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C File U.F. Brotherhood-Foundation Relationships

March 26, 1977

Mrs. Carolyn Kendall
1400 W. Salvington Place
Wheeling, IL 60090

Dear Carolyn:

Thank you for your letter expressing concern over Brotherhood-Foundation relationships. I hope that the interaction between the Foundation and the Brotherhood can always be warm, understanding, and cooperative. In any human relationship there will always be differences in opinion and judgment. This is why group discussions and decisions are so important.

I firmly believe that the Foundation supports the activities and goals of the Brotherhood and that the Brotherhood supports the activities and goals of the Foundation. With each new activity and each new situation or problem, however, it is quite possible that the Foundation might wish to make suggestions to the Brotherhood or that the Brotherhood might wish to make suggestions to the Foundation. In each new situation group decisions need to be made.

We must be particularly aware of the dangers of the extremists on either side of issues. At present I have on my desk a letter from Peter Holley of Boston, Virginia, which quotes The URANTIA Book to condemn virtually everything the Foundation is doing. He says, "It is Luciferian to assume such authority over one's brethren." And he goes on and on. Obviously, the copyright, trademark, and service marks should be protected. But the zealots on the other side of this question can also thwart the divine purposes of The URANTIA Book and movement. To them I would say, "Remember, The URANTIA Book was made for man, not man for The URANTIA Book." Our unseen superiors liked the formulations of the uncompromising Abner but they wisely worked with the more free wheeling Paul. The uncompromising legal formulations of the Foundation lawyers might be beautiful in their legal perfection but they could also undermine the spiritual purposes of those who are overseeing the URANTIA movement. I believe it is possible to retard spiritual progress on our planet by either extreme positions. Certainly we should protect the copyright and marks by legal means, but I cannot believe that our unseen friends would approve of using unethical means to do so. In the case of the Oklahoma Society, we should not require them to say they did not do things which, in fact, they did do. Remember the final court is not a legal one on this planet but a spiritual one at a higher level.

All of this illustrates the danger of extreme and uncompromising positions on either side of the question. We have enough of both legal and libertine counsel. What is needed is divine counsel and wisdom. Here, again, group wisdom is of paramount importance. We should not urge uniformity of thinking on this or any other matter. After issues are clarified through open and vigorous discussion and a group decision is made, then we can have unity in carrying out the group will.

As you know, I have repeatedly asked the Foundation to issue guidelines for study groups and societies regarding the protection of copyright and marks. Until this is done my personal advice is to use your best knowledge and judgment regarding this matter. I think their primary concern should be ministering to spiritually hungry souls and not in legal ramifications which often aren't even clear to Foundation Trustees. When they get these guidelines, then they will have clear guidance to follow.

The Oklahoma Society addressed their answer to the Foundation letter to the Brotherhood because they were instructed to do so. I clarified ~~this~~ with Tom. The Brotherhood can chastize (if necessary) their children better than can the Foundation. Information and general communication can go directly between societies and the Foundation. But in all disputes between societies and the Foundation, the Executive Committee of the Brotherhood - and ultimately the General Council - should mediate between the society and the Foundation. If and when the Foundation formulates a revised Confirmatory Agreement, it should come to the Executive Committee. We will negotiate with the Foundation regarding any suggested changes, and then we will submit it to the Societies. I thought this procedure was clear and acceptable to everybody. If it is not, it should be clarified by the Executive Committee.

There is no question but that the Foundation has primacy regarding the copyright, trademark, and service marks; in all other things concerning government and control within the Brotherhood, the Brotherhood has primacy. But I think this is a senseless argument. Our relationship should be cooperative and mutually supportive. Ought we not stop thinking and saying that the Oklahoma Society or the Foundation is not working or negotiating in good faith. We need to learn to trust one another and work as brethren rather than adversaries. The Brotherhood and the Foundation have the same human foibles exhibited by every other human organization. We need humility, divine guidance, love, and wisdom to keep us working harmoniously.

Carolyn, I appreciate your letter. You speak to basic issues and raise important questions. I certainly make enough mistakes to keep me humble! As you say, I do have a tendency to bring in "the other side" of issues. I think I also have a tendency to protect the "underdog" and to defend against authoritarianism and dogmatism - even among Executive Committee members and Foundation trustees! This is why I need my friends and co-workers to keep me from the danger of my own natural tendencies. This is also why I have a profound faith in group wisdom.

It may sound strange, Carolyn, but I really believe that this issue of the

Confirmatory Agreement between the Oklahoma Society and the Foundation is a healthy experience and one which will result in both wisdom and good to the Brotherhood and the Foundation.

Thank you for your help and your understanding. We look forward to seeing you next week.

Cordially,

Meredith J. Sprunger

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