

OCT 3 1977

MEMORANDUM

URANTIA

TO: Committee on Education and Conferees

Sept. 29, 1977

FROM: Duane L. Faw

SUBJECT: Comments on the purpose, goals and content of the Workshops to be held in connection with the 1978 Conference

The Workshops should be tailored to help implement the Education function of the URANTIA Brotherhood. I am not clear as to how Brotherhood policies are determined or promulgated. My first comments are directed to the policy-making arm of the Brotherhood, whether the General Council, the Executive Committee or (for Education policy) the Education Committee.

If the URANTIA Book is the Fifth Epochal Revelation, it will not be very epochal or revelatory if we sit on it. This is not to suggest that now is an appropriate time for evangelical or missionary zeal, or for any other form of "promotion" of the Book. Rather, it points to a two-step program: first, to make the URANTIA Book available to those who are led by the Angels to look for it instead of playing hide-and-seek as we have in the past; and second, for those who have been spiritually aroused by the Book, to facilitate their quest for deeper understanding by providing appropriate study opportunities and study aids.

The Education Committee is not primarily concerned with the dissemination of the URANTIA Book. But it does have the duty to help the readers of the Book to learn from it. This entails both the teaching function and the preparation of study aids for all modes of learning.

The obvious danger is that whomever prepares the study aids will incorporate in them views which are dogmatic or doctrinaire and thereby may inadvertently create a body of "Brotherhood" views as to the meanings of the URANTIA Book teachings. I certainly share this concern. This is a possibility. But is it a probability? And what is the alternative?

If we can borrow an example from the Christian religion, the most dogmatic and doctrinaire sects within Christendom are those which refuse to accept any outside assistance in "interpreting" (synonym: understanding) the Bible. On the other hand, the most flexible and liberal sects are those using a wide spectrum of opinions in study material. Thus the threat of narrowness, dogma and doctrine seems more "probable" if we refuse to share our divergent views and insights into the teachings of the URANTIA Book than if we do share them!

Frankly, it makes as much sense to stifle the use of the entire spectrum of study aids to the URANTIA Book for fear that we will create a system of dogma, doctrine and ritual as it would to abolish the use of the wheel for fear people would forget how to walk.

Therefore, I recommend the adoption of the following POLICIES with respect to Education:

1. The URANTIA Book Study Group (unstructured) is the primary mechanism of the Brotherhood for teaching interested individuals the truths of the URANTIA Book. The major thrust of Brotherhood Educational activities will be to promote and support such study groups.
2. The Brotherhood will charter affiliate bodies (Societies, Area Councils, etc.) as appropriate, and will encourage and support periodic meetings at which educational activities are conducted as determined by the local bodies.
3. The Brotherhood will encourage and support periodic Area Conferences (State, Regional, etc.) by affiliated groups at which Educational Programs and Workshops are an integral part of the agenda.
4. The Brotherhood will, from time to time but not more often than once a year, conduct a National Conference at which Educational Programs and Workshops will be an integral part of the agenda.
5. The Brotherhood will encourage the production and dissemination of study aids for the URANTIA Book, and may, on appropriate occasions, participate in the distribution of such study aids. Under no circumstances will the Brotherhood endorse the accuracy, authenticity, orthodoxy or efficacy of any study aid or material, and its encouragement or distribution of such material does not signify such endorsement. The Brotherhood will refrain from encouraging and/or distributing any material considered adverse to the best interest of the Brotherhood for any reason. Study aids to be encouraged include, but are not limited to:

indexes
concordances
harmonies
dictionaries
glossaries
topical study outlines
work books

6. The Brotherhood will encourage the production and dissemination of scholarly writings concerning teachings found in the URANTIA Book. Under no circumstances will the Brotherhood endorse any particular view or interpretation of any teaching of the URANTIA Book, and its encouragement or distribution of any scholarly writing shall not be interpreted as a concurrence in the views expressed. The writings will be represented as the views of the author, and not of the Brotherhood, for consideration by the reader, and not as a final answer.
7. The Brotherhood will encourage the presentation of talks, speeches, lectures, etc., whether or not accompanied by slides

charts, posters, handouts, etc., concerning the teachings of the URANTIA Book at appropriate gatherings. Such encouragement and promotion shall not be construed as an endorsement of the views expressed nor of the accuracy of the material presented. The Brotherhood may, however, limit its support to presentations at appropriate times and places.

8. The Brotherhood will encourage and support all forms of art (painting, drawing, photography, music, dance, poetry, literature, etc.) reflecting or depicting teachings of the URANTIA Book. Such encouragement and support shall not signify any endorsement of, or concurrence in, the concepts communicated by the art form.
9. The Brotherhood will encourage and support in-depth studies of teachings of the URANTIA Book. The purpose shall not be to determine an orthodox view or to reconcile conflicting views, but rather to qualify individuals to discover new and deeper meanings in the Book, to answer serious questions by reference to significant passages of the Book, and to assist serious students of the URANTIA Book--from beginners to scholars--in their study of the Book.
10. The Brotherhood will facilitate the collection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of all forms of material that ~~is~~, or may be, useful in the study of the URANTIA Book and its teachings by individuals, study groups, classes, conferences, etc. This may take the form of a library or libraries, either by the Brotherhood or its affiliate organization, or both. It may also take the form of distributing information about the study materials available.

In support of the adoption of these particular policies (or similar ones) the key to success lies in the broadness of the educational materials supported rather than to the narrowness of them. If the Brotherhood supports educational materials which have been closely screened and censored for "accuracy" with URANTIA Book teachings, and does not support any others, the practical effect of such selective support is to create an orthodox body of material which becomes the dogma and doctrine of the Brotherhood. It can only avoid this result by following one of two other courses of action. It can support NO educational material, or it can support a spectrum of educational material, passing it on for what it is: the author's views for the readers' consideration. It goes without saying that the Brotherhood should do something in the Education area. The broad support outlined in the ten policies listed above will help the truth-seekers find meanings and values for themselves without telling them there is a Brotherhood theology they should accept.

Assuming a policy mandate along broad lines as suggested above, I suggest the following purposes of the Workshops:

1. To familiarize Brotherhood members and friends with the new Educational Policies of the Brotherhood, and of the Education Committee's plans to implement it.
2. To set up a special workshop to plan the Education Committee's role and activities in the immediate future (two years).
3. To train teachers to implement the policies of the Brotherhood,

with objectives and goals following generally those outlined by Chuck Burton in his paper dated 9/77 and the general content as outlined by Lynne Kulieke in her memorandum of September 13, 1977.

To summarize my views concerning the importance of religious education, I see religion as being composed of two elements: first, information; and second, personal commitment. Of these, the most important for eternity is personal commitment. But commitment to what? To that which one knows about religion! The most important element for the progress of religion, generically, is education. It is the only means by which people can become committed to the truth instead of to some misconception.

Believing that the URANTIA Book teachings contain the truth for our day, and that it is the will of the Father that His children know the truth, it follows that a commitment to the Father's will is a commitment to assist our Brothers and Sisters who are seeking to learn the truth. This we can do by education.