

## TOWARDS AN INTERNATIONAL URANTIA BROTHERHOOD

Since at least the time of the early Greeks some four thousand years ago, mankind has talked about a world-wide Brotherhood. There has been down through the years continuing theorization about the perfect society wherein mankind could live together in peace and harmony. Even today we hear numerous factions championing various ideologies as promising a solution to man's international social, economic and political dilemmas. Some of these ideologies promise a perfect world just around the corner.

Yet, in spite of all these ideas, what progress has been made toward this International Brotherhood?

Broadly speaking, our planet witnessed not too long ago the conclusion of the most devastating war in our planet's history. More recently, we saw the termination of a long and debilitating war in Southeast Asia, and currently there is war in Africa, continuing conflict in Southeast Asia, threatened war in the Mid-East and we live under the threat of total nuclear annihilation--and all of this on the mortal natal sphere of Joshua ben Joseph, Jesus of Nazareth: The Prince of Peace.

In considering the implications of the growth internationally of URANTIA Brotherhood, it is well to mention two major problems.

The first problem affecting the international scene is that of Nationalism.

The URANTIA Book tells us:

"War on Urantia will never end so long as nations cling to the illusive notions of unlimited national sovereignty. There are only two levels of relative sovereignty on an inhabited world: the spiritual free will of the individual mortal and the collective sovereignty of mankind as a whole. Between the level of the individual human being and the level of the total of mankind, all groupings and associations are relative, transitory, and of value only insofar as they enhance the welfare, well-being, and progress of the individual and the planetary grand total--man and mankind."  
(p.p. 1487-88)

and we also read:

"War is not man's great and terrible disease; war is a symptom, a result. The real disease is the virus of national sovereignty." (p. 1491)

The second problem, and in my view the more basic, is the concurrent materialism and secularism prevalent the world over.

Again The URANTIA Book:

"Materialism denies God, secularism simply ignores Him; at least that was the earlier attitude. More recently, secularism has assumed a more militant attitude, assuming to take the place of the religion whose totalitarian bondage it one time resisted. Twentieth-century secularism tends to affirm that man does not need God. But beware! this godless philosophy of human society will lead only to unrest, animosity, unhappiness, war and world-wide disaster."(p.2081)

"Without God, without religion, scientific secularism can never co-ordinate its forces, harmonize its divergent and rivalrous interests, races and nationalism. This secularistic human society, notwithstanding its unparalleled materialistic achievement, is slowly disintegrating. The chief cohesive force resisting this disintegration of antagonism is nationalism, and nationalism is the chief barrier to world peace. The inherent weakness of secularism is that it discards ethics and religion for politics and power. You simply cannot establish the brotherhood of man while ignoring or denying the fatherhood of God.

"Secular social and political optimism is an illusion. Without God, neither freedom and liberty, nor property and wealth will lead to peace." (p. 2082)

In anticipating and meeting these problems, it seems we can be most effective if we

1. Implement the rules for co-operation and co-ordination as are set out in the Constitution of URANTIA Brotherhood
2. Avoid losing sight of our high mission as a spiritualizing force on the planet.

Although URANTIA Brotherhood chanced to have its beginnings in the United States--even in Chicago; it desires truly to be international in its outlook. One of the most appealing things about URANTIA Brotherhood is that its Constitution provides for a federal system of organization, insuring relative autonomy in local affairs, including a high degree of religious liberty. This means that each society can be free in the conduct of its study

and local activities and still be confident that there is a mechanism for national and international co-operation and inter-association with other Societies whether they be in France, Belgium, Australia, Canada, the United States--even world-wide.

The URANTIA Book refers to the American Federal Union as an example of this bridging principle.

"To use an important nineteenth and twentieth century illustration: The forty-eight States of the American Federal Union have long enjoyed peace. They have no more wars among themselves. They have surrendered their sovereignty to the Federal government, and through the arbitrament of war, they have abandoned all claims to the delusion of self-determination. While each State regulates its internal affairs, it is not concerned with foreign relations, tariffs, immigration, military affairs, or interstate commerce. Neither do the individual States concern themselves with matters of citizenship. The forty-eight States suffer the ravages of war only when the Federal Government is in some way jeopardized.

"These forty-eight States, having abandoned the twin sophistries of sovereignty and self-determination, enjoy interstate peace and tranquility. So will the nations of Urantia begin to enjoy peace when they freely surrender their respective sovereignties into the hands of a global government--the sovereignty of the brotherhood of men. In this world state, the small nations will be as powerful as the great, even as the small state of Rhode Island has its two

senators in the American Congress just the same as the populous state of New York or the large state of Texas."

(p. 1489)

In addition to this federal principle of organization, another and important advantage is that the organizational burdens of URANTIA Brotherhood are light. Those who have had religious upbringing in a formal institution sometimes have difficulty in realizing that the URANTIA Brotherhood is interested in only those essentials of an organization which are necessary for the co-ordination of group function. Our principal purpose is not to rule or to serve an organization. Our principal organizational purpose is to serve in the wise world-wide dissemination of the teachings of The URANTIA Book--as free as possible from cultural bias.

Therefore, readers of The URANTIA Book from whatever country may strive to develop a group into a URANTIA Society--should they so wish--which will have equal constitutional dignity with any other URANTIA Society and which will give them the opportunity to work in international co-operation for the wise dissemination of the teachings of The URANTIA Book--and they may do so without fear of excessive organizational hierarchy and stifling creedal demands.

By implementing the plan of co-operation and co-ordination as established by Constitution of URANTIA Brotherhood, URANTIA Brotherhood may avail itself of the salutary "bridging" aspects inherent in the Federal principle without the necessity of over-organization and oppressive creedal requirements, encouraging the orderly transition from the spiritual free will of the individual to the collective spiritual experience of mankind as embodied in the genuine living organismal brotherhood of man.

Now, in working towards this genuine living brotherhood of man, we will save ourselves much misunderstanding if we make it apparent that URANTIA Brotherhood does not itself pretend to be that universal brotherhood of mankind as envisioned by the early Greeks, and certainly not the spiritual brotherhood of man spoken about so often in The URANTIA Book. There are undoubtedly many who have entered the spiritual kingdom of heaven who have never heard of URANTIA Brotherhood, much less The URANTIA Book.

On the other hand, one's membership in URANTIA Brotherhood is no guarantee of entrance into the spiritual kingdom of heaven--though we hope that some of the qualities of this true spiritual brotherhood will be reflected in the conduct of the affairs of URANTIA Brotherhood.

URANTIA Brotherhood is not exclusive but it is and should be exclusively dedicated to the spiritual uplift of mankind.

Our purposes are spiritual and not necessarily organizational. URANTIA Brotherhood is not interested in conquering the world as one might physically conquer new territories, but we are interested in inviting international co-operative union with those who personally share our beliefs in and commitment to the unadulterated teachings of The URANTIA Book and their certain promise for a better world of brotherhood.

Also, we should recognize that there may be those who share similar goals and purposes but who wish not to join URANTIA Brotherhood formally, retaining their own clear, distinct identity. There is no mandate, either social or spiritual, that they join URANTIA Brotherhood, and we would wish them well should they choose to go their own way. However, those who wish to work in concert with us are nevertheless as welcome as was David Zebedee and his corps of able workers who labored so efficiently and effectively for the

furtherance of Jesus' mission.

The URANTIA Book admonishes us:

"But in this brotherhood of Jesus there is no place for sectarian rivalry, group bitterness, nor assertions of moral superiority and spiritual infallibility." (p. 2085)

In turning to the second major international problem, that of materialism and secularism, we would do well to consider that Jesus avoided making economic and social pronouncements, and he avoided becoming involved in political entanglements. He remained ever dedicated to his objective of bringing God to man and man to God.

URANTIA Brotherhood--if it is effectively to deal with materialism and secularism--will remain ever free to pursue this same goal of bringing man to God and God to man, and helping towards that time when the teachings of Jesus will rule in the hearts of all mankind.

"Religion has little chance to function until the religious group becomes separated from all other groups--The social association of the spiritual membership of the Kingdom of heaven." (p. 1091)

"Any religious belief which is effective in spiritualizing the believer is certain to have powerful repercussions in the social life of such a religionist. Religious experience unfailingly yields the "fruits of the spirit" in the daily life of the spirit-led mortal." (p. 1091)

The URANTIA Book further states

"Jesus never intended to formulate economic theories; he well knew that each age must evolve its own remedies for existing troubles. And if Jesus were on earth today, living his life in the flesh, he would be a great disappointment to the majority of good men and women for the simple reason that he would not take sides in present-day political, social, or economic disputes. He would remain grandly aloof while teaching you how to perfect your inner spiritual life so as to render you manyfold more competent to attack the solution of your purely human problems.

"Jesus would make all men Godlike and then stand by sympathetically while these sons of God solve their own political, social and economic problems." (p. 1581)

In helping to bring about world peace, we can be most effective by not advocating any particular ideology, but by aiming for the sparking of a spiritual swakening among the peoples of the planet.

"Neither democracy nor any other political panacea will take the place of spiritual progress." (p. 2077)

URANTIA Brotherhood looks forward to crossing enumerable national and cultural boundaries where we can increasingly experience the satisfying joys of varied human association at ever higher levels while knowing the exhilaration of helping to lay the foundation of a new age of religion on this planet.



There are many potentials in The URANTIA Book for world-wide peace and a true world-wide brotherhood, a brotherhood supported upon a matrix of World Law administered through mankind government, guaranteeing social and economic justice to each, and nurtured by the stable expression of mutual and powerful love and trust as was so well exemplified in the life of Joshua ben Joseph; Jesus of Nazareth, who said:

"And no matter what blunders your fellow men make in their world management of today, in an age to come the gospel which I declare to you will rule this very world. The ultimate goal of human progress is the reverent recognition of the fatherhood of God and the loving materialization of the brotherhood of man." (p. 1608)

John

URANTIA BROTHERHOOD

INTRA-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

FROM Martin W. Myers DATE June 30, 1978  
TO Members of the International Fellowship Committee SUBJECT

cc: Carolyn Kendall, Conference Chairperson  
Dr. Meredith J. Sprunger, President  
John Hales, Resident Director ✓

RE: 1978 URANTIA Brotherhood General Conference

Enclosed is a draft of a statement which I plan to present at the opening of our meeting on Tuesday afternoon.

After the statement is given, it would seem appropriate to hear from those who have been involved in significant international activity. I would propose to ask the following to speak for 15 minutes on their international activity, especially things they think of significance in furthering the best interests of the URANTIA teachings--and how best to do it:

1. Julia Fenderson (Trip to Australia)
2. Henry Begemann (possibly having someone from Paris help him)
3. A Representative of The Family of God Foundation
4. Lavallee or Desjardins from Canada

Each could take 5 - 10 minutes to answer questions.

This should prove interesting to all and should be easily done. It would just fill our time allotment of 120 minutes (2 hours plus a thirty-minute break).

Let me know how you feel and any ideas you have.

If we need a meeting, it will have to be some evening and because of time problems, I'm wondering if we could do it before the 15th of July? (We can have a conference call for Anne and Eunice). We will want to give the participants ample time to prepare.

MWM:kfm

Encl.