



THE DISSEMINATION OF THE URANTIA BOOK AND STATEMENT ON PUBLICITY

(Abridged)

The Timing of The URANTIA Book. As the book was being readied for publication in 1955, certain members of the General Council collaborated to prepare a memo concerning the timing of The URANTIA Book and their perceptions of the readiness of the world to receive it. Here is a portion of their memo:

"We regard The URANTIA Book as a feature of the progressive evolution of human society. It is not germane to the spectacular episodes of epochal revolution, even though it may apparently be timed to appear in the wake of one such revolution in human society. The book belongs to the era immediately to follow the conclusion of the present ideological struggle. That will be the day when men will be willing to seek truth and righteousness. When the chaos of the present confusion has passed, it will be more readily possible to formulate the cosmos of a new and improved era of human relationships. And it is for this better order of affairs on earth that the book has been made ready.

"But the publication of the book has not been postponed to that (possibly) somewhat remote date. An early publication of the book has been provided so that it may be in hand for the training of leaders and teachers. Its presence is also required to engage the attention of persons of means who may be thus led to provide funds for translations into other languages.

"We must learn to possess our souls in patience. We are in association with a revelation of truth which is a part of the natural evolution of religion on this world. Over-rapid growth would be suicidal. The book is being given to those who are ready for it long before the day of its world-wide mission. Thousands of study groups must be brought into existence and the book must be translated into many tongues. Thus will the book be in readiness to comfort and enlighten the peoples of many languages when the battle for man's liberty is finally won and the world is once more made safe for the religion of Jesus and the freedom of mankind."

The Plan for Our Early Stage. To those in whom circumstances placed the custodianship of the fifth epochal revelation, and to us who have followed, it is apparent that we are to engage in three primary programs: 1) to train leaders and teachers; 2) to bring into existence thousands of study groups; and 3) to acquire funds to provide for translations of The URANTIA Book into other languages.

It was agreed that it was vital that these activities be carried on quietly, without the glare of public attention. Hence, the decision was made that the revelation would be spread to new readers primarily by personal and individual means. The early planners believed that a broad and sturdy foundation should be built of people who were well-grounded in the spiritual and intellectual teachings of the book. So that students could nurture their faith and belief, and refine their knowledge of the teachings, there must be provided an atmosphere free of controversy.

In the early stages of development of a new organization or movement, unified, co-ordinated efforts are crucial to survival. There must not be multiple or conflicting policies and practices concerning the dissemination of the book, as this would tend to undermine the Brotherhood's ability to co-ordinate internal programs and could ultimately confuse the public, the various religions, as well as readers of The URANTIA Book.

Evolutionary vs. Revolutionary Growth. We are currently growing at a rate we can handle. The movement has not failed. The book is doing its own work. Society evolves or a movement develops when it is not subjected to intense pressure to grow and spread quickly. Under the strain of too rapid expansion, growth would be unpredictable and faulty. At present, a strong core of deeply committed individuals is emerging, and will continue to emerge, if the evolutionary process is not disrupted. Material yardsticks can never be used to measure spiritual progress. ~~We are engaged~~ in the dissemination of advanced religious truth; book sales will be a natural consequence.

We have been conditioned to crash methods and programs in science and industry, and to movements in religion designed to "save the world in this generation." But we must remember that the major mistakes on our planet have been caused by ignoring the fundamental law of readiness which is the key to all solid growth in the evolutionary universe. Any attempt to hasten or retard this evolutionary process is doomed to defeat.

We must not be in a hurry. We must not be stampeded into unwise actions to promote the revelation. Those who witnessed the formulation of the URANTIA papers and the subsequent publication of The URANTIA Book, zealously guarded and controlled the manner in which it was presented to the world, letting the example of the unseen friends, who waited hundreds of years to make this revelation, curb their impatience and govern their enthusiasm.

By not advertising we might lose the chance to gain thousands of believers in our generation. However, by giving in to impatience or by engaging in unwise methods of dissemination, in the long run, the revelation might fail, and the loss through time could number billions of people.

The Media. URANTIA Brotherhood has consistently advised readers to avoid bringing the name of The URANTIA Book into any activity that could become a media event. The media is fast, powerful, effective, and always hungry for news. It is symptomatic of our immature state that neither the print nor broadcast media are dedicated to emphasizing what is good in society. Good news is usually not as appealing as controversy.

We do not yet have enough trained spokespersons who can safely and effectively deal with the media. Unskilled but well-intentioned believers, discussing sensitive areas of The URANTIA Book with skilled reporters, would find themselves hopelessly embroiled, explaining subjects even angels could not explain to unbelievers.

Eventually, it will be advisable and necessary to speak out, but that day can be forestalled by decades if we adopt a policy of not randomly giving interviews and news stories.

The majority of people who encountered any form of advertising of the book, or introductory material, no matter how well conceived and presented, would of necessity be forced to decide the merits of the Fifth Epochal Revelation based upon their reactions to these miniscule bits of information.

Search for Worthy Programs. For a long time, readers have believed that there were so many things they weren't supposed to do, they have become confused as to how to spread the teachings. In fact, there is only one "don't," and that is not to publicize The URANTIA Book. They can do practically everything else of an "outreach" nature.

But, we all ought to keep in mind that The URANTIA Book and its associated programs call for the wisest thinking and eternity-proven methods to promulgate truth on our planet. We must seek methods and techniques that fit the spirit of the teachings and always try to avoid projects that cheapen the revelation.

Finding Those Who Are Ready. While the world as a whole has been adjudged not ready for The URANTIA Book <sup>and</sup> for the complete system of thought that is the fifth epochal revelation, there are undoubtedly thousands of people (among the more than 4½ billion inhabitants of our planet) who would gladly receive the book today. In view of the decision that the book will not be publicized, the problem arises of how to reach those whose minds and souls hunger for truth and spiritual enlightenment.

The person-to-person approach is superior to a program of advertising. Advertising lacks the human touch. The disciples accepted the gospel because Jesus personified the twin truths of the gospel -- the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men.

Many new readers are fired with the intense desire to share their new-found treasure with others immediately. Frequently, they are not well acquainted with the book and make the mistake of over-emphasizing the phenomena of the revelation, or they stress the scientific aspects, and neglect the spiritual truth contained in the book.

It is difficult to introduce such a complex book as The URANTIA Book without first having a good acquaintanceship with it. No single method of introduction is effective for everyone, hence the importance of knowing the book, and understanding the needs of your friend to decide which approach will best answer his longings. Try to become skilled in creating a quest for truth as Jesus did. A long-time reader has expressed it this way: "One 'friend' is introduced more graciously and warmly to another friend by a friend who knows the qualities of both well."

Become spiritually fragrant so as to better attract people to you and to these supernal teachings. When you have exhausted your "supply" of friends to whom you have already introduced the book or the teachings, expand your circle of friends, and never become discouraged. We are all aware of the courage called for when approaching someone about The URANTIA Book.

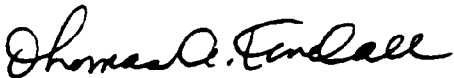
Public Spread of Truth. There are many types of programs being formulated that are directed toward the public which incorporate concepts of the revelation, but which do not include any mention of The URANTIA Book by name. These efforts are intended as attempts to elevate and up-grade the quality of the arts, the communications industry,

and other basic institutions of society. Another purpose of these kinds of programs is to prepare the way for the later acceptance of the ~~URANTIA Book~~. (Suggested public programs are included in the unabridged version of this statement.)

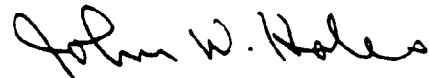
When Will the World be Ready? It is not difficult to understand why so few people are ready to accept ~~the URANTIA Book~~ salvation ~~truth has occurred~~. Our age is characterized by chaos and confusion and wide-spread indifference to spiritual realities. And these things must pass before men and women in large numbers will be willing to seek truth and righteousness. This will be the signal that the era of The URANTIA Book has arrived.

Is the Book Indispensable to Salvation? It has been proposed that every man and woman be given the opportunity to know about the book and make the decision whether to believe it or not. It is implied that failure to accept the book might lessen chances for survival. No evidence from the book has been presented to support the claim that the book is vital to salvation. Even Jesus could not have imparted his gospel to everyone on earth in his day. He was, as we are, limited in his proclamation by opportunity, timeliness, and the readiness of the people.

Our Primary Loyalty. Let us remind ourselves: We must be careful not to confuse primary and secondary loyalties. Our primary spiritual loyalty is to the Universal Father and to him alone. When we encounter some spiritually hungry brother, our first objective is to bring him closer to his heavenly Father. This we may do with or without the book. All things are secondary and subordinate to the acquisition of this one prize: the realization of sonship with God. The book itself is not an end; it is a most important means to an end. If The URANTIA Book becomes mandatory in our ministry, then we have truly subordinated to it our first and primary objective and purpose which is: the service of God.



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