

## A FORUM FOR ISSUES OF CONCERN TO STUDENTS OF THE URANTIA BOOK.

For one reason or another, no age (yet) has been easy to live in. Our growth depends upon our tolerance for one another's sincere opinions—as well as an equal willingness to alter those opinions when further learning and wisdom dictates that we should. The articles in these pages are the works of diverse authors who have taken the time to share their viewpoints on significant political and social issues. The opinions of these authors—including my own—are not necessarily those of the publishers of the *YOU-BE*. We continue to encourage your contributions—our reader's concerns will continue to direct the content of this forum. *The Editor.*

### FEMINISM AND THE QUESTION OF "RIGHTS"

*Constance Green*

*Lee's Summit, MO*

I've occasionally heard Urantians refer to the first four paragraphs on p.938 of the *URANTIA BOOK* as if it clearly stated exactly what male and female rights are, and that the two sexes are "extremely" different in other than biological sense. The term "mental dissimilarity" is used by the authors of the Book, and further reading tells us that women are "somewhat less logical"; although they "seem to have more intuition than men." Larry Tyler and Matthew Rapaport suggest that feminism denies men and women any but biological differences. Elsewhere, I have heard that feminists could never accept the notion that "women's rights are by no means men's rights" (938A). But after much U.B. research, I have failed to discover any but vague references concerning the differing rights of men and women, and I cannot see how feminism could hinder the spread of the Book.

I am sure there are certain fringe elements that might press beyond good sense; as in any movement, woman's struggle for equality has had its occasional sally over the lines of reasonable behavior. Yet I submit that the only connection between feminism and the Lucifer Manifesto is perhaps the remnants of a legacy left on Urantia, that of the pattern of confusion and over-reaction to injustice. Very few changes were made on this planet by means of peaceful and quiet protest, unfortunately; though things seem to be slowly changing. Anatole France has said "it is human nature to think wisely and act foolishly."

What are women's rights, or their domain? There is little elaboration in the *URANTIA BOOK*. On 794B we are told that rights "are relative and ever-changing, being no more than the rules of the game..." The closest definitive reference I discovered on the subject of woman's "omain" was the "spheres of grace and charm" (937C).

This would seem to embrace the whole of femininity. My mind can conjure a graceful—and charming—mechanic! There is nothing limiting in this reference to "domains." It speaks of dignity and honor, and seems not in the least to be weak or lesser. A human being could build an entire life around these principles and feel fulfilled.

We know that "woman will never be man's serious rival in industry" (938B). Yet industry has been the major factor in augmenting woman's liberty; so much so that now it "practically equals man's" (937B); and that was in 1934! With new choices come more responsibilities and decisions. It is by facing and choosing that both men and women grow more spiritual (1282A). "And again evolution has succeeded in doing what even revelation failed to accomplish" (937C).

We are told that much of woman's failure to progress was due to the fact that she was not a "spectacular or crisis hero" (934B). This is the only explicit reference to the "male domain" I could find, and it refers explicitly to "primitive" men and women. I think we can safely assume that heroism is not outside the domain of the civilized woman—look at Ellanora of Panoptia; not to mention the heroic women of our own planet! Even among advanced peoples, we are told that "...man's attempt to protect woman has always been a tacit assertion of superiority" (936).

I find it difficult to comprehend, with all the references in the *URANTIA BOOK* to the equal importance of the sexes, why some still prefer to dwell on the ambiguous references to the differences between men, women, and their "rights." They are there, to be sure, but I feel some are making too much of them. Page 939 tells us that the stamp of male or female will never leave us:

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"always will these two basic variations of humankind continue to intrigue, stimulate, encourage and assist each other..." We should put more emphasis on these balancing aspects of our personalities; these yin-yang principles, and less emphatically foster our differences. We would do better to read the words of the Mighty Messenger (245). Note that it is not specified if this ascendant being is male or female.

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## FEMINISM AND THE BALANCE OF THE URANTIA BOOK

Don Tyler & Mary Jo Clark

Chicago, IL

Man should not criticize woman's struggle for liberation without recalling the history of her suppression. At one time, women (and children) were even considered food for men (979). Men could kill their wives at will (936). Women could be, and in some places still are, loaned by their husbands. They were considered property of their fathers and husbands, or of the community (917, 781). In more "civilized" times they were not allowed at the banquet table (1878), nor were they spoken to in public by "decent" men (1612). The Apostles had difficulty with Jesus' full recognition of the equality of women (1614). Even in modern society we are told that "man's attempt to protect woman has always been a tacit assertion of superiority" (936).

There are many instances where the URANTIA BOOK teaches equality of women and men. The Caligastia One Hundred and their assistants consisted of 100 men and 100 women (742-9). If the women cooked and the men went out to work, the Book doesn't mention it! Part of the greatness of Eden was the equality accorded men and women; an "astounding innovation" to the people of that time (831). The Book says that the heavenly hosts "do not consider a planet as having emerged from barbarism so long as one sex seeks to tyrannize over the other" (564).

Jesus adopted the image of God as Father because it was the best of Judaism's images.\* Judaism was sexist, as most religions have been. But Jesus' actions showed that he was not sexist. It was both men and women who, after Pentecost, "would cry out 'Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty'" (2065).

Nowhere is woman's struggle for equality better detailed than in "Woman Under the Developing Mores" (936), which goes far beyond that for which feminists strive.

The Book recommends a return to the family council practices of the Andites who "did not maintain the patriarchal or autocratic form of family government" (941). In America, the fight for full human rights has won women the vote. The fight for legal and social rights continues, and someday, consciousness of equality will prevail. The differences between men and women will always exist, even to Paradise (939). How much greater are the differences between the Creator Son and the Universal Spirit, who are, nevertheless, proclaimed equal "in all en-

dowments of personality and attributes of divine character" (369)!

Seemingly sexist language in the URANTIA BOOK should not be confused with sexism. Remember that the authors were restricted to English, which lacks asexual language which might more properly describe our Universal Parent. The authors are careful to avoid sexism in context or content. Recall that we (men and women) are all *sons of God*, as distinct from the angels who are called the daughters of God (419). This does not preclude a certain personal identification with Michael for men, or with the Mother Spirit for women. But we sons of God must look each other in the eye as equals, at home, at work, in law, and in our hearts.

An individual brings to the URANTIA BOOK his or her own preconceptions, be they traditional family role models, or traditional Christian theology. The URANTIA BOOK is fair and is not conflict-inducing. It is more like Jesus as teacher than like John the Baptist. It sticks to the subject—God—rather than trying to bring about change through social manipulation; a top-down approach, a holistic concept, rather than a piecemeal approach. The truths it contains allow one to evolve a non-sexist family model, and a non-superstitious Christianity.

But some will fall away, clinging to their prejudices rather than allowing truth to weed out error, just as so many fell away from Jesus after the feeding of the 5000, and for the same reasons. Pray for them.

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## FEMINISM— A REVIVAL OF JESUS' PROCLAMATION OF THE SPIRITUAL EQUALITY OF WOMEN

Suzanne Hentrich

Grants Pass, OR

If Feminism has been inspired by Caligastia, he is in for a surprise. It was Jesus who first proclaimed the spiritual equality of women on earth and who, in an unprecedented move, established the Women's Corps to work for the kingdom. It was a woman who found the empty tomb, and to a woman Jesus first appeared in morontia form.

When Michael returns as the Son of Man AND the Son of God; glorified by his Father, and appearing on Earth in his own name, perhaps he will again choose a woman—a spiritually liberated woman—to whom to reveal himself, because she will have the spiritual eyes of faith to see him.

I do not doubt that Caligastia is in the heat of battle with Michael in every arena he can enter—including the Feminist movement. In this regard, it is important to remember that Michael was there before Caligastia, and will be there after him. Caligastia, at his frightening worst, is no more than the most lost of the lost.

If the rebellion is alive and well in America it is not in spite of Jesus, but because of his tolerance. Jesus always emulates his Father, and his Father before him allowed the rebellion to run its natural course for the greatest good of all.

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\* The Book suggests that it is the best HUMAN image (1260 & 2097). Editor.

## PACIFISM AND THE GOSPEL OF JESUS

Lou Meyer

Boulder, CO

Your invitation to discuss "things nuclear" and, more specifically, unilateral nuclear disarmament, seems to have brought forth some passionate responses. After the reading the contributions of Stephen Finlan (whose World Government emphasis I totally support) and Sandy Garrick, I would like to correct what I believe to be an erroneous interpretation of "pacifism" as expressed by these two writers—while keeping in mind that truth can be defined "only by living" (1459).

Stephen writes: "The folly of most of the peace movement in the West is that it thinks it can ignore the issues of the ideological struggle, and that *peace can come from naive good will*" (emphasis mine). Sandy believes that pacifism entails an "arbitrary" proclamation of peace; that "the religion of the URANTIA BOOK is NOT pacifist, it is rather active on all fronts of Spiritual Progress."

Sandy's image of pacifism appears to be equivalent to a do-nothing sort of *passivism*, while Stephen implies that the essence of pacifism is political naivete. Yet Webster's Third International Dictionary defines pacifism as "Opposition to war or violence as a means of settling disputes." This can entail both *activity AND worldly wisdom*. The meaning of 'pacifist,' from the latin root, is actually the same as 'peacemaker.'

On 1770 we are told three ways of contending with, and resisting, evil: 1) To return evil for evil—positive but unrighteous; 2) To suffer evil without complaint or resistance—purely negative (passivistic); and 3) To return good for evil—positive and righteous. On page 1929-31 there are detailed five positive means we are to use to promote peace on earth. These things also apply to our relation (as believers) to the secular governments of the planet, and there are two things we are admonished NOT to do on these same pages. In summary, the "weapons of peace" are: 1) The Spirit of Truth; 2) The fruits of our spirits—Brotherhood and service; 3) The power of our faith and courage; 4) Persistent and aggressive preaching; and 5) Zealous persuasion of men's minds. The things we are NOT to do include: 1) Rendering spiritual worship to earthly rulers; and 2) Employing the physical forces of earthly governments in furthering the work of the Spiritual Kingdom.

The modern equivalent of rendering worship to Caesar is called nationalism. On 2082 we are reminded that "nationalism (not atomic weapons, not pacifism, and not the Soviets) is the chief barrier to world peace." "My country right or wrong" is, in reality, the standard by which most people live—including Americans, and that is tantamount to rendering spiritual worship to earthly rulers. I have seen this phenomenon in thirty-two countries I have visited.

Concerning the "mixing of politics and religion," it seems to me that we who have been blessed with the faith to recognize the Fifth Epochal Revelation, have also been given the invitation to be the "new leaders, spiritual men and women who will dare to depend solely on Jesus and his incomparable teachings...exclusively devoted to the spiritual regeneration of men. And then will these spirit-

born souls *quickly* supply the leadership and inspiration requisite for the social, moral, economic, and *political* reorganization of the world" (2082-3, emphasis mine). If our mission is solely spiritual, then we should have nothing to do with support or encouragement of those means that temporal rulers (and most people) must still use because, living by fear and not by faith, these means are the only ones they know, the only ones in which they believe.

I too would much rather live in the United States than in Russia today. But I also see that there is much improvement needed by me and my fellow Americans. Instead of looking accusingly at the splinters in the eyes of others, let us look at the beam in our own. While we nominally claim "In God We Trust," we do in truth live more by "In Arms We Trust!" This beam is present in America and Russia, and is equally un-Jesuanian in either place. We try to claim Jesus for "our side" in order to justify our own fear and lack of brotherhood; just as his followers, two thousand years ago, tried to get him to take up arms against the Romans. "Never make the mistake of identifying Jesus' teachings with any political or economic theory, with any social or industrial system" (1580).

To come finally to the question of unilateral disarmament, I favor it. As a believer in Jesus I cannot say otherwise. But I am not the Government, the decision is their's. "The proper attitude [of religious groups] consists in the teaching of non-violence..." (1088). Until such time as our political leaders (and their supporters) are spiritually converted—are truly convinced that the power of love is superior to any military solution—non-violence will not work for them. For our part, let us remember that there may be sudden breakthroughs in the story of man's spiritual evolution. Since "Urantia is now quivering on the very brink of one of its most amazing and enthralling epochs of social readjustment, moral quickening and spiritual enlightenment," (2082) let us dare to take to heart Jesus' invitation to be his ambassadors, and live by the weapons of peace which he gave to us. Be at peace, fear not! "The act is ours; the consequences God's" (556 & 1286).

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## INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP PACIFISM

Stephen Finlan

Fairfax, CA

Lou Meyer's statements about pacifism are very helpful; indeed, we need to preach non-violence. But this is something that applies to us as *individuals* and as *religious groups*; when talking on the political level, the appropriate attitude is the "adequate defense" (in response to wickedness) mentioned on pages 802-4.

My article (see *last issue*; ed.) did not even deal with pacifism as a personal attitude. I was responding to the idea of *unilateral disarmament*, which goes far beyond personal or religious-group pacifism. And I repeat that it is naive to ask Caesar to obey the rules of the spiritual kingdom. Caesar, indeed, should obey the principles of ethics which apply in the secular sphere—but also principles of political wisdom, and these indicate that disarmament in the absence of supra-national government is

suicidal. State defense against aggression is not the same as the use of force in the promulgation of the kingdom.

And one of the best things that a "peacemaker" can do today is to express his moral solidarity with persecuted religionists in communist countries. The world unity that the Kremlin seeks is the unity of a spiritless population

which allows a small 'vanguard' to enjoy (or *take*) all liberties. The Soviets treat religious faith as political rebellion, whether it is intended as such or not. The most dangerous embodiment of institutional Luciferism is the Kremlin. Mustn't even a purely personal pacifism undertake some form of opposition to militant atheism?

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Matthew Rapaport

San Francisco, CA

We may not all be "golden rulers" in America (or any part of the so-called "free world"), but there is one great difference between the large communist States and all other countries—a constitutional denial of the reality of God! The "virus of national sovereignty" (1491) may be the greatest barrier to secular peace, but atheism is the "maximization of ugliness" (646). Is a nation that refuses its citizens the right to worship as they choose much different than a System that rebels against the Constellation Government?

As Lou Meyer points out, the Book spends 5 pages (more or less) on the subject of National Sovereignty and its significance to our planetary progress (1486-91). But on 1487 it does say that "The concept of equality never brings peace except in the MUTUAL recognition of some overcontrolling influence of supersovereignty." On 1488 we are told that "Between the level of the individual human being and the level of the total of mankind, all groupings...are...of value only in so far as they enhance the welfare, well-being, and progress of the individual and the planetary grand total—man and mankind." A state which permits its citizens to express their recognition of God is of value in an age when there are States that impose sanctions upon such expression.

Within those nations that allow their populace to worship God there are two types of governments. One attempts to restrict the content of worship to specific creeds (like Iran) while the other sets no constitutional boundaries on the individual's right to worship in his own way. Despite the presence of "vicious" intolerant minorities (against which we are also warned on page 798), our nation is one of the latter. It does appear, then, that an "adequate" defense on our part, against the manifestly aggressive intentions on the part of certain States, IS warranted by analysis of revelation (804).

A "my country right or wrong" sort of attitude DOES equate to religion (1100), and this is a backward attitude, given what we know is possible for our age. But the existence of such persons in a nation, and even the fact that, as a nation, we have often acted in a purely selfish manner, does not annul the value of this nation in the evolutionary portrait of the planet. And this is true of any nation which permits its citizens the right to worship as they choose. On 1580 Jesus makes clear that his teachings are to be applied to individuals and not to nations. Somehow, we must live with this distinction—at least until there is a real global government. What constitutes adequate defense is another matter.

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It is hard for me to imagine a feminist who would concede that "...women's rights are by no means men's rights" (938). Most people would say that a woman who believes this is NOT a feminist, but this does not mean that such women condone old-fashioned or out-dated sexual role models. Recall that rights are linked to responsibilities (793-4 & 906), and the model of marriage patterned after Michael and the Universe Spirit may have little to do with the differing rights of men and women as such (I am grateful to Connie Green for this distinction). There is, also, the matter of the differing qualities of even the ideal love of a mother and father. The Book is clear on this point (76), but even Don Tyler seems to believe that 'father' is a "sexist" term which the authors had no choice but to employ.

The feminist doctrine—with its denial of these crucial concepts—is pervasive in this society. Many women have, in fact, had trouble with this section of the URANTIA BOOK, and its generally "male oriented" Deity descriptors, and have, as a result, dismissed the Book as sexist. Thus the question remains: what impact will feminism have on acceptance of the URANTIA BOOK? A related question is how we can best present the Book to women (and men) who are trapped by this particular falsehood in the wider philosophy of feminism?

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Again I want to thank those who donated to this effort after our publication of the last issue. Our readership is increasing slowly, and the number of persons donating their time and effort to the forum is increasing. The Tortoise continues to carry a large percentage of the financial burden of publication. We do this, and will continue to do this because we feel the forum is valuable. More and more readers, it seems, agree with us. To those who have not contributed, I urge you to do so—both with financial and editorial efforts. Help us to expand and reach more readers with this unique window into the concerns of URANTIA BOOK readers.

SEND ADDRESS CHANGES, LETTERS, AND DONATIONS TO:  
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