

OPENING STATEMENT

N.A., as we know it, was formed in 1956. In 1959, our fledgling fellowship survived a major crisis. Lack of adherence to the Traditions almost destroyed us. As our fellowship started to grow again the concept of a Board of Trustees was put into action to help prevent this from happening again. In the beginning our Trustees acted as a "Board of Directors", guiding the growth of the fellowship, and safeguarding our Traditions. The Board of Trustees was given the authority to act in this manner until such time as our fellowship could manage its own affairs.

Today, we again stand at a crucial point in the growth of N.A. The stage is set. This is the First world Service Conference. An important event, for the fellowship and for the Trustees, an event which is the result of three years of planning and work. It is, and has been, the intent of the world Service Board to transfer the decision-making process and guidance of N.A. to the fellowship.

In looking back at the last few years, the intent of the Board becomes obvious. The first phase of this effort was to set the scene by training members to take over responsibility, expanding our available literature, encouraging new meetings and service committees and setting up a functioning world Service Office. This first phase is complete. The second phase was to establish a service structure which makes it possible for the fellowship to be self guiding. This was the purpose of THE N.A. TREE, to establish a method by which decisions could be made by the fellowship. This phase is well on its way. Our groups have active officers and representatives; area committees and regional committees have been established and are functioning; and we have a world Service Conference. The final phase of this project is the actual transfer of decision-making and guidance from the Board to the fellowship. This final phase begins today, with the First world Service Conference.

The purpose of this Conference is to set in motion the wheels which will make it possible to have future Conferences which are truly representative of the fellowship and orderly in nature. We have the opportunity to do something significant for N.A. if we can put personalities aside and work together for the benefit of the fellowship as a whole.