



PRESIDENT  
URANTIA BROTHERHOOD (1955-1957)

533 DIVERSEY PARKWAY

CHICAGO 14, ILLINOIS

20 January 1958

Miss Marian T. Rowley,

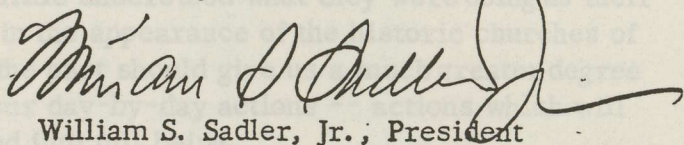
Secretary, Executive Committee

Dear Miss Rowley:

Attached is the President's Triennial Report (1955-1957) for presentation to the General Council at its regular annual meeting, the twenty-sixth of this month.

Sufficient copies have been provided so that each Councilor may have one.

Respectfully submitted,



William S. Sadler, Jr., President



## PRESIDENT'S TRIENNIAL REPORT (1955-1957)

### I. INTRODUCTION: THE FIRST THREE YEARS

This is the first Triennial Report to be made by the chief executive officer of Urantia Brotherhood to the chief legislative body of Urantia Brotherhood.

This report will attempt to review the accomplishments of the Brotherhood from its beginnings, some three years and a few weeks ago, to date. This is a historic period of considerable moment in the evolution of religion on this planet. Never before has a group of human beings organized themselves by deliberate action into a social vehicle for the promotion of religious truth. Previous religio-social organizations -- the churches -- have come into being more or less gradually and unintentionally; they were not founded with conscious intent and purposeful design. The churches came into being through the slow evolution of customs, precedents, traditions, rituals, and observances. This type of growth is in sharp contrast to that of the Brotherhood which suddenly came into existence when its Constitution was signed by thirty-six founders.

This Brotherhood was brought into being by a group of individuals who have (or should have) historic insight into the planetary significance of their actions. Because of this, the founders and administrators of the Brotherhood should be capable of showing a type of mature wisdom far surpassing that which has characterized the actions of any of their predecessors in the field of religion. Our predecessors little understood what they were doing as their day-by-day actions culminated in the appearance of the historic churches of Urantia. But our knowledge of the past should give us a much greater degree of insight into the meaning of our day-by-day actions -- actions which will eventually bring the Brotherhood into full being.

While we do have this advantage of having historical insight, still the founders and the administrators of the Brotherhood are a relatively untried group of people. As administrators of a social organization with a religious purpose, we are all amateurs. We are untried; we are lacking in experiential preparation for our respective tasks. Therefore have many of our efforts been characterized by fumbling and groping, and by that general trial-and-error method which is so inseparable from the acquisition of all bona fida job-knowledge in any field.



Our insight into what we are trying to do does not exempt us from the need to learn from experience. But this same insight should enable us to achieve a much more mature and truly sophisticated perspective for self-analysis -- for an objective and realistic appraisal of our efforts as a group.

For a group of unpaid amateurs, working on a part-time basis, we have not done badly. As compared to a group of professionals -- such as those who administer a well-run business organization -- our record is not such a happy one. Because we have had to learn our jobs as we went along, it has taken far too long to get things done. But we have made progress: The record of the first three years is not a bad one -- though it might have been much better.

It is the purpose of this report to attempt an appraisal of our efforts to date. This report will not attempt to be so kind as to obscure candor, and an effort will be made to associate optimism with realism.

## II. COMPLETION OF ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY

Like the supreme seraphim of local universe service, the Brotherhood has evolved from the top downward. Here again, we are unlike any of our predecessor groups. We started out with a written Constitution, the signing of which brought the Brotherhood into being. This was done some ten months before the publication of the Book and about a year and a half before the chartering of the first local society. Other religious groups have started with teachers and writings and have grown from there to embrace congregations which eventually possessed themselves of written constitutions, or the equivalent. In our case, the process was reversed: We started out with a Constitution at the top of the organization and have proceeded from there to build the understructure. Let us then take inventory of our progress in the completion of the construction of the administrative machinery of the Brotherhood.

1. The Constitution. We started out with our Constitution already in writing. While it is hardly a perfect document, it has proved to be workable. It will undoubtedly be amended in the future, but it should serve the Brotherhood effectively during the next six or more years.

2. The By-laws. These by-laws have been written and adopted and are now in effect. Like the Constitution, they are not perfect, but they have proved to be serviceable.



3. The Rules of the Executive Committee. These Rules are required by the Constitution. They supplement and amplify the by-laws in governing the affairs of the Brotherhood. Such Rules were recently adopted by the Executive Committee.

4. The Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee. These Procedure Rules are also required by the Constitution. They govern the internal practices of the Executive Committee. Such Procedure Rules were also recently adopted by the Executive Committee.

5. The Departmental Committee Rules. Late in 1957, each Departmental Committee adopted its own Rules of Procedure, as is required by the Constitution.

This completes the inventory of the administrative machinery that is required by the Constitution. All required administrative machinery has been brought into being during this first triennial period. The last item in our inventory is not required, but is permitted by the Constitution:

6. The Urantia Brotherhood Corporation. This Corporation was organized about a year and a half ago under the laws of the State of Illinois. It has served as the Fiscal Agent for the Brotherhood. It has also functioned as the sales agent for the Foundation.

### III. EFFECTIVENESS OF DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES

A very wise individual once said, "Comparisons are odious." Nevertheless, we must make comparisons if we are to make any kind of an estimate of the effectiveness of human performance.

It is not the purpose of this report to single out for comment either specific individuals or individual groups. It is, however, within the scope of this report to attempt a comparison between three general levels of performance on the part of the Departmental Committees. This report elects to classify performance in the three following categories: unchallenged, unresponsive, and relatively effective. Let us consider these categories one by one:



1. Unchallenged performance. Some of the Departmental Committees simply have had very little to do. What little they have had to do has been done quite well. But, in the absence of much of any challenge, it is not possible to evaluate the effectiveness of performance.
2. Unresponsive performance. Other Departmental Committees, while encountering little in the way of specific challenges, still could have shown more initiative. They could have undertaken certain work and could have established certain liaisons which, at the very minimum, would have been highly educational to the Departmental Committee itself. The performance of these Committees could well be characterized as "unresponsive."
3. Relatively effective performance. Still other Committees have come up against the challenge of a considerable number of problems. For the most part, they have performed in a relatively effective manner. By thus responding to the challenge of problems, these Committees have grown in experience and have tended to surpass their colleagues in the attainment of administrative skills.

All-in-all, the effectiveness of the Departmental Committees is about what might be expected from a group of earnest amateurs, all of whom are working without compensation and in their spare time.

#### IV. LIAISONS ESTABLISHED WITH URANTIA FOUNDATION

While there is no organic connection between the Foundation and the Brotherhood, there are certain relationships of a functional nature that are obviously desirable. During this first triennial period, two such functional relationships were formally entered into with the Foundation:

1. Physical Custody of the Book. By joint action on the part of the Foundation and the Brotherhood, certain individuals were designated as "Joint Custodians of the Urantia Book Functioning on Behalf of Urantia Foundation and Urantia Brotherhood." This physical custody relates to Books not in the possession of the printer. These Joint Custodians of the Urantia Book have functioned very efficiently from early October of 1955 to date.



2. Sales Agency for the Book. When the Brotherhood Corporation had been organized, it entered into a relationship with the Foundation whereby it serves as the active sales agency for the Book. Since the establishment of this relationship, all sales have been made through the Corporation and all profits from such sales accrue to the Brotherhood through the Corporation. (The Foundation is presently operating on a "breakeven basis" as concerns the sale of the Book.) It presently appears possible that the Foundation may, in the future, request the Brotherhood Corporation to act for it in the sales of still further publications.

## V. DEVELOPMENT OF EFFICIENCY (AND LACK OF IT)

Quite a little space in this report should be devoted to a discussion of the development of organization efficiency -- and the lack of it. Perhaps this subject can best be discussed under four general headings:

1. The problem of the sincere amateur. Sincerity may well unlock the doors of the kingdom of heaven, but it is efficiency that gets things done down here on earth. There are two interesting proverbs that might be quoted at this point: "Many hands make light the work." and "Too many cooks spoil the broth." The first proverb usually proves true when the "many hands" are also skilled hands. The second proverb is all too often true when the "too many cooks" are unskilled amateurs. The volunteer worker is a most welcome individual -- if he will only take time to learn his job. Otherwise, he often costs more in time than he contributes to the venture.

2. The problem of the impatient professional. Certain individuals have been able to bring their personal skills and their vocational experience to bear on the problems of the Brotherhood. In this sense, they are "professionals" and stand in contrast to the "amateurs" we have been talking about. This bringing together of the professionals and the amateurs has been (and will continue to be) a somewhat trying experience for both. Each tends to frustrate the other. The amateur is often offended by what appears to be cock-sureness on the part of the professional; the professional all too often becomes impatient when he observes the fumbling approach of the amateur. The impatient professional is then quite apt to overstep propriety in the interests of getting something done. This action produces two results: The job gets done and the amateur's feelings get hurt. What is called for in this situation is a greater humility on the part of the amateur and a greater patience on the part of the professional. In time, the coercive education of experience will diminish the number of amateurs, will increase the number



of professionals, and will tend to minimize this problem. But this problem is inherent in a self-governing organization whose elected administrators will not always have professional competence to bring to their responsibilities.

3. Transitional-adjustment problems. Still other problems arise because this is the first triennial period in the history of the Brotherhood and the Brotherhood, itself, arose out of an older social group. This older social group had its own traditions, and such administrative traditions are considerably older than the Constitution of the Brotherhood. Now, the Brotherhood is a self-governing body, but the preceding social group was not. This means that the administrative customs of the older social group will be at considerable variance with the administrative procedures set forth in the Constitution of the Brotherhood. It is usually somewhat difficult for human beings to change long-established habits, and so, for a little while, we are bound to encounter transitional problems -- problems arising because of the conflict between the administrative customs long operating in a social group that was not self-governing and the administrative procedures set forth in the Constitution and By-laws of the Brotherhood, which is a self-governing social group. Time, in association with patience and tolerance, will ameliorate and eventually remove this problem.

4. Positional values in a system. Until the nine men on a baseball team really know where they are supposed to be in all expected situations, they just simply are not a team -- they do not know their positions on the playing field. The Papers express this idea as follows: "In aggregations parts are added; in systems parts are arranged. Systems are significant because of organization -- positional values. In a good system all factors are in ... position. In a bad system something is either missing or displaced -- deranged." (p. 1227, ¶9) Now, in theory, the Brotherhood is an organization -- a system. And the function of each administrator in the Brotherhood, in a sense, is his "positional value" within the system which is the organization of the Brotherhood. But, while in theory the Brotherhood is a system, in actuality we started out as a mere aggregation of people and each one of us has had to learn his "positional value" within the system. This "positional value" is defined by the Brotherhood Constitution and its supporting documents. When each one of us has learned to function in and from his defined position, then we will have a good system, a well-organized and efficiently administered Brotherhood. Until this lesson has been well-learned, the Brotherhood will be, at least in part, a "bad system" because one or more of us is out of position, "displaced -- deranged."



## VI. POSSIBLE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

The Brotherhood Constitution is non-amendable until after the convening of the first Triennial Delegate Assembly -- some six years from now. Nevertheless, it is the intent of this report to make record of certain suggestions which may possibly receive consideration at some future date. The following suggestions are accordingly recorded:

1. Term of office in a local society. The Constitution requires that the officers of a local society "... shall be elected annually ...". It would appear that this places a valueless restriction on the autonomy of a local society. It is recommended that this section be liberalized so that such officers may be elected for a term of one, two, or three years -- as the local society desires.

2. Geography and the General Council. As the Constitution is now worded, membership in the General Council is a prerequisite to holding office as an officer of the Brotherhood or as a chairman of a Departmental Committee. At the present time, there are five such officers and nine such chairmen; this adds up to a total of fourteen out of the thirty-six members of the General Council. In addition to this, the Constitution requires that one additional member of each Departmental Committee also be a member of the General Council. Since a Brotherhood officer may also be a member of a Departmental Committee, this provision could call for as few as four additional Councilors, or as many as nine. We have here a spread ranging from a low of fourteen-plus-four to a high of fourteen-plus-nine. In other words, at least eighteen, and as many as, twenty-three, members of the General Council are required to be active in the administration of the affairs of the Brotherhood. Now, as we are presently constituted, this requirement presents no pressing problem because we started out with General Councilors who were almost all resident in the Chicago area. But, what are we to do when the General Council is an elected council and when there are around a dozen societies in the Chicago area and more than a hundred societies that are situated elsewhere? We can hardly expect the Triennial Delegates to hand pick a General Council of Chicagoans. And, if they do not do this very thing, how are we to function? Already we have encountered a tendency for members of Departmental Committees to resign when they move away from Chicago. Suppose that even half of the General Council (eighteen members) are resident remote from Chicago, how is the Brotherhood to be administered? It is accordingly recommended that the prerequisite of Council membership be eliminated as concerns membership in, and chairmanship of, Departmental Committees. This would mean that only the five officers of the Brotherhood would have to be members of the General Council.



3. Term of office of Departmental Chairmen. Some consideration should be given to staggering the terms of office of the chairmen of the Departmental Committees so that all nine chairmen do not come up for election at the same time. As matters now stand, there could be a possible complete turnover of the personnel of the Executive Committee each six years. This does not make for good administrative continuity.

## VII. A BROTHERHOOD -- NOT A CHURCH OR A SECT

"What is the Urantia Brotherhood? Another sect?" This question has been put to the writer of this report more than once. To this question, a negative answer has always been given, "No, the Urantia Brotherhood is neither a church nor a sect. It is simply a social group which has a religious objective."

There is a real place in modern civilization for a group of religious people who are "... willing to completely divest themselves of all ecclesiastical authority and fully surrender all concept of spiritual sovereignty. God alone is spiritual sovereign." (p. 1487, ¶1) The modern world hardly needs another church, another sect. At the present time, we suffer from a plethora of churches and a multiplication of sects.

But, if we are not a church, how then do we differ from a church? If we can clearly see how we differ, then perchance we can maintain such differences. And, if we can maintain these differences, then we may be able to preserve our organization as a distinctive Brotherhood; we may be able to avoid a possible evolution in the direction of a church.

Well, right on the face of it, there are three main differences between the Brotherhood and a typical church: We claim no spiritual sovereignty; we claim no exclusive path to salvation; we claim no ecclesiastical authority. So long as we do not claim these things we can hardly become a church.

But, even if we are not a church, even if we never become a church, is it also true that we are not a sect? A Urantian could be a sectarian religionist; he could be a religionist who is primarily dedicated to the propagation of the Urantia Book. Would such a dedication, however, be a valid dedication -- in the light of what we all know? The writer submits that such a dedication is not valid as a primary dedication. Such an exaltation of a most worthy secondary dedication to primary status could well transform a religious Urantian into a sectarian Urantian -- a Urantian who has allowed the



importance of the Urantia Book to take precedence over the importance of God.

How then can we, as Urantians, avoid not only churchification but also sectarianization? The writer believes that both of these unfortunate developments can be avoided if we are careful in distinguishing between Means and Ends. This is another way of saying that we should be careful not to confuse our Secondary loyalties and our Primary loyalties. The writer would accordingly submit for the careful consideration of the Brotherhood the following philosophy of action:

1. God is the only true End. Our primary spiritual loyalty and dedication is to the Universal Father, and to Him alone. When we encounter some spiritually hungry brother, our first objective is to bring him closer to his spiritual Father. This we may attempt with, or without, the Book. All other things are secondary and subordinate to the acquisition of this one "pearl of great price" -- the realization of sonship with God.
2. The Urantia Book as a Means to the End. The Book itself is not an End -- it is a most important Means to an End. It is designed to bring God closer to man and to bring man closer to God. We may minister to our spiritually hungry brothers with or without the aid of the Urantia Book. But, if the Book ever becomes mandatory in our ministry, then have we truly become sectarian. Our primary objective, as Urantians, is the service of God, and the Book is an important Means to that great End. Here we should make a vital distinction between that which is value and that which has value.
3. The Urantia Brotherhood as a Means to the End. Neither is the Urantia Brotherhood, nor membership in it, a true End. The real function of the Brotherhood is also the function of a Means to accomplish a desired End. The structure of the Brotherhood is to the spiritual experiences of its members as the river banks are to a river; it is true that no river can be had without its banks -- but neither should the banks be confused with the flowing river. 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 always subordinate Means to the true End, then we shall continue for a very long time as a real Brotherhood. And we shall avoid becoming merely another church or another sect in the world of the twentieth century -- a world which needs neither a new church nor a new sect.



## A PERSONAL POSTSCRIPT

It has been a real honor to have had the privilege of serving as the first chief administrative officer of the Urantia Brotherhood. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my official and administrative associates of the past three years. We have all participated in the beginning of something which may play an increasing part in the promotion of peace on earth and good will among men. And may we never forget that this peace and this good will can come only as the fruit of man's spirit-born realization that he is truly a child of the Universal Father and that each one of his fellow men here on earth is also a child of that same Universal Father.