

Resolution Group Discussion Paper:

The Distinction between NA World Services and the World Service Conference

June 12, 1995

During our first meeting, the Resolution Group arrived at a series of four goals for our work and developed an aggressive timeline for accomplishing them. We compiled a list of resource persons whom we are inviting to our next two meetings. After substantial discussion, we arrived at agreement on some important distinctions that we felt would need to be documented for those who will be joining our work already in progress. This paper discusses some of those distinctions, and is intended to serve as a resource for anyone attempting to track our progress and offer us input.

The four goals for our work are to develop a vision statement for NA World Services, to develop a mission statement for the World Service Conference, to make specific proposals for restructuring World Services, and to make specific proposals for future work when our mission is completed in October. Distinctions inherent in those goals include our perception of the difference between NA World Services and the World Service Conference, between a vision statement and a mission statement, between an "entity" and an "event" as these terms relate to our service structure, and between the terms "tactical" and "strategic" as they relate to the planning and execution of the annual business of world services.

The World Service Conference — an Entity or an Event?

What exactly *is* the NA World Service Conference? Is it an entity which exists throughout the year, or is it better understood as an event which occurs once a year? And more importantly for our purposes, what *should* it be? We discussed these questions at some length, and realized that we were going to have to arrive at some operating assumptions about them in order to develop a framework for the rest of our work.

Our conclusion is that we will call the broadest entity of world services simply "NA World Services," or NAWS. We will call the World Service Conference an event — the annual meeting of all the various elements of NAWS. Though we have not discussed this in great detail yet, we agreed that the elements of NAWS would include a set of participants sent by regions or zones of the fellowship, a board or boards, committees analogous to those that exist today, and a staff of special workers. The proposals for restructuring we put forward in October of this year will seek to lend definition to the relationships among these world service elements, transforming all NA world service relationships into effective partnerships.

Vision Statements and Mission Statements

A vision statement is a concise statement of what a group most deeply aspires to *be*, and a mission statement is a concise statement of what a group aspires to *do*. Both kinds of statements are intended to serve as a touchstone that inspires the members of the group. Members of a group should all be able to look at their vision statement and be struck with the sense that it truly gets to the heart of what they are all about. Members of a group who read

their mission statement should similarly be struck with the sense that it gets to the heart of what their mission is — what they as a group exist to accomplish.

Since our vision of NAWS is that it will be an entity which will encompass all elements of world services, we feel that a vision statement is most appropriate for it. Since our view of the WSC is that it will not be a standing entity as such, but rather will be the major rallying event of NAWS each year, a mission statement is most appropriate for it.

Separating the Strategic from the Tactical

We believe that our current structure does not give sufficient attention to separating strategic matters from tactical matters, and that this is a cause of much of our inefficiency. Strategic matters are the most broadly stated missions and goals of an organization, and tactical matters involve the actual execution of the work. Businesses talk about the “strategic time frame” as the long range planning period. The “tactical time frame” is the short term planning and execution period. Strategic decisions are typically the focus of senior management and boards of directors, while tactical decisions are typically the focus of middle management and staff.

Put in NA world service terms, our World Service Conference is well suited to addressing strategic issues, but not well suited to handling the many tactical issues that abound throughout the year. Still, it is often expected today to handle the tactical affairs of world services. We envision the WSC as the annual meeting of NAWS, with its focus on strategic matters. At each WSC, NAWS would delegate tactical matters to the appropriate board, committee or staff department.

Summary

The above concepts are broadly stated in an effort to provide background as to how the resolution group's discussions are proceeding. Nearly all the details are yet to be discussed and decided. Those persons who wish to provide us input are asked to study these distinctions carefully. Think through the implications of our view that NAWS as a whole is the umbrella entity at the world level, and our view that the WSC should not be treated as a separate entity, but as an annual event. Consider our assertion that certain elements of NAWS are well positioned to make decisions about our strategic direction, while others are well positioned to be delegated the tactical matters. Our Twelve Concepts provide for just that kind of effective delegation, and this conceptual view of world services represents our attempt to align with them more squarely than we do with our current structure. Specific project plans and other matters of tactical execution would cease to be the focus of the WSC.