

BIRTH OF A REVELATION

The Story of the Urantia Papers

Written by Mark Kulieke

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PREFACE

This historical summary is far from perfect. It represents my best attempt to piece together fragmentary facts, truth, conjecture, and occasionally what almost amounts to rumor into a meaningful whole. Some items are well substantiated; others only partially so. Just as is often the case in piecing together the archaeological remains of an ancient tablet, some pieces are missing altogether.

I certainly invite corrections, amplifications, and comments to improve this summary for future editions. I do not regard this history as finished. Indeed, I question whether it could ever be regarded as finished. The past is ever subject to reinterpretation with each passing moment. Because of the unique nature of this subject, it is more than ordinarily true of this history. In any event, this summary is succinct and will gradually be expanded in the years to come. Much more information could be presented, but it is beyond the scope of this current narrative.

This historical narrative is as accurate as I can possibly make it under the circumstances. I write this history as a believer in the teachings of The Urantia Book, and as one who grew up a child of Forum members. I come from a large clan of Forum members. I was born early enough to have at least seen, heard, and in many cases talked personally with the members of the Contact Commission and a great many of the active members of the Forum, in addition to my own family.

Many histories will eventually be written about the Urantia Papers and collectively they will ultimately provide readers more balanced treatment and perspective on the subject. Any history incorporates the subjective bias or interpretation of the author. While the information comes from many sources, the synthesis and perspective of this story reflect my viewpoint. I have openly incorporated my opinion and belief on various matters into the text of this history. The concluding pages are particularly interpretive. I have tried to make it clear where I inject my opinion and belief. But inevitably, it underlies the entire

fabric of this narrative. It is therefore also important to state the purposes of a history. Any individual writes a history with particular purposes in mind.

One of my concerns is to provide a sense of the process by which the Urantia Papers took origin. Second I want to capture a feeling for the people and the flavor of the times during this birth phase. In doing so, I hope to provide additional perspective today to those who must now serve this revelation well if it is to succeed. It is my purpose that those who read this history and are encountering much of the material for the first time will be able, as a result, to approach the future with additional confidence and wisdom. More on that subject will be encountered in the concluding paragraphs of the history itself.

I have been absorbing perceptions and information relating to this subject at least since the age of six. I am indebted to a great many people for the substance of this narrative. I can mention only a few here.

First and foremost, I am indebted to Barbara Kulieke for a great deal of the information contained in this history. She has been involved in a number of projects relating to Urantia history, one of the most notable being that she worked with E.L. Christensen (Christy) for two weeks to write a history which Christy never completed or published. Barbara had access to information which few have ever seen.

The many early leaders and other current students of the Urantia Papers to whom I am most indebted are as follows, in alphabetical order: Clyde Bedell, Arthur Burch, Ruth Burton, Tom Choquette, E.L. Christensen, Edith Cook, Scott Forsythe, Vern Grimsley, Geraldine Kulieke Hahn, Carolyn Kendall, David Kulieke, Lynne Kulieke, Marilyn Kulieke, Warren Kulieke, Dr. William S. Sadler, Meredith Sprunger, and Grace Stephens. In actuality, I am indebted to a great many others for a word or an anecdote here and there. I would be unable to list them all.

Said Jesus: "[T]his is the final will of Him who sent me, that of all those he has given me I should not lose one."(*p. 1711) "If a kindhearted man has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, does he not immediately leave the ninety and nine and go out in search of the one that has gone astray? And if he is a good shepherd, will he not keep up his quest for the lost sheep until he finds it?>(*p. 1762) "[I]t is not the will of my Father in heaven that one of these little ones should go astray, much less that they should perish."(*p. 1762) And so, our humble world Urantia, isolated, and "truly among the least of all creation," became a world of "great universe interest".(*p. 466) "Sometimes the last is first, while truly the least becomes greatest."(*p. 466)

The Universal Father and his son Michael are engaged in an unimaginably massive downreach effort to retrieve Urantia from the chaos of rebellion and restore it to the progressive ascent to glory in the universe of Nebadon. Jesus said: "[T]he Father knows what you need even before you ask him."(*p.1577) Thus it was in the first decade of the 20th century, even before the most grim harvest days of a materialistic and secularistic age, that the gift of revelation began to stream once again to our confused planet. The first visible stirrings of what would become The Urantia Book, the Fifth Epochal Revelation of Truth to our world, began around the turn of the century and almost certainly no later than 1906. As with any significant event in history, it must be understood that many factors converge in that initial event. In reality, the roots of the Fifth Epochal Revelation reach down into all parts of our planetary history: the Andonite experiment; the Caligastia Rebellion; the Adamic Default; the evolutionary defeats and failures as well as the successes of this million-year drama; the Melchizedek emergency bestowal; and the bestowal of Christ Michael 2000 years ago. All these events formed the evolutionary bath from which The Urantia Book sprang.

During the Middle Ages (circa 1200 A.D.), the United Midwayers of Urantia petitioned for a new revelation along the lines of The Urantia Book. Apparently their request was ultimately honored, but perhaps the book was a feature of our destiny in any case. Who can say how many human factors were watched, how many other attempts were made to begin the revelatory process before the celestial overseers ** met with success? We know

* The Urantia Book, copyright © 1955 by Urantia Foundation. All Rights Reserved. This refers to any quotations marked by a single asterisk throughout this document.

**Celestial overseers is a term used generically throughout this paper and is not intended to refer to that specific group of superhuman beings.

that even in the 20th century, they were watching several human groups with an eye toward engaging them in this revelatory adventure. The superhuman administrators are not without backup plans in any important endeavor. It is a lesson worth noting that destiny can be and often is modified. If a steward is unfaithful to the talent of truth in his care, even that which he has shall be taken away and given to another.(See p.1876)

Our celestial overseers conspired to bring about the conditions for revelation in Chicago, Illinois in the very heartland of the North American continent. It was a city of which in 1890, Rudyard Kipling said: "Having seen it, I urgently desire never to see it again. It is inhabited by savages." Carl Sandburg would refer to it as the "hog butcher of the world" and it would become world-famed as a city of gangsters and political corruption. But camouflaged in all that was unsavory, it was to become blessed as the city of celestial visitation. Perhaps once again it is a case of the last becoming first. ("Can any such good thing come out of Nazareth?"(*p. 1527)) Probably Chicago was selected for a large variety of reasons much as Palestine was selected for the scene of Jesus' life and teachings.

There is little doubt that several human personalities were brought together by unconscious celestial guidance to form the nucleus of the receiving group of the Fifth Epochal Revelation. This group would eventually become known as the Contact Commission. This process probably began in Battle Creek, Michigan and all converged in the Chicago area, first in the suburb of La Grange, and shortly thereafter at 533 Diversey Parkway which in those days was part of the northern extremity of Chicago. 533 Diversey remained the center and birthplace of the Urantia Papers through the more than 50-year development process culminating in the publication of The Urantia Book in 1955.

I favor the belief that midwayers, student visitors, or superhumans of some sort made attempts at contacts for hundreds of years, perhaps partly for practice and adjustment, possibly with the hope in mind of finding an ideal human subject, perhaps to found forward-looking groups from which epochal revelation could eventually spring, but all in all, under the coordination of some transcending reality such as the Universe Mother Spirit, the Seventh Master Spirit, or other influence. Perhaps such attempts have always gone on in the sense of autorevelation. In any event, I believe a more concerted effort characterized the last few centuries maybe starting with Swedenborg or even before. While the superhumans (midwayers) apparently hoped for something on the scale of The Urantia Book, we have no evidence that the earlier petition had been acknowledged or granted until 1924.

The experience with the contact group may well have started without even superhuman knowledge or determination of the eventual result. I have some fragmentary evidence to suggest this. An inspection visit to Urantia by Tabamantia is mentioned in The Urantia Book as having occurred "not long since." (*p.1189) I am aware of one human account which suggests that Tabamantia visited circa World War I, and having witnessed the contact experience then in progress, had some "admonitions and indictments"(*p. 1189) to deliver

to the superhumans then involved. It seems altogether reasonable that as a result of his visit, the matter was put on a different footing.

We know that on February 11, 1924, Machiventa Melchizedek announced to the contact group the plan to write the Urantia Papers with the participation of what was known as the Forum which had then been in existence for about four months. It may well be that lower orders of beings were likewise unaware of the scope of the project until approximately that time. Thus, the contact experience started 17-25 years before the formal announcement of the bestowal of the Fifth Epochal Revelation to Urantia. A beginning date of 1911 is given in The Mind at Mischief by Dr. Sadler, but is known to be several years late.

Much information and many hundreds of pages of written material existed before the official start of the revelatory process in 1924. While the information was somewhat more general, it formed a basis for the Urantia Papers to a certain extent. Some of the same facts and truths that are in the book were in this earlier material. The contact group had had many years to work together, to learn, experience, rehearse, and grow under superhuman guidance before the focal drama began. I would guess this earliest period to have been somewhat intellectually and psychologically chaotic for the participants. We also know that the midwayers themselves learned a great deal in terms of universe fact and truth in the unfolding of this revelatory process.

The contact group, known subsequently as the Contact Commission, embraced at least six people and possibly several more. Those known are Drs. William S. and Lena Sadler, their son William S. Sadler Jr. (Bill), Wilfred and Anna Kellogg (sister to Lena), and Emma L. Christensen(Christy). One other doctor is thought by one Forum member to have participated prior to 1920, probably Meyer Solomon. Also, if the human subject was not one of these seven people, we must presume an eighth unknown member of the group. In the earliest years, there might have been others now unknown when Dr. Sadler was scientifically examining this phenomena quite rigorously. I have even heard it said that he consulted Houdini on this matter. However, the contact group was not formally commissioned until 1924, so these others would not have been an integral part of the Contact Commission.

Most regular students of The Urantia Book know that the identity of the human subject was never revealed. He is revealed as male in The Urantia Book. There are those who think they know the subject's identity and some opinions have been expressed with overmuch certainty of feeling. The fact is that the human and superhuman participants seem to have covered their tracks adequately. There can be no certainty of the subject's identity - only conjecture. The roots reach too deeply into the past for anyone to know. Even the earliest Forumites arrived on the scene 20 years after this whole matter had begun - plenty of time for the Contact Commission to get their act together on the matter and keep anyone off the scent. We know this was their intent as they were told by the revelators: "We don't want a St. Peter, St. Paul, Luther, Calvin, or Wesley associated with The Urantia Book a thousand years hence."

We can pretty safely figure that the Contact Commission consisted of members of the reserve corps of destiny. It became common knowledge in the cases of both Dr. Sadler and Christy (E.L. Christensen). It seems self evident that all members of the group would have to be reservists given the magnitude of the project they were privy to.

Dr. William S. Sadler was the leader of the Contact Commission - essentially co-led with his wife Lena (along the model revealed in The Urantia Book) until her death in 1939. Dr. Sadler was trained as a surgeon and psychiatrist and was thus of a scientific bent of mind and appears to have been generally skeptical of psychic phenomena. In the case of the revelatory contact and the Urantia Papers, he tested and probed and studied for many years. He was so bothersome in his investigations that the midwayers became a trifle testy with him. He was thus perfectly suited to manage a case of genuine revelation. He tried everything he knew to trip up either the human subject or the superhumans. He exhausted the possibilities. He alluded to and admitted in the appendix to The Mind at Mischief, first published in 1929, that this was one of only two cases which he regarded as genuine revelation. (It has been theorized that Ellen White was the other case to which he referred.) He spent many years debunking various psychics and mystics of the day at a time when interest in such phenomena was considerable. While he provisionally accepted the validity of the Urantia contact from a relatively early date, it was something like 30 years before he felt certitude on the matter. Specifically the paper on the twelve apostles gave him final conviction.

Only the Contact Commission knew the identity of the human subject and certain of the details relating to transmission. Even so, they asserted that there were many missing links in even their knowledge of the contact process and that total understanding on anyone's part would be impossible. However the contact experience may have begun, it eventually embraced many forms of contact and several personalities and must, from the evidence, have included at least the following:

- 1) The contact described in The Urantia Book and The Mind at Mischief with the subject personality wholly unconscious during contact and speaking audibly to those present.

- 2) The same as number one except that the human subject while unconscious or semiconscious wrote down the material being directed through him by superhumans rather than speaking. However, this should not be confused with automatic writing. Dr. Sadler denied that anything like automatic writing or any automatic phenomena occurred.

- 3) Something akin to so-called channeling. Someone other than the human subject who was also a member of the contact group received inner impulses of which he was conscious and which he then wrote down, but which would not be heard or noticed by others. This seems to be how some instructions came. It would not surprise me if all members of the Contact Commission had this capability.

- 4) Direct audio contact between the members of the Contact Commission and the superhuman revelators.
- 5) Materialization of physical papers by superhumans.
- 6) Rendering the invisible visible. The Contact Commission was enabled to see seraphic transports.
- 7) Visions. Dr. Sadler was enabled to see the mansion world life prior to his death. It would appear that reflectivity was also employed to enable him to see certain events on Earth in distant locations.

Numbers 1 and 2 seem to be heavily intertwined and were the predominant form used for the actual text of the Urantia Papers. It is apparent from this list that the experience with superhumans was pervasive, complex, multidimensional, and evolutionary. The members of the Forum, which began in October 1923, became knowledgeable of much of the contact process, but not as much as the Contact Commission.

The contact experience was a very rich one which slowly broadened and blossomed over a period of years as the Contact Commission itself became oriented, learned, and evolved in wisdom and spirituality. There were, of course, many instructions given and much dialogue held with the revelators in addition to the actual presentation of the text of The Urantia Book. We will never know about most of this supplementary material as it was destroyed from time to time when it was deemed no longer needed or for other reasons. Some was destroyed by the revelators prior to publication or they would order it to be destroyed by the Contact Commission. Additional material was shredded upon the death of Dr. Sadler. Christy authorized the destruction of the last portions during her final illness. Only fragments of these many exchanges linger in other written material or among some individuals' private letters or notes.

It would help to understand that the contact experience was on the one hand most profound and riveting and on the other was frequently quite personal, informal, and liberally blended with humor. As a parallel, think of the morontia Jesus participating in breakfast, joking and visiting with his apostles on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. The midwayers and seraphim frequently resorted to humor, usually dry, and also to human slang. Many of their statements were strictly limited to the circumstances in which they functioned, as they made commentary on nations, leaders, political parties, organizations, personality types, and so forth. They talked of things they liked, of things they wanted to see, and they discussed their problems with humor. The Urantia Book is a formal statement intended to be seen and studied by millions. The superhumans in everyday dialogue were hardly so formal. However, the higher the personality type, the more formal and serious they could appear to us.

If all Urantia Book readers knew the complete recital of the contact experience, probably a percentage of them would be disturbed by some of the activity of the superhumans. I think this may be because the superhumans were relating personally to the Contact Commissioners and they are willing to reach down and relate to us wherever we are at and take us forward by the hand. Since each person is unique, superhumans would relate to each person uniquely. We all carry many unconscious judgments and opinions of proper superhuman conduct and behavior. Consequently, many or most of us might be critical or confused, bothered and bewildered by the realities of superhuman contact. Furthermore, this might get in the way of really experiencing such a contact ourselves.

While the Contact Commission interfaced with the superhumans and were the actual custodians of the Urantia Papers, the revelators utilized a larger human group in their methodology. This group was the Forum and the Forum was vital to the birth of the revelation. This was an evolutionary process grounded in human understanding and experience. All revelation must downreach to the human evolutionary position in order to be effective. The superhumans needed the human beings of the Forum as much as these humans needed celestial guidance. The Forum was formed by Dr. Sadler "inviting a few friends" to his home on Sunday afternoons to discuss interesting topics of the day in the realm of religion, philosophy, psychology, and science. The Forum functioned probably for around a year with little revelatory input. Thus the members had some momentum gathered before they were apprised of the real purpose (from the superhuman standpoint) of their coming together. When the commission by Melchizedek was revealed to them in December 1924, they learned their part in the process.

The procedure was as follows: They were to read a paper each Sunday afternoon. It was ordinarily read to them by one of the Contact Commission, usually Dr. Sadler. They were to write down any questions that came to mind and hand them in each week. Mr. Kellogg was generally responsible for collecting them. Answers to their questions were then considered by the superhuman revelators. The answers were incorporated into a subsequent paper or an editing of the original paper. In this way, one paper about God eventually mushroomed into five papers about God - the first five in the book. Other parts likewise expanded as the superhumans monitored the human reaction to their material.

Interaction and dialogue with humans was the real acid test for the superhuman revelators. As well as they may know us, they cannot fully anticipate our thoughts, actions, and reactions without this interaction. In this way, the Urantia Papers were grounded in human understanding. How many times have you read a paragraph and formed a question only to have it answered in the next paragraph or two? Therein lies the trail of the book's origin in the joint creative process of human questioning and superhuman answering.

This process initially took approximately five years and then consisted of 57 papers. But the process does not stop there. The book was advanced another generation in human understanding between 1929 and 1935. After years of reading papers, the first draft of Parts I-III, the Forum was told approximately: "With your increased understanding derived

from reading and study of the material, you can now ask more intelligent questions. We are going to go through the book again." And so the book was edited and expanded week by week and year by year and the Forum members learned and grew.

It has been reported by several Forumites that some revelatory material was recalled - either because it was just too incomprehensible to the human mind or because it was deemed best not to reveal the information to the future readership. At least one Forumite believed that several of the most difficult papers would not have been included in The Urantia Book without the questions formulated by William S. Sadler Jr.

Dr. Sadler said in one paper that about 150 people participated in this creative process. In another, he mentions 300 people while citing the total Forum membership through 1942 as 486. The original charter membership numbered 30. Then as now, there was a mix of people including the very committed, the indifferent, and even a few with negative reactions to the whole business. They came from diverse backgrounds. In the march of human events over the years, some dropped out, some moved out of town, some moved on to the mansion worlds.

By 1934 and 1935, the process was essentially complete for the first three parts of the book. A third and final creative round was undertaken between 1935 and 1942 to clarify concepts and remove ambiguities. This apparently resulted in only minor editing by the superhuman revelators.

About 1935, the Forum received the Jesus papers from the midwayers who had waited for approval from Uversa before undertaking the story. The final round of clarification and editing between 1935 and 1942 seems to have included Part IV. Part IV is undated. No one has said why. I believe it is because Parts I to III contain cosmology that will become dated and eventually need revision. Part IV on the other hand contains "historic facts and religious truths" which should "stand on the records of the ages to come."(*p.1109) Its date need not be fixed.

The prepublication years can be divided into three roughly equal phases:

- 1) The initial contact phase, 190(6)-1924, the shakedown period when the Contact Commission becomes trained and ready for action.
- 2) The birth phase, 1924-1942, the actual writing process and indirect dialogue between superhuman revelators and human Forum members.
- 3) The organizational development phase, 1942-1955, the typesetting period, dress rehearsal for publication, raising funds for the actual launching of the revelation. This period actually begins as early as 1937 in some respects and overlaps with the second period.

In 1939, apparently at the behest of the revelators, a group which became known as the Seventy began - simply because 70 people originally committed to it. I am struck by the parallel development of the training of 70 evangelists during Jesus' public life - also apparently due to the fact that 70 initially committed to it. The Seventy undertook more intensive study of the book and formalized Wednesday night classes in addition to the Sunday meetings. This group was viewed as the forerunner of the Urantia Brotherhood School.

The manuscript of The Urantia Book could only be read at 533 Diversey Parkway from the 1920's until 1955. There were several copies and people could sign out a paper at a time to read on the premises. They could read before the meeting on Sunday or come in during business hours and evenings on weekdays. The papers were kept in a safe and administered by the Contact Commission. Attendance requirements were set for the Seventy of at least 75% of the meetings. This had also applied to the entire Forum during the writing phase. Before 1955, something on the order of 450-500 different people attended Forum meetings. Bill Sadler put the number at 300. A paper by Dr. Sadler placed the number through May 1942 at 486. Some may have come only a few times and dropped out. Others came to the first meeting in 1923 and were still coming every Sunday in 1956 when the Forum became First Urantia Society also headquartered in Chicago at 533 Diversey Parkway. And these same individuals went right on into the 70's and 80's still coming to the Sunday meetings at 533.

People learned of the Forum and what it was doing only in the most discreet fashion. Forumites took a pledge of secrecy. They were not even to tell family members the nature of what they were doing. If someone thought they had a potential new member developing, they could only describe the meetings in broad terms and arrange for an interview with Dr. Sadler. Dr. Sadler talked at length with each new member or prospective member. If they indicated genuine interest in the group upon discussion with Dr. Sadler, they were administered the pledge of secrecy and ushered into the group without further ceremony. They had to read papers on their own to come up to speed with the group.

I think it is well to point out that the Forum members exuded camaraderie and a collective sense of excitement and anticipation at what they were participating in. Even as a child in the '50's, I picked up a sense of closeness, friendship, and common purpose which I have never found equalled in the Urantia movement since. Perhaps the cohesiveness of the Forum could be likened to that of a single close-knit well-functioning study group. It was a special time for a special group and they were conscious of their function in the history of our world.

As the text of the Urantia Papers neared completion, the group naturally began to focus its thinking on how to release the revelation to the world and consider what form the sponsoring organization or organizations should take. The first major conflict dates from this time and involved a psychic and writer named Harold Sherman. I will briefly summarize the incident. There is considerable difference of opinion on what transpired in

this whole episode that cannot be readily resolved. This narrative constitutes a biased understanding synthesized from many sources but chiefly follows Dr. Sadler's viewpoint and to some extent that of my father, Warren Kulieke. Harold and his wife Martha joined the Forum circa 1942. Harold was apparently somewhat charismatic or otherwise personally persuasive. While seemingly benignly attempting to bring the revelation under democratic control of the Forum, it would appear that he had a secret agenda. It should be remembered that the Contact Commission was an extension of the superhuman revelatory commission itself; they took their orders from the superhumans. In trying to wrest the Urantia Papers from the control of the Contact Commission, and in particular from Dr. Sadler's leadership, Sherman was actually challenging the authority of the superhuman revelators. According to Dr. Sadler, Sherman was playing into the hands of Caligastia who was trying to divide the group. The Contact Commission was told that Caligastia hated the Urantia Papers and would seek to destroy them. They were further told that Caligastia operated by driving wedges between people and groups and fostering disunity. Maintaining unity was much emphasized by the revelators.

Sherman passed a letter or petition around the Forum membership to be signed which criticized Dr. Sadler's control of the Urantia Papers. Many Forumites, not realizing the real intent behind his actions, joined his cause by signing Sherman's petition. The so-called Sherman Rebellion was viewed as a threat to the integrity of the revelation. The midwayers declared the situation a crisis and frequently maintained hour by hour contact with Dr. Sadler from the outbreak of the rebellion until its conclusion. Dr. Sadler called each signatory in one by one and talked with them at length. In the end, they all asked to have their names removed from the petition, with the apparent exception of the Shermans. The crisis was controlled and while some conflict ensued with Sherman, the danger was passed.

There seems to have been intellectual disagreement within the Contact Commission itself on how to organize and this should not be particularly surprising in view of the fact that even the Seraphim of Progress and the Seraphim of the Churches were in conflict regarding the management of the Urantia Papers in these days. They remained so until a new head of the superhuman government was installed who dealt with this matter in the early '50's.

Research and consideration of the forms of organization by the Contact Commission and the Forum started in the late '30s and continued through the '40's. There was considerable dialogue and input from seraphim and midwayers on the subject. The Contact Commission was warned of the danger of misguided idealists. They were told that what was needed was a blending of ideist and idealist. Paul was an ideist and he succeeded, but compromised his ideology. Abner was an idealist who was inflexible and largely failed. A balance between the two is needed. The Contact Commission was also told that The Urantia Book should not be under the direct control of a democratic organization which is ever subject to the whims and fickleness of its members. At the same time, the membership was not to be subject to an autocratic body. It had to be representative.

The organizational design of having two main organizations, Urantia Foundation and Urantia Brotherhood, was wrought over a period of many years and was ultimately approved by the celestial overseers. While they observed that the constitution of Urantia Brotherhood was not perfect, it was pronounced as fair a document as any yet devised and provided for its own amendment.

While evidence suggests their concern for too much power residing with the Brotherhood, I don't think it would be correct to think they didn't have concerns about the Foundation as well. The key was to have two dissimilarly designed bodies in harmony and balance. This was not to be a hierarchical system anymore than a single pair of seraphim is a hierarchy. Seraphim work jointly. One is energy positive and the other is energy negative, but they are described as complementary. This, I believe, was the plan for Urantia Foundation and Urantia Brotherhood - to be complementary. Bill Sadler likened them to members of a football team, the Foundation as tackle and the Brotherhood as quarterback. Urantia Foundation did not form Urantia Brotherhood, but it did choose to formally recognize the Brotherhood and bestow certain duties upon it such as handling sales of The Urantia Book.

Urantia Foundation became the direct heir to the Contact Commission in 1950. In August 1942, instructions were given for the Foundation-to-be to copyright The Urantia Book and to register Urantia as a trademark. The Commission was told:

"You have not done enough to safeguard your name. Make it very safe for one generation so the name Urantia cannot be pre-empted."

"In a common-law trust you hold the name. You do it also in a corporation. A corporation has status in law. You also do it in the copyright. You must carefully register it with the division of government that I have looked into, that controls trade relations, Trademark, and then you are protected in common law connected with a volunteer association such as you are planning in the Urantia Brotherhood. In all those ways you must safeguard the name. This is one of your most important duties."

"In 50,75, or 100 years the name will be fairly safe. You safeguard it for a generation and it will largely take care of itself."

After the Foundation trustees became the custodians of The Urantia Book, they set about doing these things.

I have heard it said that one Forum member understood that the equivalent of The Urantia Book has been given to numerous worlds. I have no information to substantiate this at the present time.

As alluded to above, some changes in the superhuman planetary government of Urantia were instituted on August 21, 1950 and there were ensuing changes for several years

afterward ultimately affecting the direction and welfare of the Urantia Papers. Certain of the human outworkings were to be in the hands of the trustees of Urantia Foundation subject to the veto power of the United Midwayers of Urantia. What form that veto power takes appears to be completely open to speculation. The Personal Regent to the Vicegerent Planetary Prince of Urantia announced that overall direction of the revelation for the next 500 years (from February 11, 1954) was placed in the hands of the Seraphim of Progress (progress angels) with the more immediate control for the next one hundred years to be entrusted to the Seraphim of the Churches (religious guardians). He announced that he reserved the right to intervene at any time. Again what form such intervention would take may be unknown to all. I, myself, would presume that such intervention ordinarily appears to occur naturally through human agents who are part of the reserve corps of destiny.

The Regent was empowered to make these decisions after a newly formed Supreme Court of Urantia, created in November 1951, handed him the authority over the revelation. After his first year in office, in 1951, he announced to the Contact Commission that his first year had not been an altogether happy one - he had spent the better part of it "trying to prevent or postpone global war." On another occasion he expressed shock at the lack of enthusiasm of some Forum members for the Urantia Papers. Did they not realize what they had? He opined that it must just be that few mortals "can stand the test of time." He said on the whole that the Seventy were reasonably committed, but relatively few others. On February 11, 1952, (28 years to the day after Machiventa's message) he told the Contact Commission that he and he alone would decide the time to publish. However, if they did not hear from him for a period of three years, the Urantia Foundation was free to go ahead with publication. He also told them to prepare an index to be published in a separate volume. The Contact Commission did not hear from the Regent again for three years and on February 11, 1955, the trustees of Urantia Foundation signed their "Declaration of Intent to Publish The Urantia Book."

Work began immediately thereafter on printing. The typesetting had been completed earlier as well as some other preliminary preparations. The Urantia Book was published on October 12, 1955, a Wednesday night, when the Seventy regularly held classes at 533 Diversey Parkway. I still remember the excitement of my father when he came home that night with four Urantia Books. Many of these people had waited decades for this momentous event and at last it was at hand. The amount and nature of contacts seems to have greatly altered subsequent to 1952. The organizations were largely on their own.

Dr. Sadler and Christy both indicated that the Urantia Papers were published exactly as received except for errors of copying, most of which were subsequently identified and corrected. The Contact Commission was limited to making changes in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Urantia Brotherhood was formed on January 2, 1955 by 36 Forum members acting as the original General Council. It was not until June 17, 1956 that the First Urantia Society was

formed and the Forum, after 33 years, passed into history as most of its members became the 156 initial members of the new society. A new phase had begun. The intrepid Forum members now prepared to share The Urantia Book with the world.

The Forum had been told many things by the celestial overseers of the public dissemination of The Urantia Book among which are the following statements. In some cases, wording has been changed from second to first person.

"The future is not open to our mortal comprehension, but we will do well to diligently study the order, plan, and methods of progression as they were enacted in the earth life of Michael when the Word was made flesh. We are becoming actors in an ensuing episode when the Word is made book. Great is the difference in these dispensations of religion, but many are the lessons which can be learned from a study of the former age."

"We regard The Urantia Book as a feature of the progressive evolution of human society. It is not germane to the spectacular episodes of epochal revolution, even though it may apparently be timed to appear in the wake of one such revolution in human society. The book belongs to the era immediately to follow the conclusion of the present ideological struggle. That will be the day when men will be willing to seek truth and righteousness. When the chaos of the present confusion has passed, it will be more readily possible to formulate the cosmos of a new and improved era of human relationships. And it is for this better order of affairs on earth that the book has been made ready."

"But the publication of the book has not been postponed to that (possibly) somewhat remote date. An early publication of the book has been provided so that it may be in hand for the training of leaders and teachers. Its presence is also required to engage the attention of persons of means who may be thus led to provide funds for translations into other languages."

"We must learn to possess our souls in patience. We are in association with a revelation of truth which is a part of the natural evolution of religion on this world. Over-rapid growth would be suicidal. The book is being given to those who are ready for it long before the day of its world-wide mission. Thousands of study groups must be brought into existence and the book must be translated into many tongues. Thus will the book be in readiness to comfort and enlighten the peoples of many languages when the battle for man's liberty is finally won and the world is once more made safe for the religion of Jesus and the freedom of mankind."

"Not since the Gospel of Jesus has there appeared on earth such a dynamic nucleus about which could be built so many organizations and which would attract so many differently motivated men - good, bad, and indifferent."

"There has not in 1900 years been anything about which there could be so much confusion and competition for control as your organization, and you cannot spike organization guns except by organization in this present age."

"Are you ready for the baptism of joys and sorrows which will surely attend the inauguration of the Urantia Papers to the world?"

As of the time of this writing we have long since begun and continue in our "baptism of joys and sorrows." I, myself, regard the completion of the process resulting in publication of The Urantia Book in such a pure and accurate form as a major miracle in itself. It required 50 years of human handling: human thoughts, feelings, and actions. These people experienced doubt, perplexity, confusion, turmoil, uncertainty, as well as personal and social conflict. Yet out of this process, they fraternized, they grew, and they succeeded in launching the Fifth Epochal Revelation of Truth to Urantia. All the difficulties have continued and multiplied as this ship has sailed out of the harbor. The revelators said it would take 50-75 years (dating from 1955) of proper handling to ensure the success of this latest revelation. Will it succeed and set the stage for entry upon the threshold of light and life? Will our world become a marvel of redemption and restoration throughout Orvonton? Or will this epochal transaction end up compromised and distorted as so many of our previous revelations on this planet? Will we become one of the truly greatest cosmic disappointments? It is up to those of you who currently labor in this vineyard and those shortly to follow.

Since the superhumans anticipated many difficulties in the public dissemination of the revelation, we must trust that through this turmoil and trouble, this storm and stress, we can still emerge triumphant in carrying the Fifth Epochal Revelation safely through this transition era. In divining what to do at every decision point in this forward struggle, we do well to examine how this whole process started and progressed right on down to the present moment. Thus may we act with increased wisdom as we help steer this latest revelation from the safe harbor out upon the high seas of evolutionary destiny.

One of the points of this history will have been missed if you conceptualize these historical events as remote to current events and clothe the ever more distant Contact Commissioners and Forum members in golden auras of greatness, for example like the founding fathers of America. This is not to minimize the achievements of these people. However, they were essentially ordinary people made great only by their commitments. The events are not remote; rather they have given shape to and are still shaping current day reality.

The same power to make momentous decisions and dedicate the human will to serving this revelation lies within each of us. We may not all be reservists, we may not all be leaders in the enterprise, but each one of us can make the same level of commitment that a reservist makes. And God will take note and use us to maximum advantage whether it be as a lowly foot soldier or a great commander. "Life is but a days work - do it well. The act is ours; the consequences God's."(*p. 556)

The revelation is still in the very early stages of unfolding to the world. It still needs committed men and women in order to succeed just as much or more than in the early days. There is no shortage of critical roles. Essentially you need be limited only by your imaginations. Great and historic times are upon us now just as they were upon those of the early 20th century. It's just that points of present day reality rarely feel as monumental as times of the past. Nevertheless, they are. Supreme dedication from millions of religionists is needed at this very moment. For those who make such dedication, great times are always at hand. God will ever speak to those willing to hear: "Take my hand. Walk with me. Do my bidding. I enlist your aid."

If you have specific questions, you maybe able to obtain further information by contacting:

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Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Net proceeds from the sale of this paper and any contributions received will go toward a videotape presentation of this history and to the development of a library of materials relating to the Urantia movement which would be available for public use. I am working on obtaining a tax-exempt number.