

YOUR THIRD LEGACY

WILL YOU ACCEPT THIS

By

Dr. Bob and Bill

October, 1950

(NOTE: This is a proposal to form "The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous" – a small body of State and Provincial A.A. Delegates meeting yearly, who could assume direct responsibility for the guidance of the A.A. General Service Headquarters at New York City – not to be confused with the 1950 Cleveland International Conference.)

We, who are old in A.A., bequeath to you who are younger, these three legacies – the "12 Steps of Recovery," the "12 Traditions" and now the "General Services of Alcoholics Anonymous." Two of these legacies have long been in your keeping. By the 12 Steps you have recovered from alcoholism; by the 12 Traditions you have achieved a suburb unity.

We now wish to deliver the members of A.A. their third legacy. Since 1938 we and our old friends have held it in trust. This legacy is the General Headquarters Services of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Alcoholic Foundation, the A.A. Book, the A.A. Grapevine and the A.A. General Office. These are the principal Service assets which have enabled our Society to function and to grow.

Dr. Bob and I ask that you - the members of A.A. — now take these assets, use them, and guard them well. The future growth, the very survival of Alcoholics Anonymous may heavily depend on how prudently you administer these Arms of Service in years to come.

May we share with you a fragment of history? Twelve years ago, warmly aided by great friends, Dr. Bob and I established a Headquarters for our then obscure Fellowship. We named it the Alcoholic Foundation and it consisted of a simple Board of Trustees dedicated to serve our cause. The Board was formed of alcoholics and non-alcoholic friends, who today number fifteen. When in the spring of 1938 our Foundation was born, A.A. was three years old. We had only 50 members. The book Alcoholics Anonymous was just an idea. None could then guess the magnificence of the gift which Providence had begun to bestow.

In the twelve years since, those 50 early members have spawned 120,000 more. A.A. stretches world—wide. Religion and medicine have approvingly raised us out of that No Man's Land where we once floundered between them. We have no enemies, our friends are beyond count. Like gleaming coral islands our thousands of Groups build themselves upward out of the alcohol sea. What a God-given, miraculous circumstance!

Through this glowing, feverish infancy, the Alcoholic Foundation Board, unseen by many, quietly played a great part in the formation and spread of our well—loved Society. Acting through our General Service Office, the book Alcoholics Anonymous, and latterly the Grapevine, the Foundation became directly responsible for half our growth and effectiveness — both in quality and quantity. There can be no question of that.

Suppose then, all these years, we had been without those fine services. Where would we be today minus the A.A. book and our standard literature which now pours out of Headquarters at the rate of three tons a

month? Suppose our public relations had been left to thoughtless chance. Suppose no one had been assigned to encourage good publicity and kill the bad. Suppose no accurate information about A.A. had been available. Imagine our vital and delicate relations with medicine and religion left to pot luck. Then, too, where would thousands of A.A. 's be today if the General Office hadn't answered their frantic letters and referred them to help? (Our New York Office received and answered 28,000 letters of all kinds last year.) Or in what shape would hundreds of distant A.A. Groups now be if that Office hadn't started them by mail or directed travelers to them? How could we manage without a world Group Directory? What about those foreign Groups in 28 countries clamoring for translations, proved experience and encouragement? Would we be publishing the A.A. book at Oslo, Norway and London, England? What of those lone members on high seas or in far corners of the earth, those prisoners, those asylum inmates, those veterans in service or in hospitals? Where might we one day be if we never had the A.A. Grapevine, our mirror of A.A. life and principal forum of written expression? How grateful we are for those faithful Secretaries, those painstaking volunteer Editors and those able Trustees who have stood sentinel all these years over our principal affairs. Without all these things, where would we be? You must have guessed it. We'd be nowhere; that's sure.

So it is that by the "Steps" we have recovered, by the "Traditions" we have unified and by our Headquarters Services we have been able to function as a Society.

Yet some may still say - "Of course the Foundation should go on. Certainly the Foundation should go on. Certainly we' ll pay that small expense. But why can't we leave its conduct to Dr. Bob and Bill and their friends the Trustees? We always have. Why do they now bother us with such business? Let' s keep A. A. simple." Good questions, these. But today the answers are quite different than they once were.

Let's face these facts:

First — Dr. Bob and Bill are perishable, they can't last forever.

Second - Their friends, the Trustees, are almost unknown to the A.A. Movement.

Third - In future years our Trustees couldn't possibly function without direct guidance from A.A. itself. Somebody must advise them. Somebody, or something must take the place of Dr. Bob and Bill.

Fourth - Alcoholics Anonymous is out of its infancy. Grown up, adult now, it has full right and the plain duty to take direct responsibility for its own Headquarters.

Fifth — Clearly then, unless the Foundation is firmly anchored, through State and Provincial representatives, to the movement it serves, a Headquarters breakdown will someday be inevitable. When its old-timers vanish, an isolated Foundation couldn't survive one grave mistake or serious controversy. Any storm could blow it down. Its revival wouldn't be simple. Possibly it could never be revived. Still isolated, there would be no means of doing that. Like a fine car without gasoline, it would be helpless.

Sixth — Another serious flaw: As a whole, the A.A. movement has never faced a grave crisis. But someday it will have to. Human affairs being what they are, we can't expect to remain untouched by the hour of serious trouble. With direct support unavailable, with no reliable cross-section of A.A. opinion, how could our remote Trustees handle a hazardous emergency? This gaping "open end" in our present set-up could positively guarantee a debacle. Confidence in the Foundation would be lost. A. A. 's everywhere would say: "By whose authority do the Trustees speak for us? And how do they know they are right?" With A.A. Service life-lines tangled and severed, what then might happen to the "Million who don't know." Thousands would continue to suffer on or die because we had taken no forethought, because we had forgotten the virtue of Prudence. This must not come to pass.

That is why the Trustees, Dr. Bob and I now propose the "General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous." That is why we urgently need your direct help. Our principal Services must go on living. We think the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous can be the agency to make that certain.

SECTION II

OUR PROPOSED PLAN

Here is our over—all plan. To start the General Service Conference, the Foundation Trustees will invite one Delegate from each State of the Union and one from each Province of Canada. States and Provinces having large A.A. populations will be asked to send additional Delegates. (Subject, of course, to A.A. 's willingness to finance full representation.)

These Delegates will serve in two rotating panels. Panel No. 1 will be formed by inviting representatives from the 28 States and Provinces having, by our Group Directory, the largest A.A. populations. Panel No. 2 (which will start in the second year) will be created by inviting Delegates from the remaining 28 States and Provinces plus additional representation from densely populated regions.

Delegates to the General Service Conference at New York are to be selected by Group representatives who will usually meet in the largest A.A. center of each State or Province, on dates to be set every two years by the Alcoholic Foundation working with appropriate State or Provincial Committees.

A non—controversial method has been devised for the selection of State Committees and Conference Delegates. It will be seen that this method carefully avoids our usual political troubles. No Delegate so chosen could possibly consider himself a political victor. He will feel himself a servant, but not a senator. (Details in Section III)

Each Delegate will serve a two—year term, will always be available for mail or phone consultation with A.A. Headquarters, and will twice attend the General Service Conference which will ordinarily be held in New York City to coincide with the regular April meeting of the Foundation. At the Conference, these Delegates will sit with our Trustees, General Office Secretaries and Grapevine Staff Members. Thus, we shall constitute the "General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous."

Now what will our General Service Conference do?

A. It will here the Annual Reports of the Foundation, General Office, Grapevine, and Works Publishing (the A.A. Book Company); also the report of our C.P.A.

B. It will fully discuss these reports, offering needed suggestions or resolutions respecting them.

C. The Trustees will present to the Conference all serious problems of policy or finance confronting A.A. Headquarters, or A.A. as a whole. Following discussions of these, the Conference will offer the Trustees appropriate advice and resolutions.

D. Special attention will be given to all violations of our Tradition liable to seriously affect A.A. as a whole. The Conference will, if it be deemed wise, publish suitable resolutions deploring such deviations.

E. Because Conference activities will extend over a three—day weekend, Delegates will be able to exchange views on every conceivable problem. They will become closely acquainted with each other and with our Headquarters people. They will visit the premises of the Foundation, Grapevine and General Office. This should engender mutual confidence. Guesswork and rumor are to be replaced by first-hand knowledge.

F. Before the conclusion of each year's Conference, a Committee will be named to render all A.A. members a written report upon the condition of their Headquarters and the state of A.A. generally.

On a Conference Delegates return home, his State or Provincial Committee will, if practical, call a meeting of Group representatives and any others who wish to hear his personal report. The Delegate will get this meeting's reaction to his report, and its suggestions respecting problems to be considered at future Conference Sessions. The Delegate ought to visit as many of his constituent Groups as possible. They should have direct knowledge of their A.A. Headquarters.

How best to finance our Conference expenses is a moot question. The General Service Conference will function for the benefit of A.A. as a whole. Its entire cost ought to be a charge against those "Group Contributions" now sent to New York for the support of the General Office. But this method is quite impossible now. Group Contributions are not meeting General Office expenses. Nor can the "Reserve" or the Foundation's A.A. "Book Income" carry the Conference.

We therefore propose that all A.A. Groups be asked for a gift of \$5. each, yearly, at Christmas. The Foundation Trustees would deposit these sums in a special account marked "Conference Funds."

If even one—half the A.A. Groups made this annual \$5. gift to the Foundation "for the benefit of the million who don't yet know," we estimate that the resulting income would absorb the total yearly Conference overhead, plus all Delegates' transportation to New York in excess of \$100. each. (See Section IV for details)

One more word about money. A.A. Headquarters recently sent out its semiannual appeal for voluntary contributions, remarking that of late the Groups had donated much less than the traditional "\$1. per member a year." The present condition is only natural. The larger A.A. grows, the less the average Group is apt to know or care about the Foundation. It's not surprising that interest lags. But the General Service Conference should change all that. A brand new channel of participation and understanding will be wide open. No doubt hundreds of Groups not now giving to the Foundation will commence to do so. Meanwhile, our great thanks go out to all those who have supported Headquarters in past years, especially to Groups whose gifts have far exceeded the traditional "\$1. per member" yardstick. Without them we'd never have got by; there would be no Foundation Office or Grapevine today. But it should be noted that foreign, institutional or quite new A.A. Groups need never feel obligated.

The A.A. General Service Conference will be an informal gathering. Resolutions passed by a simple majority will be advisory only. But the Trustees will traditionally favor all resolutions passed by a two—thirds vote. When Trustees of the Foundation retire, the remaining Board members will traditionally consult the Conference, or a committee thereof, before naming their successors. Above all, it ought to be understood that the General Service Conference will never become a government for Alcoholics Anonymous. Though it may publish resolutions respecting deviations from A.A. Tradition, it is agreed that such acts will never be personal, punitive or governmental in their character.

So concludes our general outline of the General Service Conference plan.

The Trustees, Dr. Bob and I rest in sure confidence that this - your third legacy - will never be lost; that your new responsibility will be carried without faltering. By its complete willingness to serve God in all weather, may the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous ever merit the worthiness to endure.

SECTION III

A.A. STATE AND PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES:

THEIR COMMITTEES AND DELEGATES, HOW CHOSEN

Without great expense or friction, how can States and Provinces select their General Service Conference Delegates and suitable State or Provincial Service Committees? This is the "\$100." question. But we believe there is an answer. On one of Bill's western trips, experiments were tried which proved it possible to do these things. The following concrete plan is the result. At this stage we urge the need to be definite to avoid confusion. Later on you may wish to amend the plan to suit local needs or iron out flaws. Here we are:

- A. With Foundation help, meetings of A.A. Group representatives will be organized in each State and Province, these to be called Assemblies.
- B. Each assembly will cast separate written ballots for each of its State or Provincial Committeemen; three, five, seven or more of them.
- C. Committeemen so selected will be automatically placed in nomination as candidates for the post of Delegate to the General Service Conference for a two—year term.
- D. If, on a trial ballot, no one of these Committeemen can be elected Delegate by a two—thirds vote, they then draw lots between them to name the Delegate.
- E. Each State or Provincial Assembly naming a Delegate pays his plane or railroad fare to New York. But not to exceed \$100. yearly per Delegate. Money to defray this expense will be raised at the Assembly meeting where the Delegate is chosen. Two years, paid in advance, is preferable. For the benefit of distant regions, the Foundation "Conference Fund" will pay any yearly transportation expense in excess of \$100. per Delegate (See Section IV)

For the clear guidance of those States and Provinces who send Delegates in 1951 and 1952, we urge this detailed procedure:

By January 1, 1951 the Foundation will ask the A.A. Group within each State and Province comprising Panel No. 1 how many of them wish to participate, as outlined above. Each Group expecting to help chose a Delegate will immediately select an experienced A.A. Representative. He (or she) will be ready to attend the State or Provincial Assembly. A date (not later than March 15th) will be announced. Much care ought to be given such selections. Any one of them may become Committeemen or the Delegate. Old—timers and former Group or Intergroup Officers ought to be considered possibilities.

Assuming that a minimum of 10 Groups in each State and Province of Panel No. 1 has volunteered to participate, the Foundation, in cooperation with the Groups, (or Intergroups) of the largest local centers,

will arrange suitable State or Provincial meetings. The Foundation will then advise all participating Groups of the places and dates of their respective Assemblies. (In following years State and Provincial Committees will of course assume this duty.)

By this process we shall create a series of State and Provincial Assembly meetings, the Panel No. 1 Assemblies to gather in early 1951.

Now a very important question. Just how will State or Provincial Assemblies be conducted? For these key meetings we urge this procedure:

Let's assume that the Foundation, cooperating with a Temporary Committee* appointed at a typical "host city", has already named the date, hour and address of a given Assembly meeting. Group Representatives, "out of town" and "in town" have arrived. What happens then?

1. Registration: Each Group Representative registers his, and his Group's name and address in the Registration Book provided. He also has brought a copy of this pamphlet so he can follow the Assembly procedure.
2. Registration Completed: Chairman of the Temporary Committee opens the Assembly and reports the number present from the Registration Book. Those who have not registered do so.
3. Tellers Appointed. Local expenses covered: Temporary Chairman appoints one or more tellers. He names the sum spent by his Committee in arranging the Assembly meeting and asks the tellers to pass the hat to cover it.
4. First Business — Determining size of State or Provincial Committee: The Temporary Chairman then determines the size of the Committee desired by asking whether Assembly will have three, five, seven, or more Committeemen. He requests a show of hands on these figures in succession, until a majority names the proper number.

* The temporary "host committee" will only be needed for the very first

meeting, after which State or Provincial Committees will take over.

5. Election of State or Provincial Committee: Tellers pass blank ballots. The Temporary Chairman then points out that all Committeemen ought to be experienced A.A.'s well known in the area, who would be willing to give close attention to Conference affairs for a two-year period. Temporary Chairman then requests a written ballot for Committeeman No. 1. Tellers count the ballots and report the high man. Unless he declines to serve, he becomes State Chairman at once and takes over the meeting. Similarly the next ballot produces a Treasurer, the next a Secretary, and further ballots the remainder of the Committee. If there are declinations, the process continues until there is a full Committee elected for a two-year term. (Note that this method avoids personal nominations, hence personal controversy.)

6. Trial Attempt to Elect a Delegate by 2/3rds Vote: The Chairman reminds the Assembly, that according to plan, the election of the State (or Provincial) Committee has automatically placed all its members in nomination for the post of Delegate also explains why, to assure unanimity, the election should be by two-thirds vote. Therefore the Chairman asks for a show of hands on this question — "Will this assembly, on a single written ballot, attempt the choice of its Delegate by a two-thirds vote?" Should more than two-thirds of the meeting indicate a desire to try this two-thirds method, a ballot is cast. If one of the Committeemen receives two-thirds or more, he becomes the Delegate for two years. Otherwise the method of election is discarded.

7. Delegate Chosen by Lot: The Tellers then place in a hat the names of each Committeeman willing to serve as Delegate. The first man (or lady!) out of the hat becomes State or Provincial Delegate for two years. The remaining Committeemen become alternates according to the order of their election. The State Secretary records the result together with the names and addresses of his Committee.

8. Duty of Treasurer: The Chairman then directs his Committee's Treasurer to name the sum required from each Group Representative present to cover the newly chosen Delegate's traveling expenses for two years. (This is determined by dividing the number present into the total estimated expense, or \$200., whichever is lower.) The Chairman asks the Assembly for a show of hands whether it wishes to pay one year's traveling expense, or two, in advance. The Treasurer then receives the agreed payment from each Group Representative and issues such Representative a receipt by which he may reimburse himself from his Group's treasury.

10. Secretary's Report: The Chairman instructs the Secretary to prepare a brief written report of the meeting, listing the names and addresses of Committeemen and Delegate, copy to the Alcoholic Foundation.

10. Final Business: The Chairman then throws the meeting open to discussion. Questions respecting the Conference, or instructions to be given the new Delegate, may be brought to the floor. Finally, the Chairman announces the date of an Open Meeting to be held after the Delegates return from New York. There the Delegate is to make his personal report to all A.A. members who wish to hear it. Adjournment is then in order.

Such is our concept of the typical State or Provincial Assembly. We hope it proves a successful model for future years. We can only try and see.

Though it may prove desirable, it will not be absolutely necessary to hold Assembly meetings in "off—election years." But returning Delegates in those years ought to make their usual report to Open Meetings held in large centers and should visit as many of their constituent Groups as they can.

Should travel money be lacking for a Delegate in his second year, his State Chairman may circularize the constituent Groups, or his Committee may raise this sum as they deem wise.

When, in the judgment of a State or Provincial Committee, a Delegate becomes incapacitated through alcohol, or otherwise, the Chairman will attend the General Service Conference in his place. If the Chairman cannot attend, he will offer the post of Delegate to his fellow Committeemen in the order of their seniority as determined at the time of their election.

It is hoped, too, that State Chairmen will keep in close contact with the Alcoholic Foundation, addressing their correspondence to the A.A. General Office where one of its secretaries will be named to look after Conference matters.

A special word about Panel No. 2. To place the General Service Conference on a rotating basis, no Delegates can be invited from Panel No. 2 regions until 1952. These States and Provinces will then be approached in precisely the same manner as above described for Panel No. 1.

Since it is felt that Panel No. 2 may be more thinly represented, it seems right to invite additional delegates from those States or Provinces having an A.A. population of more than 2000 to round it out. On Panel List No. 2, attached, a number of cities which can act as "assembly" points for such additional representation are suggested. Provided "Conference Funds" prove adequate, additional cities in heavily populated regions may make application for representation.

Though no Panel No. 2 Delegates can be chosen until 1952, we hope that all States and Provinces will generously contribute to "Conference Funds" during 1951. For unless ample funds are in sight, we shall have to limit the total number of Delegates invited to the Conference. We much hope that won't happen as ultimate success for the Conference will depend upon wide—spread representation.

On the following list, each State, Province or special locality may discover the Panel in which it belongs. These selections were based upon the 1950 Group Directory. In suggesting cities for additional representation, we have been obliged to consider convenience as well as population.

Naturally these arrangements are tentative, experimental. Defects will show up. But we can mend these as we go. We shall begin thus.

IMPORTANT — We hope and believe that we shall be able to invite Delegates from every locality listed, but it might not work out that way at first. Should there be a limited response from all the A.A. Groups when asked for the \$5. Christmas contributions to the "Conference Fund," we would have to limit out invitations accordingly. We may have to start on a smaller basis than we anticipated. So please don't feel disturbed or disappointed should we have to limit representation at the start. We' 11 do the best we can.

NOTE - Where large centers are near State or national boundaries, there seems no good reason why Groups in adjoining areas may not cross these lines to elect Delegates. For example, at Detroit, Kansas City, Missouri, Buffalo, New York, etc.

SECTION IV FINANCING THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

How to finance our General Service Conference is a plain guess. We'll have to make the best estimate we can and try it out. There's no other way.

First, some background. Lacking close contact, the Foundation has grown remote from the Groups. They have lost the feeling that our Foundation is really theirs. A.A. General Office expenses have soared because of inflation, even though that office isn't half as big, in relation to A.A.'s size, as it used to be. For these reasons the A.A. Groups haven't been meeting their current Headquarters expenses; 2000 Groups who could well give a hand, still abstain. The entire burden falls on the remaining 1500 Groups; they carry the load. Nobody is specially to blame for this, it's simply a condition. One important Conference purpose is to stabilize and correct this very situation. When the A.A. Groups are given direct participation and know the score, they will handle the matter. We are sure of that. Then Conference expenses can be deducted from routine contributions; the difference will scarcely be felt. But that time hasn't arrived.

Therefore Groups who already contribute, plus those who may soon be interested, are the ones who will make our Conference a success.

Naturally we can't place the entire financial responsibility upon those Groups who happen to take part in choosing Delegates, either. Many Groups at long distance from State or Provincial "Assembly" points might not be able to help choose a Delegate. Nevertheless we're positive that hundreds of them, considering this new set-up, would like to make a direct contribution to its success.

Bearing these facts in mind, our tentative financial plan is this:

1. That we ask every A.A. Group in the United States and Canada to contribute \$5. annually, this special gift to be made to the Foundation at Christmas for the benefit of "the millions who don't know." Since the Conference would insure the continuance of A.A. Headquarters, which is our principal lifeline to all those yet to come, this would be the thought.

Such a Christmas-time appeal would create an annual income somewhere between \$5,000. and \$10,000. for Conference purposes. If interest is small, we can invite but few Delegates. If interest is large, we can invite all those who are listed in Panels Nos. 1 and 2. This income will be deposited in a special Foundation account devoted to Conference purposes only and titled "Conference Funds."

□ Just how would these \$5. Christmas—time contributions be used? Save one exception the Foundation would pay the total expenses of the General Service Conference, the year round. This would include:

- (a) Full hotel bills and meals for as many as 60 Delegates for three days.
- (b) The cost of a suitable meeting place.
- (c) The printing of an annual Conference report to be sent to all A.A. members.
- (d) The cost of secretarial help, correspondence and special mailings.
- (e) All round—trip plane and railroad fares exceeding \$100. in any one year to assist distant Groups with transport of their Delegates.
- (f) Organization expense— distribution of 100,000 copies of this plan, possible travel by Bill, etc.

2. Each Group Assembly sending a Delegate would pay his round-trip fare to New York not exceeding \$100. per year. Any excess would be chargeable to the Foundation "Conference Fund." Eastern Groups would seemingly have an advantage but it's not great. Because of their numbers, the Easterners would be the principal \$5. Contributors to the "General Funds." Hence their's would be the lion's share of paying all Western fares over \$100. Therefore approximate justice would be done.

Quite obviously, full representation at our General Service Conference is going to depend squarely upon the generosity of some 2000 Groups Contributing \$5. each a year for this very special Conference purpose. It is a responsibility which you - the members of A.A. — will need to take if you are to receive and guard well your Third Legacy, The General Services of Alcoholics Anonymous. Dr. Bob and I have the deepest faith that you are going to accept that responsibility.

SECTION V
TEMPORARY CHARTER
FOR THE
GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE
"12 SUGGESTED PRINCIPLES"

We here present a precise statement of "12 Principles" upon which the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous can be founded; principles upon which it may be experimentally assembled, financed and operated during a four-year trial period beginning, if possible, in April 1951. If in four years the Conference proves its usefulness and has gained wide A.A. acceptance, it may then amend these principles according to the dictates of actual experience. But any such changes in the Conference Principles should, of course, conform to the Tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous. Meanwhile, we only commit ourselves to giving the Conference - a thorough trial. On this basis the Trustees, Dr. Bob and I offer you - the members of A.A. -this temporary "Charter" for your General Service Conference:

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

1. Purpose: The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous is expected to become the basic guardian of our A.A. Tradition and World Services. It is especially hoped the Conference will lend guidance to, and perpetuate the Alcoholic Foundation and the A.A. General Headquarters at New York City. The Conference will be a service body only; never a government.
2. Composition: - The Conference will be composed of A.A. State and Provincial Delegates, Trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation, and Staff members of the General Service Office and Grapevine.
3. Conference Relation to A.A.: The Conference will serve as a vehicle through which the A.A. Movement can effectively express its views upon all matter of vital A.A. policy and all hazardous deviations from A.A. Tradition, thus providing Alcoholics Anonymous with a reliable guide to right thought and wise action upon these serious subjects.
4. Conference Relations to A.A. General Headquarters: The Conference will also be expected to serve as a dependable guide for The Alcoholic Foundation, whose Trustees are the Custodians of A.A. general funds, the book "Alcoholics Anonymous," the General Service Office and the Grapevine. As such, the Trustees can be expected with favor upon any Conference resolution relating to vital A.A. policy passed by a two— thirds vote of the Conference. In filling vacancies on the Foundation Board the Trustees should be empowered to consult the Conference or a Committee thereof. It must be remembered, however, that the Conference will be informal and unincorporated and that the Alcoholic Foundation is alone authorized to make contracts, conduct public relations in the name of Alcoholics Anonymous, and insure the financial and managerial integrity of the A.A. General Headquarters. But if the Conference, following a reasonable trial period, becomes a vital and accepted Service of the A.A. movement it should then be entitled to shape and mould its own final form.
5. State and Provincial Delegates — Term of Office: State and Provincial Delegates will be chosen for terms of two years each.
6. Conference Rotation: This will be effected by two panels of State and Provincial Delegates. First Year, Panel No. 1: To be composed by inviting one Delegate from each of those 27 States or Provinces having the largest A.A. population. Second Year, Panel No. 2: To be composed by inviting one Delegate each from the 28 remaining States and Provinces. Panel No. 2 will also invite extra representatives from those States and Provinces having an A.A. population of more than 2000. (See Section III)

7. Conference Delegates - Points at Which Selected: Conference Delegates will be selected at the largest centers of A.A. population within their respective States and Provinces. But Panel No. 2 will ordinarily include Delegates from the next larger centers of each State and Province having more than 2000 A.A. population (See Section III)

8. State and Provincial Delegates - Method of Selection: State and Provincial Conference Delegates will be chosen by Assemblies of A.A. Group Representatives meeting at such dates and places as may be jointly arranged by The Alcoholic Foundation and suitable State and Provincial Committee according to the principles of Point No. 7.

Delegates and alternates will be chosen by election or by lot, or by a combination of these methods. But if elected, a Delegate ought to be chosen by a majority of two-thirds because all Delegates should feel themselves servants of world A.A. rather than marginal victors of troublesome political contests. (See Section III for method of choosing Conference Delegates and State or Provincial Committees.)

9. - The General Service Conference — How Financed: General Service Conference total costs will be apportioned as follows:

(a) Once yearly, each A.A. Group interested will be asked to make a \$5.00 contribution to the Alcoholic Foundation "Conference Fun"

(b) Those Groups within each State or Province who actually participate in naming Delegates will pay their Delegates traveling expenses to and from New York City, not to exceed, however, \$100.00 a year each. It is estimated that any excess above this figure can be absorbed by the "Conference Fund." (See Section IV for detail.)

10. Conference Meetings: The Conference ought to meet yearly at New York, or specially if there be an emergency. And two-thirds of the State, Provincial and A.A. Headquarters Delegates registered should constitute a quorum.

11. Ordinary Procedure: The Conference will hear the reports of The Foundation and its related Headquarters Services. The Conference will then advise with the Trustees and Headquarters Staff concerning pending and important matters of finance or general policy affecting the Headquarters or A.A. as a whole, making such suggestions or passing such resolutions as it may deem desirable. The Conference may also discuss and recommend appropriate action concerning serious deviations from A.A. Tradition, or harmful misuse of the name "Alcoholics Anonymous." The Conference will elect its own officers and pass suitable by-laws. Before adjournment the Conference will authorize a Committee to draft a full report on its proceedings and the state of A.A. generally, which will be furnished the Alcoholics Anonymous Groups throughout the world.

12. General Warranties of the Conference: In all its proceedings the General Service Conference ought to observe the spirit of our A.A. Tradition, taking great care: that the Conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds plus ample reserves be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference members ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion and vote; that no Conference resolution ever be punitive in character or an incitement to public controversy; that the Conference never attempts to govern Alcoholics Anonymous, and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference ought always remain democratic in thought and action. Perhaps, now, certain questions are coming to mind. For instance:

Q. Why should our Trustees and Headquarters Staff be voting members of the Conference.

A. As the ones most experienced in the conduct of our overall Services, they are obviously entitled to full Conference participation.

Q. Why is a "cross—section of A.A. opinion" so necessary?

A. Future Trustees must have sound advice and vigorous backing. Without that they never could speak for A.A. in years to come. A.A., too, must have a definite means of knowing its own mind. Otherwise serious issues of the future will certainly bring us endless controversy and confusion. A Society such as ours cannot permanently function on emotion, rumor or guesswork; it cannot be well advised by the clamors of small or self—appointed minorities.

Q. Why, on important matters, should a two—thirds vote of the Conference be needed?

A. Since the Conference will meet briefly, and but once a year, our Headquarters Staffs must be given some latitude for independent judgment. Hence they ought not be too firmly bound by a bare majority. To be binding, a Conference resolution ought to be reasonably unanimous.

Q. Why shouldn't the Conference elect the Foundation Trustees?

A. This would introduce a difficult and unnecessary political problem. It seems better that the Trustees continue to name their own successors, subject to consultation with the Conference or a Committee thereof. Should circumstances warrant, the Trustees would unquestionably look with favor on any advice offered by two-thirds of the Conference respecting the composition of the Foundation Board.

Q. What is meant by "two year rotating panels?"

A. This means that only the Delegates described in Panel No. 1 will attend the 1951 Conference. In 1953 the original Panel No. 1 will be replaced by a new Panel No. 1 chosen from the same area. And so on, ad infinitum. This will make for continuity because only one—half of our out-of-town Delegates will have to be replaced each year. (See Part III, Selection of Delegates.)

Q. Why shouldn't our Conference be a government for Alcoholics Anonymous?

A. Each A.A. Group is autonomous; our only "authority" is a Higher Power. Practically speaking, no A.A. Group will stand for a personal government anyhow; we're built that way. Though the Conference will guide A.A. Headquarters, it must never assume to govern A.A. as a whole. While it can publicly deplore misuse of the A.A. name or departures from Tradition, it ought never attempt punishment or legal restraint of non-conformists - in A.A. or out. That is the road to public controversy and internal disruption. The Conference will give us an example and a guide, but not a government. A personal government is something, God willing, that Alcoholics Anonymous will never have. We shall authorize servants to act for us, but not rulers.

This is the basic structure of our Conference to be. Its framework has long been under study and consultation. We trust that it will commence to meet our evident need; that it will be regarded by all A.A. 's as a safe and suitable beginning.