

---

The  
**FELLOWSHIP**

---

*for readers of The Urantia Book*

---

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LETTER**  
**May, 1991**

Dear Fellowship Members:

Our second quarter 1991 Executive Committee meeting was held at our 529 Wrightwood office on Friday, April 26 and Saturday, April 27, 1991. On Friday night, the informal mission-based subcommittees (Purposes, Support, and Administrative) met to discuss agenda items pertinent to their respective responsibilities and developed appropriate reports and/or action proposals for consideration by the full Executive Committee in its Saturday session (in effect, these subcommittees performed in parallel the necessary staff work to insure a full examination of each item brought before the Executive Committee). This letter will provide you with a summary of this weekend meeting.

**SUMMARY OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTIONS**

1. By virtue of approving their member-at-large applications, we welcome into our Fellowship Ted Nathan Folkman, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada and Fannie Jaye Blain, Lexington, Kentucky.
2. The Executive Committee approved the appointment of two new Area Coordinators in Canada: Gord Ferguson in Calgary and Geoff Taylor in Winnipeg. We thank them for their willingness to serve. Tom Burns was removed as an Area Coordinator in Atlanta, Georgia.
3. Gard Jameson proposed on behalf of the Fraternal Relations Committee that The Fellowship become a member of the North American Interfaith Network (Peter Laurence and Bettina Gray are both on the Executive Committee of NAIN) which is a broad association of religiously-oriented groups who work together to celebrate and deepen mutual understanding of the plurality of religious expression on our planet. The Executive Committee endorsed the proposal for consideration by the General Council this June.
4. Gard also proposed that The Fellowship become an affiliate member of the Council for a Parliament of World Religions, a Chicago-based group established to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first such interfaith gathering held in 1893. Once again the Executive Committee endorsed forwarding this proposal to the General Council for final action.
5. The Domestic Extension Committee's proposal, presented by Mo Siegel, for the development of a series of bookmarks containing quotations from *The Urantia Book* addressing a selection of issues of interest to people (such as life after death, the need for religion, angels, good and evil, evolution, etc.), was approved for implementation. Once produced, these bookmarks will be made available broadly to the readership.
6. The Executive Committee also approved the production and distribution by Domestic Extension of an updated *Study Group Directory* designed to help readers make contact with study groups around the world. Availability is scheduled for June, 1991. Mo indicated that almost 300 study groups have registered for inclusion.

7. The "adopt-a-bookstore" program developed and tested by Domestic Extension in conjunction with the Rocky Mountain Society, was approved for implementation. This program will provide readers interested in helping overcome the general unavailability of *Urantia Books* in retail bookstores (resulting from the Foundation's termination of sales to book distributors) with a tested program which may be implemented by individuals or groups on a local basis. The program objective would be restored book availability in at least one bookstore in every community where there is an active reader, study group, or society. Tear pads, bookmarks, and support materials would be made available to those persons interested in participation. Announcement of the program will be made soon.

8. It was agreed that the matter of the development of a symbol for The Fellowship would be placed on the agenda for this June's meeting of the General Council for consideration. The proposal to be made would include a mechanism for the broad-based involvement of the entire membership of our organization in whatever development and selection process is designed.

9. On behalf of the Judicial Committee, Steve Dreier presented appropriate language for proposed amendments to the Constitution (the summary below focuses on the substance and not the language of each proposed constitutional amendment):

a. The "Name" Article (I) shall be amended to change the name of our organization to The Fellowship (the descriptive phrase, for readers of *The Urantia Book*, will be retained for all uses). Fifth Epochal Fellowship Corporation will be retained as the organization's corporate entity name and Paragraph 5.1 of the By-Laws will be amended to reflect this change (adopted in November, 1989 by action of the Executive Committee pursuant to the Constitution). If approved by the Council, all uses of these names in the Constitution and By-Laws will be amended accordingly.

b. The "Distribution of Assets Upon Dissolution" Article shall be amended to enable the Executive Committee to select an appropriate beneficiary in the unlikely event that dissolution should take place.

c. The "Composition" Article (III) shall be amended to replace "URANTIA Society" with the generic wording "local society." All other similar references will be amended accordingly.

d. The "Name of Local Society" Section (5.3) shall be amended to enable the Charter Committee, subject to ratification by the Executive Committee, to approve the name of each new local society. As noted, this will apply to new societies.

e. All references to the upper case URANTIA form, *The URANTIA Book*, in the Constitution shall be replaced with the Library of Congress form of reference: *The Urantia Book*.

f. The "Procedure for Amendment" Section (14.1) shall be amended to enable the General Council to consider and, if approved, adopt amendments to the Constitution at all properly called meetings of the General Council (and not just at the Annual Meeting).

g. The "Purpose" Article (II) shall be amended to replace the phrase "...and of the teachings of Jesus Christ..." with phraseology more consistent with language used in *The Urantia Book*: "...and of the life and teachings of Jesus...."

10. Katharine "Ticky" Harries was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Special Projects Committee. Her continuation on this committee will be subject to a vote of the General Council during the election portion of the June Council meeting.
11. It was agreed that Mike Painter would work with George Sammis of the Brotherhood of Man Library to make all our publications available to the Library in computer form (if available), encourage him to contact anyone he wishes to obtain other materials, and offer to issue a call for materials for the Library in the *Study Group Herald*.
12. Bob Bruyn's proposal that Special Projects begin work on a comprehensive history of the Urantia Movement, which would include the Oral History Project now underway, was approved with the request that a timetable and methodology be presented to the Executive Committee at its June meeting.
13. In order to provide better communication and support services to societies, the Charter Committee was charged to work closely with Domestic Extension Committee in this area of responsibility. In addition, the Judicial Committee was asked to work with both Charter and Domestic Extension to consider the policy implications and language for possible amendments to the Constitution which would re-align the responsibilities of these two committees.
14. The subcommittee on development of a brochure for The Fellowship presented its proposed language. It was approved with minor corrections for final composition and printing.
15. It was agreed that the subcommittee responsible for work on the Strategic Working Plan would incorporate the ideas and suggestions developed at the Tampa meeting, and those received from members responding to our recent mailed request for input, and develop an informational mailing to be sent to all societies, TDA delegates and alternates, and General Councilors for review and comment and to help establish priorities for action. At the same time, it was agreed that activity on program items which received consensus support in Tampa would be undertaken by the appropriate Departmental Committee.
16. The Executive Committee, acting in its capacity as the Board of Directors of Fifth Epochal Fellowship Corporation, accepted the recommendation of the Financial Advisory Committee to contract Manning, Silberman, Rapaport, and Tico as The Fellowship's auditing firm to replace Arthur Anderson (who refused to renew our contract claiming that there was a conflict with another client).
17. The Executive Committee (acting again as Directors of the Corporation) accepted with deep gratitude on behalf of The Fellowship the first Remainder Trust gift we've received. The donors, who requested anonymity, are hereby publicly thanked for their generosity.
18. In response to International Conference 1993 chairman Brent St. Denis' recommendation, the Executive Committee approved the establishment of a Canadian Funds Account to handle receipts and disbursements for IC 93. Brent also noted that there will be a planning meeting in Montreal for IC 93 on August 2, 1991 and he hopes members of the Executive Committee and others interested in working on the conference will attend.
19. Gard Jameson (chair), Lynne Kulieke, and Avi Dogim were appointed (by memo after the meeting) as a sub-nominating committee to put together a proposed slate of officers, standing committee chairs and members for consideration by the Executive Committee at its June 27, 1991 meeting. The

full Executive Committee serves as the nominating committee for the General Council and will present the slate of nominees to the General Council at its June meeting as part of the election process.

### REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

1. It was reported that to date there are 15 persons willing to be considered for election by the Delegates to the Triennial Delegate Assembly for the 14 seats available on the General Council. It is hoped that more people will offer their names for consideration.
2. Dan Massey indicated that planning for the upcoming Summer Seminars is on track. The Seminars will begin on Sunday, June 23, 1991 at 11:00 am with a worship program.
3. Jim Johnston reported that the *Study Group Herald* was going to press shortly and would be in the mail in mid-May. The second Special Conference Issue of *The Journal* will also be sent out in early May (the two Special Conference Issues totalled 128 pages and featured almost all of the presentations given at the summer, 1990 International Conference at Snowmass).
4. Mike Painter noted that pursuant to the approval of the Executive Committee at its last meeting, a return-card would be included in those copies of the *Study Group Herald* to be sent to people on our mailing list who have been qualified as "inactive" asking them to advise us of their interest in staying on our mailing list. Once the results are in from this attempted contact, we will determine the next steps in the mailing list culling process.
5. The Foundation's lawsuit against Kristen Maaherra for copyright and trademark infringement and deceptive practices filed in Phoenix, Arizona in March, 1991 was discussed. Though the general consensus was that it was inappropriate for the Executive Committee to make any decisions with regard to organizational involvement in this matter, it was agreed that a letter to readers stating the facts which are known, offering pertinent informational materials, and underscoring The Fellowship's commitment to the integrity of the text of *The Urantia Book* as a revelation of divine truth from superhuman authors, would be drafted for consideration by the General Council this summer. Steve Dreier, Mo Siegel, and Dave Elders will work on the draft letter for approval by the Executive Committee prior to forwarding to Council members.

### CLOSING COMMENTS

In my personal opinion, as a reader and believer in the authenticity of the teachings of *The Urantia Book* as a revelation of divine truth, recent statements made by the attorney for the trustees of Urantia Foundation in court testimony (see below) represent a grave violation of the text of *The Urantia Book* and the trust given with the book--the preservation and establishment of its validity as an epochal revelation of divine truth to the peoples of this planet. The Declaration of Trust creating Urantia Foundation underscores the validity of the essential religious nature of the teachings by using this language in section 2.1 PRINCIPAL OBJECT: "...of the genesis and destiny of Man and his relation to God, and of the true teachings of Jesus Christ; and for the inculcation and encouragement of the realization of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man...through the fostering of a religion, a philosophy, and a cosmology..." There is no doubt that there are refined legal arguments which will be claimed as justification for these statements. But, unfortunately, while these may have some technical merit in court proceedings and legal argumentation, they will be lost on the common reader and legal layperson. The real legacy of these claims will be left for our children and children's children. They will be the ones called upon to respond to those who attack the validity of *The Urantia Book* as an epochal

revelation with court testimony wherein its primary stewards, the trustees, disclaimed its revelatory origins. They will pay the greater price. Certainly the book can and will speak for itself to those who make the commitment to read it; however, many will reject it out-of-hand based simply on the doubts about its authenticity. (That is, of course, if the book can be obtained: the trustees have terminated sales through standard book distributor channels, thereby risking the categorization of the book as a cult document, available only through its readers). History may unfortunately show that by severely restricting book sales while initiating constant legal actions to "preserve inviolate" the chosen tools of protection, the copyright and trademarks, coincident with public statements which undermine the validity of the revelatory origin of *The Urantia Book*, the current trustees have gravely violated the very text the tools were meant to protect, and therewith their trust.

Here is what *The Urantia Book* says about its origins in the very first paragraph (Foreword, page 1):

"IN THE MINDS of the mortals of Urantia--that being the name of your world--there exists great confusion respecting the meaning of such terms as God, divinity, and deity. Human beings are still more confused and uncertain about the relationships designated by these numerous appellations. Because of this conceptual poverty associated with so much ideational confusion, I [an Orvonton Divine Counselor, Chief of Superuniverse Personalities assigned to portray on Urantia the truth concerning the Paradise Deities and the universe of universes] have been directed to formulate this introductory statement in explanation of the meanings which should be attached to certain word symbols as they may be hereinafter used in those papers which the Orvonton corps of truth revealers have been authorized to translate into the English language of Urantia."

Here is what the trustees of Urantia Foundation claimed in court testimony in the two most recent Foundation lawsuits against readers of *The Urantia Book*:

**1. Suit against Center for Urantia Book Synergy (CUBS)--filed April, 1988:**

In response to the CUBS counterclaim statement (para. 12) that "On information and belief *The Urantia Book* was revealed to Urantia by various divine beings, as specified and identified in *The Urantia Book*, and was not original with nor written by plaintiff," the Foundation replied:

"Plaintiff denies that *The Urantia Book* contains the specifications and identifications alleged in paragraph 12 of defendant's counterclaim and is without knowledge or information sufficient to admit or deny the remaining allegations of that paragraph and therefore denies same, except that plaintiff admits that *The Urantia Book* is not original to or written by plaintiff and affirmatively alleges that it owns all copyrights in *The Urantia Book* as a result of a transfer of same to plaintiff."

In response to CUBS' counterclaim statement (para. 15) that "On information and belief, Urantia refers to or relates to a religion, religious revelation and/or movement," the Foundation stated:

"Plaintiff denies the allegations of paragraph 15 of defendant's counterclaim."

**2. Suit against Kristen Maaherra--filed March, 1991:**

In this most recent suit, the following statements were made in U. S. District Court in Phoenix, Arizona in March, 1991 on behalf of the trustees of Urantia Foundation by their attorney, Craig Fochler:

"First of all, it [*The Urantia Book*] is a work for hire. It [the copyright] can be renewed. The work does qualify as a work for hire, part of work by the author, who's discussed in the Burton case...There was a trustee of the Urantia Foundation, William Sadler, Jr., not senior, who wrote, authored, however you want to look at it, parts of the Urantia Book. And that was part of the work, and it was clearly work for hire, also a joint work. And that was also a basis for renewal." (Court Transcripts of March 15, 1991 Hearing, page 27).

But, Your Honor, I think the most telling aspect of this, if you think the book's really in the public domain, and by the way it's not a religious book, it's got a lot of historical scientific [sic], but if you think it's really in the public domain..." (Court Transcript of March 7, 1991, pages 44-45).

\* \* \*

It is in this unfortunate context that I write my final Executive Committee Letter (my second term as President ends this June). The last years have been ones of great challenge, and I think that the most satisfying part of dealing with this challenge has been the opportunity to work with the many extraordinary individuals on the General Council, in the headquarters office, and in local societies and study groups. New levels of dedication, creativity, unselfishness, and a true spirit of cooperation seem to have emerged as the direct products of dealing with the organizational strife and change of the last two years. The Fellowship is freer today than ever before to develop into an inclusive, democratic, and caring association of religionists dedicated to the work of bringing the teachings of *The Urantia Book* to the peoples of our world.

But this opportunity is, perhaps by higher design, matched by continuing challenge. Our separation from Urantia Foundation could have proceeded more smoothly, like a divorce with no children, except that we share a child for which we have responsibility. While it is not impossible for us to do our work without easy new reader access to copies of *The Urantia Book*, it is much harder. While our lives can come to serve as testimony to the validity and dignity of the teachings of *The Urantia Book*, it is much harder when the trustees have seemingly and inexplicably taken the risk of creating doubts about the authenticity of the book's revelatory origins. This, then, is our challenge--to accomplish our mission on behalf of these teachings in the face of these serious obstacles.

The Fellowship is more active and alive today than at any time in the 21 years I have been involved. This is due to the unselfish commitment of creativity, energy, resources, and dedication of many, many people. The obstacles will be overcome. The doubts created will be replaced by a growing community of readers whose words and lives will stand as a clear testament to the real origin, the real purpose, the true dignity of *The Urantia Book*. There can be no doubt about the underlying religious power of the teachings and their ability to make each person ever more aware of the uplifting support of the many spirit agencies and beings who are dedicated to the transformation of humankind on our planet. There can be no doubt about the power of our inner relationship with our common Father to so enliven each person that any human obstacle to the spread of religious truth on our world can be overcome and turned into a living expression of the religion of Jesus and, thereby, a symbol of the glory of God.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. In fellowship,

David N. Elders