
FIFTH EPOCHAL FELLOWSHIP

for readers of *The Urantia Book*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LETTER

May, 1990

Dear Members of Fifth Epochal Fellowship:

Our regular April, 1990 meeting of the Executive Committee took place at our Fifth Epochal Fellowship headquarters on Friday night, April 26 and all day Saturday, April 27, 1990. This will provide you with a summary of our deliberations and actions taken at this meeting. On Friday night, the two subcommittees mentioned in the last report (Name Change, Programs and Services) met and finalized the recommendations they then made to the whole Executive Committee. The other business of the Executive Committee was conducted all day Saturday.

SUMMARY OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTIONS

1. Five new Area Coordinators were approved for service: Tom Moody, Colebrook, NH; Paul Krupa, Fall River, MA; Julie Gordon, Green Bay, WI; Cecilia Lampley, Reno, NV; and Leslie Thackeray, Boulder, CO. Thanks for your willingness to serve.
2. It was agreed that the report made by the Ad Hoc Committee on Councilor Responsibility (including their proposal for an Oath of Office) would be accepted by the Executive Committee and forwarded to the General Council for review and action. The Ad Hoc Committee was dissolved with thanks for a job well done.
3. The Executive Committee unanimously approved the Charter Committee's recommendation that the Arizona pre-society group be approved for Chartering as a Fellowship Society at an Installation ceremony scheduled for Saturday, May 19, 1990 in Phoenix. This Society will be named the Grand Canyon Society for Readers of *The Urantia Book*.
4. It was agreed that copies of the new *Resource Guide for Secondary Works* would be given away at no charge to attenders of the upcoming Snowmass Conference, Fellowship members and contributors.
5. The Sub-Committee on Mailing List Policy proposed and the Executive Committee agreed that their report be accepted as submitted and placed on the agenda for the upcoming July, 1990 meeting of the General Council.
6. The Executive Committee approved after discussion the changes in the Standards of Admissions for Societies proposed by Avi Dogim on behalf of the Charter Committee. Specifically, the Standards would be amended to replace the phrase "in good standing" with "responsible members" in the following context: "Founders of a Society should be responsible members of their community." This change was designed by the Charter Committee to recognize the need to establish a new Society on a responsible basis, but at the same time minimize the possibility that our requirements might preclude a group of sincere students who were "not citizens in good standing" because they were fighting injustice (e.g., apartheid in South Africa). Also, it was proposed that the language which refers to "membership in any church" be replaced with "membership in any religious organization" to insure that our stated willingness to welcome all who will join us is as broad as possible.

7. Steve Dreier presented the plan for the organization's final name selection process developed by the subcommittee on this issue. The plan essentially provides for sufficient time in the selection process to insure broad participation by the entire membership. The Executive Committee approved the plan as presented, with discussion slated for both the Society Conclave and General Council meetings this summer.
8. The Executive Committee agreed that the General Council should make the final decision with regard to the Fellowship's response to the Foundation's 'Special Report.' Accordingly, the officers will draft the response suggested by the Executive Committee and forward it to the General Council for comments. Once their comments are integrated into the response, it will be returned to the Council for final comment and approval.
9. It was agreed that the 1991 Triennial Delegate Assembly (TDA) would be held the weekend prior to the 1991 Summer Seminars hosted by the Education Committee. The specific date will be communicated once the site and timing for the Seminars have been finalized by Conference Services. The date will be decided upon by early June, 1990 so that the formal TDA Call can be sent to the Societies to give them additional time to select delegates and alternates pursuant to the Societies' direction both at the last TDA and past years' Society Conclave meetings.
10. The Executive Committee approved a limited increase in the legal budget to cover expenses related to reaching final agreement with URANTIA Foundation concerning the property and financial details related to the separation of the organizations. Additionally, there was consensus that we should seek to minimize legal contact and expenditures in further interaction with URANTIA Foundation, focusing instead on the utilization of personal contact.
11. We agreed that the Strategic Plan Proposal presented by the Programs and Services Subcommittee would be put together in a report format and sent to members of the General Council in early June. This would give Council members sufficient time to review the suggested plan and prepare to discuss it fully at the upcoming General Council meeting.

REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

1. Steve Dreier reported that the Judicial Committee did not agree philosophically with the concept of an oath of office for General Councilors, but did not see any technical reason preventing the adoption of such an oath. The committee did, however, suggest that it would be more consistent to make an oath a part of the qualifications for nomination to the position of General Councilor rather than as an amendment to the Constitution, and requested Executive Committee input on this suggestion.
2. Jim Johnston reported that with the mailing of the Spring issue of the *BULLETIN* in May, the publication would be back on its regular mailing schedule. He noted also that translated summaries in four languages (Finnish, French, Italian, and Spanish) are sent with each issue to the appropriate readers. Also, the inaugural issue of the *Study Group Herald* is scheduled for publication this Fall. Martin Greenhut of Great Barrington, MA, has been appointed as managing editor and will work with an editorial policy committee comprised of Jim Johnston, Dan Massey, and Mo Siegel. Finally, the *Journal of Fifth Epochal Fellowship*, now under the aegis of the Publications Committee, will continue publication in an expanded format now being developed by a special subcommittee chaired by David Kulieke. The subcommittee's recommendations will be evaluated by the Publications Committee at its annual meeting in July.
3. Bob Bruyn reported that Special Projects Committee is nearing completion of the final review of materials to be included in the *Resource Guide*; once done, the entire work will be turned over to

the Publications Committee and Scott Forsythe for layout and printing, in time to meet the scheduled availability date of the Snowmass Conference. Work on the Oral History Project is now in the final pre-interview development stage.

4. John Hay gave his report on the 1990 International Conference. Paid registrations are over the 1,000 mark, with the necessary number of meal plan purchases now committed insuring that we will meet our contractual obligations to Snowmass. Since registrations are still being received, there is every indication that we may have close to 1,100 readers and their families attending, making this the largest gathering of readers of *The Urantia Book* held to date.

5. After much discussion related to the appointment of Area Coordinators, especially with regard to differing needs and requirements in the various countries in which there are active readers, it was agreed that this matter would be taken up at the General Council meeting. This discussion would include the issues of membership requirements for those persons willing to serve as Area Coordinators in locations in which there are no Societies, as well as whether any differentiation between Area Coordinator requirements due to geographical considerations is appropriate.

6. Avi Dogim reported on his contacts with each of the Societies with regard to their current attitudes toward the separation between the Fellowship and Foundation. While this will be discussed at the Society Conclave meeting this summer, Avi expressed his opinion that the organization needed to undertake a self-critical analysis of its behavior and decision-making during the last year to determine if we properly followed our constituted procedures and to take responsibility for, correct, and learn from any mistakes. The Executive Committee agreed with the need for such an evaluation and the chairman pointed out that this task had already been assigned to the Judicial Committee.

7. Gard Jameson reported that the interfaith session to be held at the Snowmass Conference involving presentations and discussion among representatives of the Baptist, Hindu, and Buddhist faiths would be video taped (only with their permission and if approved by the Conference chairman) by Julio Edwards and broadcast on a local community television station in Colorado.

CLOSING COMMENTS

The following closing comments were contributed by Steve Dreier.

The past year has witnessed an unprecedented level of debate about organizational matters among students of *The Urantia Book*. Dozens of meetings have been held, hundreds of public and private letters have been sent, and individual informal discussions probably total thousands of hours. A varied and complex body of fact and opinion has been presented for consideration, with additional contributions continuing at a brisk pace.

The immediate cause of this phenomenon appears to be the separation of the former URANTIA Brotherhood (now Fifth Epochal Fellowship) from URANTIA Foundation, and the concomitant loss of the Fellowship's ability to use the term "Urantia" and the concentric circles symbol to identify itself. However, this event may have been only the final catalyzing element in a process which has been maturing for more than twenty years and which, if we are willing, now provides us with new opportunities for cosmic growth.

Often we have given only casual attention to organizational issues. Many of us have been content to let others manage these matters while we concentrated on the more personal and individual aspects of the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. Yet *The Urantia Book* teaches that organization and administration are an essential study for everyone. Our destiny involves service as universe admin-

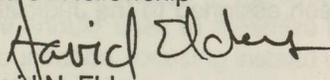
istrators, and the intensive experiential study of such matters will constitute the major focus of the training we are to receive as we move inward through the cosmos from planet to Paradise.

While organizational matters do not appear to relate directly to our private and personal relationship with the Universal Father, they are very directly concerned in the development of our collective relationship to the Supreme Being. The Grand Universe is a vast organization composed of innumerable interrelated component organizations; all of these are evolving together towards attained perfection under the cosmic guidance of the Supreme Being. We are expected to experientially master the challenging details and techniques of this massive undertaking; all activities which contribute to this goal have cosmic survival value. Understanding this, we can choose to cooperate with this plan by agreeing to begin our universe education now.

Clearly, we have much to learn. Our recent organizational upheavals may be a cause for discouragement, but they may also be a precious opportunity for supreme growth. Each of us must choose which view will prevail. We can yield to feelings of disappointment and choose to become inactive; or we can re-dedicate ourselves to a sincere collective effort to study and improve the details of our organizational work, deepening our inquiry into the nature of supremacy, and experientially augmenting our ability to contribute meaningfully to the evolving universe presence of the Supreme Being.

"The act is ours, the consequences God's." (p. 1286:4)

Yours in fellowship


David N. Elders
President