

KEYNOTE ADDRESS -- TRIENNIAL DELEGATE ASSEMBLY
OF URANTIA BROTHERHOOD
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August 4, 1967

I am sure that all of us present who have been connected with the Urantia movement for some time, or in some way have been concerned with the progress of the Brotherhood as it attempts to disseminate the teachings of the Urantia Book, are soberly impressed with the importance of what is being done, of what has been done, and of what will be done, by all of us who have a part in the planning and work of the Brotherhood. As Christy has repeatedly said, "This is big business."

We are all very fortunate to participate in these assemblies and other meetings which certainly must be considered auspicious occasions. Most of us will no doubt live out our lives before the consequences of our acts will be realized and before the Urantia Book has had much influence upon the world. We have been privileged to receive the Urantia Book before the world is ready for it. For this we can be humbly thankful. But with all this in mind, let us face the tasks that lie before us in this Assembly seriously, yet joyously, realizing that a great project has been placed in our hands -- one so great that we can be sure our unseen friends will not let it fail. Yet we must realize that at present they are working through us and a few of our associates, and, perceiving that this project is so important, we must sincerely strive to dedicate our best thinking to it and be willing to relinquish any personal desires that may not be for the best good of the Brotherhood.

Over the past twelve years since the Brotherhood was formed we have been somewhat accustomed to doing things for the first time -- we have become charter members of a society, we have taught or studied in the first class in the Urantia Brotherhood school, we have participated in the first charter ceremonies, the first Triennial Delegate Assembly, and many others. Today it is different. We have moved a notch farther. This is not the first Triennial Delegate Assembly. We have a precedent. This mysterious concept that we call time keeps marching on. We are getting away from the first stark beginnings of the Urantia movement, and traditions and modes of procedure are developing. Now we have had three Presidents of Urantia Brotherhood and many other workers to add to the record of the early leaders of the Urantia movement.

It is important, as we strive for acceptance of the Urantia Book, that we remember the cautions expressed by our first Urantia Brotherhood President, Bill Sadler. He suggested that we do not confuse our secondary loyalties and primary loyalties, stating that God is the only true end, that the Urantia Book and the Urantia Brotherhood are means to the end. "The Brotherhood is designed to promote the book and the book is designed to bring God and man closer to each other. If we can clearly separate means and ends, if we can subordinate means to the true end, then we shall continue for a very long time as a real Brotherhood."

Let us then be careful to maintain the proper perspective as we view our purposes in this Assembly and in all our work of continuing to build Jesus' kingdom on earth. But we must remember that Jesus was forced to use the word Kingdom for his concept of a brotherhood. Our Urantia Brotherhood is the physical and social organization that is the literal representation of the spiritual brotherhood of men that is derived from realization that the Universal Father is the actual Father of all Adjuster-indwelt mortals.

Our organization that has called us together for this meeting is, we believe, the best means we have of promoting the Urantia Book, which, we believe, is the best means available of bringing man closer to God, and of helping spiritually hungry men to come to a realization of sonship with God.

I should like to speak a few moments about our organization, the Urantia Brotherhood. Its purposes are well expressed in Article II of the constitution:

"The purposes of URANTIA BROTHERHOOD are the study and dissemination of the teachings of the URANTIA BOOK; the promotion, improvement, and expansion among the peoples of the world of the comprehension and understanding of Cosmology and the relation of the planet on which we live to the Universe, of the genesis and destiny of Man and his relation to God, and of the teachings of Jesus Christ; and the inculcation and encouragement of the realization and appreciation of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man -- in order to increase and enhance the comfort, happiness, and well-being of Man, as an individual and as a member of society, by fostering a religion, a philosophy, and a cosmology which are commensurate with Man's intellectual and cultural development, through the medium of fraternal association, ever obedient and subservient to the laws of this country and of all countries wherein URANTIA BROTHERHOOD may extend."

An organization with these purposes any spiritually-minded individual can accept and actively support. We have been told that the world is not yet ready for the Urantia Book, but that it is given to us so that leaders and teachers may be prepared and translations into other languages be completed so that when world conditions do ripen to where the book will be widely and enthusiastically received, we can be ready to do great things in promoting the study and dissemination of the teachings of this book. It is for this purpose and toward this end that our Urantia Brotherhood must continue to function effectively.

Our second Urantia Brotherhood President, Warren Kulieke, had this to say about "The value and significance of the Brotherhood Organization" in his report to the General Council in 1960:

"The writers of the Constitution of Urantia Brotherhood carefully and deliberately provided for an institution with a strong central over-control while at the same time establishing the autonomy of the individual societies. In so doing they were consciously aware of the statement in the Urantia Book which says:

"'While it is true that the institutionalization of religion has usually detracted from its spiritual quality, it is also a fact that no religion has thus far succeeded in surviving without the aid of institutional organization of some degree, greater or lesser.' (p.1083)

"And may it be ever thus -- that individual believers will band together to form Urantia societies, and these societies will group together to form the Urantia Brotherhood organization for the purpose of attaining the goals herein expressed.

"But let us not overlook another important function of this organization, namely, the safeguarding of this revelation which has been entrusted to us. Religious fanatics and those with sinister intent as well as many well-meaning but mis-

guided individuals will try to attach themselves to our cause or even try to take it over completely. Such have already arisen. Our constitution is designed to prevent such attempts. We are safeguarded by law. The Brotherhood reserves the right of revoking a charter when necessary or of expelling individuals it deems harmful. The Urantia Foundation retains control over the book itself. In supporting the organization we are insuring the future of the teachings of the Urantia Book.

"We are not in a hurry. We will not be stampeded into unwise actions to promote our revelation. Those of us who have witnessed the formulation of the Urantia papers and the subsequent publication of the Urantia Book will zealously guard and control the manner in which it will be presented to the world, letting the example of our unseen friends, who have waited hundreds of years to make this revelation, curb our own impatience and govern our enthusiasm."

We are aware that some do not believe in organization, but that believers should just put their faith in God. We need to look back to the life of Jesus and also to the experiences of his early followers. Jesus had his apostles organize. It is true that the organization after Jesus left the planet got out of hand. Jesus did not plan the ecclesiastical hierarchy that subsequently grew up. Abner had a truer concept of Jesus' teachings than Peter or Paul. Abner went off by himself and continued to teach and preach and win souls for the kingdom, but he did not organize. Peter and Paul, though they changed the emphasis of the Gospel, did organize churches. Abner, though we have a warm feeling for him, failed. Peter and Paul, whom we cannot help but respect even though they yielded to expediency and compromise, accomplished something that persisted as the second best religion on earth.

As we look at the grand universe we see that it is highly organized and even then there are occasional problems. We are told that when a planet reaches the era of light and life some degeneracy still remains, and they still need many controls to protect the individual -- and we are obviously a long way from light and life. Those that feel that we should not have government or organization should be patient, as we are reminded that on Havona there is no government. But we are a long way from Havona. We believe that the best government in the world is one that governs least, and that that government that prevents the most government is best because it leaves the individual free -- permits him his liberties and inalienable rights, and prevents predatory groups from interfering with these liberties.

We have an organization whose major purpose is to prevent other organizations, and is therefore the most benign. It attempts to give everyone a right to his own beliefs and interpretations, and it also attempts to prevent confusion and disruption that would occur if there were no safeguard against designing groups who would use the name Urantia though they prostitute the teachings of the book. Our Urantia Brotherhood was developed carefully by people who have considered many possibilities. It is sometimes difficult for newcomers to accept procedures that do not include certain practices -- practices that have been tried or considered and then discarded by many who have had experience with them. We no doubt will have some idealists who will want to do things in certain ways because they assume that the human animal is much more spiritually led than is really true. Some Urantians do live on a comparatively high spiritual and moral plane, but let us not forget that the writers of the Urantia Book consider us only partially civilized.

It is easily possible to become discouraged as we attempt to get people interested in this book that has meant so much to us. Three years ago there were six societies represented in our Assembly; today there are only five. We know that there are many study groups and still many more individuals who are excited with the book and are spreading its teachings. As I view our present situation I cannot help but compare it with the experiences of climbing up to the peak of a mountain.

If you have ever been in the mountains and have had the urge to climb up to the summit of a peak, you probably have had the same experience that I have had. When you see the peak from a distance it looks as though it is easy to reach. But as you climb, it seems that the peak does not get much closer, and you begin to realize that there is much terrain to cover before you can finally reach its top. It seems that there are a series of small hills to climb, each succeeding hill slightly higher than the preceding. Sometimes to continue to climb it is necessary to go down into a small valley before the ascent of the next hill.

Mountain climbing consists of attaining these successive high spots, usually successive plateaus, where after considerable climbing one reaches level ground and walks forward for a short time without ascending. Whenever I have reached such plateaus, I would pause for a few moments, and rest and enjoy the view. It has always been gratifying for me to look back and see how high I had come. And even though the peak may still appear quite far away, as I look back and see how far I have come, and then look again to the peak, it somehow seems closer, and I realize it is closer and more easily attainable.

Our experiences in our Brotherhood climb toward the peak of general acceptance of the Urantia Book and the consequent tremendous forward surge of the human race I believe will be similar to those of mountain climbing. We periodically appear to reach a plateau and progress seems to be at a standstill. Sometimes we may even seem to dip down into a valley before again moving upward. It is good to pause at such times and be cognizant of the views from the plateau.

As we look back over the past twelve years, we see at first a fairly small group of individuals, mostly in Chicago, enthusiastically through personal contacts showing others the Urantia Book. The Brotherhood organization started to function. The various committees began to develop plans and instruments to utilize for their purposes. Constitutions and chartering procedures were devised; a school was organized and curricula and courses of study originated; fraternal relations with other religions were studied, and plans for disseminating the book and for the extension of our teachings were put into practice.

Today as we look back from the plateau we can see that, though we have progressed only a relatively short distance toward the peak of our objectives, we have actually come a considerable distance. Five functioning societies are in existence, many study groups are active, and a glance at the pins on the world map shows that there is world-wide distribution of our book. One translation into another language has been printed and several more are being considered. A number of leaders and teachers have been certified and ordained; the Brotherhood is functioning; there is a marked increase in the number of books sold, and the printing of the second edition is under way; even our index is moving toward completion at a good rate. Letters of appreciation for the book come in in greater and greater numbers. Yes, as we look back from our present plateau after twelve years, the view is not as encompassing as we would like it to be, but it is satisfying and beautiful.

Now we need to turn around and again face the peak and make plans for the next ascent toward our goal. There will still be more valleys of disappointment to cross, rough places will be encountered, decisions will have to be made as to the best route to select; some occasional storms may buffet us, the ascent may become steep with discouragements, and with some, the fatigue of declining interest may slow down the progress. But at all times, if we only look upward, the summit of the peak will progressively stand out more clearly and inspire us to renewed effort. All along the way we can be refreshed by drinking of the springs of the supernal words of life and inspiration from our amazing revelation that includes the words of truth and life of our Master Son. And we can become strengthened as we re-read the admonitions of the Solitary Messenger who was part of the revelatory corps:

"You could be so comforted and inspired, so enthralled and intrigued, if you would only allow the Adjuster constantly to bring forth the pictures of the real motive, the final aim and the eternal purpose of all this difficult uphill struggle with the commonplace problems of your present material world...Why do you not allow the Adjuster to strengthen you with the spiritual truths of cosmic power while you wrestle with the temporary difficulties of creature existence? Why do you not encourage the heavenly helper to cheer you with the clear vision of the eternal outlook of universal life as you gaze in perplexity at the problems of the passing hour? Why do you refuse to be enlightened and inspired by the universe viewpoint while you toil amidst the handicaps of time and flounder in the maze of uncertainties which beset your mortal life journey? Why not allow the Adjuster to spiritualize your thinking, even though your feet must tread the material paths of earthly endeavor?" (p.1223, ¶4,5)

We are all placed here with an immediate task to perform, and we can be privileged in leaving our imprint on this world even as we are developing a spiritual counterpart that will carry us to a more glorious life of enhanced service.

Realizing all this, we must let the desire to promote the prime purposes of the Urantia movement transcend all other motives. Any personal, circumscribed, or selfish interests must give way to whatever is best for the Brotherhood. Our consuming desire must be for the steady progress of the essential teachings of our Master Son as revealed in the Urantia Book.

To be leaders -- to be one of those who will help push Urantia over the brink into one of its most amazing and enthralling epochs of social readjustment, moral quickening, and spiritual enlightenment -- we need to dare to depend solely upon Jesus and his incomparable teachings.

We have many examples to inspire and guide us -- the versatility and steadfastness of Andrew, the persistent loyalty of Ruth and Rebecca, the ingenuity and dependability of David Zebedee, the zeal of Peter, and above all the cool courage of John, who calmly accompanied his Master into the very jaws of death.

We must develop a new breed of apostles through whom the world may see Jesus living again in the experience of these spirit-born mortals who effectively reveal the Master to all men.

"The call to the adventure of building a new and transformed human society by means of the spiritual rebirth of Jesus' brotherhood of the kingdom should thrill all who believe in him as men have not been stirred since the days when they walked about on earth as his companions in the flesh." (p.2084.6)

It is most likely that we will not see Jesus -- Michael -- until we reach Salvington. But we can experience this thrill as we respond to this call to this adventure -- the adventure of building a new and transformed human society by means of the spiritual rebirth of Jesus' brotherhood of the kingdom.

The revelators have admonished us: "Be not discouraged; human evolution is still in progress, and the revelation of God to the world in and through Jesus shall not fail."

May we do our part in bringing this to come to pass.