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DEC 29 1983

URANTIA

Patrick and Jeralie Kopp  
1508 SE 47th St. Place  
OKC, OK 73129

December 20, 1983

John:

We received your letter today. We, meaning Jeralie and myself and, I assume, could also mean many others on the Urantia Brotherhood mailing list.

I find myself feeling somewhat grateful that I am now living in Oklahoma City and have joined the First Urantia Society of Oklahoma through which I have knowledge of Vern Grimley's claims, for if this were not the case your letter would have only confused and dismayed me more than it already has. I feel deep concern for those who have not been given detailed information pertaining to the matter of Vern's claims. They can only sit and speculate as to what in the world you are talking about in your letter.

I have enclosed a copy of your letter with my marginal comments for your understanding of my reaction.

At this point I will speak frankly. It took me several years and much thought to decide to join the Urantia Brotherhood. I am quite disappointed as to the leadership I have seen thus far. I believe if we as a brotherhood are to disseminate the teachings of the Urantia Book to the world we need to show forth the fruits of the spirit making our movement stand out as a real light unto the world and not just another religious cult fraught with political infighting, egoistic jousting and vainglorious power struggles.

In my opinion, Vern has been and still is one of the most courageous banner carriers of our movement. To witness his wholesale condemnation and abandonment, by the Foundation in particular and by several members of the leadership of the Urantia Brotherhood, fills me with great sadness and indignation.

John, were it you who had become thus deluded, I do not think you would want your brothers and sisters to turn their backs on you. I hope you don't believe it is impossible for you or myself to become thus spiritually deluded. The warnings are clear in the Urantia Book. Page 1222, the first paragraph, "the courage . . ." Also, page 1609, starting with the last paragraph and continuing to page 1610. Please read these if you are unfamiliar with them.

Let me state clearly, I do not believe what Vern claims, but I do believe that he believes it.

I will close with my expressed hope that our organizational brotherhood will rally to aid Vern in his need and not take the all too natural path of fear and pride. If our movement loses its savor then it will be fit for nothing more than to be trampled under men's feet.

My comments may seem harsh, but it is the truth as I see it.

Your brother,



Patrick Kopp

cc: Martin Myers,  
Vice President  
Urantia Foundation

*John,*

*I'm in agreement with Pat.*

*With love your sister,*

*Geralee Kopp*



URANTIA

URANTIA BROTHERHOOD

511 DIVERSEY PARKWAY CHICAGO ILLINOIS 60614

December 15, 1983

*what individual?*

Dear Friend:

*What?  
Has Varn  
Declared  
War on  
the world.*

I am writing on behalf of the Executive Committee of URANTIA Brotherhood concerning recent events. Information has been circulated about the possibility of a world war by (an individual) who has enjoyed long association with the activities of URANTIA Brotherhood. Such information is neither new nor remarkable in itself. What is new is the claim that the message is of spirit origin. We have received many telephone inquiries questioning the position of the Brotherhood concerning these matters and the individuals directly involved with spreading this information. *who?*

*As I understand  
it, Varn made  
his 1<sup>st</sup> claim  
to contact  
last winter.*

It is probable that many of you had not heard about these events until you received a letter from URANTIA Foundation stating some details of this matter. *Certainly not enough detail for me!*  
The first opportunity for the fourteen member Executive Committee of the Brotherhood to discuss these events was at its regular meeting November 18. Through the group discussion process we reached certain conclusions. I wish to share the results of our deliberations with you.

It should be clear that as an organization the Brotherhood does not support the claims being made nor are we to be in any way linked to them. This statement of group policy is not a judgment of the personal experience of any individual.

Let me review some background information. URANTIA Brotherhood is described in its Constitution as a social and fraternal organization with a religious purpose. Being associated with the Brotherhood either through membership or as a friend does not limit one's involvement with any other organization. The Brotherhood is not an ecclesiastical organization nor does it claim any ecclesiastical authority. It exercises no authority to sit in judgment on the personal religious experiences of anyone. To make an exception to this principle would set a bad precedent as it would change the nature of the Brotherhood. It is not our mission to assess any individual's sometimes dramatic experiences for validity, accuracy, or spiritual content.

However, while the Brotherhood does not pass judgment on the claims of individuals or groups, it does have the duty to make response to actions taken by individuals or groups that may create misunderstanding or confusion among members and friends of the Brotherhood. This is especially true if such confusion diverts efforts from our primary mission -- encouraging the study and dissemination of The URANTIA Book and its teachings. We believe the current situation requires our comment.

(over)

Over the years the Brotherhood office has received phone calls and letters from individuals claiming to have received, or to be receiving, special messages from supernatural sources. We have never disputed their personal claims. Neither have we accepted or encouraged them. Rather, we have sincerely wished them well in their truth-seeking efforts. URANTIA Brotherhood must conduct its affairs through the insights acquired from evolutionary experiential wisdom, epochal revelation, and the personal guidance of its members as all of these resources find group expression in the democratic process. Our democratic organization was established to allow group wisdom to function.

This situation is different in degree from those of the past since the individual bringing the message has had a long history of public ministry ~~in promoting~~ the gospel of Jesus. In addition he has been a speaker at many conferences and gatherings of URANTIA Book readers. His public stature coupled with the sincerity of his claim has created a perplexing situation for many who find it difficult to separate their love and caring for the individual from the disbelief in the claims he has made.

Let us not divide ourselves over whether one believes the validity of the "message" or not. Let us not make belief in the "message" a test of faith and friendship. Human argument about the claims being made have shown that what is reasonable to one can be unreasonable to another.

URANTIA Brotherhood is an organization established to promote and encourage teamwork among all believers in the fifth epochal revelation and their wise efforts to disseminate the supernal truths it contains. Do not let the thorns of human differences divert us from our task. Recall that Jesus tells us that we are not created to think alike. He tells his apostles to demonstrate spirit unity in the face of great diversity.

During this traditional season which celebrates the birth of Jesus let us pause to pray for greater understanding of each other and rededicate ourselves to the Father's will.

*I don't believe the intentional leaving out of Vern's name in this letter in any way helped foster clarity*

*JWH/jh*

*in this matter. Quite the contrary in light of Martin's letter as speaker for the Foundation,*

In fellowship,

*John W. Hales*

John W. Hales, President  
URANTIA Brotherhood

December 20, 1983

Martin:

In response to the letter sent out by you as Vice President of the Urantia Foundation, I wish to express my reactions.

First, I believe that it's very important, as I'm sure you do, that the Foundation and Brotherhood make clear their formal response to Vern's claims and actions. I believe you achieved this in your letter.

I'm not wholly convinced as to the unanimity of the trustees' opinions on this matter for I have received conflicting reports of their personal opinions. Also, many of us who are not in the inner circle of the Brotherhood are receiving very confusing accounts as to the attitudes of the Foundation and Brotherhood on this matter.

Still, all of this aside, I feel the spirit of your letter was cold, legalistic and paternalistic. Not in the spirit of the loving brotherhood we are supposed to be building with this revelation. Our movement, like the salt that has lost its savor, is fit for nothing but to be trodden underfoot if we cannot or will not manifest the fruits of the spirit by which we are to be known.

I believe it is vitally important that the trusted servants in leadership positions, such as yourself, need always be mindful that our goal is to help bring about the world realization of the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. Martin, your letter, in my opinion, did not sound very brotherly. Knowing your dedication to the Urantia Book revelation and its teaching, I can understand your feeling threatened by one such as Vern who so boldly declares that which seems so utterly false and that seemingly threatens the movement as a whole. But, I am puzzled by your failure to recognize that the healing solution is compassionate wisdom and understanding, not declarations of authority or statements of disenfranchisement. Authoritarian, paternalistic religious leaders act in this negative fashion. I hope we can do better.

Have no doubt that I have prayed for guidance in this matter.

Your brother,

cc: John Hales,  
President  
Urantia Brotherhood

Patrick Kopp

*Martin,  
Pat has forwarded my feelings and  
will love your sister  
Patrick Kopp*