

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF FOUNDERS OF URANTIA SOCIETIES

The responsibilities of founders of Urantia Societies are two-fold: legal and moral. The legal aspect consists of setting up the organization of the society --devising and adopting a constitution and/or by-laws, carefully observing the regulations for local societies specified in the Brotherhood constitution. These regulations are conveniently listed in a paper so entitled--one of the several items contained in this envelope. Another enclosure is the sample local constitution, offered by the Charter Committee as a pattern, which should be helpful. It would be well to come to an agreement on the provisions of the constitution before the installation ceremony, so that immediately afterward it could be adopted and signed, and officers and committees be selected. A copy of the constitution adopted should be sent to the Secretary-General for the Brotherhood files.

Because the government of a Urantia Society is autonomous--in fact, very much on its own, once a charter is granted--it is important that the beginning activities of the new society should point straight toward the purposes of the Brotherhood, and not veer off on a tangent toward some cult or ism, which might seek undue influence within the group. For this reason the Charter and Executive Committees have made the standards of admission for founders more strict than standards of admission for later members. Founders must be dependable, tried and true Urantians, not mere investigators or uncertain truth-seekers. Founders have to be relied upon to set the society on a well organized and carefully charted course.

When the machinery of the society is functioning, the immediate and legal responsibilities of the founders will have been fulfilled. But they still have a very real moral duty: namely, to encourage, plan, and promote the study program. Since founders are more thoroughly acquainted with the Urantia Book, they will naturally be expected to take the leadership in this matter. The chief activity, by far the major effort, of any Urantia Society will be its study and discussion groups. To these meetings, all who are interested, all sincere truth-seekers, should be welcomed. They need not be initiated members of the society in order to attend the study sessions. The doors of these meetings should be wide open to all who wish to come. As these friends and visitors become more deeply interested, and come to appreciate the truth of the Urantia teachings, they may wish to identify themselves with the group, and may qualify for membership according to the very simple and easy standards of admission.

Business meetings of the society will be few and far between. Only admitted members, of course, can attend these meetings, where organizational matters are voted upon and officers and delegates elected. Business meetings are vitally important, but it is the study group enterprise that will require the great proportion of a society's time and effort, once the structure is set up and operating. It is the missionary program, the "dissemination of the teachings of the Urantia Book," that constitutes the thrilling challenge before all Urantia Societies, for they are, literally, outposts on the frontiers of religious enlightenment. Toward this central purpose of the Brotherhood, it is the moral responsibility of the founders to contribute a promising beginning.

CHARTER COMMITTEE

11/11/56