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URANTIA

[REDACTED]
Monday 12 June 1978

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Mr. Thomas A. Kendall
URANTIA Foundation
533 Diversey Parkway
Chicago, Illinois 60614

Dear Tom:

I am sorry you were unable to come to our regional conference here in Washington on June 3rd, but I can readily understand why the Executive Board meeting and other duties precluded it. Perhaps you or John Hales will be able to come on another occasion.

In any event our conference went very well, with attendance calculated at "forty-nine and three halves" (i.e., 49 adults and three children less than eighteen months old) by Vic McGonegal, one of our two volunteer photographers. (When everything gets sorted out, we plan to send some pictures to the Brotherhood.) To give you a sample of what went on I have enclosed a copy of the program, as well as copies of the outline and text of the talk I gave on the finaliter career.

Turning to the French translation and your letter of May 9th, I reiterate my offer to be of assistance. If the Foundation does proceed in the direction of employing one or more translators on a full-time basis, I realize that it may not be possible to factor in the volunteer efforts of others. On the other hand it is also possible that the full-time translation staff would wish to target the efforts of others toward specified portions or topics.

All portions of any translation of The URANTIA Book must indisputably be of high literary quality, but a uniform style throughout is not necessary -- and probably not desirable. In the original English the various authors have employed distinctly different styles, and so far as is possible in French it would seem a good idea to suggest the variations in diction. A team approach thus appears to me to be a very sound concept, with the understanding that total homogeneity is not desired. For specified portions of the book the functions of original translation, review, and editing could be allocated to different individuals or groups of individuals -- who would then exchange roles in relation to other portions. And if the translation were to proceed in this way I would see no particular obstacle to contributions by mail, on the understanding that such material would be subject to appropriate editing and revision.

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I was pleased that you considered my suggested title, Les Thèses d'Ourantie, to be worthy of serious consideration. The explanation in my letter of March 6th centered on the meaning of the first two words, so it only remains for us to discuss the spelling of Ourantie.

There are two sounds in French which roughly correspond to the letter u in English. The first is spelled ou; it is open and soft and is not stressed; it sounds very much like the English /oo/ in boo-hoo and choo-choo -- as well as almost all other English u sounds (do, shoe, two, woo, and so on). Examples in French are tout (everything), nous (we), and vous (you plural).

The second French sound, spelled u, does not have an exact equivalent in English. The ue or ew in certain English words (e.g., flue, rue, new, hew) comes close but in the end does not convey the French sound, which is intense, accented, and aspirated (with the mouth rounded and pursed forward). Examples in French are tu (you singular), nu (naked), and vu (seen).

It probably is already clear to you why I prefer the ou spelling. To give a few examples, the following French common nouns begin with ou: ouragan (hurricane), outrage (outrage), ouverture (overture, opening), ouvrage (literary or scientific work). Perhaps more to the point, there are also quite a number of French proper nouns which begin with ou. The most impressive is of course Ougadougou (the capital of Upper Volta), which manages to use the /oo/ sound three times. Others include Ouganda (Uganda), Oulan-Bator (Ulan Bator, the capital of Mongolia), and l'Oural (the region of the Ural mountains). For the Soviet republic in central Asia which in English is spelled Uzbekistan, there are three variations in French (in the following order of preference): Ouzbékistân, Uzbékistân, and Ouzbékïe. (The third possibility shows the French fondness for the -ïe ending, which we will talk more about later.) The closest parallel to Ourantie is the name Ouranos -- in Greek mythology, the god who personifies the sky and the heavens. (In French the Roman spelling for the god in question, Uranus, is also accepted, but Ouranos is preferred. In the case of the planet Uranus -- discovered by an Englishman, Sir William Herschell, in 1781 -- French astronomers have accepted the English and Roman spelling, probably out of a desire to minimize confusion.)

With a few notable exceptions (e.g., Sicilia/Sicily/Sicile, Hispania/Spain/Espagne), the Latin ending -ia becomes -ie in French. The following table shows examples which illustrate the rule.

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<u>Latin</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>French</u>
Dalmatia	Dalmatia	Dalmatie
Galatia	Galatia	Galatie
Rhaetia	Rhaetia	Rhétie
Italia	Italy	Italie
Asia	Asia	Asie
Arabia	Arabia	Arabie
Syria	Syria	Syrie
Armenia	Armenia	Arménie
Aethiopia	Ethiopia	Éthiopie
Mesopotamia	Mesopotamia	Mesopotamie
Lusitania	Lusitania	Lusitanie
Mauretania, Mauritania	Mauretania	Mauritanie

Thus the -ie ending seems to me clearly desirable in the case of Ourantie, the French translation for the English word Urantia.

Since we have now come full circle you will undoubtedly forgive me for closing with a memorable abbreviation most often associated with the study of Euclidean geometry: Q.E.D.

Peace--clarity--light,

Neal A. Waldrop III

Neal A. Waldrop III
Member At Large,
URANTIA Brotherhood

Enclosures