

June 1958

AA's Group Conscience in Action

8th General Service Conference Meets

THE EIGHTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE of Alcoholics Anonymous was marked by a deep awareness of responsibility both to delegates' local areas and to the Fellowship as a whole, according to a special summary distributed on the last day of the Conference held in New York, April 23-27, 1958.

Delegates from every state of the Union and each Canadian province, as well as Puerto Rico and Alaska, met with the Board of Trustees, directors and staff of the AA Grapevine, AA Publishing, Inc., and the General Service Office, to consider questions affecting AA as a whole. An observer from Norway also was present.

"Many discussions involved expressions of deep-felt but varying viewpoints," the summary emphasizes. "All, however, were illuminated by an earnest, continuing search for approaches and solutions designed to fulfill AA's primary pur-

pose: enduring service to the alcoholic who, now or in the future, may turn to the Fellowship for help."

Highlights of Conference Advisory Actions recommended by its nine six-member "out-of-a-hat" Committees were:

25th ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION

A 25th Anniversary Convention of AA was voted, to be held in Long Beach, California, July 1-3, 1960—subject to final approval and direction by the General Service Board.

RATIO OF TRUSTEES

In a "sense of the Conference" vote, a majority of 65-to-12 approved the principle of changing the ratio of Trustees of the General Service Board (now 8 non-AAs and 7 AAs) to 9 non-AAs and 9 AAs—with the understanding that the question will be submitted to local areas for review and guidance prior

to final action at the 1959 General Service Conference.

GRAPEVINE SUPPORT

Delegates agreed to help stimulate Grapevine circulation, which experienced a drop in the past year, with a person-to-person plan, augmented by modest promotional support from the Grapevine office.

ANONYMITY MAILING

Although it was noted that fewer anonymity breaks had occurred during 1957 than in previous years, Conference members voted approval of a widespread mailing from the General Service Office to writers, editors, publishers, film personnel and others, reminding them of the importance—to the membership and to AA—of personal anonymity.

AA "CENSUS"

A plan was approved whereby delegates will try to get a more accurate count of the number of both active and "inactive" members identified with groups in their areas. Purpose of the "census" is to reflect the real recovery picture, known to be in excess of membership figures actually reported by groups registered at GSO.

NO PAPERBACK "BIG BOOK"

Unanimous rejection, "for both practical and spiritual reasons," was voted a suggestion to issue a cheap reprint edition of "Alcoholics Anonymous."

FOREIGN TEXTBOOKS

The Conference approved a proposal that AA Publishing provide a basic textbook on AA in the languages of a number of countries where such a text is reported to be needed.

BILL'S STATUS

In response to a written request from Bill W. for clarification of his status in the interim before his final retirement from special service work, the Conference recorded its wish for his continued leadership on projects of movement-wide concern. [Six such projects, some complete, or near completion, and others still to be finished, were outlined to the delegates: an AA history (published last Fall); an hour-and-a-half nationwide television show on AA; determination of the trustee ratio; achievement of real solvency for the General Service Office; structural reorganization of the Grapevine; and enlargement and revision of the Third Legacy Manual—Ed.]

Two copies of a summary of Conference actions will be mailed to all registered groups with the June "Exchange Bulletin," and Area Committeemen will have advance digests sometime during May, according to the General Service Office. Many groups have also scheduled meetings for personal reports on the Conference. The Grapevine will, as space permits, carry additional material on pertinent Conference actions in future issues.