

July 1959

AA IN ACTION

A Report on the 9th Annual General Service Conference

AA's Tradition of non-endorsement of outside enterprises was reaffirmed by delegates to the Ninth Annual General Service Conference in a resolution which also emphasized the right of AA members to work in and support such enterprises—serving strictly as individuals and not in any manner to be interpreted as "representatives" of Alcoholics Anonymous. The resolution also contains warm words of appreciation for the work of agencies in the field of alcoholism, promising full cooperation "short of affiliation." Finally, the resolution recommends

that material such as "Cooperation, Yes—Affiliation, No" be supplied by GSO to areas where there is an apparent need for clarification of the relationship of AA with outside agencies.

The Conference, meeting for four days in April to review the work of AA's world service arms and to recommend action for the coming year, did not approve a proposal to change the present ratio of alcoholic and non-alcoholic Trustees on the General Service Board. The proposal, which would have changed the ratio from the current eight non-alcoholics and seven alcoholics to

an eighteen-member Board consisting of nine of each, was accorded the traditional Conference voting procedure on matters of policy: an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the delegates—or 55 "yea" votes—was agreed necessary for adoption of the proposal. Since the resulting vote was 46 in favor of the proposed change and 36 opposed, the proposal failed of adoption.

Among the many other topics reviewed and acted upon by the 82 Area Delegates present, together with members of the Board of Trustees, the AA Publishing and Grapevine; Boards, and GSO and Grapevine staffs, were the following:

Literature Preliminary plans for two new pamphlets were approved: (1) a pamphlet for inmate alcoholics, AA institutional committees, and others interested in helping alcoholics in prison; (2) a pamphlet to inform interested clergymen of AA's sole purpose and how they may be able to help the alcoholic to find sobriety in AA. Updating of "The Alcoholic Employee" and preparation of material for new Loners also received approval.

Directory It was agreed that careful observance of the stated purpose of the Directory as printed on its inside cover is important for AA members, although free communication among AAs should not be interfered with; it was recommended that mis-use of the Directory by non-members continue to be called

to the attention of the mis-users by GSO through correspondence.

Listing of Meetings A suggestion that meeting nights be added to information contained in the World Directory was approved, when the information is supplied by The Group.

General Services After considering some fifteen reports from GSO, AA Publishing, Grapevine, and Trustee members, the Conference approved the calibre and scope of the activities performed and the decisions made during the previous year.

Finances Delegates reaffirmed the principle that local areas, groups, and members are the ultimate authority for determining the approaches and methods for developing support of AA's world services. Recognizing that many groups ask GSO guidance to arrive at a "yardstick" for contributions, the delegates approved references in GSO correspondence to the fact that some AA groups now contribute on the basis of \$3.00 per year per member.

An experimental plan permitting individual members no longer active in group affairs to contribute directly in support of world service was noted with interest by delegates, who suggested that exploration of the plan be continued.

The Conference also reaffirmed the Traditional AA principle that financial bequests—whether from

members or non-members—not be accepted in any form.

Grapevine After hearing a report from an area where the responsibility for distribution and interest in the society's monthly magazine has been made a specialized volunteer job, the Conference recommended experimentation along the same lines in other areas; it was suggested that locally-sparked plans be inaugurated at the state and area level whereby a permanent Area Grapevine Representative be selected to work independently of

the General Service Representative, stressing the Grapevine as "a vital tool of communication within AA."

The Conference also approved a recommendation that state and area conferences be encouraged to have a local Grapevine representative in attendance, and that these conferences be supplied with display materials if possible.

(Ed. note—Readers seeking further details are referred to the "Highlights Edition" of the Conference Digest, distributed to all groups in place of the June Exchange Bulletin, and to the Final Report of the Conference, available from GSO for \$1.00.)

Word from the Vineyard . . .

NEWs about carrying the message of General Service to groups in northeastern Ohio was reported to the General Service Conference by the delegate from that area, who presented the first of a series of one-minute talks prepared by the area committee for the use of GSRs. Delegates were enthusiastic about the idea, and the suggestion was made that publication of these short talks in the Grapevine might be helpful to other areas. The first talk appears below; others will follow in subsequent issues.

The five talks carry this note from the N.E. Ohio General Service Committee to group General Service Representatives: "This is Number One in a series of 'One Minute Leads' on General Service. As your Group's General Service Representative, you are requested to read this to your group. These 'One Minute Leads' do not ask for money—they are being written and distributed simply to build a greater bond of understanding between N.E. Ohio Groups and N.E. Ohio General Service."

THE EDITORS

WHAT'S A LEGACY?

IN ordinary life we think of a legacy as an inheritance. We usually think of someone giving us something, usually money or some other material thing. The dictionary tells us a legacy may also be a right

or a privilege. An attorney will tell you a legacy may also involve a debt.

In AA we think of our three legacies: Recovery (the Twelve Steps)—Unity (the Twelve Traditions) and World Service. How well these are named—legacies!

Certainly there is material well-being in recovery and sobriety. Just think of the money we *don't* spend, the bills we can now pay, and the bartenders we don't send to Florida each winter. There is our right to be unified by the common principles of our Twelve Traditions. And it sure is a privilege to be able to choose between the old life and this shiny new one which we share.

And there is a debt. We owe it to those who came before us, and to those yet to come, to pass the message along.

World Service, of course, enables us to pass the message *everywhere*—in Calcutta as well as Cleveland, in Africa as well as Akron. You may never attend an AA meeting in Australia, but you can make your influence felt there . . . through World Service.

We try to live the first two legacies in our daily lives. Let's try to be sure to live the third one, also. Let our gratitude remind us to help pass the program along by supporting World Service.

N.E. Ohio General Service Committee

