

## FIFTH EPOCHAL FELLOWSHIP

Dedicated to the study and dissemination of the teachings of *The Urantia Book*

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE/GENERAL COUNCIL LETTER

March, 1990

Dear Members of Fifth Epochal Fellowship:

The first quarter, 1990 meeting of the Executive Committee was held in Scottsdale, Arizona on January 25-26, 1990. A special meeting of the General Council was held immediately thereafter, followed by an organizational planning meeting which included Society Presidents and Area Coordinators in addition to Councilors. This report will provide you with a summary of these meetings.

#### SUMMARY OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTIONS

1. In response to a proposal and request by Bob Bruyn, chairman of Special Projects Committee, it was agreed that the *Resource Guide For Secondary Works* would be expanded to include additional elements which may be of interest to readers. Further, a loose-leaf format would be considered. Finally, because review of items to be included would be minimal, that responsibility would be given to the office staff.
2. It was agreed that in view of the uncertainty regarding the status of societies' continued licensed use of the symbols ("Urantia" and the concentric circles), we would consult our attorneys for clarification which we could in turn furnish to the Societies. Steve Dreier agreed to forward copies of the Licensing Agreements to the attorneys and interact with them on the subject.
3. The Executive Committee approved Harry McMullan's proposal for the use of a contract to govern the use by the Area Coordinators of that portion of our mailing list appropriate to the ACs' area of work. At the same time, inasmuch as we centrally hold and maintain the mailing list in trust for our membership, especially for our societies, it was agreed that we would contact each society, let them know of our intention to share with them that portion of the list pertinent to their area, and ask for their input on the desirability of utilizing guidelines or a contract for that use as well.
4. We agreed that an office staff person would be added to the mailing list policy committee (comprised of Marilynn Kulieke and John Hay) to develop a policy to govern responsible use of our mailing list for discussion at our April, 1990 Executive Committee meeting. Final decision on such a policy would rest with the General Council.
5. In the context of the results of the Name Survey summarized by Marilynn Kulieke, it was agreed to establish a name selection sub-committee comprised of Steve Dreier (chair), Berkeley Elliott, Avi Dogim, and Mo Siegel to devise a plan and time-line for final selection.
6. The Executive Committee agreed to request formally a meeting with the Trustees of URANTIA Foundation over the weekend of March 9-11, 1990 for the purpose of initiating an honest dialogue on the issues now of concern between us. The president was instructed to forward a formal invitation to the Trustees.
7. In response to several recommendations made by Brent St. Denis, the officers were charged to develop more efficient agenda, and resolution processing procedures for our meetings.

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8. It was agreed that the Editor-in-Chief of *The BULLETIN* should be a member of the Executive Committee, preferably the chair of the Publications Committee. Consequently, Jim Johnston will continue to so serve.

9. It was agreed unanimously to apprise the General Council of the receipt of Phil Rolnick's letter regarding procedural questions. But, inasmuch as Phil would not be attending the Council meeting to present and discuss his views, and since the letter arrived just before the meeting and was not on the agenda, it was agreed that it would not be read aloud and discussed unless the Council so wished.

10. It was agreed that the Financial Oversight Committee be charged with completion of the purchase of the 529 Wrightwood headquarters building under the most favorable and responsible terms possible, including but not limited to a donors' partnership, bank financing, annual giving fund, etc.

**REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Marilynn Kulieke, Gard Jameson, Steve Dreier, and Avi Dogim reported on the various meetings with societies and pre-societies at which they and Foundation representatives presented the views of the two organizations. Upcoming meetings include societies in Dallas, New York, and Connecticut.

2. Marilynn Kulieke reported on the results of the name survey. In total, more than 500 responses were received from approximately 1,400 surveys mailed to members, non-member donors, and non-United States readers. A complete summary of the survey will be published in the next issue of *The BULLETIN*. Overall the sense was that while Fifth Epochal Fellowship is an acceptable name, it did not receive overwhelming support. Names which included *The Urantia Book* in the title were equally preferred, though concern with possible Foundation legal action somewhat clouded the name question. A name selection sub-committee was established to develop a final name selection plan and timetable.

3. John Hay reported that room reservations for the International Conference at Snowmass were running at a rate of 30 per day, with a total number to date of over 450. John also reported a revision in the meal plans making it even more desirable to purchase the entire meal package. If this level of interest continues, attendance at this conference might exceed all previous conferences.

**SUMMARY OF GENERAL COUNCIL ACTIONS**

This mid-year Special Meeting of the General Council was held on January 27, 1990 at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona. There were only two items on the agenda for the formal portion of the meeting: Election of Councilors (two) to fill vacancies until the Triennial Delegate Assembly, and Discussion of Executive Committee Actions of November 5, 1989.

1. Marta A. Elders of Darien, Connecticut and Lyn Davis Lear of Los Angeles, California were elected as General Councilors of Fifth Epochal Fellowship until the 1991 Triennial Delegate Assembly.

2. A motion to ratify the action taken by the Executive Committee on November 5, 1989 not to contest at this time URANTIA Foundation actions of October 30, 1989 was passed unanimously.

3. A motion to ratify the action of the Executive Committee on November 5, 1989 to purchase the 529 Wrightwood building was passed unanimously.

4. A motion to ratify the action of the Executive Committee on November 5, 1989 to change provisionally the name of URANTIA Brotherhood Corporation to Fifth Epochal Fellowship Corporation was passed unanimously.

5. A motion to ratify the action of the Executive Committee on November 5, 1989 to retain as Fifth Epochal Fellowship legal counsel the firm of Wildman, Harrold, Allen & Dixon passed unanimously.

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6. A motion to ratify the action of the Executive Committee on November 5, 1989 to charge the officers with the responsibility to implement these resolutions and act as a sub-committee of the Executive Committee to deal with legal matters passed unanimously.

Once the formal session of the General Council was adjourned, the planning meeting of General Councilors, Society Presidents, and Area Coordinators began in the same location in Scottsdale, Arizona. A separate summary of this meeting is included for your information herewith. On a personal note, all participants were guests of the members of the Arizona pre-society group at a social gathering at JJ and Geri Johnson's home on Friday night. It was a wonderful time of friendship and fellowship and we are all deeply grateful for their warm hospitality.

### CLOSING COMMENTS

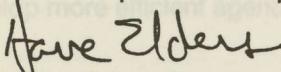
Clearly the events of the last months have represented a serious test for all of us in terms of our commitments and priorities. While it would have been easier in some ways for us to simply ignore the very real issues facing us in the name of organizational unity, fortunately we believed that dealing with these conflicts and tensions represented an opportunity for growth in the depth of commitment and in the level of active, involved participation in the achievement of the organization's purposes.

There are some who have expressed dismay that we, readers of *The Urantia Book*, have succumbed to problems which many other people before us who were involved in religious activities have also had to deal with. Though this may speak more of unreasonable expectation than failure, it doesn't take into consideration the significance of the fact that there are conciliating commissions from here to Paradise. Clearly conflict, disagreement, and the need to compose differing value levels are a regular part of our ascending experience in the universes. If this notion is correct, perhaps instead of regarding these events as a painful reminder that we are still human, we should regard the conflict as a gift which can stimulate real growth. Perhaps it is in the resolution of conflict between value levels that some of the "doing" of Supreme achievement lies.

The separation between URANTIA Foundation and Fifth Epochal Fellowship does not, in my judgment, qualify to be labelled sectarianism. Rather, it is a separation of functions, one which we are convinced was intended from the beginning. The formation of an alternate fellowship organization by the Foundation, however, does constitute the risk of a sectarian division of the readership and is an action which links us rather closely with unfortunate historical precedent on our planet. Such a sectarian approach may well hinder or prevent building a worldwide community of religionists united by their commitment to the teachings of *The Urantia Book*--a community of individuals and a federation of societies and other groups which form to do specific work related to the teachings. There are real and significant value issues here to ponder and resolve, issues which can be viewed either as an opportunity for new understanding and growth, or as justification to write off "organization" as human failure.

It is my hope, one I believe is shared by many, that these events and issues will stimulate thought, participation, and action on the part of every member and, in fact, every person committed to the work associated with this revelation. Since our fellowship will always be comprised of unique men and women who think for themselves, our true character and dedication as an organization will be seen most clearly at times of stress and conflict when this character and dedication are required to reach issue resolution based not on enforced uniformity, but on an expression of unselfish group process consequential to spiritual unity. Perhaps we have been given a real and living opportunity to awaken to the experience of Supremacy in this process of learning how to resolve value-level tensions in cooperation with those with whom we share a common purpose.

Yours in deepest fellowship,

  
David N. Elders, President

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"Men all too often forget that God is the greatest experience in human existence. Other experiences are limited in their nature and content, but the experience of God has no limits save those of the creature's comprehension capacity, and this very experience is in itself capacity enlarging. When men search for God, they are searching for everything. When they find God, they have found everything. The search for God is the unstinted bestowal of love attended by amazing discoveries of new and greater love to be bestowed.

All true love is from God, and man receives the divine affection as he himself bestows this love upon his fellows. Love is dynamic. It can never be captured; it is alive, free, thrilling, and always moving. Man can never take the love of the Father and imprison it within his heart. The Father's love can become real to mortal man only by passing through that man's personality as he in turn bestows this love upon his fellows. The great circuit of love is from the Father, through sons to brothers, and hence to the Supreme. The love of the Father appears in the mortal personality by the ministry of the indwelling Adjuster. Such a God-knowing son reveals this love to his universe brethren, and this fraternal affection is the essence of the love of the Supreme." (*The Urantia Book*, page 1289: 3,4)