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# NEWSFLASH!

Issue 15

A URANTIAN® NEWS BULLETIN

March 2001

*From Urantia Foundation to Foundation Office Managers, Foundation Representatives, Translators, IUA Officers, and Other Supporters for the Purpose of Disseminating This Information to Readers in Local Areas*

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## **International Conference – France 2002**

Mark your calendars now for this exciting biennial event. Readers from more areas of the world attend these conferences than any other *Urantia Book* reader gatherings.

The next IUA International Conference will take place in France in August 2002. Tentative dates are set for August 3-7, 2002, with business meetings for IUA and the Foundation on August 1-2. A comfortable site has been found at Dourdan, a small and beautiful medieval village 40-50 kilometers south of Paris.

The general theme will be "Vivre le plan divin d'ascension dans l'expérience humaine" - "Living the Ascension Plan in Human Experience."

Six secondary themes will be developed and proposed soon and given to each National Association (or at least to each continent). The organizers wish to give an international dimension to this event by allowing each National Association to express and share in its own way.

More details will be available later this year.

## Foundation/Fellowship Agreement Regarding Copyright and Trademark Issues

On March 17, 2001, representatives of *The Urantia Book* Fellowship, International Urantia Association, and Urantia Foundation, aided by their counsel and an independent team of mediators, reached an agreement concerning the copyright and trademark issues that have long been a source of friction among these organizations, which otherwise share many common goals. We hope you share our joy in achieving this step forward in the unity efforts among those interested in fostering the dissemination of *The Urantia Book*.

The agreement was finally concluded at approximately 2:30 AM on Sunday, March 18. Mediated negotiations began at 9:00 AM on March 17 at the law offices of Katten, Muchin, Zavis in Chicago and came to a successful conclusion eighteen hours later. Not that anyone planned to meet this long—in fact, it was initially thought that either we have an agreement by 5 or 7 PM at the latest or we don't—but there was enough motivation on both sides to find a non-litigious solution to our differences to stick it out until we got there. And we did.

At this point, we cannot supply details about the terms of agreement because the formal agreement itself is still in the form of a handwritten signed “memorandum of understanding” that needs to be polished and typed into a final document. Additionally, both sides agreed to issue a joint statement, which has yet to be drafted. A complete announcement regarding details of the agreement will be released soon.

We hope this positive step will lead to greater harmony among these organizations and an increased potential for further cooperative efforts by *Urantia Book* readers worldwide. We want to thank everyone who participated in the discussions over the past few years that culminated in this agreement. We have witnessed a willingness to succeed among the participants who worked so hard to achieve this peaceful resolution. We also thank all of you whose prayers and encouragement sustained us.

For further information contact Tonia Baney (tbaney@urantia.org) or Mindy Williams (mwilliams@urantia.org) at Urantia Foundation, +1-773-525-3319.

## Libraries in Korea, China, and Burma Receive *The Urantia Book*

Urantia Foundation's Field Representative, Mark Bloomfield, who is responsible for hand delivering 1,500 *Urantia Books* to libraries throughout India, has recently been visiting libraries throughout South Korea, China, and Burma to donate *Urantia Books*.

### China:

Here's what Mark reports about China:

*All fifty-five of the major Chinese universities that actually use English as a secondary language of instruction now have a copy of The Urantia Book. Both Catholic and protestant churches have been presented with the revelation at their highest levels. The major public libraries of China, some of which are among the largest in Asia, also now have the book. The learning centres of Taiwan have copies on their way to them.*

*Around a quarter of all Chinese university library books are in English, and in Shanghai library, about 40 percent. Of all libraries visited, not one refused to take it. The librarians I met gladly and unhesitatingly accepted not only the book, but also its message. I never had a single refusal, every place I offered a book it was gladly accepted. The short conversations I had with what librarians spoke passable English all confirmed that the book's teachings were very close to the Chinese heart. I couldn't help slipping in 'universal comradeship' sometimes as well as universal brotherhood.*

*The churches are closely watched by the authorities and have to call themselves 'patriotic churches' though after talking with some of the high rollers within the Chinese Christian community, there's no shortage of old-time Christian spirit within them. I received an email from a minister of a Beijing church that received a book in the mail. He told me how his little church on Christmas day had several thousand citizens visit it many of whom waited for hours in the freezing cold to come in. Four services were held back-to-back in order to contain them all. That tells us something about what's going on over there.*

*The Chinese translation must be finished a.s.a.p.  
This country is ready!!!  
Regards,  
Mark*

#### **South Korea:**

In Seoul, South Korea, Mark placed 97 Korean *Urantia Books* in college and university libraries and 250 books in university and college Christian clubs. He arranged for 35 books to be distributed to the major regional public libraries by the Chief Librarian of the National Library and, with the help of Korean readers, has mailed 231 books to university and college libraries

outside of Seoul. If the regional public libraries respond positively to the book, the Chief Librarian of the National Library has agreed to distribute the book to the remaining public libraries on our behalf.

#### **Burma:**

Against risky odds, Mark managed to take 30 books into Burma as part of his personal luggage. Here's what he had to say about his Burmese adventure:

*Now there aren't many libraries in Burma. With the 30 books I had with me, I was able to cover all the important bases. Foreigners are prohibited from entering university campuses so needless to say, all the universities I visited ended up as a story in itself. At Rangoon University, I finally managed to befriend the guards who eventually escorted me to the librarian. He happily accepted the book, then showed me next door to the Universities Central Library, the headquarters of the entire Burmese university library system where I had a wonderful long talk with the lady librarian, who was a devout Buddhist. We had much in common, especially the notion of universal brotherhood. At Dagon University on the edge of Rangoon, I waited at the main gate for over an hour whilst a steady stream of guards shuttled between me and the librarian relaying message after message. Eventually she came out herself to receive the books, which she did cheerfully and good naturedly. In another university, I walked straight in and just as I found the library, (which in this case was too small and specialized for the book) I was suddenly surrounded by 5 men who politely though purposefully marched me off the premises.*

Mark has continued on to place books in the Philippines and Indonesia. Stay tuned for further reports.

## International Distribution News

### Advertising:

Advertisements for *The Urantia Book* have been placed in various bookseller publications worldwide. We have placed a four-color, full-page ad with Ingram Book Company, one of our major distributors, in the May issue of *Bridges*, the catalog sent to their English-speaking market around the world. We anticipate this will assist us in our efforts to expand distribution in the United Kingdom. We placed another four-color, full-page ad in Ingram's sister publication, *Los Libros de Español*, which is sent to their Spanish market worldwide.

A half-page, black and white ad is about to be published in *Bookwatch*, a publication of Baker & Taylor Distribution that is sent to booksellers worldwide. An additional half-page ad was placed in *The Book Industry Review*. *The BookReader* will also carry a half-page, black and white ad in addition to including a review of *The Urantia Book* in their BookExpo America issue. In Europe an advertisement was placed in a bookseller catalog.

Digrisa, Mexico's largest distributor, placed *El Libro de Urantia* on the front cover of its brochure, at no expense to the Foundation. This distributor is ordering *El Libro de Urantia* by the thousands!

### New Printings:

Four new editions of *The Urantia Book* are being reprinted as stocks have run low. The 2<sup>nd</sup> printings of the paperback and small hard cover editions of the Spanish translation have just been completed.

The Russian translation of *The Urantia Book* has been re-edited and formatted in a

smaller size in preparation for a second printing. We have almost exhausted our initial supply of 5,000 copies printed in 1997. An appeal for funding assistance is underway with the aid of a benefactor committed to matching all contributions received through June for the Russian printing fund.

Also, the large English classic "study edition," as it is becoming known among readers, is being reprinted. It will be the same size as the 11<sup>th</sup> printing. Because of its popularity with distributors and librarians, we want to continue to offer this edition. It will have the same white classic dust jacket design as the 11<sup>th</sup> printing.

### Library Placement in Honduras:

One hundred hard cover Spanish books have been sent to the National Library of Honduras. A Honduran reader has made arrangements with the National Library to place the books in its collection for distribution throughout the library system there.

### Books in Africa:

Five hundred copies of *Le Livre d'Urantia* have been supplied to Moussa N'diaye, Urantia Foundation's Representative in Senegal, for distribution throughout the many French-speaking African nations.

Urantia Foundation's shipping department has been busy boxing and shipping books to contacts made by Norm Ingram on his visits to Africa. Although the Foundation shipped books ahead of time for Norm to use while traveling, since his return he has received many emails from people whose hearts have been touched asking for more books.

## News from Mexico

We have begun to see the effects of the efforts of Urantia Foundation over the past several years to enhance distribution channels in Latin America. Urantia Foundation staff and representatives have made valuable contacts by participating in major book fairs in Mexico and South America. Sales of *El Libro de Urantia* soared to 15,794 during the year 2000. This was facilitated in part by the work of Ana Garcia (Foundation Representative in Mexico), Robert Solone, and Tonia Baney, who convinced the largest distributors in Latin America to begin carrying *The Urantia Book*. These distributors have helped to reduce the retail prices of *El Libro de Urantia* in

bookstores. In the past year, one distributor in Mexico has ordered 8,500 books! Ana is also assisting many of the Foundation's Representatives throughout South America with their contacts with booksellers.

Two reader meetings were arranged while Tonia Baney was in Mexico for the Guadalajara Book Fair. Fifty-five readers gathered in Guadalajara and sixty-five in Mexico City. These meetings provided a great opportunity for Spanish-speaking readers in Mexico to meet and fraternize with one another, to ask questions, and to be updated on activities worldwide.

## Latin American Library Placement Project

Marian Hughes, a *Urantia Book* reader and IUA member from Hawaii, along with several other committed readers, January Morgan, Carolina Arana, and Martha Villuendas, recently traveled through Chile and Argentina to place copies of *El Libro de Urantia* donated by Urantia Foundation in libraries and universities and to meet with readers. All together, forty Spanish and ten English books were placed across the Lake District of southern Chile and in the southwest of Argentina. Books were placed in libraries and universities in Chile in the towns of Puerto Montt, Puerto Varas, Osorno, Valdivia, Pucon, Temuco, Villarrica, Chaiten, and Parque Pumalin. In Argentina books were placed in the towns of Bariloche, Bolson, and Esquel. All books were well received by librarians and other interested individuals.

A meeting for anyone interested in *The Urantia Book* was organized in Bariloche, Argentina with the assistance of the Foundation's Representative in Argentina,

Carlos Rubinsky. This was the first meeting of its kind to be held in Bariloche and twenty-one people attended. Many of them learned about *The Urantia Book* for the first time.

Throughout the trip Marian and her traveling companions met many individuals who showed an interest in the book. Marian reports: *One thing that we have learned is that many young people from Europe travel down here. The best place to put books is in the Hostels. And Today I made a connection with a bookstore owner who said that he has sold over 80 Urantia Books and that he is reading the book himself. He asked me to write down my favorite parts. While I was in the shop an Argentinean woman, who lives in Houston, said that a friend had told her about the book some time ago and she didn't really pay any attention, but now she would get one and start to read. This is just another example of being in the right place at the right time. That has been happening quite a bit on this trip.*

## Miami Book Fair International

Numerous people were exposed to *The Urantia Book* as a result of Urantia Foundation's booth at the Miami Book Fair International, the largest outdoor book fair in the United States. This was a cooperative effort between Florida Students of *The Urantia Book*, Florida Urantia Association, and Urantia Foundation. There was tremendous interest from Miami's Spanish-speaking population, with most of the books distributed during the three-day fair being copies of *El Libro de Urantia*. Many

had heard of *The Urantia Book* through friends or relatives and this was an opportunity for them to explore the book for themselves. A couple of French books were purchased by Haitian-Americans, and several English books and Thought Gems calendars were purchased. Two bookstores ordered copies of English and Spanish books during the book fair, so there are now two more places where Miami truth-seekers may encounter *The Urantia Book* on bookstore shelves.

## USUA Conference, 2001

From the organizers:

The Zebedee Guild of The United States Urantia Association cordially invites readers of *The Urantia Book* to attend our 2001 national conference, "Preparing as Teachers and Leaders - or - What Are You Doing with the Rest of Your Life?"

This year's gathering will take place in the picturesque setting of Saint Mary College in Leavenworth, Kansas, just north of Kansas City among the verdant rolling hills along the Missouri River. The conference will begin Thursday evening, July 19, and end at noon Monday, July 23, 2001. This location is near the geographical and population center of the United States within driving distance for much of the country. Saint Mary College is a twenty-minute drive from Kansas City International Airport. Commercial shuttle service is available.

We hope to provide conference attendees with a unique and interactive experience based on relationship building and the cultivation of teaching and leadership skills. It is our desire to stimulate service-related planning and to motivate individuals and

groups to actively incorporate these plans in their daily lives. Service and developmental programs and activities will be made available on an ongoing basis following the conference. The conference agenda will incorporate plenary speeches, workshops (including both study and interactive formats), musical and artistic entertainment, and plenty of time for interaction, relaxation, and reversion. A recreational children's program will be arranged for children between the ages of five and sixteen.

There will be no on-site registration. Adult registration is \$260. All applications must be received by June 15, 2001. If you register before May 15, 2001, you will receive a discount of \$25 making your registration fee \$235. If you wish to attend the conference but stay off campus, day rates will be \$150, including meals. If you cannot attend the entire conference, the rate will be \$50 per day. This rate includes meals, but not lodging.

For further information and registration details contact Lynn at (573) 294-7350 or Email [serviceguided@yahoo.com](mailto:serviceguided@yahoo.com).

## New Transitional Coordinating Committee Members

Several years ago, responding to IUA leadership, the Trustees asked the Coordinating Committee to form a Charter Committee to review the IUA Charter and Bylaws. The committee recommended that the Charter and Bylaws be revised to reflect the formation of the CNP and suggested that the Trustees consider further codifications of the current documents. The Trustees authorized the Charter Committee to prepare a draft reflecting the committee's recommendations. The initial phase of this process is nearly complete, although it has not yet been presented to the Trustees. When the draft has been submitted to the Trustees, they will review it to determine whether the proposal has sufficient merit to warrant consideration by the members. While the IUA Bylaws are under review, the IUA Coordinating Committee will be referred to as the Transitional Coordinating Committee. The Transitional Coordinating Committee will carry out any duties of the Coordinating Committee under the current IUA Charter and Bylaws until new Bylaws have been adopted, and will facilitate the transition to operation under the new bylaws.

The Trustees have appointed five new members to the Transitional Coordinating Committee: Kathleen Swadling, Australia, Lee Armstrong, USA, Peep Söber, Estonia, Gaétan Charland, Canada, Patricia Ramírez González, Colombia, and Séverin

Desbuisson, France. Nancy Shaffer, USA, was appointed Chairperson.

The TCC currently has two committees, the Executive Committee and the Charter Committee. Nancy Shaffer is the Chair of the Executive Committee. JoAnne King is the Chair of the Charter Committee. The Charter Committee expects to submit a proposed draft of amended bylaws for IUA to the Trustees in April.

The members of the Transitional Coordinating Committee and their current assignments are:

Nancy Shaffer, Transitional Coordinating Committee Chair, Executive Committee Chair, Charter Committee  
Jo Anne King, Executive Committee, Charter Committee Chair  
Jay Peregrine, Executive Committee, Charter Committee  
Seppo Kanerva, Executive Committee, Charter Committee  
Cathy Jones, Executive Committee, Charter Committee  
Travis Binion, Executive Committee, Charter Committee  
Kathleen Swadling  
Lee Armstrong  
Peep Söber  
Gaétan Charland  
Patricia Ramírez González  
Séverin Desbuisson

## Update: McMullan/Michael Foundation Lawsuit

The discovery period ended March 1, 2001 in the lawsuit filed by Harry McMullan III's Michael Foundation seeking to invalidate the copyright in *The Urantia Book* and trademark rights in the words URANTIA®

and URANTIAN®. Urantia Foundation has now requested that the court enter summary judgment upholding the validity of the copyright and trademarks. Those of you who are interested can view a copy of the

legal brief on the Foundation's web site at [www.urantia.org/newsinfo/sjm030101.pdf](http://www.urantia.org/newsinfo/sjm030101.pdf), or a copy can be mailed to you upon request.

For close to a decade, Harry McMullan III has used his influence, personal wealth, and three organizations to wage an assault on the intellectual property rights held in trust for nearly fifty years by Urantia Foundation. The first time McMullan challenged the intellectual property rights entrusted to Urantia Foundation was through Asoka Foundation, a nonprofit organization established by McMullan. McMullan, directly and through Asoka Foundation, provided over \$73,000 in financial support for Kristen Maaherra's unsuccessful legal challenge to the trademarks and copyright in *The Urantia Book*.

The second time McMullan challenged these intellectual property rights was through the Fellowship, on whose Executive Committee McMullan has sat since 1979. In 1996 Harry McMullan III and others proposed that the Fellowship print its own, unauthorized edition of *The Urantia Book*. This project was adopted by the Fellowship, and Mr. McMullan helped oversee the publication, known as the Uversa Press edition of *The Urantia Book* (which is no longer sold to the public).

He also used his influence to persuade the Fellowship to retain Ross Flourde, McMullan's current and longtime lawyer, to file an *amicus curiae* brief in support of Maaherra. He even personally attended the proceedings before the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. However, unwilling to accept the court's decision in Maaherra, he immediately made the decision to wage another legal challenge.

This time he is doing it through Michael Foundation, which he established in 1995, among other reasons, to publish *Jesus-A New*

*Revelation*, consisting of Papers 121-196 from *The Urantia Book*. In this third attempt, he has recently indicated that he may adopt a new strategy, one not raised by his attorneys in any of their previous filings on his behalf.

Based on recent statements under oath by Harry McMullan III, his new strategy apparently is to ask the court to find that the copyright is invalid because the real author of *The Urantia Book* is the anonymous person referred to on pages 1208-1209 of *The Urantia Book*. The argument would likely be that this person did not ever formally assign his copyright to Urantia Foundation.

Mr. McMullan stated in a recent deposition that he doesn't know whether he believes that the listed authors in the titles of the papers section of *The Urantia Book* are the true authors of the respective papers. (2d Dep. p. 11, p. 66-67). He is no longer willing to acknowledge that *The Urantia Book* or Papers 121-196 contained in *Jesus-A New Revelation* is a revelation (2d Dep. pp. 65-67). To support his premise that the human subject must have been the author, McMullan cited Dr. Sadler's statement that "automatic writing" was not involved in *The Urantia Book*. McMullan claims that, if the human subject had been a mere channel for spiritual authors, this would have constituted "automatic writing" (2d Dep., pp. 12-13, 16-17). If it was not automatic writing, McMullan claims, then it must have come from the subject himself. It could have been inspired, but the human would have been the author (2d Dep., p. 17).

Though some have promulgated a contention that Urantia Foundation's rights are based on fraud or by disavowing the spiritual authors listed in book itself, this is simply not true. We are confident that those with insight to value the teachings of *The Urantia Book* are capable of discerning for themselves whether such sophistries have



any basis in fact. Anyone interested in these matters should read for themselves the court's decision in *Maaherra* at <http://laws.findlaw.com/9th/9517093.html> which addresses these issues. The court specifically addressed allegations concerning alleged fraud in obtaining the copyright as follows:

*Maaherra asserts that the Foundation did not want to reveal to the Copyright Office that the "authors" were celestial beings because the Copyright Office would have rejected the application.*

*There is no merit to this contention. The Foundation deposited two copies of the Book with the Copyright Office. The Book clearly describes its own origin as having been created at the instance of "Planetary celestial supervisors [who initiated] those petitions that resulted in the granting of the mandates making possible the series of revelations of which this presentation is a part." We conclude that there has been no fraud on the Foundation's part, and no prejudicial reliance on Maaherra's part. We therefore hold that the Foundation's renewal copyright is valid, and that Maaherra infringed it.*

The court in *Maaherra* did not find human "authorship of the Urantia Papers," but merely the requisite minimal degree of human "creativity" associated with the origination of *The Urantia Book* by virtue of the Papers appearing as a response to questions.

To support his position that the human subject is the author of *The Urantia Book*, McMullan is trying to show that in the *Burton* case, Urantia Foundation claimed that the human subject was the author. Urantia Foundation denies that it has ever asserted that any human being authored the Urantia Papers. Mr. Burton filed a sworn affidavit stating his belief that the original Papers were written by a patient of Dr.

Sadler who had no memory of having done so. In answers to Interrogatories, Urantia Foundation stated that it would not assert that the personality through whom the material was transmitted, nor any other person, living or dead, was the author of the papers; instead, Urantia Foundation stated "[t]he personality through whom the material which constitutes the text of "THE URANTIA BOOK" was transmitted is considered to be merely a conduit through whom the contents of the papers was transmitted to those who became the proprietors thereof . . . ."

The legal criteria for summary judgment require that the facts be considered in the light most favorable to the other party. In its brief in support of its Motion for Summary Judgment in *Burton*, Urantia Foundation stated that it is immaterial "whether the author is an unknown superhuman being, or the unidentified individual who actually wrote the manuscript in his own handwriting [as claimed by Mr. Burton]." Even if Mr. Burton's contentions were assumed to be true, Urantia Foundation stated that it was entitled to copyright protection for *The Urantia Book* as the custodian-proprietor entrusted with the manuscripts and printing plates.

It saddens us that some people are unwilling to accept the validity of the copyright and trademarks and move forward, united in service to our fellow man, in an effort to spread the truths derived from the book. This has become such an obsession for some that they appear willing to say or do anything to abolish the copyright. We regret the necessity of diverting precious resources from the work before us, but we are resolved to preserve the rights entrusted to Urantia Foundation.

We appreciate the prayers and support of all those interested in furthering this revelation.

**NEWSFLASH I**

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