

## Editorial:

### *A Request and an Apology*

*By Bill*

AS AN outcome of talks recently given, press reports carrying my full name have appeared.

Since two of the 12 Points of A.A. Tradition emphasize the great importance of maintaining personal anonymity at the level of press and radio, I naturally feel uncommonly embarrassed and concerned at having been the subject of these anonymity breaks. Just how or why these lapses occurred, I have not yet learned; I had thought suitable precautions had been taken against them. Perhaps they were partly due to my own failure to caution reporters present at these particular meetings.

In any case, I feel that all A.A.'s are entitled to this explanation and to my sincere apologies.

Everywhere the press has been uniformly cooperative on anonymity when it is explained as a vital protection to the Alcoholics Anonymous movement. May I therefore urgently request all A.A. groups to carefully cover my anonymity on any future appearances and I shall, of course, try to take far greater care myself.

Let us never let go of this vital principle.

## Statement:

*By: The Trustees of The Alcoholic Foundation, Inc.*

*(Editor's Note: The following statement was not prompted by the incidents mentioned in the Editorial on the opposite page but refers to other departures from anonymity and to inherent value of preserving the principles.)*

**M**EETING in regular session, the trustees of The Alcoholic Foundation, issued to whom it may concern the following statement regarding "Anonymity", and the use of the name, Alcoholics Anonymous:

"The practice of anonymity in our public relations already has had a profound effect upon us, and in the years to come it will undoubtedly remain one of our vital traditions.

"We would like to take this opportunity of thanking the press, radio and motion picture companies of the nation for the splendid job they have done and are doing to respect our tradition of anonymity.

"Occasionally, there occurs a break in this tradition; the name or picture of an A.A. member may be publicly printed, or he may speak or be spoken of by name in a radio interview. The responsibility for these regrettable, sometimes sensational, situations may rest with the A.A. himself. There are no rules or regulations that can bind him to the tradition if he chooses to disregard the wishes of the movement as a whole. In some of these instances the general public does not realize that the alluring temporary benefits of personal publicity must be ignored by us in favor of the long-term benefits of anonymity.

"So, if you are an A.A. member, or a friend of Alcoholics Anonymous, we earnestly request *your personal cooperation* in helping to maintain a world-wide policy of *anonymity at the public level* as expressed in the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

"Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not to be broadcast, filmed or printed publicly. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There never is need to praise ourselves. We feel that it is better to let our friends recommend us!

"Finally, no person is authorized to speak for Alcoholics Anonymous, nor, obviously, should anyone introduce, publicly, the A.A. name into his own personal affairs or controversy at the public level."