



URANTIA BROTHERHOOD  
533 DIVERSEY PARKWAY CHICAGO ILLINOIS 60614

GENERAL COUNCIL LETTER  
July, 1986

TO: Members of URANTIA Brotherhood

On the weekend of June 28-29, 1986, the members of the General Council of URANTIA Brotherhood gathered at Lake Forest College for the annual Council meeting. This meeting followed with a day's rest the Summer Seminar on Part II of The URANTIA Book hosted by the Education Committee with evening programs developed by Fraternal Relations. To provide some perspective on this meeting, you might find the following of interest:

- \*Of the 35 Councilors who attended the meeting, 14 hail from the Chicago area; 21 needed to utilize air travel to attend.
- \*Based on an estimated average air fare of \$300.00, plus the meal/room cost of \$59.00, and including an estimate of about \$30.00 for each of the area Councilors for meals and travel, this meeting represented a contribution to the work of the Brotherhood of \$8,000.00. This money is really a small portion of the "quiet" funding which each member of the Brotherhood donates to our work which never finds its way into our annual budget, and which is not funded by the donations sent in by all of us each year.
- \*The meeting ran from 9:00am Saturday through 9:30pm with minimal meal breaks and from 9:00am through 11:45am on Sunday.
- \*This is the fourth meeting of the General Council in the last 12 months. We have met in Chicago (June 29-30, 1986), in New Haven, Missouri (retreat program November 9-11, 1985), in Orlando, Florida (DesignShop Meeting April 18-20, 1986), and again in Chicago this June, 1986. This level of activity and expenditure reflects quite dramatically the degree of commitment and dedication on the part of each of these General Councilors and is no doubt reflective of the rest of the membership of our community of readers.
- \*Scott Forsythe remarked that two of our Council Members, Marian Rowley and Bill Hales, have served continuously since the very first meeting of the General Council in 1955.

SUMMARY OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

What follows is my best effort to summarize for your information, comment, and follow-up the various items discussed, decisions reached, and thinking shared during our meeting. The order of this summary is essentially the same as in the meeting itself, and was based upon an agenda sent to each Councilor in draft several weeks before the meeting.

1. After the call to order, a reading from The URANTIA Book with a moment of silent prayer, the reading of the minutes from the June 29-30, 1985 meeting of the General Council, and approval of the meeting agenda, the Secretary gave the Census Report on membership in URANTIA Brotherhood (as of 12/31/85):

Society Members	775	
Members at Large	<u>219</u>	
Total URANTIA Brotherhood Members		994

2. Election of General Councilor. In order to fill the two-year vacancy in the General Council resulting from Martin Myers' resignation, an election was held among the following candidates nominated from the floor (and which included candidates suggested by at least two Societies): Avi Dogim, Dorothy Elder, Debbie Foster, Neil Francey, Marvin Gawryn, Don Guimond, Nancy Johnson, and Marjorie Reed. After the election process, it was declared that Marjorie Reed was elected to fill the vacancy.

3. Election of Committee Members. At each annual meeting of the General Council there is an election held to fill at least the expiring term of one of the six members of each of the Departmental Committees of URANTIA Brotherhood (as well as any vacancies created by resignations). Those persons elected this year to the standing committees were:

Judicial Committee	Ellen Montgomery	6 year term
	David Owen	3 year term
Charter Committee	Tom Choquette	6 year term
Fraternal Relations	Richard Bain	6 year term
	Scott Forsythe	1 year term
Domestic Extension	Michael Challis	6 year term
International Fellowship	Neil Francey	6 year term
Education	Ralph Zehr	6 year term
Publications	Nancy Johnson	6 year term
Finance	Marta Elders	6 year term
Special Projects	Daniel Glazer	6 year term

4. Discussion of reports from officers, departmental chairpersons, and field representatives. These reports were largely accepted as submitted. If any member has any questions concerning activities for this past year or plans for the coming year, please address them to the respective committee chair or appropriate officer.

5. Status of amendment to change the names/functions of four departmental committees. The recommendation of the Executive Committee to table this proposed amendment for further consideration was accepted by the Council based upon the desire of the committees to more carefully consider the implications of such a change. Further consideration by the Council will await the next annual meeting.

6. Library gift book placement program. The Chairman reported that all of the 1,200 books given us by the Foundation for the library program have been placed by Vin Myers, who has been untiring in his placement activity this year. In addition, the books budgeted to committee programs this fiscal year for libraries will have been placed before year-end by Brotherhood members throughout the country. Consequently, it was the consensus of the General Council that the Chairman, in conjunction with the Executive Committee, should work out the details of a two-part library placement proposal to the Foundation. This proposal would involve an immediate request for 1,000 additional free books for placement this year to be followed by a longer-term mechanism for the purchase of additional books from the upcoming ninth and subsequent printings of The URANTIA Book on an incremental direct cost basis using either capital funds or ongoing donation activity. The intent of this proposal will be to insure the continuation of this valuable seed-planting activity in a way which would enable the members of the Brotherhood to assume a greater share of the financial responsibility for this program as a service opportunity.

7. Reports on status of 1985 TDA Resolutions:

a. Citation Standards. Dan Massey formally presented the written report he and his committee prepared on this subject. It was accepted with praise for its depth, quality, and completeness. It was agreed that an article in the Bulletin and possibly a pamphlet would be utilized as methods to bring this information to our reader community and encourage the use of these standards.

b. Resources Guide to Supplementary Material is the revised name being utilized by Special Projects for the resource guide which will help readers become aware of the secondary materials available throughout our community.

c. Book Distribution. Harry McMullan reported that evaluation of this subject was delayed due to the extensive changes in our office organization. This subject will be taken up more completely both in the central office and by the DesignTeam working in this area (see below).

d. Improved Communications. Dave Elders commented that for various reasons many of the Societies were unable to send copies of the Executive Committee Letter to each member. Accordingly, the General Council agreed that the central office will henceforth mail this communication to all Brotherhood members. **SOCIETIES PLEASE TAKE NOTE.** Councilors were generally quite positive about the improvement in communications overall (the Bulletin has helped considerably in this area) and felt that members in the field appreciated the information.

e. Brotherhood history resolution. There is considerable disagreement about the worthwhileness of this project. After much discussion, it was agreed that at minimum the Special Projects committee should more precisely define the objectives, value, and cost of alternative ways to undertake the preparation of a history of our Brotherhood (including the hiring of a professional archivist) and to report back to the Executive Committee, then to the Council, with a specific proposal to proceed or table for future consideration.

f. Standardized Nominee Biographies. Dave Elders reported that the preparation of these for this election was a very time-consuming and frustrating experience which did not turn out so well since the data submitted for each nominee was quite different. It was proposed and the Council agreed that the standardized form drawn up some years ago would be used from now on and would be distributed as submitted in advance of the elections.

g. Book Pricing Resolution. Reduction of the price of The URANTIA Book is another subject which has generated much healthy and mature differences of opinion. Frank Sgaraglino was charged last year with developing a plan for reducing the book price to \$20.00. After solicitation of the points of view of each General Councilor on the subject and pulling together all the pertinent cost detail, Frank presented the plan, which called for the need to raise approximately \$400,000 above current fund-raising levels over four years to provide the necessary subsidies to reduce the price to this level (additional subsidies would be needed after four years to retain the book price at the lower level). After much discussion pro and con, it was agreed that we needed to further evaluate this possible price reduction to better define current and future production/distribution costs, the impact of price reduction on our retail trade, the ability of price reduction to generate increased sales, etc. Accordingly, the Design-Team on marketing (see below) will undertake the development of a test plan to be presented back to the Council for review and decision in January, 1987. A straw vote to determine Council commitment to the development by January, 1987 of a test plan for implementation was strongly in favor of this course of action. One further note: Doug Fraser suggested that any evaluation of pricing take into account the substantial inequities in pricing internationally--e.g., the relationship of retail price to per capita income in this country versus other countries may point to the desirability of variable pricing (possibly the U.S. price could be used to subsidize prices in other countries).

8. 1987 General Conference. Marilyn Kulieke reported that plans were proceeding steadily. The conference theme: "Our relationship with God: Personal Transformation and Its Power to Transform the World" was decided upon at a conference advisory committee meeting of over 30 representatives from societies and study groups internationally. The conference will be held at Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine beginning August 2, 1987.

9. DesignTeam Program. The General Council agreed to participate in the next stage of program planning and development as proposed by the Chair. Councilors volunteered to serve on DesignTeams whose task is to develop action plans for review at a January, 1987 meeting of members of the General Council with a target for implementation of plans approved during

the months following. The plans will include consideration of available resources (people and money), appropriateness for current evolutionary development, co-ordination with other DesignTeam programs and Brotherhood Departmental committee programs/resources, and involvement of people throughout our reading community. The DesignTeams are:

- a. Study Group Development: Harry McMullan, Michael Painter, Polly Friedman, Lew Clark, Steve Dreier
- b. Programs, Services, and Resources: Tom Allen, Lynne Kulieke, John Hay, Marilynn Kulieke, Nancy Grimsley, Gloriann Harris
- c. Book sales, marketing, distribution: Charles Burton, John Hales, Larry Mullins, Bill Hazen, Doug Fraser, Mo Siegel
- d. Personal and Spiritual Component in our Work: Steve Law, Helena Sprague, Jim McNelly, John Andrews, Marjorie Reed, Virginia Kuenster
- e. Communications Design: Jim Jarnagin, Dan Massey, Duane Faw, Paul Snider, Marian Rowley
- f. Internationalization: Frank Sgaraglino, Tom Kendall, Gene Joyce, Phil Rolnick, Peter Laurence, Scott Forsythe, Berkeley Elliott

The chair will act in a co-ordinating and communications role.

10. The General Council unanimously approved the award to Helen Carlson of a Citation recognizing her many years of dedicated service to the work of URANTIA Brotherhood. Such award will be presented to Helen this fall.

11. Stocking the Concordex. The chair reported that printing of the revised Concordex has just been completed and that our (Brotherhood's) decision to implement the Executive Committee's stated intention to act as a sales agent for the Concordex must await the Foundation's review of the volume. Comments during the meeting were suggestive of a healthy divergence of opinion on the appropriateness of acting in a sales agent capacity and included, for your edification:

-the Brotherhood is currently proceeding in a direction to facilitate but not produce and distribute secondary or derivative works; selling the Concordex would run counter to this approach, which was designed to insure that readers could obtain these works but that they would not in any way be endorsed by the Brotherhood as "official."

-we have always carried the Concordex; shouldn't we continue to do so as a service to our reader community?

-as long as we help our readership obtain the works and study aids they would like, is it important that we (the Brotherhood centrally) actually act as a sales agent? In other words, isn't it most important that the Brotherhood, in its facilitating and coordinating capacity, insures that the work gets done, and not necessarily always do it centrally?

-the Concordex is an extremely useful, non-interpretive study aid and as such should be included in those genre of works sold by the Brotherhood at the central office.

12. Standards/guidelines for appearances before non-reader groups. This issue elicited much discussion since it seems to be at the heart of a desire to increase outreach but in a way which is both responsible and responsive to group consensus and policies on publicity. Councilor opinions ranged from establishment of an actual teaching and accreditation procedure to qualify "official" spokespersons to the setting of general guidelines expressive of a policy that any one who appears before any group represents only him/herself, and that there is no official interpreter for The URANTIA Book or "official spokesperson" for URANTIA Brotherhood. It was agreed that two committees--Fraternal Relations and Domestic Extension--review this question with an objective of making specific proposals to the General Council at its meeting in August, 1987, with an interim report to the Executive Committee before that date.

13. Status of Spanish Translation. Mike Painter, project co-ordinator, and Doug Fraser, translation team, reported on the status of translation work. Euramerica has produced a glossary and has translated the Foreword and the first ten papers. Doug Fraser commented that the translation is very good and will work to improve the editing controls.

14. Other business:

a. Larry Mullins suggested that consideration be given to inviting persons from other countries to attend General Council meetings as observers. In discussion, this idea was broadened to include ways to better involve readers in other countries in organizational activities. This idea will be considered by the DesignTeam working on Internationalization.

b. Lynne Kulieke noted that we need increased staffing at the office and requested that anyone interested in applying for the available positions or who knows of any interested party should contact Gloriann Harris or have interested persons do so.

c. Jim McNelly suggested the acquisition of an 800 number for use by the Brotherhood. This will be evaluated by the DesignTeam on communications.

d. John Hay reported that the Brotherhood is obtaining Master Card and Visa capabilities and that the Finance Committee will work with the office to plan the process of implementation and announcement.

e. Scott Forsythe suggested that consideration be given to encouraging the societies to increase intercommunication to discuss matters of mutual concern and to share experience, much like the conclave held several years ago. Domestic Extension will undertake this project.

f. John Hay requested the Councilors' comments on the degree to which we should become more aggressive in fund-raising. It was agreed that the Executive Committee will take up this discussion in September.

g. The General Council agreed with a suggestion that the Executive Committee review the organization's name, especially in the context of its meaning to those readers in other countries.

h. Harry McMullan proposed, and the Council agreed, that the Executive Committee be charged with the responsibility of developing and implementing a more efficient voting procedure for all elections.

i. John Hales reported that The URANTIA Book is 16th on the Ingram Book Co. best seller listing of theological titles.

j. John Hales, Tom Allen, and Berkeley Elliott shared slides and personal observations of their trip to the Pacific region in June. They made many new friends, deepened relationships with old friends, attended a conference in Australia, and helped stimulate interest in enhanced communication and possible pan-Pacific Basin conference activity.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING FOLLOWING COUNCIL MEETING

There was an Executive Committee meeting immediately following the General Council meeting summarized above. The main purpose of the meeting was to confirm assignments of tasks given by the Council, most of which were noted above. Additional matters not included above follow:

1. Berkeley Elliott recommended and the Executive Committee agreed to appoint Emmanuel Lou of Tahiti as a Field Representative of URANTIA Brotherhood for a period of six years effective immediately. His specific tasks, as an official representative of URANTIA Brotherhood in the South Pacific, shall be to foster communications among readers and stimulate study group activity.

2. Marilyn Kulieke reported that Carol Forsythe wanted to resign from the Special Projects Committee. This resignation was accepted and, at the request of Marilyn, Cece Forrester was appointed to fill the balance of the one-year term created by this resignation.

3. Dan Massey surfaced for committee discussion the many obstacles to the timely translation of the Bulletin into other languages (most immediately into French). Since it was the consensus of the Executive Committee that we need to find a way to do this, Publications will review alternatives and make a specific proposal to the Executive Committee.

#### SUMMARY

This letter, I hope, will give you a fairly complete view of the issues discussed and the actions taken at both the General Council and Executive Committee meetings held the weekend of June 28-29, 1986. Though not a product of these meetings, there is an important announcement from URANTIA Foundation which we would like to pass along to you. At its meeting of July 20, 1986, Frank Sgaraglino was elected a Trustee of URANTIA Foundation filling the one remaining vacancy. Frank is one of the most dedicated and able members of URANTIA Brotherhood and, in his new position, will help to further evolve the important working relationship between our two organizations as we move more aggressively in weaving this revelation into planetary consciousness. In closing, I would like to pass along a reminder which was voiced at the close of our Council meeting: it is worthwhile to remember that this is the Father's revelation, not ours, and we are indeed privileged to be able to serve its outworking during our short stay on this planet of our birth.

In deepest fellowship,

David Elders, President