

Springer

DATE: June, 1983

Dear John,
Thank
you for the copy of your letter to Rev. Jim Boyter. He attended
the Atlanta
Conference, as did Rev. Frank Coker, and at talked with him for
some time.
It sounds like he intends to start a Church among both Kille and U.R.
as scripture. I pointed out the problems involved. See your own list

A study of all of the viable social and religious movements of history shows that they start by contacting, educating, and organizing individuals into small groups in local communities. The URANTIA movement, therefore, can expect to become a transforming force in our society only through the leavening influence of thousands of study groups in local communities throughout the country and world. I personally am not afraid of any reactions which might be precipitated by mass media publicity. I simply am interested in lasting results and believe that, at best, advertising has only a peripheral contribution to make in establishing a solid grass roots foundation for the URANTIA movement. But, more importantly, we should not allow this issue to push us beyond officially establishing what the majority consider to be a wise policy into a position of setting up "dogmatic prohibitions" regarding outreach ministry or anything else.

It seems that religious institutions always have their pet dogmas. For fundamentalists it is the blood atonement doctrine; for mainline churches it is liberal social, economic, and political policies; for URANTIA Brotherhood it is the advertising policy. When rational arguments do not convince members of these institutions, leaders strive to make them feel guilty. Implications are made questioning their loyalty; strong emphasis is placed on unity when they actually mean uniformity in obedience to the key doctrine or policy; and finally they usually imply that anyone disagreeing with them is out of harmony with the will of God.

For one who has spent his entire life intimately associated with the church which has repeatedly committed the errors of dogmatism, authoritarianism, and coercion, it is sad to see URANTIA Brotherhood on the threshold of falling into the same evil institutional trap. Those who would associate themselves with the religion of the spirit should have nothing to do with it.

For years I have been perplexed at the fear and anxiety exhibited by many leaders of URANTIA Brotherhood. Are we afraid to trust our future in the hands of the God of truth, whose sons and daughters we are? Certainly there are uncertain and troublous times ahead; but let us not allow our fears to push us into the error of authoritarianism, dogmatism, and coercion with their guilt and loyalty manipulations.

It is our responsibility to formulate and communicate wise policies and allow our fellowmen to accept or reject them of their own free will. It is our responsibility to actualize these policies in all official activities of the Brotherhood; but it is not our responsibility to enforce these policies in the unofficial activities of Brotherhood members or students of The URANTIA Book. Even if we should attempt to do so, it will fail.

A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

- I. URANTIA Brotherhood should be governed by the majority decisions of its members. All official activities and all activities sponsored or promoted by the Brotherhood should be harmonious with these decisions of the majority.
- II. Majority and minority opinions should be presented as effectively and persuasively as possible; but no attempt should be made by the majority or minority to use authoritarian or coercive methods to get members of the Brotherhood to conform to their philosophy or actions.
- III. It is proper for the majority or the minority to privately or publically disagree with the philosophy and/or actions of individuals and/or groups.
- IV. It is wise to permit great freedom of thought and action within the membership of the Brotherhood. Minorities should hesitate to withdraw from the Brotherhood simply because they disagree with the philosophy and/or actions of the majority and should probably not do so unless it prevents being loyal to higher personal spiritual guidance. Majorities should hesitate to remove individuals from Brotherhood membership and probably should not do so unless the philosophy and/or actions of such individuals is inimical to the basic purposes and values of the Brotherhood and their continued membership seriously threatens the future welfare of the Brotherhood.
- V. In facing the issue of public ministry all of these principles may be severely tested. Evolutionary readiness for Fifth Level ministry will be differently interpreted. Although it is probably wise at this point in time to advise people to use Fourth Level approaches in public ministry and low key, private ministry in Fifth Level outreach, some people will arrive at a position where they believe this limited approach is both unwise and contrary to their highest spiritual guidance. We must allow these people to follow their authentic spiritual guidance and highest wisdom. We cannot prevent such public ministry even if we tried; we can either co-operate with it or disassociate ourselves from it.
- VI. We should not use scare tactics; but we must be realistic. This public ministry will cause opposition and bring confrontation. We must face it with as much love, courage, and wisdom as possible. Since there are those whose spiritual guidance and highest wisdom leads them to engage in public ministry, it is much better for us to creatively anticipate the problems associated with public ministry than to engage in various styles of avoidance behavior.
- VII. We are now at a period in the URANTIA movement when we can expect public involvement. Various people, some of whom we have never heard of, will start different kinds of public ministry. Some will start congregations using The URANTIA Book as scripture. Others will engage in various kinds of mass media outreach projects. Although we should strive to advise and guide these people according to our best wisdom, the social dynamics of history demonstrate that such public involvement will come. It may begin in this decade.

We should prepare ourselves, psychologically, for any eventuality. It is generally assumed that we live in a day when physical persecution for religious convictions is past; however, it is impossible to predict how fanatics may react. Therefore, we must be psychologically and spiritually prepared for whatever may happen. This could be a time of testing and many of the half-hearted and the fearful will turn away. We need to face the future not with fearful timidity or by trying to avoid the inevitable cost of discipleship but meet it with equanimity, confidence, and courage.