads names of new Committeemen who take seats facing the Assembly.

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- A. Presiding Chairman calls for election of new Chairman. (Who with his Committee will take office the following January, prior to the date of the Conference at New York in April.) The term of office shall be for two years.
  - B. Tellers pass ballots to Assembly, including newly elected Committeemen.
  - C. By written ballot, the Assembly votes for new Chairman from among Committee.
  - D. Tellers sort ballots and list several of high names on blackboard.
  - E. Balloting continues until one name receives a plurality of 25% or more of vote cast. This elects the new Chairman of the State or Provincial Committee.
  - F. Balloting continues by the same method, electing a Secretary and a Treasurer. Optional: A Committee may elect its own Secretary and Treasurer, and may also replace vacancies that occur between Assembly meetings.

This completes the selection of the State (or Provincial) Committee and its Officers. Their term of office commences the January first following their election or as soon thereafter as they are actually elected. The retiring Chairman and the Committee, for briefing and instruction purposes, should remain ex-officio members of the new Committee until the April meeting of the General Service Conference. Committees and Delegates alike shall have a two year term of office. (In some areas Assemblies are held every year and therefore elect one-half of their Committeemen only, thereby creating rotation among them. This is of course optional, but O.K.)

9. Election of Delegate. Chairman directs next order of business to the election of a Delegate to the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous for a two-year term, beginning the April following.
10. Withdrawals. Chairman asks the new Committeemen if any are unable to serve as Delegate and if so, to thus indicate.
11. Additional Nominations. In rare cases, the Chairman may ask the Assembly to make additional nominations for the post of Delegate. Though nominations from the floor are almost always very undesirable, this will cover the unusual situation where a candidate has for some reason failed to be elected a General Service Representative, or being a Representative, has failed to be elected a Committeeman. But such a nomination, if made, should be confirmed by a majority show of hands.
12. The Secretary lists the names of all candidates for the post of Delegate on the blackboard.

13. All present cast written ballots for their choices. Leading names are listed on board.
14. Those having less than 40% may withdraw. If none have the required two-thirds vote after three ballots, the Chairman asks if any in the running, having less than 40% of the total vote, care to withdraw. Chairman points out that any person having 40% or more should remain in running.
15. If withdrawals are made, a fourth ballot is then taken.
16. Closing the balloting. If still no election occurs, the Chairman asks for a motion that the balloting be closed. A majority show of hands will be required to stop the balloting.
17. As soon as the Assembly votes to close balloting for the Delegate, the Chairman announces that the choice must be made by lot.
18. Delegate chosen by lot. The Chairman then asks that, one at a time, the following motions be made, seconded and voted upon:
  - A. That lots be drawn among all the candidates.
  - B. That lots be drawn among the three officers of the new Committee.
  - C. That lots be drawn between the two high candidates in the running.
19. The Delegate is Elected. Lots are then drawn as directed by the Assembly. The first candidate out of the hat becomes the Delegate. The Assembly has now chosen its new Committeemen, Officers and its Delegate.
20. Conference financing. The Chairman, for the general information of the Assembly, next reads the section of this Manual called Conference Financing (Page 46). This gives a clear idea of the several sources of money required to support A.A.'s World Services, as a whole.
21. Delegates Expenses, How Defrayed. Chairman points out that this is, at the present time, partly the responsibility of the Assembly. He explains that once a year special contributions (\$5 to \$10 per A.A. Group) are asked to defray the New York Conference expense and all Delegates' fares to New York in excess of \$100.

Chairman then states how much the Assembly should raise (up to, but not more than \$100.) for transportation of its Delegate to the Conference. Chairman also emphasizes that Delegate is put to much incidental expense all during his term.

Chairman then asks the Assembly if it wishes to raise this sum - two years' fare and incidentals on the spot,

pro rata among those present; it being understood that the Assembly Treasurer will issue receipts by which Assemblymen can recoup their outlay from their respective Group Treasuries.

In case the Assembly does not wish to do this, then an alternative plan is discussed and adopted.

22. The Chairman then directs the Secretary to send a report of the Assembly meeting and the names and addresses of the New York Delegate, the new Committee and its officers, and all General Service Representatives in attendance, to the Conference Secretary at New York.

If there is no other business, the Assembly is then adjourned.

## SECTION VI

### STATE AND PROVINCIAL COMMITTEES

#### NUMBERS TO BE ELECTED, DUTIES, QUALIFICATIONS, TERM OF OFFICE

When in 1951 we first began to hold Assemblies, the number of Committeemen named was almost always far too low. This was particularly true both in the very densely populated and the very sparsely populated areas. Altogether too much work was thrown upon too few shoulders. Besides, a good many Committeemen took their posts without realizing how much work was involved. So the Delegates and a handful of remaining active Committeemen couldn't possibly handle the centers of heavy population or areas involving great traveling distance.

Committeemen should be numerous. Therefore, it should be urged that districts from which Committeemen are derived be small enough so that they can be readily covered without undue hardship. Before Assemblies elect Committees, the Chairman should point out that these posts will, even at the best, require considerable time and effort. Though this condition among Committeemen has considerably improved during the last four years, it is still, however, the weakest link in the chain of service that extends from the Groups upward to World Headquarters.

Returning Delegate; his reports. To further improve communication, the returning Delegate ought to meet as soon as possible with his Committeemen, briefing them thoroughly on what he has seen, heard and felt at the General Service Conference. The Committee ought to discuss among themselves the best plan for presenting the Conference picture in their respective areas and districts. In this connection, attention is called to the first section of this Manual, especially the historical run-down on the Services. This will help refresh the recollections of Committeemen and Delegates alike, so that when they approach the Groups they will have something much more comprehensive to offer than dry statistics and urgent pleas for funds. The first-hand reactions of the Delegates, plus the historical material, can, when offered to Groups, present a picture that they will want to buy. If the picture is not well drawn, requests for money support are likely to fall flat. Indeed, these requests may be completely misunderstood.

Committeemen contact General Service Representatives. Nor in this process of presentation should the General Service Representatives be overlooked. So far as possible each Committeeman should brief the General Service Representatives in his area, asking their cooperation in arranging meetings where one or both of them can be present, and bring up to date A.A.'s world situation and services. If the General Service Representative's support is actively enlisted, he can follow through during the year, especially at the spring and fall fund-raising time. (See page 31, General Service Representatives.)

Committeeman may be re-elected. Normally, the term of a Committeeman is two years, concurrent with that of his Delegate. Because of the scarcity of Committeemen who have time and ability to do good work, the question is often asked, "Can a Committeeman be named

for additional terms of service?" Our experience suggests that he certainly can, provided there is a real scarcity of available people. But if he is to be named for another term, he should of course go through the usual elective process. His Group should first name him a General Service Representative, and then his Assembly may reseat him upon its Committee if it so desires.

Qualifications for Committeemen. Whenever possible, Committeemen should be members of considerable sobriety, emotional stability and energy. If they have already served upon Group or Intergroup Committees, and are thus experienced in dealing with large numbers of A.A.'s, all the better.

Avoid conflict between local and World Service. It is usually better, however, that Committeemen have World Service as their primary interest. If they are at the same time heavily engaged in area or Intergroup activity, their interest may be too much divided. Nor is it usually wise, in this same connection, to use an existing Intergroup Association as an Assembly by which to name Delegates and Committeemen for World Service purposes. So far as possible, these two efforts should remain separate and distinct.

## SECTION VII

### DELEGATES

#### QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES, TERM OF OFFICE

Types of Delegates. When Assemblies elect Delegates, there are several considerations to be borne in mind. In the four experimental sessions of the General Service Conference already held, there was a nice balance between two types of Delegates: About a third of the membership consisted of real old timers, often founders of Groups; they were chosen by Assemblies on the basis of their known wisdom and long experience, even though they weren't still highly active in local affairs; the remaining two-thirds of the Conferees were composed of members sober an average of perhaps five years, people still retaining a high degree of activity, people who were still attending meetings regularly, thus living close to A.A. These are the types of Delegates that Assemblies ought to consider. Of course, in each instance there must be the necessary sobriety, stability and willingness to take seriously the job of being a Delegate.

Delegates are servants, not senators. Assemblies and Delegates alike should remember that the Delegates are not representatives of areas in the usual political sense. The Delegates do not go to the General Service Conference to logroll special benefits for their respective areas. They go primarily to render a service to World A.A., to insure that A.A. continues to function as a whole. However, they should bring with them the viewpoints of their own areas on world problems or even on such local problems as may affect on A.A. as a whole. Delegates are always servants, never senators.

Duties of Delegates. At the Conference itself the Delegate has two primary duties. The first is to consider the issues raised there and to vote intelligently upon them so that the Trustees of the General Service Board can be rightly guided in their decisions. The second duty of the Delegate is to get a clear and comprehensive picture of our World Headquarters. He should be able to explain to anyone just what the Headquarters has meant to A.A. in the past, what it means in the present, and what it will mean for the future welfare of our Society. Of course he should have the current facts and figures well in mind. But it is even more important that he carry home with him the vision of a great movement in action.

Delegate should present picture effectively. Arrived home, his effectiveness will depend upon how well he is able to transmit the world picture to his Committeemen and how well he can inspire them to relay his information and enthusiasm to the General Service Representatives and to the A.A. Groups themselves. On no account must he undertake to do this whole job himself; it is too big. Therefore, he should organize and stimulate his Committeemen so that they will carry his message right down to the group level. This will be the real and final test of the effectiveness of the Delegate. As often as he can, he should tell his story to the General Service Representatives of his area.

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There is nothing more convincing than the first-hand account of an eye-witness.

Delegates should be sensitive to area reaction. After the Committeemen and General Service Representatives have finished presenting the Conference picture to their respective groups, the Delegates should hold Committee meetings to evaluate the results. At this time he can question his Committeemen about the reactions they found in the groups. The Delegate can so brief himself to still better represent his area's views at the next meeting of the Conference.

Mail polls need close attention. At times each year the General Service Board Trustees will wish to conduct mail polls in order to get a crosssection of A.A. group opinion on vital decisions that have to be made. At these times the Delegates will especially need to enlist the cooperation of their Committeemen and their General Service Representatives. Carefully done jobs of this sort will result in sure guidance for the New York Headquarters and thus serious blunders can often be avoided. Sometimes these polls can be confined to Delegates only. At other times the Committeemen need to be included. In rare instances, very serious questions will have to be taken clear down to the group level. Up to this date, 1955, our experience with polls has not been of the best. Too many Delegates and Committeemen have neglected to make the effort. Or perhaps they have assumed that the Headquarters should know the answers anyhow. General Headquarters tries hard to avoid unnecessary polls. Therefore, it is hoped that a much better Delegate response will be made to the few that are vitally needed.

When the Delegate is not the Committee Chairman. It is true that the Delegate is often the elected Chairman of his Committee. But sometimes this is not the case. If this is true, the Chairman ought to be brought very much into the picture and given his full share of the responsibility. This is quite important because the Chairman himself may often be elected the Delegate at the next Assembly.

Alternates to Delegate. It should be remembered, too, that the officers of the Committee and all its members are possible alternates to the Delegate himself. And, in certain instances, Assemblies have chosen a special alternate Delegate, not necessarily the Chairman of the Committee. For this additional reason, a close working experience between such people and the Delegate will be very desirable.

Delegate cannot be re-elected to succeed himself. The Delegate's term of service is, of course, two years, commencing the January prior to the next April Conference in New York. However, the question often arises whether a Delegate can be named to succeed himself.

The Conference has emphatically gone on record that he should not; no Assembly ought to elect any Delegate to succeed himself. The question also arises, can a Delegate again be re-elected at some future time. The Conference has never ruled on this point. But most Conference members feel the Delegate should never return, except perhaps in those very rare cases where no really qualified person is actually available. Unlike General Service Representatives and Committeemen, the principle of rotation should be strictly applied to Delegates.

Delegate's experience shouldn't be lost. A Delegate has had a very valuable experience which should not be entirely lost.

Therefore, he can again become a General Service Representative or a Committeeman. And, if he is not re-elected as a Committeeman, a State of Provincial Committee can still name him as an ex-officio or advisory Committee member. There seems no objection to this at all.

It should be recorded that the caliber of the Delegates which Assemblies have already sent to the Conference has been exceedingly high. As a whole they have worked ably and hard. Their collective wisdom, acting together in Conference, is beyond question. The future of A.A. will certainly be safe in such hands.

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ASSEMBLY, CONFERENCE AND GENERAL HEADQUARTERS FINANCES

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Assembly expenses. Each Assembly naturally has its own expenses. Arrangements for meetings have to be made; people have to travel to get there; the Delegates' fare to New York up to \$100.00, and also incidental expenses throughout the year, need to be met. Therefore the Host Committee for each new Assembly should consider carefully what these expenses will be and how they will be raised. Usually, an estimate of them is added up and, when the Assembly convenes, the money is collected pro rata from the attendance on the spot. Assemblymen then obtain receipts from the State Treasurer, which they may present to their own groups as a basis for reimbursement.

Lack of funds shouldn't bar a good Delegate. In this connection, emphasis should be thrown on the plight of some Delegates who in the past have been given only their fare to New York plus meals and room while there. A Delegate is always put to considerably more expense than this. He has incidental meals and travel expenses en route. On his return from New York his telephone bill is large and he is bound to run up still more travelling expenses. Therefore, Assemblies should be careful about providing these extra funds in their budget. Otherwise only a well-to-do A.A. can afford to become a Delegate. This sort of neglect would deprive us of many an able Conference member. Nor would it be in line with A.A.'s spirit of democratic thought and action.

Alternative methods of financing. Prorating the expenses of the Assembly among its constituent groups seems the fairest and best method of financing Assemblies, though it may be sometimes necessary for State Committees to ask special contributions from financially well-off members. There should be reluctance to do this, naturally. But it is, of course, far better to resort to this means of financing than fail to function at all.

Conference expenses: How met: At some point in A.A.'s history, it is hoped that group contributions to A.A. Headquarters will exceed the yearly office expenses sufficiently to pay the total cost of the General Service Conference, including all Delegates' fares and the in-town expenses of the gathering. Up to this time group contributions have never been sufficient to do this. Sometimes, indeed, they fail even to meet A.A. Headquarters' operating expenses.

This is why, in 1951, a special plan had to be devised to take care of the cost of the Conference itself, a plan still in effect.

Special A.A. Group Contributions to "Conference Fund." In the month of February preceding the regular April Conference, all A.A. groups are asked to contribute to a special Conference Fund which is so earmarked by the Trustees of the General Service Board. Large A.A. groups are requested to send in \$10 apiece, the smaller ones \$5. These funds are used to defray all Delegates' fares in excess of \$100; to provide the Delegates with accommodations at New York and to defray the other expenses of the meeting itself. Checks are payable to: "Conference Fund."

Even this plan has been only a partial success. During the four experimental years of the Conference, 1951 - 1954, the groups have averaged contributions of only about one-half of the total sum needed. The resulting deficit, something like \$10,000 annually, has always been made up by drawing on the Reserve Funds of the General Service Board, formerly the Alcoholic Foundation. This could be the case for some years, and this is, by the way, a very good argument for maintaining our General Service Board Reserve Fund of "book money." At present (1955) - our Conference couldn't meet at all without this additional help.

General Headquarters Finances. The A.A. Headquarters itself is financed by two kinds of money. Book, Grapevine and pamphlet sales are one source, and voluntary group contributions are the other. Over the years the only thoroughly solvent part of our Headquarters operation has been the book and pamphlet business. This has yielded considerable income, the greater part of which has always been deposited in savings banks. This has created a Reserve Fund which has met the deficit in the voluntary A.A. group contributions, deficits of the Grapevine operation and, in recent years, deficits of the Conference itself.

At the present moment (1955) the Grapevine is just about breaking even and the General Service Office expenses are barely being met by A.A. group contributions. The Conference has a deficit of close to \$10,000 annually. Because the price of the Big Book was never raised since its publication in 1939, inflation of costs finally caught up with A.A. Publishing, thus badly shrinking the funds that were normally put into the Reserve every year.

This was the reason why, in 1954, the Conference voted to remove discounts to the A.A. groups on the Big Book and on "The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions." This caused the \$1.00 that the groups formerly got on the "Big Book" and the fifty cents they realized on the small one, "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions", to be available for the Reserve. This vital Fund is again building up even though book sales, especially the "Big Book," are considerably lower than they were in 1952.

Therefore, at this date (May 1955) our Headquarters financial situation isn't too bad. But neither is it too good. Save for funds going into Reserve, we are not really breaking even as yet. We are still vulnerable to more inflation or to a depression.

But as the Groups become more aware of what the Headquarters operation really means; when the Conference is older and has done more work; and when a history of our Society is finally written, I am sure that our money troubles will be a thing of the past. Barring the unforeseen, we shall be on safe ground in a few years. That we shall reach that goal I have no doubt. And I here wish to record my thanks to all concerned for the considerable progress already made.

## SECTION IX

### THE CONFERENCE PANELS

The Conference is a combination of three distinct groups of people. One group is, of course, composed of the Trustees, Directors and Staff members of Headquarters. The other two groups are composed of the elected Delegates serving in Panels One and Two.

Composition, Panel One. Panel One of the Conference is elected in the odd years, and it includes Representatives from the States and Provinces of the largest A.A. populations, twenty-eight in all. Each of these is entitled to one Delegate, plus additional Delegates for those seven States having A.A. populations of 5,000 or more.

Composition, Panel Two. Panel Two of the Conference is composed of the remaining twenty-eight States and Provinces, each entitled to one Delegate; and all States and Provinces in Panel Two whose population is more than 2,000 A.A. members, are entitled to extra representation. (See list following.) Delegates to Panel Two are of course elected in even years.

Conference Rotation. Therefore, half of the elected members of the Conference retire each year. And each year a fresh two-year panel is chosen. This causes the Conference to be rotating.

For lack of funds, we cannot at present give representation to those outside the United States and Canada. When more money is available, it will become possible for the Conference to invite representation from other parts of the world.

Ultimately, other Service Conferences will be created in other lands and a cross-linking between them will be developed as described earlier in this manual.

At some future time, it may be desirable to create another elected Panel for the Conference. Those Delegates now named in Panels One and Two on account of extra population can then be moved into a third Panel. This could give the General Service Conference a greater continuity through a three-year term of service for Delegates.

Below will be found listed the States and Provinces and points of Assembly for Panels One and Two, as of the year 1955. But, as earlier stated in this Manual, these Assembly points may be changed at will. Therefore the lists submitted below are only suggestions and are only given to make the Conference Plan clearer.

#### LISTS OF PANELS

##### PANEL NO. ONE

(CHOSEN IN "ODD" YEARS)

<u>State or Province</u>	<u>Point of Assembly</u>
Alabama	Birmingham

<u>State or Province</u>	<u>Point of Assembly</u>
Arkansas	Little Rock
British Columbia	Vancouver
California	Los Angeles
	San Francisco
Colorado	Denver
Connecticut	Hartford
District of Columbia	Washington
Florida	Miami
	Jacksonville
Illinois	Chicago
	Springfield
Indiana	Indianapolis
Iowa	Des Moines
Louisiana	New Orleans
Massachusetts	Boston
Michigan	Detroit
	Grand Rapids
Minnesota	Minneapolis-St. Paul
Missouri	Kansas City and/or
	St. Louis
New Jersey	Newark
New York	New York
	Rochester
North Carolina	Charlotte
Ohio	Akron-Cleveland
	Columbus
Oklahoma	Oklahoma City
Ontario	Toronto
Pennsylvania	Philadelphia
	Pittsburgh
Texas	Dallas-Fort Worth
	Houston
Utah	Salt Lake City
Virginia	Richmond
Washington	Seattle
West Virginia	Charleston
Wisconsin	Milwaukee

NOTE: Eight States approaching 5,000 A.A. population are invited to send one extra Delegate.

There are thirty-eight Delegates in Panel One and thirty-eight in Panel Two, at present time.

#### PANEL TWO

(CHOSEN IN "EVEN" YEARS)

<u>State or Province</u>	<u>Point of Assembly</u>
Alberta	Calgary
Arizona	Phoenix
California	Sacramento
	San Diego

<u>State or Province</u>	<u>Point of Assembly</u>
Delaware	Wilmington
Georgia	Atlanta
Idaho	Boise
Illinois	Decatur
Kansas	Topeka
Kentucky	Louisville
Maine	Bangor
Manitoba	Winnipeg
Maritime Provinces	Moncton, N. B. (Intergroup)
Maryland	Baltimore
Massachusetts	Springfield
Minnesota	Deer River
Mississippi	Jackson
Montana	Billings
Nebraska	Omaha
Nevada	Reno
New Hampshire	Manchester
New Jersey	Camden
New Mexico	Albuquerque
New York	Buffalo
	Binghamton
North Dakota	Fargo
Ohio	Toledo
Oregon	Portland
Quebec	Montreal
Rhode Island	Providence
Saskatchewan	Saskatoon
South Carolina	Charleston
South Dakota	Sioux Falls
Tennessee	Memphis
Texas	Lubbock
	Corpus Christi
Vermont	Montpelier
Wisconsin	N. Wisconsin & Upper Michigan
Wyoming	Sheridan

#### PANEL TWO (Supplemental)

#### Additional Representation from Special Areas (Suggested)

Michigan	Lansing
Ohio	Cincinnati
Ontario	Ottawa
Pennsylvania	Harrisburg

## SECTION X

### THE CONFERENCE CHARTER

This General Service Conference Charter, as shown below is a body of principles and relationships through which A.A. can function as a whole.

The Conference itself is not incorporated and its Charter is not a legal instrument. Its principles are traditional, and its power to serve A.A. is based upon experience, custom and usage rather than upon the binding commitments of law. It is an informal agreement between Alcoholics Anonymous and its Trustees setting forth the means by which A.A. can give world-wide service.

The service arms of the Conference, such as the General Service Board, A.A. Publishing, Inc. and the A.A. Grapevine, Inc., are of course separately incorporated and legally related to each other. But these arrangements have been made only for the purpose of holding funds, making necessary contracts and insuring good routine management.

For purely Conference purposes, the several Trustees, Directors and Staff members who actively manage Headquarters' services are Conference members with special duties and are entitled to one vote each. Thus the Trustees are Conference members who have custodial duties; the A.A. Publishing and A.A. Grapevine Directors and Staffs are Conference members having service or editorial duties.

Traditionally, the Trustees of the General Service Board will name their own successors, subject to the advice and consent of the Conference or a Committee thereof.

Traditionally, though not legally, a two-thirds vote of a quorum of the Conference will be considered as binding upon the Trustees or any service element of the Headquarters. But a simple majority vote of the Conference will be a suggestion only to the General Service Board.

This Charter may be amended at any time by a three-quarters vote of all Conference members.

While the Conference may mold and direct its World Services, it may never mandate or govern the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Such is the essence of the Charter for the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The Charter itself follows.

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# CHARTER

## THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS (NORTH AMERICAN SECTION)

1. Purpose: The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous is the guardian of the World Services and of the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Conference shall be a service body only; never a government for Alcoholics Anonymous.

2. Composition: The Conference (North American Section) shall be composed of State and Provincial Delegates, the Trustees of the General Service Board, Directors and staff members of the New York Headquarters and such ex-Trustees or foreign Delegates as the Conference may wish to invite.

Other Sections of the Conference may sometime be created in foreign lands as the need arises out of language or geographical considerations. The North American Section of the General Service Conference will then become the Senior Section, related to the other Sections by ties of mutual consultation and a cross linking of Delegates.

But no Conference Section shall ever be placed in authority over another. All joint action shall be taken only upon a two-thirds vote of the combined Sections. Within its boundaries each Conference ought to be autonomous. Only matters seriously affecting A.A.'s worldwide needs shall be the subject of joint consideration.

3. Conference Relation to A.A.: The Conference will act for A.A. in the perpetuation and guidance of its World Services, and it will also be the vehicle by which the A.A. movement can express its views upon all matters of vital A.A. policy and all hazardous deviations from A.A. Tradition. Delegates should be free to vote as their conscience dictates; they should also be free to decide what questions should be taken to the group level, whether for information, discussion or their own direct instruction.

But no change in the A.A. Tradition itself may be made with less than the written consent of two-thirds of all the A.A. Groups.

4. Conference Relation to A.A. Headquarters: The Conference will replace the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous who formerly functioned as guides and advisors to The General Service Board and its related Headquarters services. The Conference will be expected to afford a reliable cross-section of A.A. opinion for this purpose.

To effectively further this same purpose it will be understood, as a matter of tradition, that a two-thirds vote of a Conference quorum shall be considered binding upon the General Service Board and its related corporate services. A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of all the Conference members registered.

But no such vote ought to impair the legal rights of the General Service Board and the service corporations to conduct routine

business and make ordinary contracts relating thereto.

It will be further understood that, as a matter of tradition, a three-quarters vote of all Conference members may bring about a reorganization of the General Service Board and the Headquarters, if or when such reorganization is deemed essential.

Under such a proceeding, the Conference may request resignations, may nominate new Trustees and may make all other necessary arrangements regardless of the legal prerogatives of the General Service Board.

5. State and Provincial Assemblies: Composition of: State and Provincial Assemblies are composed of the elected Representatives of all A.A. groups desiring to participate, in each of the United States and each of the Provinces of Canada.

Each State and Province will always be entitled to one Assembly. But States and Provinces of large A.A. populations will be entitled to additional Assemblies, as provided by this Manual of World Service, or by any future amendment thereto.

6. State and Provincial Assemblies: Purpose of: State and Provincial Assemblies convene every two years for the election of State and Provincial Committeemen, from which are selected Delegates to the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous held at New York. Such State or Provincial Assemblies are concerned only with the World Service affairs of Alcoholics Anonymous.

7. State and Provincial Assemblies: Method of Electing Committeemen and Delegates: Whenever practicable, Committeemen are elected by written ballot without personal nomination. And Delegates are selected from among such Committeemen by a two-thirds written ballot or by lot, as provided in the Manual of World Service.

8. State and Provincial Assemblies: Terms of Office For Group Representatives, Committeemen and Delegates: Unless otherwise directed by the Conference, these terms of office shall all be concurrent and of two years duration each. In half the States and Provinces, Assembly elections will be held in the even years; the remaining half of the Assemblies will elect in the odd years, thus creating rotating Panels One and Two of the Conference as further described in the Manual of World Service.

9. The General Service Conference Meetings: The Conference will meet yearly in the City of New York, unless otherwise agreed upon. Special meetings may be called should there be a grave emergency. The Conference may also render advisory opinions at any time by a mail or telephone poll in aid of the General Service Board or its related services.

10. The General Service Board: Composition, Jurisdiction, Responsibilities: The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous shall be an incorporated Trusteeship composed of alcoholics and non-alcoholics who choose their own successors, these choices being subject, however, to the approval of the Conference or a committee thereof. Alcoholic out-of-town Trustees are, however, first nominated by their areas or by their State or Provincial Committees after being cleared by the Conference Nominating Committee.

They are then elected to the General Service Board, the Trustees being obligated by tradition so to do.

The General Service Board is the chief Service Arm of the Conference, and is essentially custodial in its character.

Excepting for decisions upon matters of policy, finance or A.A. Tradition, liable to seriously affect A.A. as a whole, the General Service Board has entire freedom of action in the routine conduct of the policy and business affairs of the A.A. General Headquarters at New York and may name suitable committees and elect directors to its subsidiary corporate service entities in pursuance of this purpose.

The General Service Board is primarily responsible for the financial and policy integrity of its subsidiary services: A.A. Publishing, Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. and for such other service corporations as the Conference may desire to form.

The Charter and By Laws of the General Service Board, or any amendments thereto, should always be subject to the approval of the General Service Conference by a two-thirds vote of all its members.

Except in a great emergency, neither the General Service Board nor any of its related services ought ever take any action liable to greatly affect A.A. as a whole, without first consulting the Conference. It is nevertheless understood that the Board shall at all times reserve the right to decide which of its actions or decisions may require the approval of the Conference.

11. The General Service Conference: Its General Procedures: The Conference will hear the financial and policy reports of the General Service Board and its related Headquarters Services. The Conference will advise with the Trustees, Directors and Staff members of the Headquarters upon all matters presented as affecting A.A. as a whole, engage in debate, appoint necessary committees and pass suitable resolutions for the advice or direction of the General Service Board and the Headquarters.

The Conference may also discuss and recommend appropriate action respecting serious deviations from A.A. Tradition or harmful misuse of the name, "Alcoholics Anonymous."

The Conference may draft any needed by-laws and will name its own officers and committees by any method of its own choosing.

The Conference at the close of each yearly session, will draft a full report of its proceedings to be supplied to all Delegates and Committeemen; also a condensation thereof which will be sent to A.A. Groups throughout the world.

12. General Warranties of the Conference: In all its proceedings, the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Tradition, taking great care that the Conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to serious public controversy; that though the Conference may

act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

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## A RESOLUTION

Offered by Bill for Adoption

At the Twentieth Anniversary Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous

(This Resolution Authorizes the General  
Service Conference to Act for Alcoholics  
Anonymous and to Become the Successor to  
Its Co-Founders.)

We, the members of the Twentieth Anniversary Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous, here assembled at St. Louis in July of the year 1955, declare our belief that our Fellowship has now come of age and is entirely ready to assume full and permanent possession of the Three Legacies of our A.A. inheritance -- the Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service.

We believe that the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous, as created in 1951 by our co-founders, Dr. Bob S. and Bill W. and authorized by Trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation, has now become entirely capable of assuming the guardianship of A.A.'s Twelve Traditions and of taking over full guidance and control of the World Service of our Society, as provided in the Third Legacy Manual of World Service recently revised by our surviving co-founder, Bill W. and the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

We have also heard with approval Bill W.'s proposal that A.A.'s General Service Conference should now become the permanent successor to the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous, inheriting from them all their former duties and special responsibilities, thus avoiding in future time all possible strivings for individual prestige or personal power; and also providing our Society with the means of functioning on a permanent basis.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED: That the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous should become, as of this date, July 3rd, 1955, the guardian of the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, the perpetrator of the World Services of our Society, the voice of the Group Conscience of our entire Fellowship and the sole successors to its co-founders, Dr. Bob and Bill.

AND IT IS UNDERSTOOD: That neither the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous nor the warranties of Article XII of the Conference Charter shall ever be changed or amended by the General Service Conference except by the consent of three-quarters of those registered A.A. Groups throughout the world which, within six months after suitable notice, have recorded their approval, such approval to have been received by the Conference in writing.