

August 2, 1989

Mr. David N. Ewers
Urantia Brotherhood
533 Diversey Parkway
Chicago, ILL 60614

Dear David and Executive Committee members,

I am writing in response to the Executive Committee letter dated July 21, 1989, sent to the Trustees of URANTIA Foundation in which concerns about the leadership style of the Foundation President were discussed. The letter describes certain behavior patterns of Martin Myers, the ramifications of which included the recent resignation of three Foundation Trustees.

The accusations are certainly serious. Since they deal with a man's character and personal nature, I feel the content, attitude, and intent of your letter are questionable, especially for members of a Jesus-centered fellowship. Your statements reflect subjective points of view and are not necessarily representative of the entire group. I question if they are factual.

In this letter I do not wish to discuss the justification for criticism, whether the accusations are true, or untrue, or the wisdom of interfering in the internal affairs of a separate corporate body. The purpose of my letter is to examine the most effective way the feelings of injustice or differences are best handled.

I go to the URANTIA Book, itself, for conclusions. These approaches are superior, and describe the attitude Jesus, himself, would advocate and promote among us at this critical time. I call your attention to the beautiful Ordination Sermon on pages 1570- 1571 of the URANTIA BOOK.

In his sermon, Jesus points out to the apostles, "Now that you are ambassadors of my Father's kingdom, you have thereby become a class of men separate and distinct from all other men on earth. You are not now as men among men, but as the enlightened citizens of another and heavenly country among the ignorant creatures of this dark world. . . . Of the teacher, more is expected than of the pupil; of the master more is exacted than of the servant. "

He further instructed his apostles in this sermon, "Do not forcibly resist injustice; put not your trust in the arm of the flesh. If your neighbor smites you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. Be willing to suffer injustice rather than to go to law among yourselves. In kindness and with mercy minister to all who are in distress and in need. . . . Discern

the truth clearly; live the righteous life fearlessly; and so shall you be my apostles and my Father's ambassadors. . . . If you would guide others into the kingdom, you must yourselves walk in the clear light of living truth."

The URANTIA Book, tells of a time when the two apostolic groups of Jesus and John the Baptist worked together at the Gilboa camp. For three weeks these 24 men were in session three times a day for 6 days of the week. Andrew and Abner alternated in presiding over these joint sessions. They had many problems to solve and numerous difficulties over different ways of doing things. They wanted Jesus to lead the discussions. He told them (1624-1625):

"I am concerned only with your personal and purely religious problems. I am the representative of the Father to the individual, not to the group. If you are in personal difficulty in your relations with God, come to me, and I will hear you and counsel you in the solution of your problem. But when you enter upon the coordination of divergent human interpretations of religious questions and upon the socialization of religion, you are destined to solve all such problems by your own decisions."

Jesus then left the apostles for two weeks to work out their own difficulties, and we are given some description of how they did this:

"And this is the story of the first attempt of Jesus' followers to coordinate divergent efforts, compose differences of opinion, organize group undertakings, legislate on outward observances, and socialize religious practices.

"Many other minor matters were considered and their solutions unanimously agreed upon. These twenty-four men had a truly remarkable experience these two weeks when they were compelled to face problems and compose difficulties without Jesus. They learned to differ, to debate, to contend, to pray, and to compromise, and throughout it all remain sympathetic with the other person's viewpoint and to maintain some degree of tolerance for his honest opinions.

". . . On the afternoon of their final discussion of financial questions, Jesus returned, heard of their deliberations, listened to their decisions, and said, 'These then, are your conclusions, and I shall help you each to carry out the spirit of your united decisions.'"

It seems to me the key to solving differences involves a manner of trust, tolerance, and "sympathy for another person's viewpoint", whatever it is. This requires time, listening, and spiritual effort. It is interesting that when the apostles were united in their decisions, Jesus agreed to help them carry out their plans. Jesus knew it would not be easy for the men to

stick to the plan, and he agreed to help each individually.

We can choose to put down each other's styles and viewpoints and not get anywhere except into a pattern of discontent and disharmony. I advocate continuing to work at problems in the spirit of fraternal tolerance, which would exclude personal faultfinding and labeling.

The URANTIA teachings also point out the vast resources we have today, since Pentecost. We are told, "Mankind is subject to the double influence of the sevenfold appeal of the universe influences", including the last of the spirit endowment, the Spirit of Truth, designed to aid in the ascending search for God. (2062)

How does this effect each one of us who strive to be examples of living truth, those who seek to serve in the best way we know how?

Paper 194, page 2064, highlights benefits of the Spirit of Truth bestowal:

"Pentecost, with its spiritual endowments, was designed forever to loose the religion of the Master from all dependence upon physical force; the teachers of this new religion are now equipped with spiritual weapons. They are to go out to conquer the world with unfailing forgiveness, matchless good will, and abounding love. They are equipped to overcome evil with good, to vanquish hate by love, to destroy fear with a courageous and living faith in truth. ...

"Pentecost endowed mortal man with the power to forgive personal injuries, to keep sweet in the face of the gravest injustice and unmoved in the face of appalling danger, and to challenge the evils of hate and anger by the fearless acts of love and forbearance. . . .

"Pentecost was the call to spiritual unity among gospel believers. When the spirit descended on the disciples at Jerusalem, the same thing happened in Philadelphia, Alexandria, and all places where true believers dwelt. It was literally true that 'there was but one heart and soul among the multitude of believers.' The religion of Jesus is the most powerful unifying influence the world has ever known."

After almost 2000 years it is time we take advantage of this leading. Let us look to the Spirit of Truth to unify all of us who seek to follow and teach the message of the Master.

To conclude, "Pentecost was designed to lessen the self-assertiveness of individuals, groups, nations, and races. It is

the spirit of self-assertiveness which so increases in tension that it periodically breaks loose in destructive wars. Mankind can be unified only by the spiritual approach, and the Spirit of Truth is a world influence which is universal."

The new religion the URANTIA Book speaks of is based on faith, hope, and love.

Personally, I have FAITH that problems involving individual style and expression will be viewed in a tolerant, forgiving way. I HOPE that differences will be solved intelligently in a spirit of harmony. And finally, that we can learn to LOVE those with whom we disagree as much as we love those we find agreeable.

I propose that the special meeting called for September be used to find paths for constructive mending and healing that will move us towards unity and peace. It will take humility, correctness of intent, and courage to overlook grievances. Unless the purpose of this meeting is one of peace and progress, I suggest that it be cancelled.

In the spirit of soul searching, prayer, and common concern,

Polly Friedman

Polly Friedman
General Councilor

Note: Underlines and caps in the references are my own.

cc: Trustees of the URANTIA Foundation
Former Trustees, and General Councilors