

**WORLD BOARD RESPONSE**

**TO**

**2002 CONFERENCE AGENDA**

**REPORT ON**

**Regional Motion # 6**

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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**Does the United States Fellowship Assembly have the right to meet here in Wichita? Do we have the authority to create a United States Service Conference?**

The answer to both of these questions is a resounding  
**YES, OF COURSE WE DO!**

The formation of a United States Service Conference is not a new idea. This is something has been talked about for many years in Narcotics Anonymous.

From the very start, when the World Service Conference (WSC) was created and began to meet once a year, the United States Regions used it as a national forum. Over the years as our Fellowship grew and expanded into other countries, the WSC extended it's scope and became a true world service body. Various methods were implemented by world services to prevent the US Regions from dominating the conference. This included not allowing the seating of any new US Regions, which continues to this day.

The creation of a new United States service entity was a part of the Resolution Group proposals back in 1996-1998 when the last round of sweeping changes transformed our service structure. These resolutions which were subsequently implemented by the Transition Group included: the dismantling of the Standing Committees of the World Service Conference (Public Information, Literature, Outreach, H&I, Finance etc.); the dissolving of the Board of Trustees along with the World Service Office Board of Directors; the combining of the WSC and WSO budgets into one unified budget under the control of the new World Board; the creation of the human resources panel and the world pool; all of these changes that the Resolution Group recommended were implemented, however, there was no United States service body formed. This left a gap in service delivery between our members and world services. The US Fellowship no longer had a place to address national issues.

In Europe, in 1984, Ireland and England joined together to form the European Conference of NA, which later became the European Delegates Meeting (EDM). There are over 30 Regions that make up the EDM today. In 1989 the Canadian Regions joined together to form the Canadian Assembly of NA, or CANA. There is the Asia Pacific Forum of NA which formed in the early nineties, as well as the the Latin American Forum of NA, but there is still no national forum for the US Fellowship. Some of the zonal forums within the United States do function but they are disjointed while others are pretty much ineffective as service bodies, especially since the WSC went the two year conference cycle. None of these geographical forums were created by the WSC or world services. They were created by the Regions that make up that particular geographic area.

Finally, more recently, in the 2002 Conference Agenda Report the South Florida Region brought a motion asking NA World Services to facilitate the first meeting of a new Assembly of the United States Regions. [Here is the World Board's recommendation from pages 24 and 25 of the 2002 Conference Agenda Report:](#)

***"Rather than even entering into the discussion of this issue and it's history, our belief is that this should not be a responsibility of world services or a decision of the WSC...***

***...Other forums are zonal assemblies, none of which was created by the WSC. If the US regions wish this to happen, they should make that decision and decide how best to achieve it."***

**Motion 6: NA World Services shall organize, host, and facilitate the first meeting of a new Assembly of United States Regions in 2005. This assembly shall be a three day event conducted in the most cost efficient, centrally located city available in the United States so as to encourage as many regions within the United States as possible to attend and participate. This assembly shall be a one-time responsibility of NA World Services. Each region will be responsible for the cost of room nights and food for their respective participants as well as transportation to and from the assembly. Included in the agenda for the assembly shall be the following topics:**

- 1. Assembly Guidelines Discussion**
- 2. Financial Responsibility for future assemblies**
- 3. Mission/Vision discussion**

*Intent:* To provide the United States Regions as a whole with a scheduled forum where they may come together in the spirit of unity to further our fellowship's primary purpose and deal with local issues that are not appropriate at the World Service Conference.

*Maker:* South Florida Region

*Financial Impact:* There is no practical way to estimate the specific costs for this motion.

*Policy Affected:* This motion would not directly amend any WSC policies.

*Rationale by Region:* While the zonal forums within the US fill a much-needed void in unifying our fellowship, there remains no forum for the US regions to come together to address US specific concerns. National forums have been evolving for many years. One group of geographically linked regions, which have not joined together to form a national forum, are the US regions.

"...a majority (about 70%, in fact) of the WSC participants want significant change some time in the future... the one thing that is clear is that, whatever is to occur regarding Resolution A and any changes to representation and participation at a new World Service Conference must arise from the regional delegates and their respective regions... if maintaining our global unity remains one of world services' priorities, then such a process will be essential to the future effectiveness of the World Service Conference" Transition Group Report, Resolution A, March 1998

*World Board Recommendation:* Rather than even entering into the discussion of this issue and its history, our belief is that this should not be a responsibility of world services or a decision of the WSC. The purpose of the World Service Conference is clearly stated: "Conference deliberations serve the needs of a diverse membership of different languages and cultures and address the challenge of how to provide effective services to NA groups around the world. The conference works for the good of all NA, taking into account both present and future needs."

Other forums are zonal assemblies, none of which was created by the WSC. If the US regions wish this to happen, they should make that decision and decide how best to achieve it. This motion refers to a US assembly, while the rationale refers to Resolution A and participation at the conference. Our recommendation only addresses the motion and does not address what is contained in the rationale.

# **FELLOWSHIP REPORT**

**SEPTEMBER, 1987**



It is gratifying to me to see increasing public awareness of the disease concept of addiction, which N.A. has understood since addicts began recovering in N.A.

I'm planning to go to Australia to participate in a P.I. learning day and some workshops in October. I look forward to this experience.

Keep up the enthusiasm and good work. Please send your input as soon as possible! Thanks and God bless.

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LOOK AT

To: The Fellowship

From: Leah Goodrich, Chairperson  
WSC Select Committee

The Select Committee will again hold an open forum input meeting at the Denver WSC workshop in October. This has been tentatively scheduled for Friday, October 16, 1987, from 6:00 pm-9:00 pm. We will try to focus the discussions on the information presented in the following report. It is very important that members and service committees study this new information and be prepared to give your comments on the proposed concepts. It will be your comments on these proposals that will determine the future direction the Committee will take.

If the proposed concepts are received favorably, this may alter the work schedule for the *Guide to Service in Narcotics Anonymous*. The next committee meeting will be held in November, at which time we will be discussing a possible change in scheduling for the Guide, based on the input we receive. All motions committed by the WSC to the Select Committee will again be reviewed at that meeting and reported in the subsequent Fellowship Report. We will also continue to factor in the input we have received on the current draft. Please continue to send us your comments on the current material.

FROM THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
SERVICE STRUCTURE

During the past three years, as the Select Committee on Service Structure has been working to prepare a handbook on service in N.A., there have been a great many lessons learned by the committee. The task was much greater than any member imagined it would be. As the committee members began to participate, they found that they were hard pressed to conceptualize the changes in the structure that now seem fairly obvious.

At first glance the task seemed to be to simply rewrite the existing *Temporary Working Guide* and incorporate some of the ideas presented by members in their letters. The learning process that resulted from the lengthy discussions revealed a much more comprehensive task. These past six months have been the most enlightening. They have revealed the need for a comprehensive change in the structure of the world level of service as we currently know it. The report that follows is an attempt to describe the current discussions of the Select Committee on Service Structure. These

discussions are still incomplete at this time and in no way imply any final decisions. This is simply a report on our progress and offers only a single option. Other options will also be examined in the coming months. The Committee invites members to comment on this material by sending written input to the Committee through the World Service Office.

### **The Service Structure of Narcotics Anonymous**

The basic elements of the service structure of the Fellowship are already proven to work and need little change. The group, the area committee and the regional service committee comprise the structure of service in N.A., and the method for decision making for the Fellowship as a whole. This report includes few changes in that existing service pattern.

Where a major change seems to be needed is at the level of service beyond the scope of an individual region. In earlier service materials it was presumed that the next level of service was the world level. While that was a logical assumption then and has been tried, there have evolved some problems with the quick jump from a region to a truly worldwide conference.

The difficulties involved in that jump include differences in language, culture, distance and ability to provide services. While the Fellowship grew primarily in the U.S. and Canada these problems were not fully visible. Now that the Fellowship is growing strong in places so far away as Australia, South America, Europe and Asia the difficulties of language, culture, distance and self-support, must be addressed.

There are several practical matters that highlight these problems. After three years of trying different techniques for translation of literature written in American English into different languages, no simple or single process has been found to be universally practical or satisfactory. Some language materials have been in the translation process for all of these past three years. Some items have been translated and re-translated several times and a completely satisfactory product has not yet been achieved. In addition to the difficulties of translating the material adequately and ensuring the accuracy of the N.A. message, there is the question of cultural differences making some of the material unsuitable even if translated correctly.

Although our disease is universal, language and cultural differences make it hard, if not impossible, for addicts in many places to identify with the settings, terminology, and experience described in much of the American recovery stories. Addiction in the rural areas of the Philippines, Columbia or Jordan is a real problem, but the patterns of living are so culturally different that stories of Americans provide little common ground for identification.

The translation of service materials approved by the World Service Conference, for things such as the *Guide to Phoneline Service* or *Convention Guidelines*, is simply not even being addressed. With such vast differences existing in cultural foundations these materials are not relevant in places like India, most of Africa, and parts of Europe or South America.

This non-relevance therefore raises a question of the propriety of calling such materials "World Service Conference" tools. This matter of relevance can be expanded to question why such materials should be sent to places in the Fellowship for "world approval" when actually they are not