

PRESIDENT'S REPORT
OCTOBER 6, 1992
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

Several internal issues dominated National Councils' agenda in the early months of this year. In St. Louis we voted to increase our dues to National Council. That increase was accomplished with no hitches. Also, we were able to negotiate for the first time in National Council's history a line item budget to be established for us. \$104,700.00 gave us two meetings for National Council and at least two meetings for each region. As I visited the regions at the time of your regional annual meetings I was particularly pleased to find your regional budgets in good shape.

A lot of time between October and the end of 1991 we spent finding a new lobbyist. An ad hoc committee interviewed eight lobbyist in Washington on November 6 and 7, obtained their proposals and finally selected Janet Garry. Janet's contract was effective February 1, 1992. I thank the committee, Mary, Bob Duncan, and Bill Hopkins for their collective advice and wisdom. We absolutely made the best choice possible. Janet's activity in Washington and her reports to us have been invaluable. She has also been very helpful to me personally since I have been to Washington several times this year.

SSMA was asked to testify twice by the House Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee on the problems with the disability program and funding levels. We also testified before the Senate Appropriations Committee lobbying for a decent budget. Also in Washington we have maintained good relations with OPM. After our work on PMRS reform last summer we have established an excellent working relationship with them.

National Council had three meetings in Baltimore this year, including one specially called meeting to address our strong objections to the OSDP Phase II report. All of the meetings were positive steps toward our goal of having influence on decisions. At each of our meetings we met with Commissioner King and Commissioner Enoff and with Janice Warden and her staff. As the year progressed we have earned a greater degree of respect and our influence is being felt. I think that the OSDP is an example of how we have grown in the eyes of our Central Office leaders. Janice asked me to serve on the OSDP Phase III workgroup to represent you. This kind of input, in the formative stage, is exactly what we have been striving to have. When SSA is discussing where work should be done, how it should be done, who will do it, and how we should transition to the environment of 10 to 15 years from now, then we want to be a part of that process. We are.

Another example which makes me proud of the progress we are making on some of our initiatives is TQM. Bill Dixon is serving on Janice's Quality Council. Again, we are present from the beginning, in the formative stage, so that our influence is felt during the decision making process. We much prefer being a part of a process or initiative rather than reacting to a completed product.

Several of our initiatives have been prominent parts of SSA's focus this year. Streamlining resulted from our proposal to defer some work because of the increased disability workload. We are continuing to pursue some SSI simplification through an on-going examination of the streamlining recommendations. We have continued to pursue resolution of the performance rating system, urging CO to adopt a two or three level appraisal system and to decouple the awards from the appraisals. We have followed the upgrade issue all year and have succeeded in moving CO from not having a plan to deal with OS's and above to recognizing the immediacy required to do something for OS's following any CR upgrade. We have also lobbied hard for sensible automation decisions which identify the greatest field office needs and address those needs.

SSMA started a discussion on staff allocation which has lead to a major theme for the latter half of 1992 and will continue to be a focus for 1993. We are not convinced that SSA is making the wisest use of our resources. The Contingency Fund release is a lesson for SSA as well as for Congress. If field offices are given the resources (and in this case State Agencies) we can move the work. When SSA decides to direct resources down to the components who produce the work, hold those units responsible, and give them direction, we produce. That is our thesis. We will attempt to prove that in FY 93.

As an addendum to this report, I am attaching a report on the Resolutions that were passed at last year's meeting in St. Louis. National Council has had a very active and productive year. We have been influential in Washington, in Baltimore; and each association has had success within their own region.

