

December 05, 1997

To: General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous
ATTN: Mr. Gary Glynn, Chairperson
1112 Park Avenue #3B
New York, New York 10128

Dear General Service Board,

Enclosed is a Minority Report addressed to each of you. It is being filed due to the grave concern many of us have regarding the actual monies paid to Alcoholics Anonymous from an outside source in 1995 (San Diego) and the proposed payment of monies due to be received in the year 2000 (Minneapolis/St. Paul).

I appreciate your time and energy and thank you in advance for your diligent and visionary service to Alcoholics Anonymous.

Respectfully Submitted,

[signed]

Gay G~

Past Southeast Regional Trustee

Concept V

All minorities "should be encouraged to file a minority report whenever they feel a majority to be in considerable error. And when a minority considers an issue to be such a grave one that a mistaken decision could seriously affect A.A. as a whole, it should charge itself with the actual duty of presenting a minority report to the Conference."

Concept IX

"When such an occasional situation arises, and something very vital is at stake, it is always the duty of leadership, even when a small minority, to take a stand against the storm using its every ability of authority and persuasion to effect a change."

The basis for this minority report is the actual acceptance of cash monies from San Diego in the amount of \$250,000 (1995 International Convention) and the proposed cash monies of \$100,000 from Minneapolis/St. Paul to be paid to A.A. 45 days after the final A.A. meeting (2000 International Convention). The minority view is that it is against our basic principle of self-support and a belief that this will seriously affect A.A. as a whole.

This minority report is sectioned in three parts:

1. Reference material from A.A. Literature regarding our money principles
2. Facts regarding "cash incentives" for
 - a. San Diego (International Convention 1995) and
 - b. Minneapolis/St. Paul (International Convention 2000) and
3. Solutions

(1) The following references come from the "A.A. Service Manual" and the pamphlet "A Tradition. How it Developed" the section on "Money" (What led up to the writing of Tradition Seven). "A.A. Service Manual", page 41.

Re: self-support

"Finally we saw that for the long pull outside money could really ruin us. At this point, that had been just an idea or general policy crystallized firmly into an A.A. tradition. We saw that we must sacrifice the quick, nearby advantage for long-term safety." Pamphlet - AA Tradition. How it Developed by Bill W. - section on Money" (What led up to the writing of Tradition Seven) Pages 23-30.

"That the use of money in AA is a matter of the gravest importance. Where its use ends and its misuse begins is the point we should vigilantly watch."

Page 2

"Now what about donations or payments to A.A. from outside sources? There was a time some years ago when we desperately needed a little outside aid. This we received. But times have changed. Alcoholics Anonymous now has thousands of members whose combined earning each year amount to untold millions of dollars. We are no longer poor. We can, and we should pay our own way."

"And further The Alcoholic Foundation will accept no earning which may be tendered from any commercial source. A.A. has nothing to sell: that we all wish to avoid even the suggestion of commerce, and that in any case A.A. generally speaking, is now self-supporting."

"To my mind, this is a decision of enormous importance to our future - a very long step in the right direction. When such an attitude about money becomes universal through A.A., we shall have finally steered clear of that golden, alluring, but very treacherous reef called Materialism."

"In the years that lie just ahead Alcoholics Anonymous faces a supreme test - the great ordeal of its own prosperity and success. I think it will prove the greatest trial of all. Can we but weather that, the waves of time and circumstances may beat upon us in vain. Our destiny will be secure!"

(2) Facts regarding International Conventions 1995 and 2000. The following information comes from History of Financial Incentives and the background information on A.A. International Conventions Financial History. These two references were compiled and distributed by the General Service Office.

In the International Convention Trustees Committee background material on the "cash incentive" issue, there were two letters from the Manager of the General Service Office to the Montreal Convention & Tourism Bureau and the Minister of "Affaires Sociales", Quebec in 1983 and 1984 stating that we do not "accept funds directly from an outside source" and that "it is essential that these monies be distributed by a third party."

There wasn't any information from 1984 until the background material jumped to the year 1988 and the San Diego City Council setting a new precedent and deciding to give the financial incentive (\$300,000) to the Fellowship of A.A. There was discussion on the '97 General Service Conference floor as to whether we had solicited monies from San Diego but information was misleading and the correct series of events were not presented as requested at the microphone by a Trustee.

According to the information distributed by G.S.O. on The History of Financial Incentives and the Trustee's International Convention Committee background information A.A. International Conventions Financial History given to members of the Trustee International Convention Committee - the events were as follows:

1. "The local A.A. Bid Committee approached the city of San Diego and requested financial assistance in the amount of \$300,000 to offset what were anticipated to be unusually high transportation costs if the Convention were to be held in San Diego. A San Diego A.A. group brought the situation to the attention of the General Service Board and it was considered by the trustees' IC/RF committee at the July '88 GSB Meeting. The committee reported that it would **'express its concerns to the San Diego/Imperial County Area Assembly about the inappropriate mechanism used by their Bid Committee, which involved A.A. in the public sector.'** " ["Financial assistance" became a payment in the form of a check in the amount of \$250,000].

2. "Responding to the San Diego A.A. group that had objected to the San Diego Bid Committee's actions, the chairman of the *Trustees' Committee on International Conventions* reported that the *A.A.W.S. Board* would form a committee to look into the danger of presenting an appearance of affiliation . . ." [This brings up our Sixth Tradition of actual or implied affiliation].

3. 1988 - San Diego is accepted for the International 1995.

4. 1989 - The contract with the City of San Diego becomes \$150,000 inducement to offset the anticipated costs of transportation and a rebate program in the amount of \$3.00 per occupied room night totaling \$100,000 from the San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau. ["Inducement" and "rebate" in reality were monies of \$250,000].

In 1990 an article appeared in the San Diego Tribune. Quotes from the article were:

A.A. edges G.O.P. in O'Connor choices

"Mayor O'Connor says she wants a Republican party convention in San Diego - but apparently not as badly as she wants a gathering of recovering alcoholics... she persuaded the City Council to set aside \$150,000 in taxpayer funds to draw the 1995 Alcoholics Anonymous Convention. The decision was accompanied by a new policy allowing public funds to be used to lure single extraordinarily large' conventions."

The Policy that was used to support the "cash incentive" was originally a statement from the International Trustee's Committee regarding travel option discounts to the '95 International Convention .

"Whenever a discount or subsidy is that which would be offered to any other organization of similar size requiring a purchased service or product of similar character and magnitude, i.e. convention rates at hotels, it may be accepted. Whenever the discount or subsidy is partly or in total offered because we are Alcoholics Anonymous, it must be declined."

It was to go to the Conference but records show that it was not on the Agenda.

Page 4

The minority report research into disclosure regarding "cash incentives" at the time of the negotiations for both International Conventions (1995 and 2000) showed that Committee Members, their Chairpersons and Board Members were not aware that "cash incentives" were involved. There was such a mixture of terms. In the background material, "*A.A. International Conventions Financial History*" terms such as "Financial assistance" "Financial concessions" "to defray costs" "payment" "discount" "subsidy" "rebate" "specific dollar contribution" "real money inducement" "financial inducement" "Financial considerations" were used. It would be difficult for one to realize that the terms translated into cash monies. The minority believes that if members of the committee and the General Service Board had realized that a cash payment was involved, objections would have been voiced at that time.

The "cash incentive" issue was not presented and discussed in some Areas prior to the '97 General Service Conference. Delegates were not fully informed when they arrived at the Conference. Accurate information was not established during the Conference. Therefore, the Conference vote was not an informed vote.

Terms such as "we must trust our trusted servants" and "we don't want to tie the hands of those who negotiate for us" were forefront at the Conference. These terms make us feel guilty, manipulate us and cut off discussion of the issues which is detrimental in establishing an informed group conscience...

The facts are - we solicited the funds - the money was public funds (taxpayer funds). The long form of Tradition Seven reads: "that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous whether by groups, clubs hospitals or other outside agencies."

(3) Solutions:

That all Convention transactions be negotiated up front on paper and that no cash/check monies from outside sources be a part of the transaction. This would be acceptable to those who feel there isn't a difference in principle between paper and cash. It would relieve the pressure of the minority view that believes there is a great difference.

That all monies (\$250,000) from San Diego be refunded, returning us to our long standing principles of self-support.

That all monies (\$100,000) negotiated on the International 2000 in Minneapolis/St. Paul to be paid to A.A. 45 days after the last AA. meeting, be renegotiated in the spirit of not accepting payment of money from an outside agency to pay our expenses.

Page 5

The following questions need to be addressed by the General Service Board of Trustees.

1. Why would we place ourselves in such a position in our business affairs that our Traditions would ever be questioned?
2. Why would we offer ourselves as an example for the A.A. Fellowship saying it is permissible to solicit outside funds to help us meet our expenses? Are we saying that it is acceptable for our Area Assemblies, Conventions, Conferences, service Centers and the A.A. Group to negotiate "cash incentives? Are we walking the same way we are talking about self-support?
3. Why would we place ourselves at risk regarding implied or actual affiliation?

To many, this is a very dangerous place to be and we must do everything we can to keep A.A. in harmony with our very foundation. Our A.A. history shows that money problems have always been extremely difficult for us and have always diverted us from our primary purpose of staying sober and carrying the message to others.

The '96-'97 Board of Trustees and the Conference had a very strong minority view and voice. This is a vital issue involving A.A.'s very base of operation within the *Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous*. The General Service Board must do everything within its power to bring Alcoholics Anonymous back to our long standing principles of self-support and non affiliation by revisiting these grievances.

Respectively Submitted,

Gay G.
Past Southeast Regional Trustee

cc: Conference Delegates