
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
GENERAL COUNCIL OF URANTIA BROTHERHOOD
September 16-17, 1989

A special meeting of the General Council of URANTIA Brotherhood was convened at 2:05 P.M., September 16, 1989 at the O'Hare Plaza Hotel, Chicago, Illinois.

The following members were present, constituting a quorum: Thomas S. Allen, Robert Bruyn, Brent St. Denis, Avi Dogim, Stephen Dreier, David N. Elders, Berkeley Elliott, Lucile Faw, Anthony R. Finstad, Scott M. Forsythe, Polly Friedman, John W. Hales, John D. Hay, Bill Hazen, Janice C. Heinberg, Harry McMullan III, Gard Jameson, James G. Johnston, Thomas A. Kendall, Lynne B. Kulieke, Marilynn J. Kulieke, John L. Lange, Peter Laurence, Eileen Laurence, Ronald Steve Law, Leonard D. Massey, James McNelly, Larry Mullins, Michael A. Painter, David Robertson, Philip Rolnick, Mo Siegel, Paul Snider, Melissa Wells.

Douglas Fraser was absent. James Mills, a past President of URANTIA Brotherhood, was present for the entire meeting. Former URANTIA Foundation Trustees, Gloriann Harris, Frank Sgaraglino, and Helena Sprague were present for the Saturday evening portion of the meeting. Gloriann Harris, Director, Office Operations was present at the Sunday portion of the meeting.

The meeting was called to order by the President, David Elders. He appointed Lynne Kulieke to act as Secretary pending the election of a new Secretary required as a result of the resignation of Janice Heinberg.

The Chairman indicated that the first order of business would be the election of a Secretary. He reported that the Executive Committee was recommending nominees Melissa Wells and Brent St. Denis. He asked for any additional nominations. There being none, the nominations were closed and he requested the nominees leave the room during discussions to precede the election and appointed Peter Laurence and Mike Painter to act as tellers.

Upon completion of the balloting the tellers reported the results. Brent St. Denis was declared elected for a term as Secretary until the next election of officers to be held at the 1991 annual meeting.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to recess for informal discussion.

Dave Elders provided an overview of events leading up to the need for this special meeting. Critical items included the resignations of URANTIA Foundation Trustees' Gloriann Harris, Frank Sgaraglino, and Helena Sprague, and subsequent emergency meeting of the Executive Committee on July 17 which

resulted in a letter to the Foundation stating in the clearest of terms that all was not well in the relationship between URANTIA Brotherhood and the Foundation. Dave Elders expressed his hope that the General Council would, by resolution, express its confidence in the Executive Committee's action and, more importantly, put the July 17 action behind us in a search for appropriate direction for URANTIA Brotherhood.

It was proposed that Saturday afternoon be spent examining recent events in greater detail to be followed Saturday evening in session with the three resigned Trustees. Sunday would be spent examining the values which the General Council felt should exemplify URANTIA Brotherhood decision-making and action. Deliberations would conclude with a set of resolutions intended to express the General Council's view for the future.

In the detailed and wide-ranging series of questions and open discussion which followed during the Saturday afternoon session the following are the highlights:

- URANTIA Brotherhood's complicity in creating the state of affairs between URANTIA Brotherhood and URANTIA Foundation was thoroughly reviewed. There was a sense that URANTIA Brotherhood was partly to blame by having allowed matters to go unresolved for so long, for allowing fear to reign and for buying into the idea of special status for certain individuals.
- Members of the Executive Committee explained their own interpretation of the July 17 resolution to write to URANTIA Foundation. It was apparent from their descriptions that the Executive Committee, and by extension URANTIA Brotherhood, had come to the conclusion that URANTIA Foundation by its approach to the relationship to our two organizations had effectively handcuffed URANTIA Brotherhood. The frustration of Executive Committee members coupled with their sense of responsibility to the revelation led them to act decisively and firmly. While it may appear that personalities were being targeted it was emphasized that it was the relationship that was being questioned, not the person. The relationship was becoming progressively less productive.
- There was a general feeling that, notwithstanding the difficulties of the last months and years in URANTIA Brotherhood's relationship with URANTIA Foundation, we should learn from the experience and "move ahead." We should agree on the traits, values, attitudes, and motivations which must guide us and make our decisions with faith and not with the fear which so often misguided us in the past.
- There was considerable discussion and speculation concerning the use and merits of "messages" allegedly provided to the Foundation since 1955. Along with this were suggestions that the burden of being responsible for the revelation had been assumed by a single Trustee. These concerns coupled with interpersonal difficulties led to increasingly awkward and difficult communications between URANTIA Brotherhood and URANTIA Foundation.
- In response to queries about the extent of the working relationship between URANTIA Brotherhood and URANTIA Foundation it was pointed out that the two were integrally interlocked as evidenced by a

common heritage, shared facilities and staff, contractual agreements and a common purpose. It was obvious, however, that URANTIA Brotherhood had attributed more value to URANTIA Foundation's place in the relationship than its own, thereby depriving itself of growth opportunities. The relationship would no doubt continue to exist but at a higher level. To the readership the two are seen as one which has denied URANTIA Brotherhood the space to grow.

- It seemed clear to the General Council that no elite group nor single individual could be indispensable to the proper sharing of The URANTIA Book throughout the planet. Allowing our organizational structures to permit this to happen would place the burden of default on us.

- Seen retrospectively, the events of 1989 may prove to have been the opportunity URANTIA Brotherhood needed to fulfill the independent role originally envisioned. Had the historical relationship between URANTIA Brotherhood and URANTIA Foundation been better, URANTIA Foundation may have long ago set URANTIA Brotherhood free to find the full potential of its purpose. What was not accomplished in a more productive relationship will be accomplished anyway.

- While hope was expressed that the new Board of URANTIA Foundation Trustees might be able to rectify past difficulties it was generally felt that URANTIA Brotherhood must move ahead regardless. In this way, both may find cause for a renewed relationship at a higher level.

- Accountability was deemed to be of critical importance. URANTIA Brotherhood is accountable for accomplishing its purposes and while not accountable for URANTIA Foundation's affairs, it is to the extent it supports URANTIA Foundation both financially and otherwise. It was pointed out that URANTIA Foundation repeatedly refused to disclose its financial affairs in spite of joint fundraising with URANTIA Brotherhood. It would be irresponsible for URANTIA Brotherhood to continue this situation.

- Instances were cited in which URANTIA Foundation had undertaken activities clearly within URANTIA Brotherhood's mandate. This only adds to the confusion already created by URANTIA Foundation's efforts to seemingly control URANTIA Brotherhood by force of edict or law. The willingness to work together was not apparent on the Foundation's part.

- Dave Elders was requested to describe his relationship with Martin Myers for the benefit of all General Councilors. He said he held no ill will toward Martin. Dave felt the July 17 meeting was a "justice forum" attempting to deal with relationships and not personalities. He avoided judgment at the spiritual level; nonetheless, he felt he could not maintain an honorable relationship with Martin because every disagreement with him was deemed to be a personal attack or act of disloyalty.

- It appeared from the comments of General Councilors, especially those on the Executive Committee, that "fear of consequences" was being replaced by a "fear of failure to meet our charge."

The Chairman recessed the meeting for dinner at 5:30 P.M. and resumed in informal session at 7:35 P.M.

For this session the General Councilors were given the opportunity to ask questions of former Trustees, Gloriann Harris, Frank Sgaraglino, and Helena Sprague, along with former Foundation staff, Scott Forsythe and Mike Painter. (It was pointed out that Gloriann Harris had resigned in the previous week as a Foundation staff member). Each of the five, at sometime during the discussion which followed, indicated their desire to maintain Foundation confidences. Each was willing to share their personal views on matters helpful to URANTIA Brotherhood without compromising their obligations.

The main points covered may be summarized as follows:

- The three former Trustees were unanimous in their view that Martin Myers' leadership style was not appropriate for the Foundation. They variously felt that Martin Myers should be removed as Board Chairman or completely as a Trustee. A removal vote by three Trustees was required for the former, a removal vote by four Trustees for the latter.
- In response to questions concerning their efforts to resolve the Foundation's management difficulties, the former Trustees discussed an ad hoc committee plan of early '89 developed by Trustees Caston, Sgaraglino, and Harris which would have addressed the problems. While early hopes for success were high they were dashed when Martin Myers expressed his lack of trust in URANTIA Brotherhood. Frank Sgaraglino's and Gloriann Harris' final resolve to resign was made concomitant with the loss of confidence in the ad hoc plan. Helena Sprague's reasons for resigning were based more on a long-term inability to work with Martin. All stayed on until the Center for Urantia Book Synergy (CUBS) suit was settled in June to ensure URANTIA Foundation Board stability. The ad hoc plan was based on partnership and mutual trust.
- On balance, all three former Trustees felt that, in spite of the risk to both organizations created by their action, the most good could be derived. "The risk was worth it." They expressed the view that URANTIA Foundation and URANTIA Brotherhood have separate destinies: "One is not superior to the other, they are complementary." They said they had tried to make it work.
- The former Trustees were questioned on their knowledge concerning the existence and use of "messages" and "mandates" as management tools. Their replies suggested the possible use of same in URANTIA Foundation's leadership, but they discounted their existence as fact. Concerning management and leadership style they confirmed reliance on verbal abuse, manipulation, isolation, mistrust, and anger. The latter, in combination with a "chosen person" syndrome, exclusivity, secretiveness, inability to delegate, and inadequate teamwork, resulted in a dysfunctional board unable to respond to pressing issues. They expressed little hope that, under current conditions, URANTIA Brotherhood could improve its relationship with URANTIA Foundation.

Scott Forsythe and Mike Painter each reviewed their letters of resignation from the employ of URANTIA Foundation.

Following the open question and answer session, the General Council turned to the merits of, and authority for, the Executive Committee's July decision and letter to URANTIA Foundation. Dave Elders exhorted the council to focus on the spirit of the Executive Committee's action as it looked ahead to resolving the bigger issue which is URANTIA Brotherhood's future.

There was general agreement that the Executive Committee had authority to act in the emergency which faced both organizations. While the Executive Committee's letter to URANTIA Foundation apparently placed URANTIA Brotherhood in jeopardy their action was taken in good faith having regard for the best interests of URANTIA Brotherhood and the movement at large.

The Executive Committee sought the General Council's ratification as a vote of confidence so that all Councilors could share in the search for a new direction. There was considerable lively debate concerning the need for unanimity, the tone of the July letter, and the Executive Committee's procedure in making such a decision.

It was agreed to defer any decision on ratification until the Sunday session due to the lateness of the hour.

The Chairman recessed the meeting at 11:30 P.M.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting in informal session at 9:15 A.M., Sunday, September 17 , 1989.

Dave Elders suggested that before pursuing the Executive Committee's request for ratification of the July 17 decision, the General Council consider possible future actions for URANTIA Brotherhood. By straw vote it was agreed to spend until 11:00 A.M. "brainstorming" the set of values desired in URANTIA Brotherhood's decision-making and actions. This was an exercise undertaken by the Executive Committee earlier that weekend.

The following list was produced by the General Council in a free-wheeling session during which an attempt was made to identify undesirable and desirable values which would guide our organization:

Values Rejected Values Accepted

-secrecy -accountability, openness, disclosure, communicating -fear -faith -mistrust -trust, confidence - exclusivity -inclusivity -control, manipulation -coordinating, democratic process, networking -isolation - social interaction -disrespect -respect -"chosen people" attitude -humility, service oriented -ownership - stewardship -anger, intolerance -caring, expressing needs, tolerance, respect -secular legalism -spiritual cooperation -focus on organization, -focus on individual, organization as organization as end means to an end -tyranny, unearned authority, -dependence on God, responsibility to man authoritarianism, ecclesiastic authority, dependence on fear -anxiety -courage -drifting -goal oriented -capriciousness - policy guided -unfair -fair -unilateral decision-making -group wisdom, group process -paternalism - fraternalism -egocentric -theocentric -dishonesty, hypocrisy -integrity, truthfulness -insincerity -sincerity -inaccessible -accessible -unforgiving, vengeful -forgiving -dependence on apocrypha -group wisdom,

personal spiritual guidance -injustice -justice -unfriendly -friendly -self-pride, self-import -self-forgetful, teachable, self-corrective -primary dependence on law -primary dependence on love -crystallized, dogmatic -open to criticism and examination -unethical, immoral -ethics, moral -ends justify means - means equal ends -all alone (in universe) -work with celestial personalities -passive -active -sophistry - truth -cultism, exaltation of the -reject exaltation of the individual individual -uniformity -pluralism -first mile -second mile -blaming -problem-solving

Based on the list of accepted values generated by the General Council Dave Elders asked us to "brainstorm" actions. It should be noted that this was a free spirited exercise and no judgment was rendered as to the merits of each idea.

Proactions

1. Trust URANTIA Book teachings
2. Establish URANTIA Brotherhood identity, tell boundaries of our work
3. Outreach
4. Publish our actions, be accountable and accept consequences
5. Make "growth" decisions not safety decisions
6. Have courage to act without fear of consequences
7. Openness--make minutes of meetings open to public
8. Expand circumference of group wisdom by creating an advisory committee of past Presidents (URANTIA Brotherhood), past Trustees (Foundation), and General Councilors.
9. Publish and distribute secondary works which Brotherhood lawyers say is okay
10. Move out of 533
11. Do our own fundraising
12. Change name to exclude trademark
13. Establish URANTIA Brotherhood Society
14. Go more public
15. Make meetings open to all
16. Institute a congress of related groups
17. Global constitutional re-evaluation or convention
18. Representative of URANTIA Foundation Board invited to attend our meetings and vice-versa
19. Translations roundtable
20. Become more democratic. Split Judicial, Executive, and Legislative functions
21. Re-focus entire work of URANTIA Brotherhood to accomplish a singular purpose (i.e. "attempting to bring man to God and God to man")
22. Henceforth mailing lists are separate
23. Establish an oath of office for General Councilors
24. Provide full financial disclosure to membership
25. More meaningful liaison with world's religions
26. Make a specific request to URANTIA Foundation to rent first floor and basement space at 533
27. Develop a simpler mission
28. Showcase changes in Bulletin
29. Don't limit activities due to budget (i.e. mission driven vs. budget driven)
30. General Council to go out and explain what has happened (i.e. personal contact including Area Coordinators)
31. We need to involve members and societies in decisions (i.e. more information quickly after decision made)
32. Give URANTIA Foundation time to be active in creating common ground with Brotherhood
33. New mechanisms for communicating with URANTIA Foundation
34. We are not changing directions, we're cleaning up our act
35. Publish resource guide
36. Publish study group ideas and suggestions
37. Publicly offer computer-based index of The URANTIA Book to URANTIA Foundation
38. Publicly offer audiotape of The URANTIA Book to URANTIA Foundation
39. Sell concentric pins to anyone
40. Let Area Coordinators use Brotherhood stationery
41. Consciously make decisions based on love, not fear

Following the conclusion of the "values and action" analysis, Dave Elders asked the General Council to return to the question of ratifying the Executive Committee's action of July 17. In the discussion which ensued the following points of significance were raised:

· Some felt that the Executive Committee's letter of July 21, which was authorized at the July 17 meeting, contained a personal attack inconsistent with The URANTIA Book's teachings. As a Councilor said, "Emphasis should be placed on realigning URANTIA Brotherhood's philosophy and methodology while avoiding a focus on personalities." The range of the debate may best be described by these quotes: "We've moved on to more positive areas." "Where are we on the letter?" "Don't let poison pens rule the roost." "People in the field see actions which reflect on us." "Action of a few versus action of a group." "Did it (July 17 action of Executive Committee) set a policy which should have been decided by General Council?" and "Let's take action on a higher level."

The Chairman allowed for full expression of views on the subjects of the Executive Committee's action and General Council support. He called on Councilors to consider URANTIA Brotherhood as an organization committed to fulfilling its purposes using mechanisms of internal democratic process consistent with our highest understanding of The URANTIA Book's teachings. There was a consensus that the General Council wanted to express its confidence in the Executive Committee leaving aside issues of tone, procedure, and consequences.

A Councilor, in suggesting that we view the Executive Committee decision and action in three parts, namely a) authority to act, b) means and procedure and c) direction, reminded us that the General Council's decision-making was democratic and that, as a consequence, unanimity was not necessary in expressing its support for the Executive Committee. We may deal with the question more easily in its parts. This recommendation served to focus the debate leading to these comments, quotes, and questions:

- "There was a procedural problem, but I can support the Executive Committee's action."
- URANTIA Brotherhood's constitution provides for Executive Committee independence to act, but allows the General Council to question those acts.
- "General Council must look at Executive Committee's action within a context." "The Executive Committee is supposed to take action." "The system works, but not well." "The Executive Committee believes the General Council is pleased with its past performance." In the current crisis, in which the communication "pipeline had stopped," the Executive Committee's ability to do its work was in jeopardy. The Executive Committee needed to act as it did in July simply to permit it to do its work.

A straw vote was then taken on a proposed motion to support the Executive Committee's action.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting in formal session.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried (For 31, Against 0, Abstain 2):

RESOLVED that the General Council supports and affirms the action taken on behalf of URANTIA Brotherhood by the Executive Committee at its meeting of July 17, 1989.

Abstainers from the aforementioned vote discussed their reasons for same with the General Council.

The Chairman recessed the meeting for lunch at 12:00 P.M.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting in formal session at 1:40 P.M. John Lange left the meeting to catch a plane.

The Chairman called on the General Council to proceed to a consideration of specific actions as part of putting the July action behind us. Comments were made concerning the merits of reaffirming the General Council's decision of five years ago at the height of the F.O.G. affair. It was also suggested that the General Council needed to acknowledge that URANTIA Brotherhood had been operating under external influences and now was "going it alone." As one Councilor said; "Five years ago the General Council declared that URANTIA Brotherhood was not a mystical organization and now we are saying we're not subservient."

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to recess for informal discussion (1:50 P.M.).

In discussions which preceded a proposed motion to confirm the General Council's commitment to a new direction for URANTIA Brotherhood the following points were raised:

- We must take balanced action avoiding "flamboyant" statements concerning independence.
- "Aren't we doing what is constitutional anyway?"
- "The membership needs a message." "Explain we intend to continue operating in accordance with our constitution and the values we've discussed." "Take some concrete actions and write a good article." "The Executive Committee should write to the membership focusing on process, action items. and direction."

A straw vote was taken with a majority in favor of a new direction for URANTIA Brotherhood.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting in formal session.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried (For 32, Against 0, Abstain 0) that:

WHEREAS the recent culmination of events affecting the relationship between URANTIA Brotherhood and URANTIA Foundation has led the General Council to embark on a course of action which redefines that relationship;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we evaluate our organizational goals and plans, and to institute such measures as to affirm our existence as an independent, autonomous organization, operating on the

basis of group wisdom, and in keeping with our highest understanding of the teachings of The URANTIA Book.

The motion carried: For 32, Against 0, Abstain 0.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to recess for informal discussion (3:10 P.M.)

The Chairman asked that we turn our attention to several recommendations discussed earlier in the weekend by the Executive Committee concerning the organization of the office, joint fundraising with URANTIA Foundation, and a request for more prominent office space and signage at 533 Diversey Parkway.

Highlights of the discussion which ensued are:

- The need to empower the Executive Committee to implement General Council resolutions and to respond as required to contingencies consequent thereto.
- In the area of joint fundraising it was explained by the Treasurer and Finance Committee Chairman that URANTIA Foundation has not been willing to account for funds jointly raised. This lack of accountability places URANTIA Brotherhood in a difficult position with respect to its own stewardship. They explained their best guesses concerning the consequences of terminating the joint program. They suggested the need to honor current obligations to URANTIA Foundation for the joint fundraising. They believed the net result of a new sharing and fundraising regime would not differ greatly from the status quo. Other considerations included the need to have a separate mailing address and to operate the Sales Agency more like a business.
- Concerning space and signage requirements it was pointed out that URANTIA Brotherhood simply needs more room (i.e. about 2000-3000 sq. ft. in total). As well, its presence at 533 should be more obvious as would be achieved by an exterior sign and participation in the first floor reception area. Some Councilors were adamant that URANTIA Brotherhood move out of 533 in the belief that "good fences make good neighbors." The cost of the latter action in view of the cost of alternate office accommodation was considered. The ownership of office equipment was reviewed. The first choice, it was generally felt, was to stay at 533.
- The range and intensity of discussion concerning a course of action may best be described by these quotes: "This is a big move. It will create shock waves in the readership." "With good communications the shock can be minimized." "You have to put your money where your mouth is." "It's a weak Foundation, but they asked us not to take precipitous action at the time." "It makes good fiscal sense--we should have done this long ago." "Can we use this as a negotiating tool?" "Don't take a position for negotiating purposes--no pussyfooting." "What is the best, most ethical approach?" "Quick social change? It's not quick, it's not sudden." "Joint fundraising is unethical." "The timing is bad."

A series of straw votes was held concerning fundraising, the staff, office space, and signage, and empowering the Executive Committee to act. Formal action was deferred to later in the meeting.

There was considerable discussion on the subject of the joint mailing list now shared between URANTIA Brotherhood and URANTIA Foundation. The main points raised related to the logistics of splitting the maintenance and use of a list now standing at about 9000 entries. As an intangible asset various options were available, but the handling of new inquiries to minimize confusion and to prevent the weakening of either URANTIA Foundation or URANTIA Brotherhood would require good cooperation and common sense. Both organizations need access to the readership to survive and to achieve the long-range mission for which each was established. "The readership is confused, they're not against a new direction, but can't URANTIA Brotherhood and URANTIA Foundation have separate but parallel tracks?" asked a Councilor.

A straw vote was held concerning the sharing of the readership mailing list.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting in formal session (3:25 P.M.).

A series of formal votes was taken (vote counts vary due to the early departure or temporary absence of a few Councilors).

A motion was made, seconded, and carried (For 28, Against 3, Abstain 0) that:

BE IT RESOLVED that the fundraising function of URANTIA Brotherhood pertain only to the raising of funds for URANTIA Brotherhood.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried (For 28, Against 0, Abstain 3) that:

BE IT RESOLVED that URANTIA Brotherhood re-establish a separate office services staff.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried (For 28, Against 3, Abstain 0) that:

The General Council directs the officers of URANTIA Brotherhood to formally request from URANTIA Foundation a lease at 533 Diversey Parkway for the entire first floor and basement (or other adequate and appropriate space) and the placement of "URANTIA Brotherhood" interior and exterior signs in order to facilitate the social/fraternal work of URANTIA Brotherhood.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried (For 30, Against 3, Abstain 0) that:

The General Council directs the Executive Committee to proceed and take any and all actions necessary to effect a smooth working transition of headquarters office operations in all pertinent areas and to work harmoniously with URANTIA Foundation whenever possible and that the General Council wants a written report at its next meeting as to any actions and decisions taken on this matter.

A motion was made, seconded, and, after discussion, carried (For 30, Against 0, Abstain 0) that:

BE IT RESOLVED that URANTIA Brotherhood will use its mailing list in any manner it deems appropriate.

In response to a suggestion concerning legal advice to URANTIA Brotherhood, Steve Dreier reported that this matter was under active consideration.

Polly Friedman indicated the President of the URANTIA Society of San Fernando Valley requests that the minutes of the meeting be sent to all societies.

A motion was made, seconded, and defeated (For 0, Against 28, Abstain 2) that:

The Secretary of URANTIA Brotherhood be instructed to send copies of the full minutes of the meeting held on September 16-17, 1989 to all societies.

During discussion it was pointed out that this would require a change in policy necessitating greater consideration than time would allow. Members will as usual receive the summary and, in the case of this meeting, be provided with all pertinent information in accordance with the Executive Committee's charge.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried (For 23, Against 1, Abstain 3) that:

BE IT RESOLVED that the General Council of URANTIA Brotherhood affirms the principles for which URANTIA Foundation was founded and the purposes which we share in common.

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 4:10 P.M.

(Signed) Lynne B. Kulieke, Secretary

Approved: (Signed) David N. Elders, Chairman