

TO:           The Fellowship

FROM:       WSC Policy Committee

The WSC Policy Committee submitted a proposal for the seating of new regions in the 1992 *Conference Agenda Report*. Discussions emanating from the development of that proposal led the WSC Policy Committee to recognize several issues that have prevented the formulation of a long-term plan for seating of regions. These issues include: regional diversity, conference effectiveness, and multi-national representation. In this report we will attempt to relay our findings and the substance of our discussions.

### **Regional Diversity**

"Regional diversity" refers to the different types of regions that exist within the fellowship. Well-developed regions exist in several countries including the U.S., and have a long standing history, and many experienced members in service. Developing regions exist in both the U.S. and other countries, and have a much more succinct service history and limited numbers of experienced members in service. Many regions provide a broad range of services, while others provide a minimum. Some regions have ample financial resources to provide services, while others have limited resources. The number of groups within a region vary greatly, ranging from two to 1200. In terms of geographical boundaries, some regions embody an entire country whereas some states in the U.S. contain up to five regions. Several regions outside of the U.S. have literature and service materials in their language while others have none in their language. Each of the differing types of regions have diverse needs and many have difficulties to surmount which are almost unique unto themselves.

We believe that, because of the diversity of these regions in terms of size, development, needs, etc., there is no equitable way to define regional participants of the WSC. Members of the policy committee are unified in their belief that, at the present time, one system of seating would not work for all regions throughout the world. Regions should only be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **Conference effectiveness**

The term "conference effectiveness" refers to the ability of the World Service Conference to further our fellowship's primary purpose. Most participants get frustrated when issues of considerable importance are not fully addressed at the annual meeting of the conference. At times, this may be due to representatives bringing regional or culturally specific issues to the floor. At other times, the conference has become lost in parliamentary procedure. In cases such as these, their regions are poorly served and other issues which affect NA as a whole are neglected. The conference leadership is continuing to make changes in format which is helpful. However, the WSC Policy Committee believes that improving overall conference effectiveness is not only a matter of format, but a matter of who the conference participant serves. Can a representative serve his/her region's individual needs and at the same time serve NA as a whole?

All questions of local interest, such as structural needs, public information "how to's," hospitals and institutions "how to's," line-by-line review of literature, and other similar specific topics are definitely important. The necessities and laws concerning such issues, however, vary widely around the world. We believe these issues should be explored and resolved where they are needed and understood, rather than at a World Service Conference. When specific issues like these dominate the World Service Conference, our effectiveness in furthering our "primary purpose" is diminished.

### **Multinational Representation**

Narcotics Anonymous currently exists in sixty-six countries. There are, ironically, almost the same number of regions seated at the WSC. Members from the U.S. comprise an overwhelming majority of the conference participants. The non-North American representation at the conference totals about 10% of the conference participants. Germany, Australia, London, and Ireland send a representative to the WSC regularly. Representatives from Japan, Israel, and New Zealand have attended occasionally. In order to discuss a broad range of issues, multinational participation needs to occur. For one community to impose its brand of service on any other national community, is in fact how the WSC becomes ineffective, or inappropriate to the whole. Domination by national, zonal, or continental issues diminishes the effectiveness of the conference. We believe that an additional level of service is needed to provide an arena for resolving parochial and territorial issues.

The proposal submitted by the WSC Policy Committee for the seating of new regions is the best alternative we could provide without proposing further major changes to our structure. As reported in September, we discussed a temporary moratorium on the seating of new regions as part of a transition plan. Consideration of such a moratorium, combined with the other issues discussed above, resulted in these conclusions: a) That an alternative level of service needs to occur between the regional and world level. That level could be defined on a national, continental, or zonal basis. b) That redefining representation at the WSC is necessary. Representatives could be from nations, continents, or zones.

Members of the WSC Policy Committee will participate with members of the WSB Internal Affairs Committee and the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service in a panel discussion of these issues at WSC '92. We invite conference participants to join us in open discussion on:

1. Re-definition of participation in the World Service Conference and the possible inclusion of a national, continental, or zonal level of service between world and regional levels.
2. Transition plans to a redefined World Service Conference in terms of format and participation.