

November 14, 1973

Mr. Mo. Siegel
702 $\frac{1}{2}$ Spruce Street
Boulder, Colorado - 80302

Dear Mo:

Your profound concern for URANTIA Brotherhood is heartening, and your suggestions are refreshing in their intellectual and spiritual vitality.

You have said it well: "URANTIA Brotherhood is . . . a spiritual brotherhood of God-knowing people," and it is our privilege and our "duty . . . to foster personal relationships between man and the Heavenly Father."

As a brotherhood we are united in our common dedication to seek the Father's will, to do the Father's will. And while religion is the personal relationship between man and God, a spiritual brotherhood is the personal relationship and fellowship among God-knowing men. The URANTIA movement is not a religion, but it will enhance and deepen religious faith everywhere, and will slowly and surely upstep religious perception throughout the world.

There is occasional confusion about this difference in the minds of those who perceive the revelation more in intellectual than in spiritual terms. The result of such an intellectualized approach is to fall into the trap of spiritual indifference--reading the book, joining study groups, using the right buzzwords, but without yielding to the wonderful transformation that comes to all who truly seek it. Because some may comprehend the teachings only at mind level, without seeking the experience of sonship, they may feel they have--by the mere possession of a book--everything they need. The whole point of the revelation is that it must take root in your daily life.

On page 1488 (par. 1) we are taught: "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 in so far as they enhance the welfare, well-being, and progress of the individual and the planetary grand total--man and mankind."

You mention three dangers to the movement:

- o Failure to recognize the proper difference between social and spiritual matters;
- o Failure to foster originality by overstandardizing; and
- o Failure to understand the difference between primary and secondary loyalties.

To the extent that any of these failures might begin to materialize within the URANTIA movement, we would be faced with a significant problem. Nothing within my present knowledge gives me cause for concern, however. But as I look ahead into the more distant future, I recognize the need to be ever vigilant about these things. As the Constitution of URANTIA Brotherhood has been so wisely drawn, the possibility of these dangers becoming real has been much lessened.

Berkeley's excellent analysis of the growth patterns of Societies provides us with some perspective in the matter of size; it may be that there are inherent tendencies for groups to re-cluster into more comfortable sizes when they grow too large. I would like to see more experience in the evolution of societies before we would have a sound basis for making changes in their composition. I am sympathetic to your suggestion about the greater teaching effectiveness of small groups, only I am not yet convinced that size must be--or should be--legislated. I favor the fewest possible number of regulations.

On the matter of Societies vs. Study Groups, I perceive several differences which are fundamental:

- o A URANTIA Society is an official part of the skeletal structure of the URANTIA movement; as such, it represents the movement in its area. A study group does not bear this responsibility to the same degree.
- o A Society is obliged to aid in the financial support of the URANTIA organization. A study group may or may not do this, but there is no formal obligation.
- o The fundamental task of a Society is to start strong Study Groups. In general, because Societies are enduring entities, this is accomplished in a better and more practical way by Societies than by Study Groups; Study Groups do not have this formal obligation.

The question of the relationship of Societies to Study Groups is by no means fully resolved, however. Discussions about this are still underway here, and will continue for some time to come.

The mission of URANTIA Brotherhood is defined in Article 2 of the Constitution; and it is a positive and progressive mission of disseminating the URANTIA revelation. There may be subsidiary purposes, but Article 2 is the source of my concept of our overall purpose.

Societies are chartered under the Constitution with the deliberate intent of creating strong semi-autonomous local organizations which can foster, in turn, strong leadership, originality, and continuing vitality in carrying out the purposes of the Brotherhood.

You suggested that we must move ahead with a clear perception of the goals we are moving toward. The process of establishing these goals is now underway. The enclosed memo is addressed to all who are a formal part of the URANTIA organization, but I am also sending copies to leaders of a number of study groups and asking the participation of their groups as well.

These actions will meet the spirit of your suggestion that we pause to examine our directions before proceeding.

Your proposal to limit societies to a maximum of 30 members each will be considered as one of the goals we are examining in Executive Committee sessions. Your proposal regarding a regional administration is a bit ahead of its time. Right now we are preoccupied with a host of matters which will long precede consideration of the merit of a regional structure.

Keep in mind that the General Council of URANTIA Brotherhood is not a representative body and, as growth continues, could not be. I do not personally believe that we should be concerned with "representation" in a political sense. Rather, I believe the General Council should be composed of the wisest and most spiritually advanced URANTIANS on the planet, whatever their origin, race, or place of residence. In this way, the Council will always be "representative" not of our momentary political concerns, but of our highest concepts of the leadings of the Father's will.

If this is not enough--if after all our attempts to live the teachings in the outworking of the Brotherhood--we still conclude that we need a "lower house" to deal with the matter of "political" representation, this will be an issue we should withhold until a later time in our evolution.

Throughout the revelation, I find it helpful to recall, we are taught that the book is not enough; it is only a starting point, a threshold. The important thing is that separate and apart from the study of the book, each must seek communion with the Father and lose himself in loving service to his fellow man.

I appreciate your thoughtful criticism and believe that we must continue to be disciplined by this. I ask you to bear with us as we proceed, as we organize our activities for a new phase of URANTIA growth that is now beginning.

Next summer I hope to meet you personally; but if you head this way in the meantime, please give me a call. There are more dimensions of the questions you have raised that we can talk about. (My home phone is 312-251-2948; wife's name is Mary.)

Warmest regards.

Paul Snider, President
URANTIA Brotherhood

PS:ms
c.c.: Miss Berkeley Elliot
14 S.W. 97th Street
Oklahoma City, Okla. - 43139