

September 1957

SEVERAL YEARS AGO in connection with AA activities at San Quentin Prison, I was asked to attend a Steering Committee meeting of the inmate members, for the purpose of outlining and setting up future AA programs that we outsiders were to participate in.

Near the close of this meeting (and with a feeling of no little smugness, I am sure) I asked, "Is there anything that we outsiders can do that will be more helpful to your meetings here in San Quentin?"

The Chairman of the Steering Committee looked at me thoughtfully, asked me if I meant what I had said, and I assured him that I did—although by now I was beginning to suspect that the best way for me to save face would have been to keep the lower half closed.

After what seemed to me an unduly long pause, he said: "Why is it that you people from the outside world never—or at least seldom—



## Delegates' Corner

**News and Views  
of our General Service  
Delegates**

mention God? If God is mentioned at all by you outsiders it is with an apologetic air which seems to imply that the word had slipped in by mistake and that you are sorry to have brought the word and the subject up at all. We here in San Quentin would like very much to have all of you outsiders know that God is here in San Quentin just as He is everywhere. We wish you would discuss the spirituality of the AA program at any or all the meetings that you free men conduct within these walls."

What this chairman said then was true and is still probably true to some extent. We outsiders seem to feel that the way to get across to those inside is to trot out the off-color stories—use a lot of real robust profanity—and recite our worst drunken escapades . . . anything to let these guys know that we are just a bunch of real regular fellers.

Wouldn't it be better to keep in mind that these men in prison are real people—just as you and me—and that possibly the only reason that they are in prison and we are still coming to them as "free" men is by the Grace of God?

*Paul G., San Rafael, California*