

EUROPEAN TRIP REPORT JULY 17—27, 1989

The Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the WSO International Coordinator visited with members of the N.A. Fellowship in Italy, Spain, and Israel during the last part of July this year. We are including this abbreviated report of that visit to familiarize the fellowship with some of the concerns and problems faced by our members who reside in countries outside of the United States.

We were able to attend a meeting in Rome which was conducted entirely in Italian. While we were unable to understand the words being spoken, it was not at all difficult to understand the basic message and the feelings that were being expressed.

After the meeting, we met with two of the English-speaking members to discuss some of the problems that are being experienced in Italy. Their main concern was with the translation of N.A. literature into their native language. Translations were done by an individual several years ago and sent to the WSO for approval. Following the procedure in use at that time, the translations were sent to a translation company for review. When the review was completed, the literature was printed for distribution by the World Service Office. This literature was not sent back to the local fellowship to review the changes made by the translation service. When the members in Italy then ordered the literature carried by the office, they found that the translation company's changes had revised the literature into language that was very stilted, polite, and about 30 years out of date. As a result, the members of N.A. in Italy do not use the literature carried by the office, as they find it very difficult to understand.

They have since formed a translation committee made up of one member from each of the five major cities in Italy. These members have revised the existing I.P.'s and Little White Book so that they are not only consistent with the N.A. message, but the language that the normal Italian addict can use and understand. They have had this revised literature printed, stamped it "non-approved," and are using it in their meetings. The Italian members want to have their revisions printed and distributed by the WSO. They cannot afford to continue the printing process. They also understand that the WSO relies on the sale

of literature to assist in the support of services for addicts world-wide.

Several other issues were discussed. They have problems getting members involved in service. They want to begin more meetings, but do not have members who are committed to support the meetings. They have not formed any area or regional service committees. Instead, they have one group in each city that hosts several meetings. Their efforts at P.I. and H&I have been mostly at the group level, since they do not have committees.

Prolonged discussions focused on the growth and development of services. The WSO has sent copies (one for each city) of the *Temporary Working Guide to Our Service Structure*, the *Guide to P.I.*, and the *Hospitals & Institutions Handbook*.

The members we met were very interested in carrying the message to the public and into correctional/treatment settings. They have had some difficulty in getting the message of recovery into any sort of H&I setting, due to the cultural and political situation in Italy. The only treatment programs presently in Italy are "therapeutic communities" run by the Catholic Church. These programs only attempt to get the addicts off of the "drugs" that they are using (heroin mostly), but continue to serve alcohol with meals. So the concept of total abstinence has not been embraced by the few treatment facilities.

The Italians have been in contact with the WSO several times since our visit. They seem to have gotten over their resentments at the office about the problems with translation of literature. They are requesting further assistance, as there are very few members with much time clean and they are uncertain of their direction with regard to services. As this fellowship community is so small and isolated from the remainder of the fellowship in Europe, they will continue to need much support and encouragement from the WSC, WSO, and the general membership of our fellowship.

Several days were spent at the European Service Conference in Barcelona, Spain. The first item of business was delegate reports from each of the 12 countries represented. They included the United Kingdom, Ireland, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, West Germany, Switzerland, Belgium. Each report was translated, as it was

presented, into Spanish for those members attending from the local community. The Chairman of the WSC also gave a report, as did the manager of the WSO. That evening, there was an open discussion/speaker meeting. The next day was taken up with meetings on relationships, sponsorship, the Traditions, the service structure, and cost equalization. The translation workshop was well attended by members from almost all of the countries represented. Dissatisfaction with the translation procedures used by the WSO was voiced by members from several countries. Representatives from Spain, Portugal, and France support the translation process which has been developed over the past couple of years. They shared that the process was working well, even though it moves more slowly than they had hoped.

The International Coordinator had an opportunity to explain the translation procedure. She explained that the WSO is aware of mistakes that have been made in the translations process in the past, but the office is working hard to rectify those problems. The coordinator stressed the need for patience with the process, as these projects take time to complete.

There were lots of questions regarding not only the translation process, but the literature development process. More than once, members asked why there is not a book on the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions for N.A. Several members expressed anger and frustration with the WSC literature process and the American fellowship. They believe the process and the Americans have hindered the availability of the written message of recovery in foreign countries. Some members are willing and ready to take on the task of translation, but are frustrated at the lack of stable material to translate. In some N.A. communities, members use the A.A. 12 & 12 during their meetings, as these materials are already translated.

The visit to Israel went extremely well. All of the trusted servants of the groups in Israel knew that we would be visiting. A Service Learning Day was held all day on Monday and half the day on Tuesday. In addition, we were able to spend time with individual members, sharing about many aspects of the N.A. program. During the learning day, which was taped for those addicts who were not able to attend, a wide variety of questions was asked. The question and answer process was a lengthy one, as each question required translation from Hebrew to English, and then

back again for the answers. Some of the questions asked included:

"Is it OK to work at a treatment center and still be a member of N.A.? Isn't that twelve step work?"

"How do we let the public know that we exist? What about interviews on the radio or TV?"

"What kind of meetings can we have in jail? Is it even OK to have meetings in jails or hospitals?"

"What do we do when members get disruptive in meetings? Can we call the police? What else could we do?"

The questions just went on and on. It was a long and arduous process with all of the translating that was required, but it was very rewarding for all of the participants.

A lot of time was spent discussing the translation of the name "Narcotics Anonymous" into Hebrew, as there is not a Hebrew word for narcotics. A final determination has not been made regarding this issue, but they will probably use the Hebrew name Addicts Anonymous for the fellowship in Israel. The Hebrew letter beginning the word "addict" is "n," so that they will still refer to the fellowship as N.A., and will (of course) use the N.A. logo on all their literature.

They have completed translations of the Little White Book and two of the I.P.'s into Hebrew. They have completed preliminary translations of the Steps and Traditions from the Basic Text. Additionally, they plan to include a glossary of terms with definitions in the final version of the Basic Text, as there are several concepts and words in English that might have four or five different definitions in Hebrew.

We have also had contact with the Israelis on a number of occasions since the visit. We have sent the *Temporary Working Guide to Our Service Structure*, the *Guide to P.I.*, and the *Hospitals & Institutions Handbook* to the Israelis, as well. The members there appreciated the visit and the information that they received as a result.

A lot of work remains to be done in these countries. The fellowship communities are very young and apprehensive about the future. They are scared of making mistakes that could be detrimental to the fellowship. There is very little communication between countries, due to large gaps, both culturally and in language.

As a result of this summer's visit, the WSO has received quite a few group registrations from both Italy and Israel.

In future issues of the *Newsline*, there will be further reports on the growth of the fellowship in countries outside of the U.S. Until next time. . .

BASIC TEXT TRANSLATIONS

As a result of the brisk interest in the Commemorative Edition of the Basic Text, the translation of the Basic Text into other languages is progressing very well.

The French Edition, which will initially contain Book One only, should be available for sale sometime in December, 1989. The members in the French-speaking N.A. communities are very excited about the soon-to-be-available recovery text in their language. We expect to finalize the draft of the Spanish Basic Text in early December, and after the necessary indexing and other pre-printing steps it should be ready for print sometime in the early fall of 1990. The work on the German translation is progressing much slower than we expected, but hope to have a draft sometime in the middle of 1990.

These recent strides in the translation efforts are in part a result of the revenue from the Commemorative Edition being used to procure the necessary services to help local members get the job done. We would like to thank those members who supported the Commemorative Edition sales effort, for without your support it would not have been possible for the WSO to expend the necessary resources to assist with these efforts.

There are still approximately 1,100 copies of the Commemorative Edition remaining. Those members who are interested in purchasing one may use the order form in the back of this *Newsline*. Additionally, the two per customer restriction is lifted as of October 1st, 1989.

SHIPPING STUDY TO BE DONE

In 1988, the WSO conducted a preliminary survey to determine the cost effectiveness of locating and

shipping literature from a facility east of the Mississippi River. This study was done in an attempt to determine whether or not a cost savings could be realized that would make operation of a facility in the eastern part of the continent financially practical.

The preliminary study conducted last year revealed that a savings in some shipping expenses would occur, but the total amount of money saved would not by itself justify placement of a shipping facility in that area. The overall expense of operating a shipping activity would be greater than the amount saved from the shipping cost alone.

The report of this survey was delivered to the Board of Directors, which gave consideration to the matter and instructed that a further study be conducted in 1989.

A new study along the lines initiated in the previous report is being conducted by the WSO at this time. If this study produces favorable results, the Board will reconsider the matter of a shipping facility east of the Mississippi. Future reports presented in the *Newsline* will give the results of this survey.

NEW TAPES

The practice adopted by the WSO Board of Directors concerning placement of tapes in the inventory was discussed at the World Service Conference in 1988. This policy generally permits new tapes to be entered into the inventory whenever they are available. For a period of three years from the time a new tape is entered into the catalog, the tape will be retained in the catalog. After three years, the tape will still be available for sale, but will no longer be included in the updated catalog.

The 1989 catalog, soon to be released, is the third catalog produced by the WSO. Tapes that were included in the original catalog will no longer be listed in the 1989 catalog. Those interested in purchasing tapes from the original catalog listing may still do so. If individuals or committees want copies of an updated list giving all tapes that are available, that list can be obtained by writing the World Service Office.

The tape review process has approved several new tapes. They will be included in the new catalog and available immediately for sale.