

World Service



Conference Report

World Service Office Board of Directors

This year's conference will find the WSO board, along with all conference participants, confronted by difficult times and difficult decisions. The year-end figures for 1996 reflected a continuing decline of Basic Text sales, our principal source of income. Put this together with a lack of new literature products, increasing costs, and no reserve funds and we have a serious threat to the operations of our primary service center.

The board gave its full attention to these matters at our meeting in February. Our budget for 1997 reflects several dramatic and necessary decisions to both reduce costs and increase revenues. These decisions include a reduction in staffing and other personnel costs, a reorganization of WSO functions, and a reduction in general expenses to decrease our costs immediately. In order to increase our revenue we adopted a marketing plan, increased our prices on several inventory items, and developed a plan calling for the incremental reduction of our discounts across our customer base. Because many of our decisions to increase revenue were so far-reaching, their implementation is not scheduled to take effect until we have had a thorough discussion with the WSB and the conference. The details of our decisions will be contained in our annual report which you should receive in several weeks. The WSO board wants to assure you that we are doing everything we can to provide you with the necessary literature distribution and fellowship services in the meantime.

We are continuing the development of our website to ensure that information about NA is provided to the fellowship and to the public at large. We are still discouraging the placement of any of the fellowship's copyrighted literature on the Internet by members, groups, and service committees until such time as we have received sufficient assurance of their protection. We are also reviewing our vendor licensing arrangements and expect to recommend changes that will resolve some of the problems that have been brought to our attention by the fellowship.

We have been conducting research about the issue of group insurance and the board finds itself with a bit of a dilemma. After exhausting our leads on this issue, the only carrier that provides coverage nationally (US) is a company that one of our active consultants has an ongoing employment relationship with. Normally in these circumstances the WSO would just terminate its relationship with the individual or discontinue the process of inquiry. In this case we have been repeatedly asked and had WSC actions committed to us to address this issue. We do not plan to discontinue our active relationship with this particular

consultant, and therefore are somewhat reluctant to provide the contact information for the insurance company to those regions, areas, or groups who contact us. We are concerned that there may be some perception that this individual was provided some preferential access or treatment. That certainly did not happen. The simple truth is that this company was the only one that met the needs of our organization. The issue of groups having insurance protection is becoming a growing problem; however, the WSO felt an obligation to report this dilemma to you before making any decisions to forward the contact information to the fellowship.

While the picture I've described to you is not as sunny as we'd all like it to be, the fact is, we are taking steps to brighten the future. We hope that you will accept the WSO board's recommendations in the spirit of unity and cooperation in which they are offered. In the meantime, we do thank you for the opportunity to serve a worldwide and growing fellowship.

Yours in service,

***Bob Feneran, Chairperson
Rogan Allen, Vice Chairperson***