

I hereby propose that the Constitution be amended as follows.  
To add to the section on annual conferences:

The conference shall have the responsibility for formulating the annual budget for the national organization. The budget shall specify the percentages or amounts of revenue to be spent on specific projects or for specific categories of activity.

I also propose adding the following to the section referring to the duties of the national treasurer and national secretary:

1. The National Treasurer may disburse funds if and only if such action is sanctioned by the budget or direct mandate from a conference or referendum.
2. The treasurer shall prepare for the membership a quarterly report of receipts and expenditures. This report shall be published in the Discussion Bulletin or mailed to the members directly.

I'd like to see these proposals taken up at the July 4th conference.

But these proposals are purely formal. They won't be adequate if there isn't discussion among the membership about what the organization should be spending money on. Due in part to the huge size of the USA, W.S.A. has had a problem of only a small number of members attending the annual conference (only 7 people at last July's conference in Morgantown). This means that if the membership want to have control over how the dues are spent, then people have to make some suggestions in the pages of the DB, at the very least. Even if a member can't make it to the next conference, he/she can say what ideas they have.

Of course, it will be hard for members to make a judgment here without knowing what people want WSA to be doing and what it costs to do these things. For example, how much does it cost to produce an issue of the DB? What is the cost per page? Should members who send in letters be required to pay a per-page fee if their letters are longer than a certain length? If so, how many pages should the organization subsidize? I've suggested to Mitch that he calculate how much it costs to produce the DB and that he give us a report on this. This should help WSA to prepare a budget that takes into account the DB expenses.

WSA has definitely had a problem of getting the membership involved in the decision-making and activity of WSA; the small attendance at the last conference is certainly one indication of this. This is a problem that WSA needs to work on. Getting more discussion in the DB is a start. But what about the way decisions are made (or not made)? Last year, to get around the problem of lack of attendance at the conference, WSA attempted a referendum. But the group here was dissatisfied with that attempt. (One member of our group still hasn't gotten a ballot.) Other than that referendum, the WSA has gone on the assumption that conferences are the way to make decisions.

But then we come up against the huge size of the USA. To deal with this, the founding conference proposed the idea of a