

in the mail along with payment. A large number were phoned in and sent out along with a bill. Greg was the first paid worker since 1973, nearly eight years earlier.

Chapter Eleven

Tumultuous Times

Nineteen eighty-three was a traumatic year for the fellowship. Publication of the book was months behind schedule, the office was about to lose some fifteen thousand dollars to a printer who went bankrupt, word was about to spread that the essays on the Fourth and Ninth Traditions in the Basic Text had been changed without consultation with the fellowship, and Jimmy was going to be relieved from his duties as office manager. It was going to be a sad ending for the only continuously active member then alive who had been part of NA's birth.

Martin C. began the year 1983 with a meeting by conference telephone call to the Finance Committee. They worked over and revised guidelines they were going to send to the fellowship for approval at the spring conference. It was a successful call, with five of his eight member committee participating.

It was not until the board met on January eighth that they finally took action on the printing delay. Their minutes tell the story more casually than the situation warranted, "Much discussion on book, if the material was delivered late to the printer or if the printer is liable for a late charge, more information is needed. Letter to fellowship concerning the delay in distributing the book, Kevin is working on the letter." The letter was to address both issues and Kevin reported: "Deletion letter - letter has been drafted; Bob R. (visiting conference chairperson) feels that the letter should not be sent out generally so as not to create controversy, but included in the book; Phil wants a copy here at the office, Bob will send to regions and it will be included in the book. Sally will answer any correspondence re: above. Motion: Deletion letter be sent to regions and included in the book. Passed; unanimously."

The proprietor of Thought Process, a reputed heavy drinker, was now obviously failing to get the work done while at the same time calling for the next periodic payment. Phil or Jimmy visited the printer or called every day during December and January. On one occasion the printer showed them the press he was going to use once the typesetting was done. But after so many weeks they were finally

concluding that something drastic had to be done as pressure from the fellowship was mounting.

Members who had sent money for their special edition books were calling and writing. Area and regional officers were contacting the office, wanting to know when the books were going to be received. Since no one knew when the book would be ready, clear and definite responses were not given. But vague answers only raised the level of concern.

It was about mid-January that Bob R. called me to ask if I would be available to serve again as parliamentarian. Without hesitation I agreed, and wrote down the schedule. He didn't mention the problems they were wrestling with over the book. At first I thought it was odd that Jimmy didn't call, but later I learned it was another example of Bob exerting his prerogative as the person responsible for the conference.

The growing number of phone calls and letters arriving at the office following the January meeting prompted other office directors to finally conclude that action would have to be taken. Kevin F. wrote an open letter to the fellowship about the crisis on January 22, 1983. Although his letter concentrated on the production delays, giving dates of significant events, it included a reference to the language change. It said, "During the proofreading of the galleys, it was noticed that an error was made with respect to Traditions Four and Nine. A special meeting was called of the three world service arms of NA, and the error was corrected." His closing remarks contained this positive note, "As far as the actual due date? I can't be sure, hopefully by the end of February 1983, but maybe sooner." His optimism, based on assurances from Phil, was misplaced.

When Kevin's letter arrived in the hands of the Literature Committee, their deepest fears seemed to be coming true. Frustration and anger against the office had been the general rule among them for two years. These disappointments were simply more fuel on the fire.

As the fire was growing in the east, one of those "minor coincidences" happened, and things were about to get better for NA as a result of it. Near the end of January, Phil was visiting a customer of his stationery business, and asked to use their phone to call someone to discuss the book problem.

Sitting at her desk while Phil used her phone to make the call was Jeanie, one of the principle employees of Valley Bindery Company. She had known Phil for some time, but didn't know until that moment that he was connected with NA. After the call was over, Jeanie asked about the problems he had discussed concerning Thought Process Printers. Phil began to lay out their difficulties when Jeanie told him that her company had normally been doing all

of the bindery work (folding, collating and stapling) for Thought Process when they printed NA literature like pamphlets and the White Booklet. She went on to say that Thought Process had failed to make payments to them for work completed and owed them more than a thousand dollars. Phil decided that Jimmy should talk to Jeanie and see if she could help with the book problems. But after several weeks passed, Jimmy hadn't called her.

Also in late January, Bob R. was having another meeting of the Conference Administrative Committee. The first item was discussion of the absence of the secretary and lack of any communication from her. She had been unreachable for months. Bob proposed, and the committee approved, the appointment of a "personal" secretary to take over. Preparation of the next *Fellowship Report* was about to take place, and they decided to include Kevin's January twenty-second letter. A week later, notice of the scheduled conference was mailed. In the weeks that followed, Bob held periodic meetings to prepare the agenda mailing.

Sensing there was getting to be too much work to do alone, and recognizing there was money to pay for it at last, Jimmy asked a member to come to work in the office as a clerk typist. Her name was Sherry B., and she worked only a few months before deciding to quit. She was replaced by Jodi who was working at the office when I came to work in June.

On February twelfth, a cold and rainy night, the office board had its next meeting. A few hours before the meeting Phil had stopped at the printer's and discovered the printing press that the book was to be printed on was gone. He then went to Jimmy's and explained what he saw. Jimmy called Jeanie who said the guy must be skipping out, and he told Phil to go back and take everything that looks like it was related to the book.

Phil, Jimmy, Doug and Jerry P. went over and collected everything they could find that looked like it was NA's. The owner complied with their seizure of the material, even signing a release. Once everything had been picked up, they went back to Jimmy's. Jeanie arrived later at the board meeting in the office and examined everything they brought back. She offered some suggestions about how to salvage the job. Jeanie was questioned thoroughly by the rest of the board; they even called the owner of her company to verify who she was. The board eventually asked her to quickly get bids from three printers who could finish the job.

Kevin reported he had been in touch with the attorney (finally) about changes to be made in the bylaws. However, Doug F. had also called the attorney and gave conflicting instructions. The board voted to designate Kevin as the only director authorized to work with the

attorney on that matter, thus assuring the conference intention would prevail.

Phil, perhaps sensing the explosive confrontation coming at the conference, submitted his resignation as president of the board during the meeting, but agreed to remain on the board. Although he cited increased personal business responsibilities, he probably didn't want to endure an even more grueling confrontation at the conference than he underwent last time. Chuck G. was selected as interim president of the board. After concluding other business, they recessed the meeting until February seventeenth when they were to receive and act on any printing proposal Jeanie could come up with.

Word of the deletions in the text was leaking out, but surprisingly it had not reached some of the key people. Jim B. of the Michigan region had already sent a letter to the trustees on the matter. Chuck S. wrote back on February thirteenth

In Tradition Four and Nine there were found to be statements that, in my opinion, would have the possibility of making the NA *Service Manual* imprudent and would have caused disharmony among some groups at a later date. Therefore I felt it important to delete from Tradition Four, paragraph two "the answer is that these things are not NA. ...all else is not NA. ...whether we choose to utilize these services is up to the group." In Tradition Nine, paragraph two, "none of them has the power to rule, censor, dictate, or decide...but they are not a part of NA." The explanation for my reason - the Traditions supersede all other written matter. These statements are superfluous and would cause serious problems among the areas and regions should some group choose to take these at face value.

Chuck's opinion was one hundred percent correct. About nine years later some individuals elected to take it upon themselves to disregard the will of the fellowship by performing actions that would have been consistent with the deleted language. They began publishing their own version of NA literature. It was to cause disruption and chaos within the fellowship and cost NA over a hundred thousand dollars to resolve, if it is even resolved as you read these pages!

Word of the book fiasco was about to ignite the fellowship; Jeanie would have to work fast. She proceeded to patch together a team of local companies to do the work. She arranged for Dale Pettit Lithography to do the remaining typesetting and printing, her company (Valley Bindery) would do the cutting, folding and collating, while the book assembly was to be done by Weber-McRea Book Binders. This is what she was prepared to do if the board could ever reach a decision. Final authorization, however, continued to be delayed.

Bob R. held another Administrative Committee meeting on February fifteenth. They accepted the elected secretary's absence and lack of response as a resignation and appointed Carol K. as secretary pro tem. The rest of the meetings was devoted to working on the mail list for the *Agenda Report* and on the report itself.

A shift developed in the week between the office board meeting on the twelfth and the one on the seventeenth. Bob R. had previously either supported the change or had at least been compliant. However, he had come to the conclusion that the Fourth and Ninth Traditions language should be printed as originally adopted by the conference. He explained his position at the February seventeenth office meeting and urged the board to put the removed language back in or not print the books until the conference was over. The board was poised to comply with his request until it was decided to consult with the attorney on the matter. After some discussion, Steve B. moved, "to disregard the discussion made in Traditions Four and Nine and to print the book as it was approved by the 1982 WSC." The motion passed. He then moved "to send the matter to the regions and trustees and abide by their collective response" (emphasis mine). More discussion followed with no resolution. They recessed until the twenty-fourth.

Even before the trustees had an opportunity to discuss the matter, Kevin F. sent a second letter to the fellowship. The letter announced the seizure of incomplete work from the printer and delivery to another company. He added more fuel to the fire by stating near the end of his letter, "Progress is now at a temporary standstill, as we are awaiting legal advice from our attorney. His response is due by the Board of Directors meeting to be held on February 24, 1983. At that meeting we will act as per his direction."

As it turned out, Chuck S. had not consulted with the other trustees until after the new year began. Because Chuck had been the key person in changing the language, he knew he would become *public enemy number one* when the conference met. In his words, "I was going to resign anyway. I had been at this thing (leading the trustees) for too long and it was more expensive than I could stand any longer." He was not the kind of person to take criticism lying down, but he accepted responsibility for having approved the change. Chuck believed his presence as chairperson would not be helpful when the matter was taken up at the conference so he made arrangements to resign as chairperson.

Carl B. had been angling towards becoming Chuck's successor for some time. However, Chuck and a few others were strongly opposed to letting Carl become chairperson. The day before the trustee meeting, Chuck and Bob B. visited Sally at her home and convinced

her to accept the chairpersonship. Sally was a particularly good choice, as her temperament and understanding served to help defuse conflict over this issue, and proved equally effective later in other matters. She was one of the few women with much clean time and was well respected by all who knew her. She got clean in 1969 and had been active in NA since then.

When the trustees met on February twentieth, Chuck announced his resignation and Sally was easily elected to succeed him. They went over the book problem thoroughly at the meeting, and Sally phoned the out-of-state trustees to discuss it with them. Of the original \$36,000 or \$37,000 collected from book sales, the printer had already received about \$15,000. The bindery company had received a \$2,000 deposit, and that was still usable. There was still about \$18,000 on hand. It was enough, but should they go ahead and print? The options were to print 5,000 copies with the original language, print 5,000 copies with the modified language, or print nothing until after the conference. The vote was divided. Two trustees voted to hold printing until the conference, three to print with the original language, and six to print with the language as amended.

The majority felt that the modified language was consistent with NA philosophy, while the original language was not. They decided that the office ought to print the book as modified. Even if the philosophical issues were cast aside, they probably felt nobody was likely to go and use over this issue, and having the book available in either form would help countless addicts find and maintain recovery. It was a tough decision. Unfortunately it would have nasty repercussions for the trustees at the conference.

Although Bob R. had been at the November meeting when the decision was made to change the language, he probably didn't tell people about it until January or February. He may have concluded after some thought that it was wrong to change the words, or he may have been taking a private poll. But regardless of what shaped his thinking, by late February he was opposed to printing anything but what the conference had originally adopted. Even when the trustee vote was announced, his opinion did not change. I believe he was sensing the anxiety level over the delay, and recognized that when word about a language change became widely known it would cause an eruption of emotion and irrational behavior.

In the days before the meeting on February twenty-fourth, he began to receive input from regions and individuals. When the directors met on the twenty-fourth, Bob presented the input to the board. He showed a telegram from Texas voting to "print with or with out deletions. From Georgia, print without deletions, Tennessee - voting to hold book until conference. Mid-America - voting to hold book.

Florida - demanding halt to all WSO operations and the resignation of all WSO board members and Philadelphia wants to disband WSO now and hold publication of the Book."

The trustee recommendation was given and discussed, and the bids that Jeanie had developed were presented. There was dissatisfaction that more bids had not been obtained, but Pettit did have good references. Doug moved "to accept basic changes with the corrections," and that motion passed. The language of that motion is not really very clear, but it was a decision to proceed with the printing. After a little more discussion they voted to proceed with the new printing arrangements made by Jeanie. They elected to consult with their attorney before printing, and resolved that each subsequent release of funds for printing would require prior approval of the board. At last a final go ahead! A contract was prepared that gave the office the ability to properly monitor the progress. Jeanie then shepherded the companies along until they were done.

But the meeting had one more twist before it adjourned. Bill B., who had missed most of the meetings during the year, but who was at this one, resigned from the board after announcing he had made complaints to the California Department of Corporations and the State Attorney General about how the WSO board had been conducting business. Bill was Jimmy's long-time loyal friend, but he apparently saw the handwriting on the wall and felt it was time to jump ship. It is interesting to note that Jimmy's name does not appear in the minutes of this or any other board meeting since the conference. It is never noted that he was present or participated in any way. Apparently all of his input as office manager was through discussions with individual directors between meetings. But this changed at the next meeting.

The day before the directors met, an open letter from an unspecified person, but purporting to be from "The fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous" was sent to the office and distributed throughout the fellowship. This memorandum demanded the office respond to twelve questions about the halt in the printing (probably prompted by Kevin's letter and phone calls to others in California who might have known what was going on). Curiously, there was no mention of the language change, only of the production problems and money loss. If they didn't know about the language change when they wrote the memorandum, they were to learn about it within the next week or so. A committee (Kevin and Sally) was appointed to respond to the memorandum for the office. They did respond, but not until weeks later.

How it came to pass that Bo and Page learned of the language change is not certain. Bo expressed to me that he couldn't remember,

and Page didn't make himself available to discuss anything at all. But it is likely that Greg discussed it with them within minutes of his phone calls with Sally on February twentieth. They may have learned of it sooner, but the telegrams to Bob R., written just days before the February twenty-fourth meeting, suggest it was on the twentieth. It was hard enough for them to tolerate the delay in printing, but they and the army of literature volunteers would not sit still for an arbitrary change in the words their group conscience labor had produced. The war signal was given, and the battle began.

Reaction from Page was quick and determined. On February twenty-eighth he wrote the office and announced he had revoked the right of the office to publish the book since they had not published it by the date previously specified, and they should cease moving forward to print the book. The office simply ignored the letter.

Page undoubtedly called Bob R., and Bob attempted to moderate Page's response, but to no avail. During the following month, Bob tried to calm the waters when he could. As the conference drew nearer, Bob continued to press the directors to stop printing or change the language back.

On February twenty-sixth, the Administrative Committee mailed the *Fellowship Report*. It was a big package. It began with a letter from Bob and George, encouraging recipients to make copies and distribute them throughout the fellowship. An announcement was included that copies of all previous conference minutes could be obtained, for a reasonable fee, from Bob in Atlanta. In this way, there could be no doubt about what had transpired at the conference since it first began meeting. There were a number of attachments to the report, providing much information to the fellowship about what was going on.

In a letter dated March first, Page wrote to the fellowship at large. He addressed the failures of the office to perform its responsibilities properly and asked for a group conscience from each region on whether to print the book now or wait until the conference. He also asked who the fellowship wanted to be responsible for the printing, and whether or not they wanted the Fourth and Ninth Tradition language returned to the original wording. The letter was moderate in tone and requested that replies be sent to the conference chairperson, which suggested he and Bob had probably talked about this in advance.

In the midst of all this turmoil, the office filed its annual IRS report forms. They show total revenue of \$85,508 and expenses of \$75,327 (\$30,469 for printing, which included payments on the book).

The trustees sent their own letter to the fellowship on March first, explaining the events as they saw them and describing their

reasons for approving the change. The letter's tone was reasoned and factual. It contained an important signal that was the foundation of further trustee discussion in the matter. "We believe that the inclusion of this material in the book would create immediate and long range problems for the fellowship, seriously threatening the unity of NA and therefore *recommended* to the WSO board that this material not be included in the book" (emphasis mine). It is interesting to note that the trustees recommended and did not direct. This point was lost when the conference took place and the trustees were each judged on their vote. Other than Chuck, the trustees had never directed a change be made, and it is even questionable that Chuck had ever done so. They only made a recommendation. In the final analysis, it was the office directors who had the ultimate control, and they exercised it.

Despite the trustees' calming report, opposition to the change and anger over the bungling of the printing spread across the fellowship. "They are changing our book and throwing away our money," was the cry heard at group podiums and business meetings all across the east and south. The feeling was that regardless of what the Text said, the conference (and therefore the fellowship) had approved it, and the language was de facto NA philosophy.

Telegrams and letters came from all over, including the Cleveland Area, the Pacific Northwest Region, the Volunteer Region (Tennessee), Philadelphia and Mid-America each expressing their views. Although slightly different, they were all opposed to what was going on. John F., the RSR from Philadelphia wrote by telegram, "[Greater Philadelphia] votes to defer printing until WSO in May and to disband WSO right now." These were discussed at the March eighth meeting of the Administrative Committee as they collated the *Fellowship Report* for mailing.

The next office meeting was held on March twelfth with Chuck G. acting as president. He started off by giving details of his discussions with the attorney. Chuck had given the attorney a copy of all their minutes, the conference minutes for 1982, the *Service Manual* and all the communications from Page. After studying the material, the attorney advised printing the book saying, "that they had been given the duty to do this at the conference by the fellowship and they had an obligation to the fellowship to proceed until the majority of the fellowship advised them to stop." Despite this advice, Kevin proposed a motion to "not print the book until the conference" but it was defeated. The printing went ahead.

A discussion then ensued concerning election of someone to succeed Phil as president of the board. Although it was decided to hold the matter until a later meeting, the matter was decided by default.

Doug, who was the vice-president and wanted the job of president, suddenly resigned a week after the meeting. His resignation letter is touched with resentment and frustration at what he termed "betrayal" by the board members and by the 1982 conference. His feeling was that the spirit of compromise present at the 1982 meeting had been lost, and he didn't want to be involved in the mess any longer. Most likely he was also angry when he learned there were not enough votes to elect him president of the office board.

A few days later, Chuck G. wrote and mailed to the fellowship a three-page report giving the background to the printing controversy. It was a low key and calming report, and asked the fellowship not to respond to individuals acting alone but depend on actions from the conference as a whole.

Even while Chuck's letter was in the mail, a letter from Attorney Bob K. (Volunteer Region), who was assisting Page, was on its way advising the office not to print the book until after the conference. Bob outlined the foundation for his advice. He cited the Literature Committee's copyright, which might be used to contest the validity of the office's right to publish. He further cited as reasons not to go ahead the changed language and the financial loss caused by the bankrupt printer.

Apparently Kevin felt the need to communicate directly with Page or Bob K. and several phone calls took place. A subsequent letter sent by Bob K. to Kevin suggested there might be no alternative but to use the courts to force the office to cease efforts to publish until after the conference.

As anger rose up, it grew beyond the printing fiasco and the changes made in the Text. It included having the directors and employees of the office removed, and, if possible, having the office moved to the east where it would be safe from the "self will" that seemed prevalent in California. This storm would not pass quickly, nor die without taking casualties.

The trustees were also a target, and anyone who supported the office decision to print the modified language was considered the enemy. The conflict struck particularly hard with the trustees. They were barraged with phone calls, mostly vilifying and angry. The special target was Chuck S., who would acknowledge at the conference that the change was, "in the main, his responsibility."

Bob R. called me again in late March, this time to discuss the minutes of the 1982 conference. He wanted my suggestions about how to handle corrections to them, as he was expecting many changes to be proposed. He wanted to avoid a long and wasted effort on them. I volunteered to write a report for him with suggestions, which I did on March eighteenth.

A few days later I delivered the letter to his house, and we had a long talk about the printing fiasco and the language change. I advised him that the office as a corporation was subject to take its direction from the conference. I also asserted, however, that the office was a legal entity of itself, and though tied to the conference by moral and ethical bounds, could legally refuse the conference's directives. Only a court could legally force the office to give up control of the Text.

On March twenty-fifth the Literature Committee sent to the fellowship at large a six page manifesto explaining the committee's view of the conflict. This document outlined their demands and sought fellowship support for their attack on the office. The letter is quite compelling, and outlined a litany of wrongs committed by the office against the Traditions, the Steps, the conference and the fellowship as a whole. It attacked the office for failure to be honest or to respond to the issues openly and factually. Their source of information was not revealed.

In one strong passage outlining the battle cry, the writers of the document stated, "WSO has demonstrated that it is incapable as a functioning organization and should either be disbanded and/or moved, reorganized and/or sued." They went on to outline complications the Literature Committee endured as a result of intentional unwillingness on the part of the office to help the committee as it strove to produce the book over a several year period. Before the letter was over it had enumerated a litany of WSO failures to properly fulfill its responsibilities. It ultimately suggested, "that the WSO be disbanded and declared defunct, and that we adopt a new structure for a true World Service Office of Narcotics Anonymous."

The letter was sent to a large number of committees and trusted servants. It arrived about thirty days before the conference and was followed by phone calls whenever possible. The letter was equivalent to a gasoline tanker truck explosion. Members who may not have known about the problems, now knew. The word **anger** is not strong enough to describe how many felt after reading the letter. Many were absolutely livid.

The workshops held to write the book may have been unwieldy but they were supported by the members, and had built a large and devoted constituency for the committee. Many of these members and committees remembered the errors and oversights by the office over the years, and now the exposure of these recent examples of bad judgment and questionable actions was more than some could accept. There was a general swelling of anger against the office. Some voting delegates were hurriedly instructed through special meetings of their regions to take strong positions concerning the office.

While the flurry of letters and phone calls was swelling to frenzied proportions, the office board met on April ninth. It was announced that the book printing was done and the printed product had been delivered to the bindery. The next item was election of a president. Only Chuck G. was nominated, and the vote was unanimous. The rest of the meeting was devoted to a review of the actions taken during the year to make sure that everything that was supposed to be done had been done. In the final discussions they decided to have the attorney concentrate on revising the bylaws, consistent with the directions of the conference.

The hard work, knowledge, efficiency and dedication that Jeanie put into publishing the book finally paid off. On Wednesday, April twenty-sixth, she and Jimmy went to the Weber-McRea Book Binders in his old pickup truck and took delivery of the first dozen boxes of completed First Edition Basic Texts. Over the following several days, the rest of the Texts were picked up. Two thousand five hundred special editions were received and two thousand three hundred and seventy regular edition Texts were received. Several boxes were then taken to Santa Monica when the conference began. Jeanie proved to be the unsung hero to whom NA owes a debt of gratitude. She produced a quality book, on time and with minimum expense.

The World Service Conference of 1983 opened on schedule on May fourth at the Retail Clerks Union Hall in Santa Monica, California, amid a very hostile crowd. It was quite a contentious environment with lots of private discussions shoring up support behind the scenes for one side or the other. There seemed to me to be a lot of new folks present who were not elected delegates. In short order it became clear that a large number of regional representatives were openly against the office, along with at least half of the Administrative Committee and some trustees. Although the number of voting participants varied from time to time, there were eight votes from administrative and committee chairpersons and twenty-eight regional votes. Some of the trustees only came for parts of the meeting and several didn't arrive at all, so their voting strength was only five or six most of the time. Regional representatives had the clear majority of voting power at this meeting.

Battle lines were clearly drawn, and the early confrontations showed it. Reports from the regions were read, followed by an effort to present Administrative Committee reports, but they were postponed until the following day. The most unusual addition to the list of regions was the Greater New York City region. Their representative was Roger T., who had finally found himself a home group and had made himself indispensable to the new region.

When work began the next morning, the minutes from the previous year were adopted with some changes. This was followed by rather quick approval of the work George had done in collating all the earlier changes to the *Service Manual*.

After several delays, at about two in the afternoon, Chuck G. began to present the office report. He gave an hour long, detailed explanation of what happened since the prior conference, ranging from the printing of the book to the changes made to the bylaws and the office financial report. He handed out a complete package of information outlining all the things that the conference wanted done during the year and showed how the office had completed or attempted them. He gave a factual and dispassionate report on the book production and its problems. He even included a minority report written by Kevin that outlined some of the issues from a different perspective. The minority report, however, was not critical of how things were being done now that Chuck was the presiding officer. As soon as he stopped talking, the motions began. The first, by Bob K., was to "mandate the resignations of all present board members, office managers and employees... and that the conference elect a new board..." We then began a three hour odyssey of motions, objections, amendments and parliamentary convolutions.

What Chuck had said was not terribly important to most conference participants. They already had their minds set. They just wanted apologies, resignations and maybe even a pound flesh. For many, it was simply time to move the office away from California and put it someplace where "group conscience" was in control.

After the first two hours of this battle, Bob called a recess and we discussed how to get off this "fire truck going nowhere" and on to productive solutions. When he called the meeting to order, he announced there would be no further discussion of the WSO report. This brought fervent appeals to the decision of the chair and yet another hour of parliamentary infighting. As the parliamentarian, I was earning my keep that afternoon. Finally Bob had his way and called for the trustee report.

Sally spoke for about fifteen minutes, giving a short report that centered on the book crisis and the decisions related to it. As soon as she finished talking they were immediately attacked for their role in the language change. In the course of the heated confrontation that occurred, Chuck at one point rose and told the conference, "I did it, and I told you all along that I did it; I called the chairperson of the Literature Committee and told him I had done it, the very minute I did it!" I later came to doubt Chuck's statement about "the very minute I did it" as there does not appear to have been knowledge of the language change among the Literature Committee members until at

least February. But by making the statement to the conference participants, Chuck was clearly attempting to take the burden of responsibility and allow the fellowship to move on to corrective action. Amid the questions that were tossed about, the motions began again; same motions, same people. After another hour of questions and motions, the meeting adjourned. No action had been taken to resolve the issue.

The following morning Larry N., the Policy Committee chairperson, moved that the conference bring from the table a motion from last years conference. By a vote of thirty-six in favor and two opposed, the motion was brought from the table. It read, "That only RSR's and State Representatives be defined as voting participants (members) of the WSC." The prevailing mood at that moment would no doubt have led to the motion's immediate adoption, but a discussion followed. The motion as it was written did not even allow for one vote for the trustees or any of the conference leadership. As they began to discuss the merits of each exception that was raised, the participants gradually began to see the wisdom of keeping the vote for the trustees and the others. Eventually a committee was created to study the motion and report back later.

Larry N., one of those who would be a key member of the standing minority, was then called as committee chair to make the Policy Committee report. He then proceeded to drag up a bunch of motions to amend the *Service Manual*, starting with the voting rights issue again. This went on again for nearly five hours, not counting lunch. In the end all the changes were presented as a single motion, and it failed. By the time the battle was over, Bob K., wanting to get a sense of the conference's true position on the matter, asked for an opinion poll about the policy matters that were being considered. Only eleven indicated that they were in favor of changing the voting rights of any participants, and twenty-four said they were opposed. In those five hours the fight to deny voting rights to trustees and others had been lost. Support for full trustee and conference leadership voting rights was secured, although the issue kept coming back at each successive conference for many years.

Mixed in with all the motions on the *Service Manual* was one from Rosalie R., the RSR from Florida. Her motion was separated out from the pack and became a substitute motion directed at how to deal with the lack of confidence in the WSO. Rather than disband the board or move to another state, this motion proposed in essence that the conference keep the existing WSO board (they were going to add four new directors, leaving nine conference-elected directors on the thirteen-member board), but have the board hire a qualified business manager. It was adopted with twenty-six in favor and five opposed.

Page came to the podium next and gave his report and fielded questions. After an hour, he moved to adopt a series of pamphlets the Literature Committee had written or completed during the year. The adopted pamphlets were: *Am I an Addict; Just for Today, Living the Program' A Guide to the Fourth Step Inventory; Sponsorship; Triangle of Self-Obsession; Youth and Recovery; One Addict's Experience with Faith, Hope and Commitment; The Physician's Viewpoint; For the Newcomer; Use of Medication in Recovery* and the *Starter Kit*. Failing to get enough votes were proposed revisions the committee wanted in the *White Booklet*.

Next came motions about the Basic Text again. A new procedural toy had been learned at this conference — to call for a roll call vote. As the motions on the book were moving toward approval, we began a series of roll call votes. This, I was told, was the only way to put on record who was going to vote which way on the Book. The motion they voted on contained this language, "That our book be completely returned to its approval form in subsequent printings." After considerable heated debate, it was adopted with twenty-four in favor and fifteen opposed.

Martin C. took the floor at 9:00 PM to give his treasurer's report. He was followed by Bob B., H&I chairperson, who began his report at 10:55. It was short and simple. So was adoption of his committee's proposed *H&I Handbook* and the "Do's and Don'ts" for H&I. At 11:30, Jim M. gave the *NA Way Magazine* report. Jim bemoaned the loss of the original subscribers list, the money, and that "very influential NA members [who] decided that the *NA Way* was a 'private enterprise' and thwarted efforts to secure a broad subscription base. Success was achieved anyway, he reported, as "eight monthly issues have been produced and distributed since September and the ninth will be out in May."

Motions pertaining to his report began with a decision to send a telegram from the conference to Linda G., asking for the funds and the list. That was later done, but to no effect. Motions and discussion then continued for nearly two hours as Jim sought to build a firm commitment by the conference for the magazine. It didn't work. The best he got was a luke-warm statement "that the *NA Way* magazine continue as a fellowship project." Only nineteen voted in favor, fifteen opposed and seven abstained. Finally at 1:55 AM we adjourned for the day — an eighteen hour session!

At 8:40 AM we began with the roll call for May seventh. The morning began by a reading into the minutes of a letter from the Tri-State region. It focused on the CARENA matter and concern over who really CARENA was and whether the ownership rights of NA literature were truly protected. The letter was entered into the min-

utes, but we moved on after brief reports from PI and an ad hoc committee on conventions. Later an ad hoc committee to study the CARENA matter was appointed with instructions to report back to the conference.

Elections followed the CARENA discussion. The first ballots were for new members on the office board. Elected to serve on the board were Martin C., Vivian L., Mac McD., and Bob R. A pool of replacements was also selected in case vacancies occurred during the year, but it didn't prove necessary to call on any of them. About an hour after the elections for the office board I found myself in a discussion with Keith S., the RSR from Ohio, about the management of the office. Our conversation ended with a direct question from him about my willingness to become the new office manager for the fellowship. I responded that if the conference wanted that, I would be willing to help in any way possible. In the hours that followed, he apparently discussed this idea with others, and Chuck G. asked me about it. After some discussions I suggested that I be retained in a consulting role rather than becoming a regular employee.

Bob R. was elected to serve another term as conference chairperson and George H. of Miami was re-elected as vice-chairperson. Carol K. of Los Angeles was elected as secretary, and Susan C. of Oregon was elected treasurer.

For the committees, John F. (Philadelphia) took over Policy; Gary J. (Ohio) would lead the Finance Committee; Ginni S. (San Diego) would chair the Literature Committee; John L. (Miami) was chosen to head H&I; and Charles K. (Ft. Lauderdale) was selected to run the PI Committee. Vice-chairpersons of each committee were also elected. As the elections wore on into the afternoon, Robin H. (Pennsylvania) and Cindy D. (Kansas) were elected as co-chairs of the *NA Way* magazine. It was an odd pairing, and it didn't work out at all.

Before the trustee elections began, the *Service Manual* was amended to specify that trustees would serve five-year terms, but would be reaffirmed annually at the conference. After this motion was adopted with thirty-eight voting in favor and none against, the follow-up motion required each of the existing trustees to immediately stand for reaffirmation. This was adopted with thirty-seven voting yes and none voting no.

First, however, they decided to nominate new trustees to fill the vacancies on the board. Eight were nominated. The existing trustees were then nominated and required to give their qualifications for the position. They received a particularly stiff grilling about their participation in the book issue and other things. Each was specifically asked how they had voted on the book change issue. Slowly they

were reaffirmed: Mike Bohan (non-addict, Virginia); Jack B. (North Hollywood, CA); Carl B. (Covina, CA); David C. (Anahiem, CA); James D. (Victoria, BC Canada); Sally E. (Orange, CA); Jim N. (Lincoln, NE); Greg P. (Atlanta, GA); Chuck S. (Whittier, CA). Although Chuck had been reaffirmed, he submitted his resignation effective at the close of the conference. Around 5:30 PM the conference adjourned so the committees could meet.

I joined with the ad hoc committee that had been created to look into the CARENA matter. We discussed ownership of copyrights and publishing under a fictitious name, but the committee was hampered by the lack of related documents upon which to base any action. Since the committee, by and large, lived outside Los Angeles, they asked me to conduct the investigation for them. Chuck G. was with the committee and also president of the office board, so he agreed to get all the documents I needed or requested in order to prepare a report over the following months.

That evening, a meeting of the office board was held. Both old and new directors were present. They discussed about how to proceed with getting edition two printed. Vivian, a new office director with printing industry experience, showed by her participation that she was quite knowledgeable on the subject. She was given substantial responsibility to gather information and prepare the board to make decisions at their next meeting. They also discussed the idea of having me work for the office.

Roll call the next morning came at 6:40. New nominees for the Board of Trustees gave their qualifications, and five were elected to serve for five-year terms: Sydney R. (Los Angeles); Bo S. (Marietta, GA); Steve B. (Santa Rosa, CA); Bill G. and Dutch H. (both from Philadelphia). This brought the number of trustees to fifteen. However, before the next conference, two would resign.

Shortly before eight o'clock, Keith got recognition from the chairperson and told the conference about the discussion we had the previous day. From across the room, he openly asked me if I would become the office manager if the job were offered to me, and he wanted a public answer. I responded to the conference that I would be willing to do whatever the conference wanted me to do. Keith then proposed a motion, seconded by Jim T., the RSR from Tri-State, "that the WSC invite the WSO to appoint Bob S. as its office manager." It was adopted by a unanimous voice vote.

There was a lot of yelling and applause as those wanting a change felt that I would provide the kind of objective and deliberate support I had provided in the role of parliamentarian. Having me take the pressure off the office would forestall efforts to move the of-

office, as most people felt they could work with me and not feel I was helping their opponents.

This sudden turn of events, however, was not without negative repercussions. The conference had given no thought to Jimmy and the fact he was still the volunteer office manager. The adopted motion did not address how Jimmy was to be handled, and whether or not he could remain working in the office in a voluntary capacity. It was later claimed by more than one member that they had immediately called Jimmy and told him what took place. One such individual told of having called Jimmy and with delight saying, "We got you now. You're out of there!"

Over night, Chuck G. had picked up most of the financial records that had been requested by an ad hoc committee directed to review the WSO financial records. Martin and Chuck met with me around ten o'clock and suggested, since it looked like I was going to help them get the office straightened out, I might start by going over the financial records and making a report. They gave me everything. About a week later I finished and mailed the report.

Several hours later Martin proposed a motion to give recognition for the years of dedication and sacrifice Jimmy had provided, and it was unanimously adopted by voice vote. It read, "the Secretary of the WSO be instructed to prepare a letter forthwith to be addressed to Jimmy K. stating that the members of this conference send our support, love and gratitude and wish him to know that in the hiring of a manager for the business of the World Service Office it is our intent to free him to do that which he does best — carrying the message to the addict who still suffers. For his willingness and untiring loving service we are ever grateful." No one ever told me later if such a letter was ever prepared or sent.

The treasurer's report handed out by Kevin showed that a total of \$12,440 had been received. Expenses were \$7,927, leaving a balance for the next year of \$5,113*.

The conference concluded later that day, but not before giving the office the responsibility for being the publishing and distributing agency for the *NA Way* magazine. This change in publication responsibility was not a magic solution to the magazine's problems. As the conference was winding down, Bob R. presented Bo with a copy of the Basic Text, signed by everyone who had been at the conference, in recognition of his dedication and sacrifice in getting the book done. It was a fitting gesture, but small compared to the cost to his personal life the work on the book had caused.

* Again, when the math doesn't work and we don't have the records Bob was working from, we'll leave the numbers as they are to give you the general picture he was trying to provide.

Among the brief conversations I had as the conference closed was one with Chuck G. He suggested we wait a week or so and then get together to discuss putting the motion to make me the office manager into effect. The office board meeting was the second Saturday in June and he felt the board should take action at that time. I agreed that was appropriate.

The conference adopted a number of other important motions that established new operational policies and set forth a work plan for several committees that would concern me and the office over the following months and years. Among those items were determinations to continue to make periodic written reports to the fellowship, a better schedule for the next conference agenda, an aggressive work plan for the Literature Committee and development of public information material.

A week passed and Chuck called to set an appointment. We met for coffee the following day and discussed different ideas about the conference action. We first discussed what Jimmy had been told and what his feelings were. Chuck admitted that he had not told Jimmy anything and thought he was unaware of the pending change. I told him I was unwilling to take the job unless Jimmy was treated with respect by having all this discussed and talked out. Chuck agreed this was important and promised to have that discussion, though he dreaded it. Jimmy was his best friend, his sponsor and a person he loved very deeply.

Although my personal business office was less than a hundred yards from the WSO, I had never been in the WSO. I was not sure of its real problems so I suggested we should start with a ninety day consultant contract with the intention that I spend the ninety days getting the office properly organized and then go through an open employee selection process to find a permanent replacement. Since I had seen the office financial report at the conference I was aware of its condition. I suggested a salary level of \$1,500 a month which would make a yearly salary of \$18,000. I felt the office could reasonably afford that, and it represented what an office manager in such a small office could appropriately be paid. We decided to meet jointly with Jimmy a few days later to discuss, in general terms, what needed to be done at the office.

We met at the office with Jimmy for about an hour a few days later. Neither Chuck nor I approached the discussion in a manner to convey that Jimmy was being replaced. Our discussion was centered on ideas about modernizing the office and getting more employees. Jimmy gave me copies of checks and other records that I needed so I could complete the financial review the conference ad hoc committee had asked me to conduct. Without going into details, Jimmy revealed

some of the weaknesses that the office had to cope with all the time. It was clear to me by the end of our discussion that Chuck had not discussed with him the conference's intent to replace him.

Chuck and I had another meeting a week later to discuss final suggestions about the meeting. At this meeting too, it was clear that nothing had been discussed with Jimmy.

As the June meeting approached, I was still busy with my other consulting work. My last discussion with Chuck had been on June fifth to verify the time of the meeting at the office; I expected no further contact until I arrived there. However, on Thursday morning I got a call at my office from a woman who, through her tears, said she was Jodi and worked in the office.

She was very upset at what was going on about Jimmy being replaced and she said no one had even told Jimmy anything about it. I was quite unhappy at this and said I would come right over. Since my office was so close, I was there in a few minutes. Through her tears she told me Jimmy had no idea what was going on, and it was unfair to treat him that way after all his years of hard work, sacrifice and service.

This was the one thing I had stressed in my conversations with Chuck that I did not want to see happen, and it had happened anyway. It was not right. It was unfair to Jimmy, and I did not relish taking over an office with one employee who was angry at me for how the former boss was treated and removed. I called Jimmy and said I wanted to come over and talk, and I would bring Jodi. As always, he was happy to see me and invited me right over. We locked the office and took my car to Jimmy's house, a distance of about a mile.

Jimmy welcomed us in and was in a pretty positive mood, though I could detect some uneasiness. Betty made some tea and we talked. With Jodi's face red and flooded with tears, there was no sense in trying to beat around the bush. In a straight forward but caring way I gave Jimmy all the facts, the sequence and substance of conference actions and meetings I had with Chuck. He did not respond with violence of thought or action. He fully appreciated the position I was in and was glad I had responded to Jodi's call by coming to talk with him. He was certainly displeased with the things I said, but he was not angry at me for having to be the messenger. We talked about a lot of things, and after a while he was putting across ideas and suggestions he thought I might be able to put into effect that he never could. After about an hour and a half, we left and I took Jodi back to the office.

I was quite angry with Chuck for not having discussed all of this with Jimmy, but I really understood his reluctance to have that confrontation. I didn't ask Chuck about it for several weeks, and then

only because we were both getting so much flack from Jimmy's close friends. He expressed regret at not having done what he was supposed to do, and subsequently wrote an explanation and apology that was published in the August *Fellowship Report*.

Even if Chuck had talked to Jimmy about his removal as I expected him to, it would still have been a strange situation. It was hard for me to believe that no one had explained to him what had taken place at the conference. There were lots of people who went to see Jimmy at his home after the conference was over. And there had been a half dozen of his sponsees in the conference room when the decision was made. It is unimaginable that none of them had the wisdom or courage to talk with him about it. A whole month had passed, and people all across the fellowship knew what had taken place. Over the next few years, two different people claimed to me that they had called him right after the vote, one to tell him as a friend, while the other claimed he was being vengeful.

I always suspected he knew, but maintained that he had not been told. I was quite often vilified by his closest friends during the first year for having the gall to take the job, pushing aside the man who had been so vital to the birth, stability and growth of Narcotics Anonymous.

I never felt wrong in having accepted the job, as the board would have filled the position with someone else had I refused. Or worse, the office might have been moved to the east. However, his removal was accomplished with callous lack of dignity and respect for a man who had been dedicated to Narcotics Anonymous for so long and who had done so much for the fellowship. It was indeed a sad ending for a man who had done so much for NA. Seven years later, when I was replaced, the same disregard for dignity and respect was visited upon me.