



WORLD SERVICE OFFICE, INC.
NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

P.O. Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409
(818) 780-3951

September 17, 1990

Susan L.
3625 St. Charles Avenue, #2-F
New Orleans, LA 70115

Dear Susan,

I am writing in response to your letter which was received September 5, 1990. I would like to respond to several points you have presented in your letter.

First, you express that you are writing this as a concerned member, but go on to explain that you are an attorney and have practiced copyright law. It appears that we have a double statement. Are you offering our membership legal advice or are you using your professional title to substantiate your opinions? If the former is true, then I have some serious concerns. Your statement, "Whether the publication of the paperback basic text is right or wrong, from a legal perspective or any other perspective, it is for each member to examine his own conscience and act accordingly, not for WSO to enforce legal rights, even if those rights exist," suggest a member should consult their conscience about whether or not to violate the law and that the World Service Office, Inc., which is a not-for-profit corporation established to act on behalf of the fellowship, should not protect the rights of the fellowship. It is highly unusual and perhaps unethical for an officer of the court to suggest that the very law that you have been sworn to uphold, be disregarded and ignored. If the latter is true, then you must realize that your professional standing has no bearing on how your opinion is considered (i.e., if I was interacting in a committee providing input on the Fourth Step Guide, I would not identify my input by stating that my name is Stu, a clinical director, to give my input merit because of my profession). The Twelfth Tradition speaks directly to this, explaining that, as members, we are all equal, which is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions. I would strongly suggest that you clarify your position either as an attorney providing information and legal advice to our fellowship, or address the fellowship as a member.

You speak of the free paperback text. Let me clarify this. The text you speak of is free to the member, but not free to Narcotics Anonymous. The service committee, group, or individuals pay for the text with personal funds or Seventh Tradition funds. The current process works like this: they will send you some of the paperback texts for free the first time. On the second occasion, you will be advised of the price list, which ranges from \$.30 to \$1.25 per book. The cost of producing this book is estimated at \$.30 per book. The sales method used to enhance the distribution depicts the text as free. This practice painfully reminds me of the old street corner gimmick of the past.

You have also asked for several financial documents, which I will send and also discuss later in this letter. Meanwhile I would like to respond with a question relating to your inquiry regarding finances. Have you written a letter to the distributors of the paperback text asking them for their financial statement; who

decides what goes in and out of the basic text; who is their printer and what do they pay for production; who decides on how to expend their revenue; do they pay taxes or are they a not-for-profit corporation; what are their by-laws; can you as a member, group, area or region impact the activities connected to the printing, distribution and sale of the book as well as the spiritual content? This is why I believe we have copyright law; to prevent individuals from stealing what spiritually and ethically belongs to someone else, for financial or other gain. A no answer to any of the above questions suggests that the rules they live by are not the same as those they require of others.

As a matter of record, the World Service Office has made this information available for some time. The cost at which we currently print the book is \$2.04. It is printed by Donnelly, Inc. and distributed by us. I have included a copy of our by-law which reflect our connection with the World Service Conference, which is today the decision-making body and voice of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. I have also included a copy of our annual report for the last three years. The specific documents you request we will be unable to provide based on our by-law Article 9, Section 9.03. We will provide that information based on the standard identified in our by-laws, on site at any time. The members of the WSO Board of Directors are elected by the World Service Conference and are entrusted with overseeing the operation of the World Service Office. The WSO is the primary service center of Narcotics Anonymous and acts as a hub for communication within the fellowship. It is not a separate organization unaffected by the fellowship. If you review our by-laws, Article 2, Objectives and Purposes, it clearly reflects the purpose for our existence. The World Service Conference has the ability to impact these by-laws and there are currently several motions being reviewed by other service bodies, as well as the World Service Office, to effect changes in them.

What →

The Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous has made it clear to the World Service Office Board of Directors that any infringement of Narcotics Anonymous trademarks or copyright will be acted upon, up to and including litigation. This precedent was set at the World Service Conference in 1989. This perspective received the unanimous consent of the World Service Conference. In conjunction, the World Service Conference has declared that no one, including the World Service Office, is to change, alter, print or distribute the text without its permission. The World Service Conference or the World Service Office has not received a request or given permission for anyone to alter, print or distribute our text. I have included a list of N.A.'s copyright registration in and outside the United States so you may find out who legally owns the basic text. I have also included a statement regarding the Narcotics Anonymous Literature Trust and all the decisions made by the World Service Conference relative to the basic text. We as a fellowship are unified in this stance and those who attempt to take our spiritual property from us only foster the things that will tear us apart. We have contacted the individuals involved in production of the illegal text. We appealed to them personally to follow the normal process, should they be aggrieved by the actions of the service structure. They have not responded and appear to be unwilling to work within the established service structure.

In your letter you made a statement that world services is involved in excessive travel and that directors, trustees and conference participants travel at will. These statements are apparently made without prior substantiation or investigation. All travel done by world services is documented in reports presented to the service bodies, as well as the World Service Conference, through its publications. I have included the travel policy for all the service bodies for your information. Our travel

needs often include meetings with attorneys to legally register Narcotics Anonymous where the hiring of translators is required to aid fellowship committees in their translation efforts, and travel related to printing and production. This is communicated and substantiated either by reports or minutes. You also inferred that the World Convention Corporation member who is local to you previously indicated that he will be travelling to Australia six times in the upcoming year. This is simply untrue. That individual is not the liaison for the Australia convention and will not be travelling on behalf of the corporation in the planning stages, and at best will attend the convention at corporation expense as the chairperson of the World Convention Corporation. As a matter of record, the individual you refer to in this situation is the World Convention Corporation chairperson and the vice chairperson of the World Service Office Board of Directors. He states that he has never had a conversation with you nor anyone else about this issue. It would have been more prudent to at least communicate with this individual prior to your statements, instead of questioning his integrity with unfounded statements.

Your letter also expressed concern about your anonymity and its relation to "attorney client privilege." I find it difficult to believe that an attorney and officer of the court would have such a dim view of this cornerstone of your profession. We, however, value the "attorney client privilege" and believe that the anonymity of our members was not violated, but protected thoroughly by the privilege. The service of individuals was simply done through our attorney, as an agent of and on behalf of the WSO, acting on behalf of the fellowship. The information used by our attorney, in respect to individuals, remains in our direct control and should the cease and desist request be heeded, no further action will be necessary and all records will be destroyed. This relationship should be particularly familiar to you in light of your ten-plus years of practice.

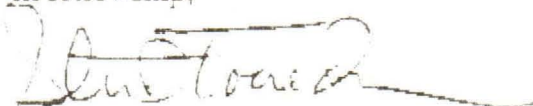
I would agree, however, that you should spend the time to develop a better understanding of the Narcotics Anonymous service structure before making accusations and expounding on traditions, such as in your last paragraph. Organization has nothing to do with money, property and prestige diverting us from our primary purpose. What you have seemingly done is to take certain parts from the Sixth Tradition and combined them with the Ninth Tradition to expound an opinion and infer a poor application of our traditions. The Sixth Tradition relates to not endorsing, financing or lending the N.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose. The latter part of this tradition applies to the former part of that tradition, and not to the Ninth Tradition. The Ninth Tradition is, "N.A., as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve." The World Service Office Board of Directors is a service board created out of this tradition. It abides by the directives given to it by the fellowship through the World Service Conference, whom it serves directly. So, as defined in the traditions, the World Service Office is within its boundaries.

While I understand your concern as a member, and will do what I can to provide you with the information you seek, it appears that you may have been misled by someone else's anger, resentments, or their need for recognition. Our traditions are the means our groups and service committees use to interact with society at large, they are predicated on the fact that this interaction is within the confines of the law in whatever country we exist in. Attempting to use the traditions to justify or rationalize the violation of law is not appropriate, because our traditions presume that our behavior is within the law before we even consider the application of the traditions. The cornerstone of the steps and the traditions is humility, which

allows us to retain a state of spiritual centeredness when interacting in or outside of our groups. A member or group therefore does not enjoy sanctity because of its membership or group allegiance. Recovery offers us a process of accepting, then amending such behavior in a spirit of humility, dignity and love. We become accountable for our actions and, as such, are urged by the recovery process to apply the steps and traditions so we may become productive members of society. I believe that you have a responsibility to apologize, to each and every member who has read the unfounded and unsustainable statements contained in your letter and set the record straight.

The World Convention Corporation is meeting on November 17 and 18, 1990 in New Orleans, Louisiana. I would urge you to take the time to come and join in the meeting to experience the activities of the World Convention Corporation Board. I am currently a member of that board of directors and will be attending that meeting. If you desire, I will be happy to make the time to sit with you personally and discuss these issues, or any other problems or difficulties you may be having. Also, if you desire, you may contact me by phone at the World Service Office between 5-7 p.m. PDT weekdays, except Thursdays. My home and work telephone numbers are a matter of record in the fellowship and can be obtained from your regional service representative.

In fellowship,



Stu Toedman, Chairperson
World Service Office Board of Directors

ST/cs

Enc: WSO By-Laws
N.A. Copyright Registrations (In and Outside U.S.)
The N.A. Literature Trust

cc: Theresa Wagner Middlebrook
Dave Moorehouse
Michael Cohen, Esq.
Craig T.
Bill I.
Joe F.

not removed