



JUNTA DE SERVICIOS GENERALES DE A.A., A.C.
INDEPENDENCIA 101-23 06000 MEXICO, D.F.
APARTADO POSTAL M-7875 TEL.: 510-25-62 FAX 510-25-62

December 25, 1994

BOB McELROY
Delegate Area 30
EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL SERVICE COMMITTEE
OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Dear Bob:

As soon as I received your information request of 12-20, I immediately asked the Ad-Hoc Committee and we then met, and afterwards with the GSB and contacted the Delegates so as to have the info requested as soon as possible, about "the situation in Mexico. My fellows and myself appreciate very much your leadership and valuable help you're giving to our troubled AA service structure. Following the same order of your letter, we are providing the information requested, namely:

A. The status of the legal procedures.

- 1) Affirmative. Since this conflict began, we have always been willing to settle the differences with the plaintiff. However, this has not been possible since the only way to have this dispute settled, has always been on a basis according to AA Tradition and principle. I mean, any agreement must be reached by the Service Delegates from both Section Mexico and Central Mexicana. This latter has always rejected this proposal. About this position, there are already some facts, which we made Mr. George Dorsey aware of, opportunely:
 - a) When we were summoned by the Central's attorneys our reply to them was that this was a problem, which had to be *Traditionally* solved by the Service Delegates.
 - b) On September 8th, 1992, we addressed a letter to the Mexican Government Agency for Copyrights, and asked for the same *Traditionally* solution.
 - c) On August 9, 1994, our trusted servants Saul Castorena and Xavier Maza met Mr. Dorsey personally in New York, and he was given a copy of the letters described in a) and b).
- 2) Bob, we have asked the Attorney General for subpoenas for only Messers. Wayne Parks and Thomas K. Jasper. The first because he appears to be the primogenial (sic) – original – author of all the literature of Alcoholics Anonymous, at the National Information Center of Copyrights of the SEP (Public Education Secretariat) in Mexico. Please find attached two pages (they're originals and are in Spanish, issued by SEP in August 17, 1989). These pages are only an example, and they're about the copyright of the booklet A.A TRADITION – HOW IT DEVELOPED, you can see that WYNE (sic) PARKS appears as the author (Spanish *autor or autor primigento*)



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About Mr. Thomas K. Jasper we petitioned for a subpoena because he issued an authorization in behalf of Central Mexico so this one by itself or on behalf of AA World Services, Inc. would be able to denounce Section Mexico for infringement of the Federal Copyright Law and Industrial Property Law on Patents and Trademarks, action which has put us in this current plight to us all. We feel this is a very serious accusation about the Services Director for Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. –Mr. Thomas K. Jasper – so I'm enclosing you the letter in two pages, dated February 17th, 1994, by which you can see that this gentleman issued a formal authorization to Central Mexicana to start ANY legal action to protect the copyrights and trademarks before ANY judicial or administrative authority in our country.

We want to tell you, Bob, that we didn't ask for any subpoena for Mr. George Dorsey. However, this gentleman is fully aware of the legal conflict currently in Mexico, for our representatives in the visit they made to New York as I've told you in point 1-c. He, though has said that he felt that the authorization to file suit against Section Mexico would only be civil and never criminal. You can judge by the letter that it clearly involves the General Attorney's Office, so we don't get to understand Dorsey's statement. Furthermore, we somehow got the Spanish translation of a letter to the Conference Members from A.A. World Services, Inc., signed by Mr. W.J. (Jim) Estelle, dated August 10th, 1994, stating that they had only issued a letter that they had no objection so that Central Mexicana could file any action against on their behalf, so to protect the copyright. We deem both Mr. Dorsey's and Mr. Estelle's statements highly inconsistent.

These subpoenas, as well as the audits have been asked for by our fellow alcoholic attorneys as a defense only, against the criminal charges made by the Central's legal office attorneys. The only one we want to defeat is John Barleycorn.

3. Concerning this point we can just say that we don't have the answer, for this depends on the resolution given by the authority who knows of the accusation, this is, the Attorney General. The possibilities follows:

- a) *The declaring of no-criminal* prosecution by the Attorney General. - In this case our literature would be returned on short term.
- b) *The declaring of an investigation reserve.* – It would take longer than a year.
- c) *The consigning of accusation to a criminal court.* – It would mean a long-term suit (years), it would then depend on the judge's sentence

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As you can see, Bob, the only short-term possibility is the first one. Otherwise, our literature would be ruined due to humidity or poor handling, or the only passage of time. The books, booklets, leaflets, etc. are now inside the Depository for Crime Objects. These objects are mainly drugs, weapons, firearms, narcotics, vehicles employed in criminal activities, and the like. It's sad, very sad, Bob, to know where is now, and where still has to stay the Alcoholics Anonymous message.

B. Affordability of literature in Mexico

- 1) Please, find attached a comparative list of publications costs to fellows A.A.'s, both from Central Mexicana and from Section Mexico.
- 2) The results of the external audits from both Section Mexico and Central, will be requested by the Mexican IRS if the procedure follows the course I mentioned above in alternatives 3-b and 3-c. So, the audit results from Central are still not publicly known, and nobody can state yet whether it's for-profit group.

At this juncture, we need to express some concerns about this matter, Bob.

The Mexican law grants a special tax-free status to an association which do not make any financial profits through its activities. However, when someone fails to comply with this requirement, he has fouled this benefit and is then subject to criminal prosecution. Supposing Central had played it foul, it worries us a lot because it implies the AA name to be tainted.

We of Section Mexico periodically have to display letters in several newspapers concerning our principles of Self-support and Anonymity because --besides Central --, there are other groups (they name themselves *24 Hours*) who use the name of Alcoholics Anonymous. They have made a wonderful job of giving medicines, shelter, clothing and food to alcoholic brothers and sisters who otherwise would die in the streets, because there's no public welfare for them. I have myself taken fellows under *delirium tremens* to 24-Hours Groups, and miraculously my fellows have gotten well. But, you'll surely understand that they have to hold these insane fellows, sometimes with a chain so the drunks do not kill themselves. There have been those who have died in the process. The tabloids usually make a big fuss of these situations, and the public in general sometimes associate us to these groups for they name themselves as A.A. Financially, they have to receive outside contributions so they can support themselves

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We have lived with this, and have learned how to answer to questions from the public concerning these groups. We also have wonderful friends in the media. Fortunately you witnessed the newsman from the radio who interviewed you and Denny at our Forum. This image-crafting has been a task that we the AA's in Section Mexico have all endeavored and fought for as our main target and like one-man's task.

I then wonder what would happen to AA as a Whole in Mexico if Central had in any time to face criminal charges for tax-evasion and fiscal fraud.

We have made our best order to avoid that the public controversy started by Central and AA World Services, Inc. gets to the media, taking care of not violating the Fifth Warranty of the Twelfth Concept for the World Service. However, we must admit that the inertia of this legal conflict makes for us harder to stick to this principle.

The irresponsibility and absence of AA principles from Estelle in telling half truths to the Group Conscience, from Parks in lying to the Mexican official agencies about his authorship of AA literature, and from Dorsey in pretending innocence when he said that he expected the litigation to be civil, and instructing Tom Jasper to sign a letter which clearly stated the Attorney General Office, are behaviors hardly conceivable in people drinking and afflicted by alcoholism. We ask ourselves why for God's sake, have these men – besides of hindering A.A. message—provoked an international legal conflict?

C. The Third Forum Regions: Center, North & South, Section Mexico, November 26 &27, 1994, Cuernavaca, Morelos State, Mexico

Please find attached summary of this meeting

D. Translation to Spanish of the Alcoholics Anonymous literature.

This is unfortunately, another handicap that we as Spanish-speaking people have been facing. It has been always difficult for our fellows who do not speak English, to understand even those primary concepts as the Blue Book and the Steps. It is said that the A.A. Program is an easy one for difficult minds. Here it has turned out to be the other way around: A complicated, puzzling set of texts hard to comprehend even by those folks with good will and openmindedness.

It would be very complicated to write down here the discrepancies found from Bill's message to what has been left in the Spanish texts, but I would like to list here some of the errors found:

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- The syntax applied is the one valid for English, but, when applied to Spanish, the resulting texts are very dark, contradictory, futile, senseless. The spiritual richness of the texts requires clarity of ideas.
- The semantics is totally different from English to Spanish. However, the translations have been done thinking only of the words translated but, this way, the idea has another meaning to the reader. Or, worse, the expression does not convey an idea, but only a series of Hispanicized English words.
- Correct translations would be easily read not only in Mexico but in every Spanish-speaking country. For instance, William James is easily understood in every Spanish-speaking country. None of us is a language-purist, but we feel sorry when we compare an English text with the Spanish one and have to admit that the ideas are not the same.

We here paraphrase Dr. Bob when he said: Let's keep it simple.

As your wise judgment will tell you, Bob, we feel there is much at risk in this problem, than the 'controlling' of copyrights, licenses and the stuff of any other for-profit entity, but not the spiritual gift of Alcoholics Anonymous, so, please, let me know about whatever you need from me so to keep out folks' conscience in your area well informed.

Yours in Love and Service

Alberto Pascal
Member of the Ad-Hoc Committee
for the "Situation in Mexico"