

MORE FROM GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE..N.Y. - 1972

"OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE"

HIGHLIGHTS FROM
KEYNOTE MESSAGE BY TOM G. - PART # 1.

OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE.....

Our preamble suggests that our primary purpose is to stay sober and to help other alcoholics achieve sobriety, and our Fifth Tradition says that each group has but one primary purpose- to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Our primary purpose, carrying the message, is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives. Our Third Legacy of Service is expressed through a physical structure which comprises this Conference, with the G.S.B., the G.S.O., and the two services arms, A.A. World Service and the A.A. Grapevine, including the areas, the districts, and ultimately the groups, our great lines of communication flowing steadily in both directions along that path from the groups to the Board, through each intervening link, and back again. It is a beautifully and soundly designed structure. It should be efficient and productive. We have been operating it for more than twenty years. It is complete; our structure is complete. But it is not perfect; it is comprised of people.

While our primary purpose is clear, and our structure is complete, maybe we could use this time, or part of this time, at this 22nd General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous, for an examination of some parts of our structure. I believe we have a lot to learn about ourselves.

One of the subjects Bill continually addressed himself to was the subject of leadership in A.A. Bill noted in his writing that "Students of history recognize that the transference of the original leadership of a society to its successors in leadership is always a

critical turning point. This difficult question of leadership, this problem of transference, must be faced."

I am convinced that with God's help we shall survive and grow, and continue to meet and fulfill our responsibilities. But let us be aware. Bill said also, "With leadership we shall have a continuous problem- and hence great care needs to be taken---. In this area a degree of weakness tends to persist. It seems to be a matter of increased care and responsibility and education."

If we agree that this Conference, which now provides service leadership to all of A.A.'s needs must have the best obtainable delegates, how can we assure that lofty aim to the Fellowship if we do not have the best available people as committee members, backed by active and informed G.S.R.'s?

If we could have service people, an abundance of people, who are knowledgeable and aware, who are educated in and dedicated to service, what would be the impact on our groups? What would be the effect on sponsorship and anonymity, group affairs, finances and membership? Would it not strengthen and stimulate our groups?

It is not sufficient for us to tritely state that our primary purpose is to "carry the message" and to blandly agree that we, as trusted servants of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, are charged with the trust of providing service. A major part of our trust is to get into the heart of the matter and to do everything we can, with God's help, to

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