

September 1994

The altar of 'political correctness'

From Hampton, N.J.:

I've been a member of Alcoholics Anonymous for over eleven years and have heard a good bit of commentary about updating our Big Book. I believe this idea is one to be examined with the utmost care and is not one which demands haste in enactment. My personal thought on the matter is "if it ain't broke, don't fix it," but I know others are not of the same opinion.

I offer an analogy to this situation. Some years ago members of a certain denomination bulled through a revision of its prayer book. The "new" book (it is no longer so new) was designed for at least a certain degree of political correctness — a sacred cow — and it is a major reason there have been departures from the particular denomination which adopted it. The Bible is under constant "retranslation," yet many of us are more than content with the King James version.

When an effort is made to please everyone it is very possible to end by pleasing no one. I would suggest that if there are those who are not pleased with the contents of the Big Book as it stands, other organizations will probably be delighted to accommodate them. For unhappy women there is Women for Sobriety (WFS); for those who dislike what I've heard called "the God bit," there are groups like Rational Recovery (RR) or Rational-Emotive

Therapy (RET).

AA has done extremely well as it already is. There are literally millions of men and women who owe the Fellowship and the Big Book their lives. Is it our intention to sacrifice effectiveness on the altar of "political correctness"? It is my personal opinion that to do so smacks of expediency and a desire to "move with the times." I wouldn't say revision ought not be considered, but if it is acted upon, such action should be conducted with the greatest possible caution.

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