



URANTIA FOUNDATION
533 DIVERSEY PARKWAY CHICAGO ILLINOIS 60614

September 11, 1989

MEMORANDUM

To The General Council of URANTIA Brotherhood

Re: David Elders's August 29, 1989, Memorandum

The August 29 memorandum provides a welcome contrast to the Brotherhood's letters of July 21 and August 30. It is philosophic in tone and cosmic in its implications. The Trustees accept and applaud a phrase which the author uses to describe the Brotherhood's work: "a vision based on the power of our faith in these teachings to lead us toward our greater planetary destiny." All of us share David's faith in the teachings of The URANTIA Book. We agree that based on these teachings, we should all strive to bring forth a new spiritual reality, a profoundly new pattern for relating to God and all of God's children.

But that is not the memorandum's central thesis. Instead, David suggests that the issue before the General Council is "a true and honest attempt to replace the fear-motivated power of control with the love-motivated power of faith." This generalization is attractive, but it is nevertheless false.

David's memorandum actually argues that faith is all that General Councilors need in order to achieve the goals and purposes of URANTIA Brotherhood. While this is all that is required from us in a spiritual sense in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, it is hardly the formula for effective action in a world of fact and material reality.

On page 1222 of The URANTIA Book, a Solitary Messenger tells us:

A human being can find truth in his inner experience, but he needs a clear knowledge of facts to apply his personal discovery of truth to the ruthlessly practical demands of everyday life.

For years mankind dreamed of flight, of the possibility to escape the fetters of gravity, to soar above the ground, to be free. Some who simply believed it was possible, tried to fly by willing it. Those who did, jumping from a high cliff, discovered the hard way that freedom of flight requires more than will power. More realistic individuals worked diligently to discover the laws and practical methods of flight. Ultimately, despite time, effort, and repeated failures, they were successful. The URANTIA Book, in its discussion of true vs. false liberty, distinguishes liberty with rules and regulations from license, which involves disregarding prudent rules and methods of operating. Although it is wonderful to talk of freedom from fear, freedom from control, one must also ask whether such freedom is legitimate and how it

should be achieved. This is where David's memorandum fails, for in order to have freedom, one must observe the rules of the road, the practical way to work together. Otherwise, one person or group's unfettered freedom is everyone else's slavery.

If any organization is to be successful, it must face facts and faithfully follow sound rules of cooperation. As individuals and in relation to our own spiritual lives, the Trustees are fully committed to the love-motivated power of faith. But acting as a collective, the Board of Trustees must use fact, law, and proper procedures to achieve its goals and purposes. We submit that URANTIA Brotherhood must also adopt that path if it is to survive, let alone be successful.

Ideals can rule the inner life but must contend with the practical demands of the outer world. In the outer world, the desire to control and rule is an intoxicant, and much of humanity is subjected to very unpleasant experiences. Permit us to cite the titles of a few articles which appear in the September issue of Amnesty International's monthly newsletter:

1. Sri Lanka: Hundreds "Disappear" During Crackdown.
2. U.S.S.R.: Newspaper Criticizes Psychiatry: For the first time a major Soviet newspaper has declared that politics have perverted the country's psychiatric system.
3. China: Youth Sentenced to Death for Theft.
4. Iran: Mass Executions for Common Crimes.
5. Iraq: Execution of Alleged Plotters.
6. Cuba: Four Executed after Trial by Special Court.
7. Sudan: Arrests Follow Military Coup.
8. Jordan: Prisoners Held Without Trial.
9. Guatemala: Trade Unionist Is Abducted and Killed.
10. Somalia: Summary Executions Follow Riots.

In a world where events like these occur every month, the Foundation's efforts to protect the copyright, the registered marks, and other rights can hardly be considered arbitrary or capricious, as was implied in the Executive Committee's letter of July 21. The laws which govern copyrights and the registered marks (including their special meaning) were not written by the Foundation or its Trustees. Neither are these laws optional. If the Trustees are to preserve The URANTIA Book inviolate, we must do as the law requires. In a civil society, law is the final arbiter of the rights of individuals and groups.

We believe this holds as well for those whose spiritual idealism has brought them to The URANTIA Book. Our relationship with the Father must always be free from human interference. On the other hand, once three or more individuals come together we have a social situation, an arrangement of individuals who ultimately must operate according to some rules of coordination.

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The importance of the rules of the game is further illustrated in a memorable passage from Robert Bolt's screenplay A Man for All Seasons. Many of you will remember that the story pertains to Sir Thomas More, a sixteenth-century Lord Chancellor of England who was eventually beheaded because he would not swear allegiance to Henry VIII as head of the Christian church there.

In a scene mid-way through the movie, Sir Thomas More sends away an unprincipled job seeker. More's wife, daughter, and son-in-law (William Roper) fear trouble and urge that More have the man arrested. More refuses, pointing out that the job seeker had broken no law and should be free even "if he were the devil himself, until he broke the law." Roper objects, "So! Now you'd give the devil benefit of law!" To which More replies: "Yes, what would you do? Cut a great road through the law to get after the devil?" Roper answers, "Yes, I'd cut down every law in England to do that!" At this point Thomas More delivers a crushing response:

Oh? And when the last law was down and the devil turned round on you, where would you hide, Roper, the laws all being flat? This country is planted thick with laws, from coast to coast, man's laws, not God's, and if you cut them down -- and you're just the man to do it -- do you really think you could stand upright in the winds that would blow then? Yes, I'd give the devil benefit of law for my own safety's sake.

The Trustees of URANTIA Foundation are inclined to believe that those who differ with them in specific practical matters are well-intentioned, honest, and sincere. But when contention arises and persuasion fails, law based on fact is all either organization has to conserve the precious trust confided to us. The Trustees are sometimes confronted by direct challenges to the integrity of the copyright or of the registered marks, and in those instances we must use the law to the fullness of our understanding and capability. If we refrained from doing so, we would be in default of our trust.

The Trustees urge that members of the General Council reflect on all this with the utmost seriousness, and we reiterate our appeal to Councilors to avoid taking any precipitate action which would affect the long term relationship between URANTIA Foundation and URANTIA Brotherhood.

The Trustees of URANTIA Foundation

cc: Trustee Emeritus
Recently Resigned Trustees
Past Presidents of URANTIA Brotherhood