

June 1954

AA's Third Legacy*



OUR FINAL GREAT DECISION:

by Bill

NEXT year, on June 10th, 1955, we shall be celebrating AA's 20th birthday. But that will not be all. For, in the year of '55, this Society will take, I trust, the last great decision concerning its final form and substance.

Now exactly what may this grave decision be?

In April, this year, AA's General Service Conference met at New York for the fourth, and the last, of its experimental sessions.

As most of us know, this Conference of ours is the instrument through which we hope that AA, worldwide, will presently be able to assume full guidance and control of its overall services and principal affairs; all those vital activities of service which have long centered around our Foundation, our General Service Office and in our publication agencies, the AA Publishing and *The AA Grapevine*.

As a four-year experiment in the

guidance of AA by its own group conscience, Delegates chosen from all the States and Provinces of the U. S. and Canada have been meeting with our Trustees and service staff men and women here at New York to determine whether AA—as a whole—can actually function as such, whether it can now safely gather into its own hands our Third Legacy of Service for all time to come.

We who have anxiously watched our

infant Conference take its first steps, and have seen it acquire form, substance and strength, are today utterly confident. We believe that our Conference, when securely linked to similar Conferences in every distant land, can guarantee, *absolutely*, the survival, unity, and functioning of AA throughout the world. We feel the deep assurance that this new beacon light of service can endure every storm and peril that the passage of the years may cast upon us. For the first time, we are certain that AA is safe, and secure.

Therefore the great event of 1955 will be our decision to make this new born Conference of Service a permanent part of AA's life. This irrevocable step will mark the full completion of AA's structure—Recovery, Unity, and now, Service. It will mark that day when, before God and the world, we declare ourselves fully responsible and come of age.

Then the third and last legacy—the Legacy of Service—will have passed from the hands of the old timers—people like Dr. Bob and me—to you. . . . You, who are the Alcoholics Anonymous of today, and of tomorrow.

Such will be the boundless significance of the year 1955, the day of our 20th anniversary, and the hour of AA's final decision.

May this be God's will for us all—Amen.

* *First Legacy: 12 Steps of Recovery; Second Legacy: 12 Traditions of Unity*