

JOURNAL



URANTIA.

A News Journal for Readers of The Urantia Book

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IUA 2000 International Conference

In the year 2000 the IUA International Conference will be held at **Wagner College in New York City on August 4-7**. The conference site overlooks the beautiful New York Harbor and is only a 20-minute car ride from Newark International Airport or 45 minutes from JFK Airport.

August 3, Thursday, will be a pre-conference day that will focus on issues related to the Urantia movement, the IUA, translations, and the Foundation. On Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the conference will focus on its spiritual theme, "Living the Father's Will," featuring speakers and workshops. Children will be able to participate in a special program that will mirror the adult program. Monday will provide a summation of the conference and will provide time for a planned tour of Manhattan. Participants may stay an extra night at the campus for an additional fee.

The program planners are looking for volunteers for speakers and workshop moderators, as well as volunteers for the children's program.

For more information or to volunteer, you may contact Nick Scalzo at tel/fax 1-860-669-4900 or email NICHOLASWS@aol.com.

Three New IUA Associations Formed

EXCERPTS FROM REPORTS BY CATHY JONES

Estonia

In August 20, 1999, eleven *Urantia Book* believers from Finland, Belgium, Holland and the United States gathered in Karepa, Estonia, to celebrate with our Estonian brothers and sisters the licensing of the Estonian Urantia Association, and join with them in their third annual conference. Of the 36 Estonians present, 22 became charter members of the EUA.

Karapa is a small village about 110 km from Tallinn. The camp where the conference was held is located on the Gulf of Finland, part of the Baltic Sea. As one walks along the beach viewing the dark green color of the sea, a giant guard-tower overlooking the water is visible—a reminder of Soviet occupation. Before the Estonians won their freedom during the Singing Rebellion in 1988, this camp was used by the Soviets as a summer retreat for boys and girls. Veikko Raagmets, the present director, was introduced to the book by Peep Sõber. Through Veikko's efforts, the camp has been made available for Urantia conferences.

On Friday, August 20, officers were elected: Peep Sõber, president; Ruth Kask, vice president; Jüri Vatter, secretary; and Arvi Pikner, treasurer. For the signing of the licensing agreement, Seppo Kanerva, President of the Council of National Presidents and Vice Presidents acted as a special Trustee Representative. He read a very inspiring welcome-congratulatory message from Trustee President, Richard Keeler.

The next day began three days of conference on the theme of Paper 100, "Religion in Human Experience." Discourses were given by Peep Sõber, Vello Reebe, Seppo Kanerva, Cathy Jones, Ralph Zehr, and Veikko Raagmets. There were special musical presentations also.

Congratulations and love to all our Estonian brothers and sisters, with a special thanks to Peep Sõber for the many hours of organizing the Association and producing the Conference.

Canada

The new association in Canada was licensed on Saturday, October 23, 1999, at the Silver Springs Retreat Centre, Flesherton, Ontario, Canada, about 100 miles north of Ontario in an area of beautiful green rolling meadows.

Attending the weekend meeting/retreat were the presidents and vice presidents of the three Canadian local

associations, their spouses, plus Urantia Foundation Trustee president, Richard Keeler, and IUA administrator, Cathy Jones. The purpose of the meeting was to get acquainted, approve the bylaws, and elect a governing board for the newly formed national association. The new officers include: Gaétan Charland, president; Nathen Jansen, vice president; Sue Tennant, secretary; and Brian King, treasurer.

From the time the participants started arriving Friday afternoon until the Sunday noon departure, there was a sense of oneness of spirit and commitment. Woven into the light-hearted fellowship one could feel a sincere devotion to a personal manifestation of the commonly shared principles of *The Urantia Book*.

On Sunday morning the concentric-circles flag was raised as we stood shoulder-to-shoulder, holding hands in a circle. The newly elected president Gaétan led the group in a prayer of thanksgiving, with a pledge to loyal service.

Southern Cone

On November 14, in Santiago, Chile, Asociación Urantia del Cono Sur was born. In English that is Urantia Association of the Southern Cone (S.A.) This group currently is composed of members from Chile and Argentina, but with the name "Southern Cone," it could expand to include the adjoining South American countries.

It is early spring in Chile and the nearby Jesuit Retreat Center, with its profusion of roses and early blooming flowers, made a perfect setting for readers from Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Finland, and USA to spend two days of study and fellowship. Language is never a barrier when spirits meet one-on-one. There are many new enthusiastic readers of *The Urantia Book* who are eagerly embracing its enlightened, revealed message. The total membership is 31, eleven of whom are full voting members. The other 20 are in process of completing their first reading of the entire book. All understand the mission of IUA—that of study, service, and disseminating the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. They consider it a privilege to work as partners with the Foundation through a licensing agreement.

The officers are: president, Mario Casassus Bulnes (Chile); vice president, Carlos Rubinsky (Argentina); secretary/treasurer, Nadine Loubet (Chile).

Congratulations to all of the new members of our IUA family.

IUA News from Around the World

News from Russia:

Here are some excerpts from an article by Viktor Paaso that appeared in "Karelian News" (Karjalan Sanomat—a Finnish-language newspaper from Petrozavodsk, Russia) dated October 13, 1999:

Activities of the Urantia Movement

The Urantia Book with 2097 pages appeared in English in the year 1955. The first Urantia Society was established in June 1956. In 1986 the first International Readers Conference outside the USA was held in France. The first non-American Brotherhood was ratified in Pieksamaki, Finland, in 1989. The fifth International Urantia Conference will be held in New York City, August 5—7, 2000.

The Urantia Book in Russia

I got my first typed strips, which told me about an enormous cosmological *Urantia Book*, in Finland in 1984. At that time, the translation into Finnish was in progress, and it was ready in 1993. I was interested in ufos and paranormalities, and I read the strips that said: "Urantia is the name that the rulers of the Universe gave to our planet."

Four years ago the friends in the Finland Urantia Association wrote me that the book would be translated into Russian in Helsinki. A man who moved from Petrozavodsk to Finland at the beginning of the 80s and his brother here in Petrozavodsk had received an affirmative answer to their request for a Russian translation from Urantia Foundation, Chicago, in 1992. They started working on the translation immediately. By the end of the winter in 1997 the Russian translation was ready. The first 5000 copies of the book were printed outside Russia. Now the second edition is under preparation. It differs to some extent from the first edition, for many improvements and corrections to the translation are being made.

A month ago Catherine Jones from the IUA visited St. Petersburg. A retired doctor, Vitali Kondratjev, who is becoming the representative for Urantia Foundation in Russia, succeeded in registering a firm he has founded—Irena, Inc. The firm is active in importing books and as a distribution channel. After ever so many hindrances and difficulties, about 900 Russian translations of *The Urantia Book* have traveled from the Helsinki office to St. Petersburg.

The next delivery will be from Paris, where almost 3000 books are stored.

Cathy Jones, our guest from the IUA, promised to the readers in St. Petersburg that Russia will be a member of the IUA in May 2000. At the end, Cathy Jones said: "Lenin tried to conquer the world without God. The people of Russia will conquer the world for God through love."

News from the Council of National Presidents:

When the Council of National Presidents convened in June 1999, one of their first orders of business concerned the IUA Journal: to officially appoint an editor-in-chief, to approve the mission statement and to appoint a board of editors. The reasons for these actions were: (1) to provide direction and continuity for the Journal in the future, and (2) to promote international participation in the Journal. The CNP also approved translating the Journal into Spanish, which could double its present distribution.

On September 22, 1999, the Council unanimously appointed the following persons to the Board of Editors of the IUA Journal: Mr. Pascal Coulombe, France; Ms. Catherine Jones, USA; Mr. Kari Kuosmanen, Finland; Ms. Janet Nilsen, USA; Ms. Maggie Pyle, USA; Mr. Andrés Rodríguez, Colombia; Mr. Trevor Swadling, Australia.

These are the duties of the board of editors:

1. Promote the Journal around the world. Encourage people to subscribe to and read the Journal.
2. Solicit articles for the Journal, including papers presented at conferences.
3. Report on IUA news.
4. Review and approve articles submitted for publication.
5. Recruit and develop future editors.

Writers worldwide are encouraged to submit articles to any member of the Board of Editors or to any Urantia Foundation Office.

News from Norway:

The Urmia Lectures: World Federalism

In Oslo, Norway, we've had a Urantia study group going more or less since 1988, and continuously since Jesus' 2000th birthday in 1994. The group is a small but committed group, even though we live far apart and only manage to meet about nine times a year.

Early this year 1999 the Oslo UBSG was, in connection with a visit from a lone reader in Denmark who brought along a friend, honoured by the presence of an unusual guest named Harold S. Bidmead. He is English but lives near Oslo, where he keeps his office; he's 85 years old but is still going strong. He has been a prominent figure in the World Federalist movement for nearly sixty years, almost since its inception. Our guest had never before heard of *The Urantia Book*, and for this special occasion the group decided to study the Urmia teachings in paper 134 (pp. 1485--91). As far as the content of the Urmia teachings goes, hardly any of it was new to Mr. Bidmead, except for the claim of Jesus sponsoring the ideas that he himself had devoted the work of a lifetime advocating. He agreed with everything we read and was pleasantly surprised, although he feels too old now to get involved in the study of the whole *Urantia Book*. But he soon started preparing to spread the word about Jesus' Urmia lectures to his fellow world federalists.

As concerns the several movements scattered around the planet and more or less calling themselves world federalist, Mr. Bidmead warns that the majority of them merely dedicate themselves to strengthening the United Nations (UN), which has written into its Charter that each member state is sovereign. In other words, most professed world federalists are only ostensibly so, since the UN is merely a league of nations constitutionally inhibited from becoming a bona fide world government. Mr. Bidmead also stresses the importance of having the representatives in the future world parliament democratically elected directly by the people of each member state, and not, as in the UN, selected by their respective governments. He further emphasizes that the supra-national government must be empowered to enforce international law directly on its individual citizens, and not, as the UN is designed for, through the intermediary of national governments; it should be invested with *full* governmental power in a *limited* sphere.

In order to preclude the possibility of a world government becoming a world tyranny, somewhat strict laws regarding fair and free elections and respect for human rights and ethnic minorities will have to be implemented in every member state, under federal supervision. So, Mr. Bidmead does not recommend us to invest our hopes in an adequately radical transformation of the UN, where many of the member states yet don't have legitimately elected governments, which are not likely to agree to surrender their sovereign power to a supra-national entity. Instead he envisages a nucleus of adequately democratic states forming a world-wide federation "so powerful that nobody will dare to threaten it, so just that none will wish to challenge it, and so successful that all who had at first stayed outside will clamour to join." And it's a paying proposition: Enormous burdens can be lifted from the taxpayers' shoulders by greatly reducing the need for an armaments industry. So: Maybe the preliminary stages of a genuine world government are to appear sooner than we tend to think, once the advantages become clear to the electorates of the already democratic nations?

Still there seems to be no large, efficient and well-organized world federalist movement worthy of the name in operation, but two newsletters serving as independent forums for discussing how to achieve a world government are available.

News from Colombia:

On Saturday, August 21, 1999, we had our Christmas celebration with a session of discourses and a glass of wine in an atmosphere of spirituality and brotherhood. Forty believers accepted our invitation to this event.

Carlos Zapata, our president, spoke on various different topics concerning our organization.

One of the presenters, Juan David Monotoya, psychologist, anthropologist, university professor and expert in comparative religions, spoke about different points of view in Christian theology, about bible interpretation, and about some historical mistakes in the New Testament.

We took advantage of this event to distribute our journal that contained interesting themes related to *The Urantia Book*.

What Does *The Urantia Book* Instruct Concerning the Dissemination of Its Teachings?

SEPPO KANERVA, HELSINKI, FINLAND

We may note that *The Urantia Book* does not come up with any explicit instructions concerning the dissemination of the revelation. We can, of course, study the methods employed in the dissemination of the four earlier revelations and then endeavour to apply the same methods in the dissemination of the fifth epochal revelation.

The first revelation, the Dalamatia teachings, was propagated through a method which involved inviting individuals from various tribes and peoples to Dalamatia where they received education, later to be sent back to their tribes as emissaries of a new and better life.

As concerns the second epochal revelation, the Edenic teachings, the method of dissemination was partly identical with that of the first revelation, but there was also the new feature of Adam and Eve organising about one hundred centres of culture and progress in various parts of the world. After the death of Adam and Eve the teachings were, through thousands of years, disseminated by a priesthood trained by Seth, the eldest surviving son born in the second garden. Seth's grandson, Kenan, instituted a missionary service which spread the new teachings among the surrounding tribes, near and far (849:7). The impact of the teachings of the Sethite priesthood began to wane only around 2500 BC.

The first disseminator of the third epochal revelation, Machiventa Melchizedek's teachings, in the 19th century BC, was Abraham up until the end of his life, whereupon the Salem missionaries took over and continued spreading the good news for hundreds of years.

The dissemination of the 6th century BC "mini revelation" happened through prophets and the founders of the new religions of that epoch.

The disseminators of the fourth epochal revelation included the apostles, other disciples, the group of 70 teachers, the women evangelists and the other Jesus-trained followers and religionists in several corners of the Roman Empire. Long after Jesus' earthly death, his teachings were finally committed also into writing. A particular role in the spread of this revelation fell upon the Pharisee Saul after he had—because of an unexplained experience—become Paul, the champion of his own understanding of Jesus'

teachings. Mainly through the efforts of Paul, and to a lesser extent through the activities of the apostles, and due to an unwitting distortion of Jesus' teachings, Christianity and the Christian church gradually evolved.

We may, however, question the helpfulness of the methods employed in the propagation of the previous revelations as concerns the dissemination of the fifth epochal revelation. The fifth revelation was delivered to us as a book, and the depth of its teachings can hardly be forced into the patterns observed in the dissemination of the previous revelations. Not many of us can and will hit the road and start proclaiming the good tidings on street corners and market places. Even so, the teachings of the book do give a multifaceted portrayal of the ways a religious revelation wins the hearts of men: It is spread by all those who believe in the revelation, and the believers do it through their own lives, in their relationships with their fellow men, in their contacts with other humans. Dissemination happens in believers' deeds, behaviour, speaking, and teaching.

What Is the Message to Be Disseminated?

An exhaustive reply to this question would require a presentation of factually all the teachings included in *The Urantia Book*. That is: I should read *The Urantia Book* to you within an hour, or come up with an exhaustive summary of its teachings. I shall not do so.

Each disseminator of the message will create his personal conception of what the message is that he endeavours to spread. It may, for example, be the gospel of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. The message may be God's love and our doing his will. The will of the Father is that each of us becomes perfect even as he is perfect, and God has reserved for man an eternal career so to enable him to achieve the goal* of perfection. Man only needs to give his free-will consent to doing God's will.

Of Jesus we are told that *the burden of his message was: the fact of the heavenly Father's love and the truth of his mercy, coupled with the good news that man is a faith-son of this same God of love* [1460:6].

Said Jesus:

"Simply go forth proclaiming: This is the kingdom of heaven—God is your Father and you are his sons, and this good news, if you wholeheartedly believe it, is your eternal salvation" [1593:0]. "When you enter the kingdom, you are reborn. You cannot teach the deep things of the spirit to those who have been born only of the flesh; first see that men are born of the spirit before you seek to instruct them in the advanced ways of the spirit. Do not undertake to show men the beauties of the temple until you have first taken them into the temple. Introduce men to God and as the sons of God before you discourse on the doctrines of the fatherhood of God and the sonship of men" [1592:6].

The truths above might do well as the message of even the modern disseminators.

In the teachings of *The Urantia Book* there is much that is of general religiosity and which the book holds in common with the doctrines of institutionalised religions. Secularism and the predominant material-mindedness, materialistic philosophy, and the unlimited confidence in the unaided mere human ways of solving the world's problems, are facts which speak for—even call for—our propagating the message of general religiosity. A reader of *The Urantia Book* may, however, induce into the spreading of even this message of general religiosity details and features that no institutionalised religion is capable of providing. One such feature, figuring prominently in *The Urantia Book*, is the teaching about the character of genuine, true religion. The teaching of *The Urantia Book* is that true religion is personal, that it concerns man's personal relationship with God; true religion does not signify that one adopts certain doctrinal tenets and lives in accordance with some preconceived rules of morality, nor does it signify observance of some given rituals. Personal, genuine, and true religion becomes manifest in man's life. It will appear as fruits of the spirit. It will make such a religionist spiritually fragrant and attractive.

Jesus taught:

"Let me emphatically state this eternal truth: If you, by truth co-ordination, learn to exemplify in your lives this beautiful wholeness of righteousness, your fellow men will then seek after you that they may gain what you have so acquired. The measure wherewith truth seekers are drawn to you represents the measure of your truth endowment, your righteousness. The extent to which you have to go with your message to the people is, in a way, the measure of your failure to live the whole or righteous life, the truth-co-ordinated life." [1726:2]

The revelation intimates that your religiosity is bound to be manifest and recognisable. We may, hence, conclude that you need not assert it or advertise it to others. If you feel a need to advertise, it is warranted to doubt if genuine faith truly exists. The quotations hereafter verify this statement:

Observing minds and discriminating souls know religion when they find it in the lives of their fellows. Religion requires no definition; we all know its social, intellectual, moral, and spiritual fruits. . . . One of the characteristic peculiarities of genuine religious assurance is that, notwithstanding the absoluteness of its affirmations and the stanchness of its attitude, the spirit of its expression is so poised and tempered that it never conveys the slightest impression of self-assertion or egoistic exaltation. . . . Thus do the words and acts of true and undefiled religion become compellingly authoritative for all enlightened mortals [1119:6—7].

Ostensible religiosity actually consists of a mere superficial—not internalised—mastery of certain dogmas and moral codes, and of critical attitudes towards one's own life, but particularly towards the lives of others. Often in the light of these dogmas and codes, this religiosity ends up in fanaticism, intolerance and intolerableness, betrayal of intellectual honesty, isolation and lessened efficiency as a propagator of the saving message.

The precondition for anyone's capability of disseminating the message through one's spiritual fruits is of course that one has the faith that yields these fruits of the spirit. In the absence of the faith, the only method of propagating the message is that of preaching. The fifth epochal revelation explains in so many ways what the manifestations of faith and genuine religion, the fruits of the spirit, are. The exhaustive list appearing in paragraphs 1108:4—16 of *The Urantia Book* is not quoted too often in discourses dealing with the ways that religion and spirituality manifest themselves in an individual.

These manifestations include: (1) Genuine religion causes ethics and morals to progress. (2) Religion produces a sublime trust in the goodness of God even in the face of bitter disappointment and crushing defeat. (3) True spirituality generates profound courage and confidence. (4) Genuine religion exhibits inexplicable poise and sustaining tranquillity. (5) Religion maintains poise and composure of personality in the face of maltreatment and the rankest injustice. (6) Religion maintains a trust in ultimate victory. (7) True faith does not falter in the face of intellectual sophistries; it rather has an unswerving belief in God. (8) True religiosity has faith in the survival of the soul regardless

leadership has never exceeded one per cent of the population. [911:7]

Another revelatory teaching proclaims:

Most great religious epochs have been inaugurated by the life and teachings of some outstanding personality; leadership has originated a majority of the worth-while moral movements of history. And men have always tended to venerate the leader, even at the expense of his teachings; to revere his personality, even though losing sight of the truths which he proclaimed. And this is not without reason; there is an instinctive longing in the heart of evolutionary man for help from above and beyond. This craving is designed to anticipate the appearance on earth of the Planetary Prince and the later Material Sons. [1008:7]

It is politically correct to question the importance of leadership because leadership is—incorrectly—viewed as something antagonistic to democracy. The revelation, however, instructs us in the words of Jesus:

"In my universe and in my Father's universe of universes, our brethren-sons are dealt with as individuals in all their spiritual relations, but in all group relationships we unfailingly provide for definite leadership. Our kingdom is a realm of order, and where two or more will creatures act in co-operation, there is always provided the authority of leadership." [1959:0]

Consequently, we may disseminate the message also in our refusing to act upon these illusory notions about democracy and denying our support from them. We should rather be emboldened to go against the mainstream putting our trust in the revelatory knowledge and acting upon it.

The scope of the efficacy of the propagation of the message depends on the propagating individual's spirituality, faith, and capabilities of being convincing, yet to an equal extent it depends on the attitude of the target of the propagation effort. Some people are conformists: they willingly subjugate themselves to the dominance of tradition and authority. A great part of even those who view themselves as religious belong to this order of people. Likewise, a great part of those who do not view themselves as religious belong to this same category. They are slavishly obedient to traditions, hardly questioning anything; their bleak ideas they have adopted entirely from other people.

Some people again are happy with modest achievements, which are only just adequate to make everyday life balanced. At an early stage they stop pondering the deep issues of life and fail to progress beyond this level of modest achievements. Their relationship with God is almost dead.

They believe that matters take care of themselves—struggle and effort are not needed. The number of those who fit into this characterisation is high.

Then again there are those who do think and ponder and advance up to the level of logical intellectualism. They do not, however, progress any further because they dare not take the step of faith, the stride of belief. They are prisoners of their cultural setting and their social network. The door of the cell is open, but they dare not walk away. Those who are engaged in the domains of science and culture are well represented within this category.

Within these three categories, faith is not excessively vibrant. They have a tendency to be fanatical, to persecute dissenters, and to be intolerant. *Living faith does not foster bigotry, persecution, or intolerance [1115:0].*

Finally, the fourth category consists of those who have liberated themselves of all obstacles put by conventionalism and traditionalism and who have mustered the courage to think, act, and live honestly, loyally, and truthfully (1114:2). Those who belong to this group do not concern themselves so much with any specific beliefs or given modes of living as they concern themselves with discerning the truth of living, the good and right technique of reacting to the ever-recurring situations of human existence (1115:6).

The revelation presents also another, slightly different, categorisation that classifies professed believers. In this categorisation, believers are classified either as indolent conformists or escapists and romantic sentimentalists, or finally as activists (1120:4—1121:2).

Indolent conformists: *There is no real religion apart from a highly active personality. Therefore do the more indolent of men often seek to escape the rigors of truly religious activities by a species of ingenious self-deception through resorting to a retreat to the false shelter of stereotyped religious doctrines and dogmas. . . . Intellectual crystallization of religious concepts is the equivalent of spiritual death. [1120:4]*

Escapists and romantic sentimentalists: *Again, there are other types of unstable and poorly disciplined souls who would use the sentimental ideas of religion as an avenue of escape from the irritating demands of living. When certain vacillating and timid mortals attempt to escape from the incessant pressure of evolutionary life, religion, as they conceive it, seems to present the nearest refuge, the best avenue of escape. But it is the mission of religion to prepare man for bravely, even heroically, facing the vicissitudes of life. . . . Mysticism, however, is often something of a retreat from life which is embraced by those humans who do not relish the more robust activities of living a religious life in the open arenas of human society*

and commerce. True religion must act. . . . Never will religion be content with mere thinking or unacting feeling. [1121:1]

Activists: *But true religion is alive. . . . To keep pace in his life experience with the impelling demands and the compelling urges of a growing religious experience means incessant activity in spiritual growth, intellectual expansion, factual enlargement, and social service. [1120:4]*

For a disseminator who approaches people with a revelatory message, the situation is not hopeless with regard to any of the classifications above. As targets, those of the first three groups are of course more difficult than the others, but the revelation does contain potentials which, if applied wisely, will penetrate even the most petrified heart. There is one exception: the situation is hopeless with regard to those who are spiritually dead. The fifth epochal revelation instructs: *Intellectual crystallization of religious concepts is the equivalent of spiritual death [1120:4].*

Circumstances which facilitate propagation

There are, apart from the superhuman influences mentioned above, also a number of features and capacities in man himself which help him in truth recognition and message acceptance.

The endowment of reality sensitivity. The revelation unveils that man is endowed with a power to recognise reality, a truthful portraiture of that which exists:

All divisions of human thought are predicated on certain assumptions which are accepted, though unproved, by the constitutive reality sensitivity of the mind endowment of man. [1139:3]

The desire to know. The revelation intimates that human curiosity is purposeful:

Curiosity—the spirit of investigation, the urge of discovery, the drive of exploration—is a part of the inborn and divine endowment of evolutionary space creatures. These natural impulses were not given you merely to be frustrated and repressed. [160:1]

Perfection hunger. There is in man a hunger for perfection, and that fact, of course, has its bearing on the dissemination of the message:

There must be perfection hunger in man's heart to insure capacity of comprehending the faith paths to supreme attainment. [1118:4]

The craving for survival. Man has an inborn desire for survival, and that again constitutes the fundamental of faith:

The highest evidence of the reality and efficacy of religion consists in the fact of human experience; namely, that man, naturally fearful and suspicious, innately endowed with a strong instinct of self-preservation and craving survival after death, is willing fully to trust the deepest interests of his present and future to the keeping and direction of that power and person designated by his faith as God. That is the one central truth of all religion. [1127:5]

Religious tendencies are innate. Religious tendencies need not be created in any human being for it is an innate inclination:

The religious tendencies of the human races are innate; they are universally manifested and have an apparently natural origin. . . . [1129:2]

Because religion is about spirituality, about one's personal relationship with God, there is no language that could adequately discuss this value on the level of the mind. This is an aspect to recall when one is engaged in the propagation of the message. The fifth epochal revelation describes this paradox in these words:

Religious speculation is inevitable but always detrimental; speculation invariably falsifies its object. Speculation tends to translate religion into something material or humanistic, and thus, while directly interfering with the clarity of logical thought, it indirectly causes religion to appear as a function of the temporal world, the very world with which it should everlastingly stand in contrast. Therefore will religion always be characterized by paradoxes, the paradoxes resulting from the absence of the experiential connection between the material and the spiritual levels of the universe—morontia mota, the superphilosophic sensitivity for truth discernment and unity perception. [1121:4]

The message is a Revelation!

The message to disseminate is a revelation—the fifth epochal revelation and the restatement of the fourth epochal revelation—printed in a book, *The Urantia Book*. It is therefore worthwhile to study in what manner the revelation characterises itself.

. . . revelation (the substitute for morontia mota) leads to the consciousness of true reality. . . . [1122:1].

Revelation liberates men and starts them out on the eternal adventure. [1122:2]

... revelation glorifies man and discloses his capacity for partnership with God. [1122:3]

... revelation portrays the eternal brotherhood, the Paradise Corps of the Finality. [1122:4]

... revelation is the assurance of personality survival. [1122:5]

Science indicates Deity as a fact; philosophy presents the idea of an Absolute; religion envisions God as a loving spiritual personality. Revelation affirms the unity of the fact of Deity, the idea of the Absolute, and the spiritual personality of God and, further, presents this concept as our Father—the universal fact of existence, the eternal idea of mind, and the infinite spirit of life. [1122:7]

... revelation tends to make man Godlike. [1122:10]

Revelation unifies history, co-ordinates geology, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, sociology, and psychology. [1123:6]

How does one propagate it?

Jesus instructed his apostles in many ways. As concerns the dissemination of his message he said:

“When you enter the kingdom, you are reborn. You cannot teach the deep things of the spirit to those who have been born only of the flesh; first see that men are born of the spirit before you seek to instruct them in the advanced ways of the spirit. Do not undertake to show men the beauties of the temple until you have first taken them into the temple. Introduce men to God and as the sons of God before you discourse on the doctrines of the fatherhood of God and the sonship of men.” [1592:6]

That night Jesus discoursed to the apostles on the new life in the kingdom. He said in part:

“Do not strive with men—always be patient. It is not your kingdom; you are only ambassadors.” [1593:0]

“... how many times have I instructed you to refrain from all efforts to take something out of the hearts of those who seek salvation? How often have I told you to labor only to put something into these hungry souls? Lead men into the kingdom, and the great and living truths of the kingdom will presently drive out all serious error. When you have presented to mortal man the good news that God is his

Father, you can the easier persuade him that he is in reality a son of God. And having done that, you have brought the light of salvation to the one who sits in darkness. Simon, when the Son of Man came first to you, did he come denouncing Moses and the prophets and proclaiming a new and better way of life? No. I came not to take away that which you had from your forefathers but to show you the perfected vision of that which your fathers saw only in part.” [1592:4]

About Jesus' teaching methods we are told at least these aspects:

And this was his method of instruction: Never once did he attack their errors or even mention the flaws in their teachings. In each case he would select the truth in what they taught and then proceed so to embellish and illuminate this truth in their minds that in a very short time this enhancement of the truth effectively crowded out the associated error. [1456:0]

In all his teaching Jesus unfailingly avoided distracting details. He shunned flowery language and avoided the mere poetic imagery of a play upon words. He habitually put large meanings into small expressions. For purposes of illustration Jesus reversed the current meanings of many terms, such as salt, leaven, fishing, and little children. He most effectively employed the antithesis, comparing the minute to the infinite and so on. His pictures were striking, such as, “The blind leading the blind.” But the greatest strength to be found in his illustrative teaching was its naturalness. Jesus brought the philosophy of religion from heaven down to earth. He portrayed the elemental needs of the soul with a new insight and a new bestowal of affection. [1771:1]

The modern disseminator of the message will most certainly act in a wise manner if he endeavours to be faithful to Jesus' teaching method, a method which in many ways is greatly different from the ways of human teaching.

In conclusion

Once the lives of individuals undergo profound changes, it will unavoidably bring about profound changes also in their actions. Today it is still difficult to discern changes which would be occasioned by any conscious efforts for world betterment founded on the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. We must not worry about this, much less feel guilty because of it, for the revelators themselves intimated that the revelation was delivered to us long before its world-wide impact. Everything, after all, depends on evolution.

And evolution is slow but terribly effective.

The Delhi Book Fair

BHAGAVAN S. BURITZ, Hawaii, USA

A few years ago I turned 50 and asked myself, "How will I spend the next half of my life. What is important to me? What have I learned? Who or what are my teachers?" *The Urantia Book* is in the top of the tier. I made a decision to get involved in the "Urantia Movement," to be a friend to all and to be useful. When I heard about the Delhi Book Fair, I was intuitively drawn to attend. I had been to India many times. India is a spiritual home to me where it is easy to remember and to constantly worship the Beloved.

I flew from Moscow to India to represent Urantia Foundation at the Delhi Book Fair, which took place from August 12—24, 1999. When I got off the plane at the New Delhi airport, tropical heat and moisture embraced me. I am back in India. I am in Mother India who constantly opens my heart to the Friend. I cleared customs, changed money—43 rupees to the dollar. This is good for exports and tourists. However, how do the common people fare? Can they still buy their daal and chaapatis?

I walk outside the airport. Everyone wants to help me. "Taxi, sir? Hotel, sahib?" So many people, so few jobs. I decide to take the airport bus into town. I bring my bag on board and pile it on top of other bags, burlap sacks, cardboard boxes, and bundles of cloth. I sit down and open a window and wait. Twenty minutes later, the bus is ready to leave. They close the windows, collect the 30-rupee fare and turn on the air conditioning. This is India. The air-conditioning never works very well. The whole infrastructure is strained by one billion souls.

We ride for a half-hour and come to Connaught Place, the main tourist area. Everyone wants to help me off the bus. I am a foreigner. Of course, they believe that I want to get off at the main tourist area. I manage to stay on the bus and ride to the New Delhi Railway Station, where I will meet Mark Bloomfield. Mark has been in India for a week placing *The Urantia Book* in libraries in the Delhi area. I have only spoken to him on the telephone.

At last, we arrive at the New Delhi Railway Station. I get off the bus. My senses are assaulted in every way. Magenta turbans, multi-colored saris—the colors are so bright, so rich. Did someone slip a psychedelic into my chai? Is that sitar music I hear in my head? The smells of incense, cooking oil, urine, curry powder, cow manure, diesel

exhaust, and ????. There is a pulsing energy of people—a swarm, a giant beehive of humanity. The trucks, buses, three wheelers, rickshaws, cars, handcarts and people move in semi-organized chaos. There are porters grabbing at my bag. I am inundated by horns, people jabbering, peddlers crying their wares. "Chaii, Chaiii, Chaiiii." "Taxi, sir?" "Rickshaw, sahib?" "Best hotel, swami."

I decide I will plunge in all the way. I take a bicycle rickshaw. This is a tricycle pedaled by one man with an open bench seat in the back. I put my bag in the sling behind me. I wrap the strap through my arm. I have already made my first mistake. I did not bargain on the fare. I do not want to make a second mistake and lose my bag. He pedals over the flyway, what we would call an overpass. He seems to be pedaling for a long time. What kind of place is this? I sit in back and a man with pipe-stem legs, who weighs little more than half my weight, sweats and pedals me to my destination. I am bigger and stronger than he is. Duty, as Lord Krishna taught Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita: it is my duty to ride and his duty to pedal. We have gone a long way. I thought Kailash Guesthouse (where Mark is staying) was right by the railway station. Oh, I see. We are going to the other side of the station to the main bazaar road—Pahar Gang.

We stop in front of a moldy, dirty building. I ask how much. "60 rupees." I offer 40, and we settle on 50 rupees. It is my duty to pay what is asked. I did not set the price beforehand. I pay too much, but this is my initiation—I have landed. It is little more than a dollar, but is more than a day's wage for a laborer.

I go up a narrow, steep staircase. There is a counter with several Indian men. This is a central open room that goes up several floors with the doors of rooms around the periphery. I ask to see a room. Is this a room or a jail cell?

There is a grate above the door—which is the only source of air—no windows and a bed. There is just enough space to stand up. I do not think I can stay here, but for 150 rupees, I can store my luggage, change my clothes and go look for another hotel. I later found out that Mark was paying 110 rupees for a smaller room. I now see how Mark is able to distribute books to libraries all over India for a few dollars a day—second class trains and third class hotels.

I give them my passport; they do piles of paperwork.

This is India; they learned bureaucracy from the British. I look through the hotel registry to find Mark's room number, then look at the grate above his door. The light is off, so I will come back later.

I walk down the narrow staircase, back onto the street. I find a three-wheel, motorized rickshaw. This is a motorcycle/tricycle with a roof. I tell the rickshaw walla that I am looking for a hotel. Another man jumps in the rickshaw; he is a "tour guide." A hotel "no problem"—the search begins.

We look at two, three, four, five, six hotels, but none of them is quite right. We finally go to a hotel on a side street. The owner is doing his puja, his ritual worship. He is sitting at the front counter in the lobby of his hotel, chanting, waving incense—and for a moment we are in the temple, God's house. In front of him he worships a picture of his Ishwara Devata, the individual manifestation of God, the individual Deity that is his personal God. To him this is not a picture; this is God present.

In this case it is Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth and prosperity, the consort of Lord Vishnu, who came out of the milk ocean when it was churned by the Gods and demons. She represents divine wealth and Atma-Vidya (Atma: Thought Adjuster; Vidya: Knowledge) as well as all Beauty, Light and Splendor. We wait for him to finish. This feels right. One of his boys takes me up and shows me several rooms. Ah, this one is perfect: marble floors, clean, windows that open onto a quiet street, air-conditioner, and my own water heater for my bathroom. This will be my home for twelve days. God's home, God's work.

I come back down and we begin negotiating on the price. From checking other hotels, I know the going rate. We settle on 425 rupies a day, including the taxes. This is less than \$10.

The boys bring up my luggage. I take a shower and change into my white Kutras. These are what we might call pajamas in America. The Hindi word "pajamas" came to the west via the British Raj.

I tell the motorized rickshaw driver that I want to go to Pragati Maidan. He says no problem. "60 rupees." The meter is never used. You either know the price or you pay too much! I am not sure what the fare should be, so I shake my head and walk away. Immediately, he says "50." I say "30." No, he wants 50. I walk away again. "40, 40, sir." Okay, this is probably too much, but I need to go.

Later in the week as I take this trip every day, I find that the price is 30 rupees. The rickshaw wallas know that I know. We vibe each other, feel each other. I become local—"Indianized"—and the bargaining is very quick. This can be an exhausting part of India—the constant bargaining.

How would Master Jesus handle it? How to be gracious and graceful and pay a fair price? After being in India a while, a rupee begins to seem like a dollar, but it is only a few cents. Gracious and graceful is a good mantra.

Pragati Maidan is a large development of the Indian government. It is part theme park, part emporium for various Indian states, and part exhibition halls for book fairs and similar events. I walk into the book fair, and thank God it is air-conditioned with air-conditioning that actually works. Almost immediately, I see three circles and a sign that says, "Urantia Foundation, Chicago U.S.A." In addition, below that, a sign says "The Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man" in English script and Sanskrit. Sanskrit is the language of pandits and scholars, mantras and slokas. Sanskrit is not really a living language, but many Hindi words are identical. Our banner is readable for most Indians in the New Delhi area.

I meet up with my compatriots with whom I will be staffing this 10-foot by 10-foot booth for the next 12 days. Mark Bloomfield is an Englishman—tall, thin, high energy, in his 30s. He is extremely enthusiastic, passionate, quick to speak, and devoted to the spreading of *The Urantia Book*. Mark came early to India, dealt with customs to import the books and related materials. This is no small task, given India's bureaucracy. Mark also set up the booth, rented chairs and tables, and paid for some of the expenses from his own pocket. Mark did the all the work to get the booth ready for the show. Mark lives in England half the year and has made his living teaching hang-gliding and ultra-light flying. He has had other exciting jobs, such as working in an open-pit gold mine in Australia, where he poured liquid explosives with a cement truck.

Paul Premsagar and I became acquainted at various Urantia conferences. He is a retired physician and a native of India who has lived in the United States for the last 35 years. Paul has a warm smile that lights up his whole face. There is a feeling of peacefulness in his presence. Paul is a welcome and calming influence to Mark's and my enthusiastic extroversion.

I am a semi-retired businessman from Hawaii and San Francisco. I am in my 50s and have studied Yoga and Indian philosophy, Sufism, and Buddhism for many years. This is my fourth trip to India. Much of my time has been spent in the South. When I have visited temples in the South, they require bare feet and bare chests, or entry is denied. In other words: "shirt and shoes, no service"!!! The life there is more traditional and my white kutras, mala and sandals are normal. This type of event [the book fair]

attracted the upper class and emerging Indian middle class. The men were mostly dressed in western clothes: slacks, dress shirts, and shoes. The women wore everything from jeans and western dresses to saris to Punjabi-type pantsuits. My dress was an ironic contrast—a westerner in traditional Indian clothes among Indian men in western dress.

The Book Fair was a typical trade show. It could have been anywhere in the world. There were booths in rows, aisles, and different rooms. The minimum booth size was about 3 meters by 3 meters (10 feet by 10 feet). There were more than a hundred booksellers, publishers, government organizations, and related companies, including two foreign publishers. Some of the bigger organizations had booths that were two, three, or even eight times larger than a standard booth.

Most of the books were in English (English is the lingua franca of India), and there were a few stalls selling books in Hindi, Bengali, Punjabi, and other Indian languages. The subjects ranged from the Vedas and ancient philosophies to computer sciences, modern novels, and children's books.

The booth that exhibited *The Urantia Book* was in an excellent location. Of course, the three foreign organizations paid twice as much as the local Indian companies. All different types of people stopped by the booth, and many showed a keen interest and active curiosity in our booth and *The Urantia Book*. For the most part we spoke with men (reflecting Indian social customs) and most of them were Hindus and Sikhs (reflecting the religious demographics of Delhi). Some browsed, and most asked questions about the book and the organization that publishes the book. As foreigners and a foreign organization, we attracted a lot of attention. Every conceivable type of person asked a question or two, while some came by several times and engaged in conversations, discussions, and sharing that extended to a few hours.

People were surprised that we only had one book. The price was also a shock because it is extremely expensive by Indian standards. The hard cover book might have been the most expensive book at the whole book fair. We explained that we were a not-for-profit organization, whose only purpose is to make the book available. We made clear that we had no political or religious agenda. When we gave them the website address and told them that the whole book was available on the World Wide Web, they realized that we truly represented a service organization.

We had some books that had been water-damaged during shipping, which we sold at a greatly reduced price. We sold all undamaged books at a reduced price to

interested individuals. We gave many books away to extremely interested and curious people who could not afford to buy them. We followed our hearts and intuition. All the money that we collected was donated by Urantia Foundation for an "Eye Camp" that Mark organized. An "Eye Camp" uses a temporary location and volunteers to extract cataracts free of charge for the poor. The only cost is the intra-ocular lens and medical supplies at about 350 rupees (\$9) per eye—a bargain to end blindness. The banner says the "Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man." No organization is mentioned on the banner. The Divine Healer gets the credit.

The three of us worked as a team so that we could all take breaks, have lunch, rest, walk through the book fair, go shopping, or investigate Pragati Maidan. We soon fell into individual roles. Paul, the oldest of our team, was a moderating and calming influence. Originally from India, some of the countrymen of his birth felt more comfortable talking to him. Mark, the youngest, was the workhorse. He came the earliest, stayed the latest, and handled all of the administrative details. Mark was an enthusiastic greeter and a passionate advocate of the Urantia message. I met with the folks that wanted to have extended conversations. We moved to the back of the booth for these long, philosophical discussions and sharing of our life and Spirit experiences. Some of these evolved into mini-discussion groups involving several different people.

Mostly I let the book speak for itself. I had these guests read directly from the book, and we had a mini-study group.

One extended conversation was with two men in their early twenties. They were law students and somewhat "nerdy." They wanted to debate and argue. They presented themselves as atheists. I said, "You are obviously very intelligent young men and as law students must have a highly developed sense of logic. Lawyers have to prove things based on evidence. How do you prove the nonexistence of something? What do you use for evidence? I am a witness to the existence of God, but I cannot offer proof, because God is Spirit." Ten minutes in this vein and they agreed that they were agnostics.

Then the hard work began. We talked for about three hours. The discussion ranged from the nature of evil and its cause, to the experience of reality within the mind of man. *The Urantia Book* answered many of their questions. I shared my experience of the Beloved, the Creator of Love and Compassion—the Absolute of Love, Beauty and Goodness. In the back of my mind I felt that the more they argued the more that they wanted to believe. (*The*

argumentative defense of any proposition is inversely proportional to the truth contained [557:14].) Near the end they shared that they saw humans as vultures. I sensed that the poverty around them moved them greatly.

There is a Darwinian struggle for survival in India. I also learned that they were the kids that were picked on in school. Finally they asked, "How can we talk to God like you do?" I said, "Find a quiet place in nature or in a bathroom, or car or anywhere. Let the mind be quiet." Then I knocked loudly three times on the table. I said, "Picture in your mind that you are knocking on God's Door. Before your hand touches His Door He will answer. Do this three different times over the course of a week or two." What happened to them? The Friend has opened the Door already and welcomed them to the wedding feast.

Many people asked similar questions: "What does Urantia mean?" A typical answer: "Earth."

"Who wrote the book?" An effective technique was to open the book itself and point to the authors. This sometimes elicited more questions. "Well who are these people?" "It's explained in the book."

"Where did the book come from?"

"It was first published in 1955. The book explains its origins. The content speaks for itself. Taste some of the banquet, before worrying about the origin."

"Did you write the book." "No, I did not write it!!!"

"What is the basic message of the book?" "The Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man."

Often the Indian people would respond: "We know that already. That is what the Vedas say. We agree with this teaching." We all emphasized this central message.

Another question was "Is this Christianity?" We said, "No, the original teaching of Jesus is to know the One by faith; then, one is a member of the Family of Believers: the Satsanga, the Truth Seekers. The followers of Jesus were very enthusiastic about him and his life, and created Christianity—a religion about Jesus." The Indian people seem to know this. Their true religions embrace all teachers and Deities. They have no problem adding another teacher, prophet, God, Deity to their religion. It is this unique, all-embracing nature of Hinduism and of also the Sikh religion that makes India such fertile soil for the fifth epochal revelation. An amazing number of Indian people knew the difference between the religion of Jesus versus the religion about Jesus. They knew Him without being Christians. When the Portuguese explorers came to India at the end fifteenth century, they were miffed to find Christians who did not know the Pope.

The open hearts and deep spiritual knowledge of some

individuals was a revelation. It felt like they had already read *The Urantia Book*. It is interesting to speculate about how much knowledge from the Garden came to India.

We passed out many pamphlets containing excerpts and descriptions of the book. These were enthusiastically received. We passed out hundreds of sheets with the Web address, and a surprising number of people had access to the World Wide Web. They were enthusiastic about looking at the book on the Internet. Paul Premsagar reported that one young woman said, "I have been reading this book on the web and am fascinated by it. I cannot download the whole book." She bought a hard copy. Access to the web is charged by the minute and is relatively expensive by India standards. Many people have access at work.

The price of the book was a barrier. It was extremely expensive for most people. They just could not afford it. They asked that the book be printed in India, which could be done at an economical price. They also asked that the book be printed in sections so that they could buy the book piece by piece as they had the rupees to do so.

There were some individuals who came to the booth several times. We had long and deep philosophical conversations. When there were questions, I encouraged the questioner to read aloud from the applicable sections of the book—in other words, let the book speak for itself. We had many of these informal study groups at the back of the booth.

Some of these individuals volunteered to help us in the future. They wanted to know where our office was located and how they could contact us. They filled out cards, giving their names and addresses to Urantia Foundation. Some asked how they could get together in groups to study the book and propagate the teachings. They seemed sincerely interested in helping us spread the fifth epochal revelation.

On the last day of the book fair, Paul left early to visit relatives in Hyderabad in the south of India. Mark and I continued on. I left my shoulder bag at the booth, and it was stolen while I was having lunch. The Muslims teach: "Trust in Allah and tie your camel." The Sufis teach: "Heart in the heavens and feet on the ground." My heart was in the heavens after twelve days of talking to people about our Heavenly Father. This was the first thing of mine that had been stolen in three trips to India. I knew that I should forgive the thief immediately, but I could not. I was angry. I prayed to learn how to forgive.

I lost a small camera and a few other items and souvenirs that I had just purchased. However, most

disappointing was the loss of the film that had pictures of the booth and some of the people who visited it.

There was a young Sikh man that I had talked to several times over the course of the book fair and we had become friends. He told me a story about something that he had lost because of community strife. (Community in India means different castes and religious groups.) About seven years ago, Indira Gandhi's Sikh bodyguards assassinated her. In retribution, many Sikh men, women, and children lost their lives. My friend's whole garment business was burned to the ground. He lost everything except his life. He had been somewhat adrift since then, but was now putting his life on track. My little bag seemed puny in comparison. He put things in perspective for me, as friends do. I forgave the thief, but I still wish I had those pictures to share with you.

My young Sikh friend said that he had been reading the book we had given him. He had calculated that if he read 15 pages a day, he could read the whole book in less than half a year.

Paul Premsagar wrote: "A seed has been sown at the Delhi Book Fair and this will require some watering and nurturing to bear fruit. It is hoped that there will be future book fairs and *The Urantia Book* will be available throughout India and Southeast Asia." Thanks to Paul Premsagar

whose description of the book fair was one of the sources used to write this article.

I hope that we will be able to attend more book fairs in India and eventually produce a high-quality, inexpensive Indian edition of *The Urantia Book*. There are plans to attend the Calcutta Book Fair from January 26 to February 6, 2000. The three of us have committed to attend this book fair and would welcome more help. There is discussion about attending the World Book Fair in Delhi in February of 2000. Contact Urantia Foundation if you would like to help with the booth at either of these fairs. If you would like to support Mark's placement of books in Indian and other Asian libraries or to support the "Eye Camps," contact the Foundation.

People ask me how I can stand the poverty of India. I say what is surprising is the people's faith and samtosha (contentment). You can feel it.

My Yoga teacher, Swami Satchidananda says Seva, Karma Yoga, Selfless Service, is the fastest Yoga—the fastest way to God. Imagine doing the best you can, with no way to fail—the results are His responsibility. Spending days talking to people about the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man is a transforming, awakening and enlightening experience.

I highly recommend it.

A Few Parables

At a study symposium in Nashville, Tennessee, USA, in May 1999, participants were asked to write original parables illustrating some aspect of the kingdom of heaven. Here is a sampling of some of the shorter parables:

How like an orange is the kingdom of heaven:
the sweetness of the juice
under its peel cannot be seen,
once opened cannot be contained.

The kingdom of heaven is like a wise mother and her child who is just learning to walk. Sometimes she lends a hand. Other times, she leaves the child alone but watches from a distance.

The kingdom of heaven is like the separate individual pixels of the television screen that come together and become a whole picture—ever growing and changing.

The kingdom of heaven is like a Urantia conference. While it is the most exciting and "real" thing going on—

and open to all—at this point in time it appears to hold little or no interest for the majority of the population.

Look at the automobile with its shiny new body and powerful engine. Without the spark that ignites it, the car is useless.

The kingdom of heaven is like a wise physician who prescribed a cure for his patients. One patient followed the cure program completely, and he was completely cured. Another patient followed part of the program, and he was partially cured. A third patient followed none of the program, and had none of the results.

The kingdom of heaven is like a rooster that crows at midnight.

few notes for each person showing the date the call was made, highlights of the conversation, or the date of the subsequent call if I got a busy signal the first time.

After several months Cathy sent me another list of readers, and I determined a better method of contacting people. I decided to send each person a handwritten note on a pretty card, followed by a phone call. My handwriting isn't so great, but it's readable, and more importantly, it adds a personal touch.

In the card I introduce myself and say that Urantia Foundation forwarded the information card to me because the permission box was checked. I say that the purpose of the note is to welcome the person into the growing family of *Urantia Book* readers. I then tell a few things about the study group I attend: that we get together once a week to read, that we read sequentially, that we notice it takes us about four and a half years to read the book through once, that we're reading it for the third time, that this time we are reading very carefully in order to better comprehend the material. Finally I say at the end of the note that I will phone in a few days to say hello.

A week or so after mailing the cards I make phone calls. Most of the calls go through to the individual. Some lines are busy and I call again. Others have answering machines; if so, I leave a message and my phone number

in case the person wishes to call me. Several people did not include a phone number, or I was unable to complete a call because the phone had been disconnected. Several were prisoners. I take a few notes regarding the conversation and note the date the call was made.

Over the months I have received several other lists of readers from Cathy, as well as the form "TUA Activities Quarterly Report," which must be returned to her in a timely manner. To date I have sent her three reports for California covering November 1998 to August 1999. A total of 54 contacts were made during that time.

The results of the outreach are as follows:

- 10 - Phone call only
- 9 - Card only (no phone number, prisoner, phone disconnected)
- 34 - Card sent and phone call made
- 10 - Message left but call not returned
- 24 - Spoke with someone on the phone
- 1 - Card returned undeliverable

I have received seven letters from individuals. There is a personal story contained in each one. And every conversation reveals the light and shade of a shared landscape we call *The Urantia Book*. IUA outreach is moving forward.

A Report on Young Readers

MICHAEL MACISAAC, STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

This is a report on the recent progress of the work I've been doing to assist the younger generation of readers around the globe. I hope to not be focusing too much attention on myself, but rather the work.

You can do important work if you do not become self-important; you can do several things as easily as one if you leave yourself out. [555:5]

Background

I am a 24-year old reader of *The Urantia Book*. My parents were readers, and I started reading the book when I was 16. At that time I could find almost no other people under the age of 40 interested in the revelation. Four years later, when I began attending medium-sized conferences (150-200 attendees), I found that there were often only one or two other readers in their 20s. Actually, there were just as few in their 30s! I still had a great time and made conference going high on my list of priorities, but I felt

that others in my generation were missing out on such wonderful conferences.

Speaking of his children's generation who are now in their 30s, an older reader recently told me that "we lost a whole generation" through not doing much to make programs at conferences for the children in the movement. I'm glad to see that this trend is reversing and that good children's programs are becoming priorities at conferences.

Collecting Addresses

After my first conference I began to seek other young readers and to collect addresses. Among other things, I wanted to get some momentum going in our generation, to find them so we could inspire each other to exemplify the teachings, and to encourage other youths to come and enjoy conferences. The address list of young readers grew slowly but steadily for the first few years. Then, in 1998 my brother helped me to start a web site for young readers. Since then it has been growing faster and more internationally.

This database needs a lot of updating work, and I wish I had more time to assist young readers around the world as a group and as individuals. The address list of young readers has grown to over 300 youths from 23 different countries.

As time permits, I am still seeking readers of my generation, so if any of you know of young readers (early 30s or younger) please tell them about the web site, or tell me about them. I just found more young readers through the UBRON (Urantia Book Readers On Line Network) web site (<http://origin.org/ub.cfm>). I went through the member listings and read about readers all around the world. While spending hours sorting through all 500 or so member pages where some people revealed their birth dates, it was a total rush as I found more and more young readers who had joined the site. In the end I had collected information on 30 newly found young readers. I only wished I had found them earlier since I even found one who lives in a city in England that I just visited six weeks before! Now I am excited to begin writing to those 30 or so.

Conferences

Conferences seem often to be turning points for young readers—high points in the lives of all who attend, for that matter. I'll continue to assist and encourage young people to come to conferences as one of my focuses, because conferences are one of the biggest motivators for readers. At all the conferences I've been to, it has been amazing to see how young people become inspired and motivated to study the book after a few days in that environment.

Nashville 1999 Conference: A scholarship program was set up for the conference in Nashville this year, which helped youths who could afford to make the trip to Nashville but who could not afford all of the registration, food, and lodging fees. Carpools were planned, and 14 of us attended. Together at a conference, it felt like suddenly there were the beginnings of a community, a solid network of young readers, who will enthusiastically continue to join the rest of the active readership. Since that conference other young readers have been starting projects. April Helen is starting a newsletter to go out to young readers, and Merindi Swadling just did a presentation at a conference in Australia about being a young reader and her recent experiences.

I'm constantly impressed as I get to know more and more readers of my generation that most of them have their priorities straight. At one point the young readers who were in Nashville, most of us having been raised by reader parents, were interviewed and videotaped. Several long-time older readers observed the interview and expressed how glad and surprised they were that we all

seemed to "get it." They said that we "got" the overall picture and could see what is important—something which had taken them 20 years of study to "get"! One of them jokingly said she felt as if she could die, and the revelation would be left in good hands

Chicago Youth Weekend: At the conference in Nashville we were invited to gather at 533 in Chicago (upstairs from the Urantia Foundation office), if we needed a place to meet. A few of us then planned a meeting to take place the weekend before the conference in Vancouver, so that some of us could carpool there together. When the time came, youths converged in Chicago traveling from France, Australia, Sweden, Hawaii, Kansas, Texas, and other parts of Illinois. Not having to worry about registration or lodging fees helped us to make it possible for 14 youths to attend.

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Being in a loving conference environment and meeting others their age who were bursting with enthusiasm for the teachings was an inspiration for all the young people there. Although some of those hadn't been reading *The Urantia Book* when they arrived at the conference, they planned to have read the whole book by their next conference, and I know of some who have already begun reading earnestly. A young girl, who was not a part of the conference, who served a bunch of us "young readers" beer in the bar one night, said to me, "Who are you people? I've never met such a happy group of people! Whatever group you are a part of, I want to join!" I wish I had been able to give her

few notes for each person showing the date the call was made, highlights of the conversation, or the date of the subsequent call if I got a busy signal the first time.

After several months Cathy sent me another list of readers, and I determined a better method of contacting people. I decided to send each person a handwritten note on a pretty card, followed by a phone call. My handwriting isn't so great, but it's readable, and more importantly, it adds a personal touch.

In the card I introduce myself and say that Urantia Foundation forwarded the information card to me because the permission box was checked. I say that the purpose of the note is to welcome the person into the growing family of *Urantia Book* readers. I then tell a few things about the study group I attend: that we get together once a week to read, that we read sequentially, that we notice it takes us about four and a half years to read the book through once, that we're reading it for the third time, that this time we are reading very carefully in order to better comprehend the material. Finally I say at the end of the note that I will phone in a few days to say hello.

A week or so after mailing the cards I make phone calls. Most of the calls go through to the individual. Some lines are busy and I call again. Others have answering machines; if so, I leave a message and my phone number

in case the person wishes to call me. Several people did not include a phone number, or I was unable to complete a call because the phone had been disconnected. Several were prisoners. I take a few notes regarding the conversation and note the date the call was made.

Over the months I have received several other lists of readers from Cathy, as well as the form "IUA Activities Quarterly Report," which must be returned to her in a timely manner. To date I have sent her three reports for California covering November 1998 to August 1999. A total of 54 contacts were made during that time.

The results of the outreach are as follows:

- 10 - Phone call only
- 9 - Card only (no phone number, prisoner, phone disconnected)
- 34 - Card sent and phone call made
- 10 - Message left but call not returned
- 24 - Spoke with someone on the phone
- 1 - Card returned undeliverable

I have received seven letters from individuals. There is a personal story contained in each one. And every conversation reveals the light and shade of a shared landscape we call *The Urantia Book*. IUA outreach is moving forward.

A Report on Young Readers

MICHAEL MACISAAC, STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

This is a report on the recent progress of the work I've been doing to assist the younger generation of readers around the globe. I hope to not be focusing too much attention on myself, but rather the work.

You can do important work if you do not become self-important; you can do several things as easily as one if you leave yourself out. [555:5]

Background

I am a 24-year old reader of *The Urantia Book*. My parents were readers, and I started reading the book when I was 16. At that time I could find almost no other people under the age of 40 interested in the revelation. Four years later, when I began attending medium-sized conferences (150-200 attendees), I found that there were often only one or two other readers in their 20s. Actually, there were just as few in their 30s! I still had a great time and made conference going high on my list of priorities, but I felt

that others in my generation were missing out on such wonderful conferences.

Speaking of his children's generation who are now in their 30s, an older reader recently told me that "we lost a whole generation" through not doing much to make programs at conferences for the children in the movement. I'm glad to see that this trend is reversing and that good children's programs are becoming priorities at conferences.

Collecting Addresses

After my first conference I began to seek other young readers and to collect addresses. Among other things, I wanted to get some momentum going in our generation, to find them so we could inspire each other to exemplify the teachings, and to encourage other youths to come and enjoy conferences. The address list of young readers grew slowly but steadily for the first few years. Then, in 1998 my brother helped me to start a web site for young readers. Since then it has been growing faster and more internationally.

This database needs a lot of updating work, and I wish I had more time to assist young readers around the world as a group and as individuals. The address list of young readers has grown to over 300 youths from 23 different countries.

As time permits, I am still seeking readers of my generation, so if any of you know of young readers (early 30s or younger) please tell them about the web site, or tell me about them. I just found more young readers through the UBRON (Urantia Book Readers On Line Network) web site (<http://origin.org/ub.cfm>). I went through the member listings and read about readers all around the world. While spending hours sorting through all 500 or so member pages where some people revealed their birth dates, it was a total rush as I found more and more young readers who had joined the site. In the end I had collected information on 30 newly found young readers. I only wished I had found them earlier since I even found one who lives in a city in England that I just visited six weeks before! Now I am excited to begin writing to those 30 or so.

Conferences

Conferences seem often to be turning points for young readers—high points in the lives of all who attend, for that matter. I'll continue to assist and encourage young people to come to conferences as one of my focuses, because conferences are one of the biggest motivators for readers. At all the conferences I've been to, it has been amazing to see how young people become inspired and motivated to study the book after a few days in that environment.

Nashville 1999 Conference: A scholarship program was set up for the conference in Nashville this year, which helped youths who could afford to make the trip to Nashville but who could not afford all of the registration, food, and lodging fees. Carpools were planned, and 14 of us attended. Together at a conference, it felt like suddenly there were the beginnings of a community, a solid network of young readers, who will enthusiastically continue to join the rest of the active readership. Since that conference other young readers have been starting projects. April Helen is starting a newsletter to go out to young readers, and Merindi Swadling just did a presentation at a conference in Australia about being a young reader and her recent experiences.

I'm constantly impressed as I get to know more and more readers of my generation that most of them have their priorities straight. At one point the young readers who were in Nashville, most of us having been raised by reader parents, were interviewed and videotaped. Several long-time older readers observed the interview and expressed how glad and surprised they were that we all

seemed to "get it." They said that we "got" the overall picture and could see what is important—something which had taken them 20 years of study to "get"! One of them jokingly said she felt as if she could die, and the revelation would be left in good hands

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a book that night. A 19-year old friend of mine who lives in Vancouver, whom I had met in Australia and given a book, came to visit me at the conference one night. He came for the night of the Pato Banton concert, and was amazed that "these are all *Urantia Book* readers?" I don't think either of us had ever seen such a large group of people bursting with love and positive energy; it's amazing to see how people open up and show their beauty when they are in such a loving environment.

At the past few conferences, it has really paid off to call a meeting of young readers and attendees. A day before the end of the Vancouver conference I finally overcame my anxiety that if I tried to call a meeting of young attendees no one would show up. That morning I went around telling a few people to pass the word around, and that evening I found that the word really got passed around. About 35 youths showed up for the meeting. A picture from this meeting is on the web site. It was an informal and open meeting with no one leading or directing the group. People expressed how grateful they were to be at the conference, and how they wanted to attend conferences more often. The mother of one of the youths in the room happened to be in the room while our meeting was taking place, and she broke into tears at one point, expressing the joy she was experiencing in observing our meeting. We enjoyed the meeting so much we didn't want it to end, so we decided, since it was the last night and we wouldn't have another chance to plan another meeting of that nature, we would meet in the rose gardens at 12 p.m. and enjoy the night together.

Word really got around to meet there. After music and good times together in the rose gardens, we decided to move to a warmer location. We all walked together, a group of 50 or so youths, to continue the party in a dorm room. It felt surreal walking through the university campus at three in the morning, with 50 young readers. Looking at the large group as we walked, I reflected on the fact that we were at a *Urantia* conference, and that we might be seeing each other at *Urantia* conferences 30, even 50, years in the future.

I stayed on the campus until there weren't any more readers to be found, and then when I went to the airport, I found I would have to wait at least four days to fly east standby. I was exhausted and didn't know what to do, when I met another young reader from the conference at the airport! She was also in the same predicament, and we ended up having adventures hitching a ride across Canada together!

After the conference, about 60 new young reader addresses were added to the list, and a bunch of pictures

of young readers were added to the UBYOUTH web site (www.x-hi.com/ubyouth).

Travel

Traveling is a great opportunity to expand our horizons, to visit other readers of all ages, and to connect with other truthseekers along the way. More and more young readers are traveling and visiting each other as the community/family of the newest generation of readers grows. Knowing readers of all ages around the world makes travel much more practical and inspirational. A young American reader who might visit Europe will have peer readers whom they can visit and probably stay with in Paris, Geneva, England, Stockholm (if I'm here), St. Petersburg, Oslo, Croatia, and more cities—not to mention all the older readers we can visit in our international travels. Some young readers after the conference in Vancouver spontaneously decided to travel together. Others have seen through the web site that they happened to be visiting the same city at the same time, and hooked up. Chris Wood enjoyed traveling around Europe last summer, where he visited young readers in Croatia, France, Oslo, and he stayed with me in Stockholm for a few weeks. I've also been traveling over the past years and visiting readers all over the world, and I've had great joy in having other readers visit me. Earlier this year in Australia while I stayed with a young reader, we were able to plan a gathering in Sydney of young readers.

Website for Young Readers: www.x-hi.com/ubyouth

Right now the UBYOUTH web site includes pages with pictures and introductions to young readers, a guest book, a link to a chat room, pages with pictures from conferences, a page with conference information, and a page with information on how to join an email discussion list for young readers.

There are currently two email discussion lists for young readers, one in English and a new one for French-speaking young readers. The English list has over 40 members right now. This list maintains a very friendly atmosphere. Anyone can read the transcripts from it at the UBYOUTH web site.

In Conclusion

It is great that young people are connecting with each other, but we also have a lot to learn from associating with the older readers. I hope when you see young readers at conferences you won't be afraid to approach them.

I want to send many thanks to all of you who have helped me and all the other young readers with our aims and efforts.

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