

BRIEF SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ANTHROPOSOPIHICAL  
SOCIETY IN AMERICA LEADING TO THE AMENDMENT OF THE BY-LAWS

Already in the late 60's and early 70's it was becoming evident that the Society would soon be too large and too wide-spread to be effectively ~~administered~~ served by a single, centralized administration. The Council established in the By-Laws of 1964 was made up of Group Leaders or representatives of all recognized groups, whether <sup>formed</sup> on a geographic or subject basis. This Group-representative Council could elect up to fifteen additional members on an individual basis. As the Society grew and new groups were recognized, the Council grew to include some 50-60 members, many of whom were never able to meet, others only very rarely. Continuity was difficult to achieve. The growing membership in the West and Mid-West felt increasingly isolated from a Society which was overwhelmingly represented by active members in the North-East. When Dietrich Asten resigned as Chairman of the Council in 1974 after serving the Society for twelve consecutive years, the new Chairman was asked to bring about as much circulation between the regions as possible. The first step was the creation of an Executive Committee to include a member for the West and one for the Mid-West. John Brousseau, followed by Hermann Kubach, served for the West and Ernst Katz for the Mid-West. Funds were allocated to enable the Chairman and members of the Executive Committee to travel whenever possible. Members' Conferences were held on the West Coast and in the Mid-West as well as in the East. The ideal of the Society as inaugurated by Rudolf Steiner was cultivated when members met. The national Newsletter under Gisela O'Neil's able editorship helped to awaken a sense of unity and of interest in the Society as such.

In 1978 the Council decided to step back for a year and give the ~~three~~ regions the chance to develop their own administrative organs if they so wished. The Executive Committee was asked to keep the Society running. The reports which came back from the West and Mid-West to the Council in February '79 showed that there was a need for and a definite will to develop regional organs. Beginnings had been made in both areas. In July 1979 in Ann Arbor, three representatives from each of the three regions met with the

national Executive Committee to formulate recommendations according to which the Society might be administered. The Ann Arbor Proposal recommended that the then-forming three Regional Councils should <sup>each</sup> select one, two, or three members to serve on a national Council, with these up-to-nine members having the right to appoint an additional six, making a maximum number of fifteen. The national nucleus would have been identified within their respective regions and chosen by members to whom they were known, but once elected they were expected to think and act on behalf of the Society as a whole -- not to think of themselves primarily as representing the interest of their region. The Ann Arbor Proposal was approved by the Council and reported to the membership and became the basis for the official reorganization which was confirmed in February 1980. The Regional Councils were asked to take administrative initiatives within their areas and to select the nucleus of the new national Council by February 1981. This was done and on February 20, 1981, the Council met and requested the new Council to administer the affairs of the Society on its behalf and to prepare amendments to the By-Laws to reflect the changes in the set-up. This done, the Council adjourned until such time as it should be recalled in order to initiate the amendment of the By-Laws.

The new Council, presently composed of seven members -- Dietrich Asten, Henry Barnes, Werner Glas, Traute Page, Carlo Platzner, Rene Querido, Virginia Sease -- ~~have~~<sup>has</sup> met four times during 1981 and, in late October, submitted its proposals for the amendments to the By-Laws to the "old" Council and called the meeting of the full Council for December 20, 1981. At this time, suggestions made by members of the "old" Council were discussed and incorporated in the By-Law draft which was then unanimously approved for submission to the membership for ~~final~~ ratification. It is this final draft which you have now received. ~~and in which~~, it is hoped, <sup>that</sup> you will ~~find~~<sup>find</sup> ~~that it~~<sup>that it</sup> reflects the direction of the Society's development which you can wholeheartedly support. It is clear to us all that By-Laws can not create a society. Only spiritually active members can do that. But By-Laws can provide the necessary framework within which spiritual life can unfold.