

Alcoholics Anonymous - move into the red light district!

Znojmo/Czechia: To make it crystal clear from the start: This is not about altruistic Salvation Army actions. It all began with this letter from Gisela. Thus the stone started rolling. Ten carefully selected anonymous alcoholics from Germany, Austria and Switzerland were cordially invited, to travel to Czechia (north of Vienna) for one week and a half (May26 - June4 2000) at the expense of AA Inc., residing in Munich, Germany. What was that? Kind of an educational vacation funded with tax-exempt monies from this anonymous Society?? One might have such suspicion, because their



incorporate bylaws state something about "... care and support for groups (meetings), in which those (anonymous) alcoholics are supported and strengthened by means of common exchange of experience, mutual strengthening and group-dynamic encouragement in their desires ... "



Name of the city

Not all of those invited really arrived and not all of them stayed. What had happened? Otto Tauber (65), a retired government office man from Neuburg a.d. Donau, uncrowned king of this particularly noble, but publicity-shy scheme since 1979, personally



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arranged for accommodation in the " Motorest E*59 ", effectively advertised by the whorehouse's inviting and widely visible sign " Girls! Girls! Men's Club - Strip Show ". A schlemiel, who thinks of bad things thereby.

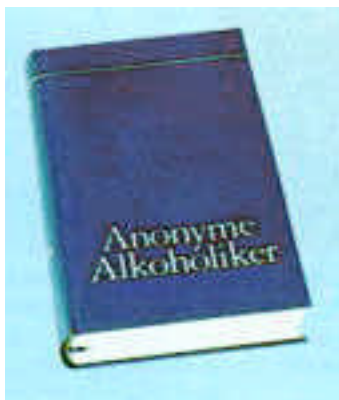


But it got worse. Instead of dealing with useful things as stated by their bylaws, like the "promotion of public health maintenance, support of needy persons, in particular alcoholic patients and a fight against alcohol abuse and alcohol dependency ", Otto insisted their meeting had to be conducted in above shown Séparée. This is a little intimate, windowless closet, having a smoothly closing sliding door, thus separating it from the restaurant. There Otto disclosed before those in attendance, their schedule, formerly agreed upon, was now void and instead they should intensively dedicate themselves to perform preparation of litigation against an AA member, who in the eyes of the incorporated AA Organization is a heavy criminal. His crime is his active membership in one international AA group which "inundates the whole world" [sic] with pocket editions of the AA book in various languages .

This group does so, by giving away tens of thousands booklets to "needy persons, in particular alcoholic patients" even paying shipment expenses where face to face contact is impossible. (BBSG, P.O. Box 31, Washingtonville, NY 10992-0031, for Europe: AA Blaues Buch Studiengruppe, PF 1104, 61218 Bad Homburg, Germany <http://www.bigbooks.org/aabbsg>) They are some sort of Gideon's for alcoholics. AA Inc. would like to prohibit and destroy these free books. Oooops! Book burning in Germany?

Wasn't there something of that type in the past??

In the country of origin - U.S.A. - the text lacked any copyright protection from the very start and was public domain from end of the 30's on, when a group of anonymous authors had written that book. How come that despite this fact both German and US AA Inc. stress a monopoly on this book? And more surprisingly they stress such monopoly by prosecuting their own groups and members in public controversy before the courts. How is it possible? AA Inc. itself calls the big book Alcoholics Anonymous "the Bible of AA". Through their official spokesman, public relations officer Herbert Thiel from Eschborn, AA Inc. seriously announced already in 1996, the association will economically ruin those, who continuously endanger this claim for monopoly.



The registered association AA Inc. sells one in quintessential points unsatisfactorily translated version of the AA book in Germany, for 25DM each. During last decade an average of 70% of the tax-exempt organization's income originated from commercial literature production and sales. About half of the annual budget of over one million Mark



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goes for salaries, travel expenses, telephone, office, administration, lawyers and courts. Nevertheless, according to their financial statements 1993-1997, AA Inc. in Germany used no less than 3.3 parts per thousand of its income (7.5 million DM) to serve a purpose as stated in section 2 of its bylaws: " The incorporation's purpose is carried out by free-of-charge-distribution of info material and selected literature, especially during (public) information meetings. " Zero point three per cent! Wonderful, isn't it?!

For many years Bodo Dombrowski from Mommenheim was President of AA Inc. in Germany. In January 1997 the astonished audience of German TV SWF3 heard him publicly explain "For me, drinking [alcoholic beverage] belongs to the meal. I am not abstinent. " And in the same broadcast he taught the public about AA: "We stick to this principle strictly. It is practiced in such open-mindedness and such honesty, that he

who relapsed, can and shall talk about that. And for [members of] Alcoholics Anonymous it is the most normal thing that someone slips back to drinking. Therefore it is no requirement for membership to be sober. While membership as such does not even exist, nobody is requested to proof a certain time of sobriety to be a member. ... To not have had a drink for 24 hours is the ultimate climax for an alcoholic ..." One or the other viewer came to believe "AA Inc. might be publicly preaching water and secretly drinking wine?" [comment: There's a word game in the German text. "trinken (un)heimlich Wein". Whereas heimlich means "secretly" and unheimlich means both "very much" and in another sense of the word "publicly" .]

Suspicion increases when reading various publications sold by AA Inc. for good profit. Here's a sample:

" We have no doctrine that has to be maintained. We have no membership that has to be enlarged. We have no authority that has to be supported. We have no prestige, power, or pride that has to be satisfied. And we have no property or money that is really worth quarreling about. ... A.A. is prepared to give away all the knowledge and all the experience it has ... We mean by this that our principles can be used in any application whatever. We do not wish to make them a monopoly of our own. ... But after several years of deliberation, our General Service Conference decided against such a course. The dramatic story of this debate and its conclusion may be found in our history book "Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age." Those early Conferences [1952/1953] believed that the power to sue would be a dangerous thing for us to possess. It was recognized that a public lawsuit is a public controversy, something in which our Tradition says we may not engage. To make our legal position secure, it would have been necessary to incorporate our whole Fellowship, and no one wished to see our spiritual way of life incorporated. It seemed certain that we could confidently trust A.A. opinion, public opinion, and God Himself to take care of Alcoholics Anonymous in this respect."

(Quoted from: "THE A.A. SERVICE MANUAL /TWELVE CONCEPTS FOR WORLDSERVIC" Copyright (C) 1962,1969,1986,1987,1988 Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., Box 459, Grand Central Station New York, N.Y. 10163)

These holy principles were not unknown to all AA members that stayed in the red light zone E*59 Znojmo that day. And thus protest arose. The majority of the group held it was not qualified to involve themselves in preparation of litigation nor was it justified [by AA tradition number five] to do so. Harsh criticism about inadequately high costs for literature had occurred within German AA time and again for many years. Most recently this was the case at AA area & intergroup meeting, Olten, May6,,2000. The Area delegates expressed their hope that obvious misconduct "would decrease in the future". Now the Swiss AA treasurer was alarmed because of this recent case of abusive waste of group money. During recent years a lot of people, including but not limited to German Attorney of State General in Frankfurt/Main had reminded the Boards of AA Inc. to comply with essential AA principles - such as outlined in AA's Twelve Traditions.

Now, that the stone was rolling, events got quickly troublesome and hot. One Swiss representative consequently dismissed his function and refused further cooperation. Thereupon newly enthroned AA Inc. General Manager Guenter Habedank from Dingolfing changed his schedule and traveled to Znojmo to discuss the crises. His trip, however, increased the amount of money wasted by AA Inc. for travel expenses. It was decided to stop well founded analysis and argument regarding the existing different text versions of German big book translations. Such discussion of translations should be replaced by a mere opinion, unsupported by details, from translator Brian Jeffries of Kaiserslautern (K-town). He, of course, would present his opinion in the best interest of AA Inc. should he ever be requested to deposit in court room. The



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question might be considered by the reader, what virtue a plaintiff displays who during a pending law suit pays a man for his "pleasant" stay in a foreign countries special hotel, and afterwards same man is appointed by same plaintiff as a witness in said law suit. Isn't there a saying "Who pays the piper calls the tone"?

" Thousands of dollars blown into the wind. No result achieved, but disunity and wasted travel expenses" said Hans Stebler from Basel and left them.

Despite such lack of substantial outcome, said meeting was reported in the next legal letter by AA Inc. lawyer Frieder Roth, Munich. And Mr. Jeffries, of course, was appointed as a "witness" in this writing to the Supreme Court Oberlandesgericht Frankfurt, Friedrich-Ebert-Anlage 35. Interestingly, for the absence of any detailed and well founded elaboration of German text versions the only reason given was "lack of time" ! Since 1994 German AA Inc. had paid lawyers to seriously threaten non-alcoholic persons, even companies and members of AA groups as well in order. Repeatedly criminal prosecution was initiated and civil law suits were brought. All this served the purpose to prevent these "enemies" from helping alcoholics in any manner that might --in the view of the plaintiffs--entangle their claimed monopoly in all AA literature matters. From 1997 on more legal steps were taken and public controversy was created by AA Inc. by instigating litigation, so that one can speak of a law suit avalanche. First secretly, then more and more obviously the main driving force behind German AA Inc. became involved, a multi-million dollar US-American publishing imperium, AAWS Incorporation, New York.



Though they tried really hard, using all types of fair and unfair things, and despite those hundreds of thousands US dollars spent in the past by AAWS and German AA Inc. for litigation and related expenses, despite all that their ultimate goal has not been met -- prohibition and destruction of AA literature, in particular those freely distributed pocket editions from AA BBSG. Thus it still happens that hopeless drunks world-wide, here and there, suddenly and unexpectedly find a way out from their deadly illness. Often, because caring human beings from their environment could no longer stand the pain of watching these alcoholics hurting or even killing themselves and their families. Most often alcoholics themselves, they passed one of these free booklets on to them and the miracle could start to happen. The great savings of immense subsequent costs, which are caused each year by recovery from alcoholism, is mentioned here only to complete the picture.

Unfortunately, it is possible for organizations in this country to label themselves with the reputable AA name, while at the same time stating in court that they are not bound by AA principles and Tradition 10 "does not apply" to them [sic]. Despite that, they continue to sell AA literature about these same fundamental principles and make huge profits each year by doing so -- because they practically achieved a monopoly on it. They appear as wulfs covered in AA sheepskin, who do serious harm to alcoholics in public. The AA name is polluted and covered with their dirt. Alcoholics who would expect unselfish help from Alcoholics Anonymous, will have to double check, if they should decide to take the risk of being labeled by AA Inc. as a "criminal" and subsequently suffer prosecution and litigation. Confidence and the principle of anonymity went to hell, that's for sure anyhow. That, i.e. AA Inc., must be stopped.

In the case on appeal 11 U 53/99 a trial took place for verbal negotiation on Tuesday, June 27, 2000, 9:30a.m., court room D149. On June 28, 2000 another Chamber of same Supreme court ruled that further criminal prosecution in regard to foreign language editions of the big book shall not be continued. The court's findings 2 Ws 5/00 are not yet available in English language. But you might want to call G.S.O. of A.A.W.S. Inc. NY (212) 870-3400. Ask for Manager Greg Muth. He should have received a translation from his German lawyer. Next trial in this matter is on August 16, same place, same time. One may expect further discoveries and disclosures. No unknown person does try to bring light into the dark -- judge Dr. Tilmann, the president of the Supreme Court in Frankfurt/Main.

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