

From Mark Bloomfield:

Africa Seeding Mission Update #11

The Last Mzungu

Beautiful things are sometimes hijacked by not so beautiful people and for still less beautiful reasons. In Kenya's case a small clutch of individuals who constitute the sum and circumference of their own respective private universes fall victim to their own life long tendencies of only internalizing what truth feeds their own conceited notions whilst spinning the rest into a tangled knot of self-deceit. Either no longer knowing the truth from the lie or else knowing but simply preferring the spin, the nation's political arena becomes their next intended vehicle of self-perpetuation and subsequently close in for the kill, utterly indifferent to final consequences upon others and devoid of even the slightest flicker of human compassion. If a million people died in post-election turmoil their self-deceit would immediately rationalize such as the necessary price of the nation's 'liberation.'

A few weeks prior to the turmoil in Kenya following the bungled December 27th election, 300 Urantia Books quietly slipped into Mombasa port unnoticed by all except another small clutch of individuals who, trust me, strive to live by a very different set of motives. A problem early arose however when contrary to specific instructions, the consignment was dispatched from India as a normal shipment as distinct from a 'door to door' shipment which necessitated the production of several original documents from the sender in India in order to clear customs and which took their time to arrive. By the time they did, the Christmas holiday period was upon us and shortly thereafter, that infamous election which precipitated near anarchy for the last three weeks and is as yet unresolved, blocking roads and causing gridlock at Mombasa port.

During this frustrating period, your fieldworker could do little more than dig in and continue to live cheap whilst maintaining a gentle and friendly pressure upon our cargo clearing agent in Mombasa (who for the record were fabulous throughout and emerged as my personal heroes.)

As the post-election rioting intensified across the country and mob rule started taking over from the rule of law, the mzungus (white foreigners) became noticeably fewer on the ground with every passing day as the usual daily taunts and ridicule at street level started being replaced with open personal threats. As the local thugs of each neighbourhood got to know where I stayed, I'd move on to the next guest house in the next neighbourhood. During one riot, the mob tried to burn down the shop immediately adjoining my place of residence.

The 300 books finally cleared on Friday 18th of January amid a firefight just a few blocks from the shipping agent's office in the bowels of Mombasa that sounded like the typical Hollywood style Wild West shootout.

By prior arrangement 15 boxes (180 books) were stored at the agent's office whilst 10 boxes (120 books) we drove through the chaos to the bus company that sporadically plies from Mombasa to Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania ten hours south down the coast. If the bus was running (as recently it wasn't) the plan would be to seed Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi in an anti-clockwise loop with the 120 so as to return for the rest in Mombasa after affording such time as to hopefully see an end to the turmoil. Luckily the bus was still running and I dropped off the books and bought the ticket for the next morning's bus out before returning to the agent to bid them a fond temporary adieu, all the while feeling like the last remaining white man in Kenya. Upon doing so, three staff members asked to borrow copies of the book to read whilst I was away to which I of course happily consented.

It was with much relief that all on board the bus arrived next morning at the Tanzanian border but once across, no fewer than five unofficial police checkpoints stood between us and Tanga, the first major town along the coast towards Dar es Salaam. At one such roadblock, assault rifle wielding police out of uniform were busy pummeling one man for no known reason as we arrived. At each roadblock, the buses' luggage compartments

were searched where the police each time came across the 10 boxes of Urantia Books that could have so easily landed me in a world of trouble but as things turned out, never once did.

At 5pm on Saturday 19th January my bus arrived in Dar es Salaam (fittingly Arabic for 'haven of peace' or at least in relative terms) from where this update is now being dispatched from. The hand seeding of Tanzania and elsewhere will commence in earnest bright and early tomorrow morning with a view to making up as much lost time as possible and will hopefully see my return to what's left of Kenya in about a month's time. Upon such a return, the remaining 180 books will be quickly seeded across Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda before returning to Johannesburg to finish seeding all of southern Africa.

During these intervening weeks and as I deliberately engineered, the issue of rival, competing brands of Urantia Book and Urantia movement as opposed to more attractive alternatives became the subject of hot debate among myself and various prominent individuals on either side of the Foundation/Fellowship divide. For the benefit of all current and potential supporters of my seeding efforts let me briefly summarize my stance on this issue lest there be any remaining ambiguity:

Neither the stifling uniformity of excessive rules and regulations nor the Luciferian folly of unbridled libertarian adventurism, Bloomfield yearns to see a loose and liberal Urantia movement showing a nevertheless visibly united face to the on looking world so as to help render the revelation as attractive to humanity as possible thereby helping to make it all the more effective in it's world-uplifting mission. To deny a definite link between thwarted, de-railed epochal revelations due to their non-attractiveness/non-effectiveness and much of the horrors, atrocities and chaos of this world is in my view the denial of reality itself. So why needlessly play Russian Roulette with all future generations when relatively minor adjustments on our part with all yet to be agreed checks and balances in place could go so far in helping us as a collectivity avoid making all those fateful mistakes of a pitifully sub-divided and priest-caste dominated Christian church?

And if this my considered stance makes me unpopular and even causes all monetary support for my seeding work to dry up, pause to consider that self-financed philanthropy (albeit on a modest scale) was where I came from and is if need be where I shall cheerfully return to rather than abandon these my long-held convictions.

In search of the Father's will,

Mark Philip Bloomfield.