

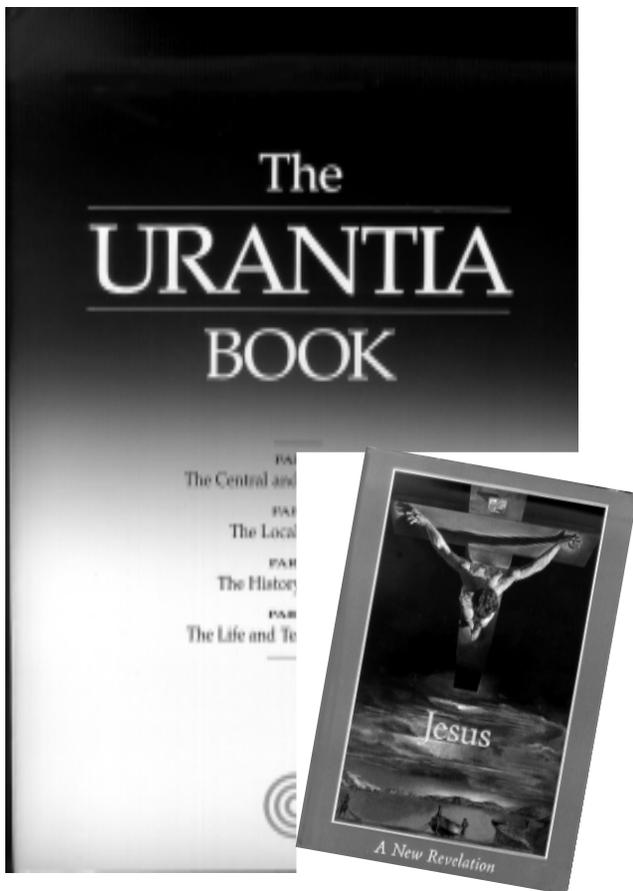
CONTROVERSY

THE JANR DEBATE:

Readers give their viewpoints pro and con about the publication of Jesus—A New Revelation

COMPILED BY SASKIA RAEVOURI

In the first issue of *The Circular* we published the letters and communications between Urantia Foundation and Harry McMullan, whose Michael Foundation is the publisher of *Jesus—A New Revelation*, a book comprised of the Jesus papers minus Paper 120. Some readers believe *JANR* is a service to humanity, others see it as breaking the law. Urantia Foundation filed a lawsuit, which was dismissed because it was filed in the wrong court. Now Michael Foundation has filed for an injunction against the Foundation, and Urantia Foundation has issued a statement in response. (The relevant documents are reproduced on pages 24-25.) The case goes on. Readers are divided in their opinions. What follows is a sampling, presented in alphabetical order.



JEFF ABERCROMBIE: What better way to “foster a religion” while insuring that “a critical mass of inviolate copies of the FER is produced and distributed” than to make cheap softcover copies available for free to whoever will accept them? Would it be conducive to the spread of the book if the Foundation’s website were simply a direct source by which you could obtain a free copy of the FER, with donations asked for but not required for future publications? What else is there for the Foundation to do? Everything it has done or tried to do outside of the printing and distribution of the UB has stirred up trouble. May we be so bold as to think that without the Foundation’s current copyright protection policies we might see *actual* unity emerge on a wide scale in this community of readers, and a religion more easily evolving among them? Would more funds be available to such a Urantia Foundation of the future? I not only predict it, I *guarantee* it!

LEE ARMSTRONG: The root of the schism is the failure to distinguish the role of Urantia Foundation as publisher and trustee of the material form of the revelation versus the social-fraternal role of the former Brotherhood to further study and

understanding of the content, but which *did not* include publication. As long as the Declaration of Trust is attacked, as long as there is no respect for copyright law, as long as readers believe they must be able to publish the book to share the publication, we will continue to be a movement conflicted. This does not equate to the Foundation against the readers because there are clearly readers like myself who support the Foundation. Copyright and trademark protection is wise because it is most likely to result in the long-term global dissemination of the teachings and the inviolate text.

CLAUDIA AYERS: I personally see tremendous value in a stand-alone Part IV, and I have been supporting the publication philosophically since its introduction. I would be greatly concerned if the publication did not have an obvious, direct connection to its source. The first page after the title page in *Jesus—A New Revelation* is the publisher's preface, clearly stating the Urantia Papers are the source of the entire balance of the text. Even the most casual reader will notice that Paper 122 must be preceded by 121 other papers, and thus make the connection stated in the preface.

Teachers of all types so often fail to evaluate where their students are before they begin instruction. The thing that thrills me most about *JANR* is that it is so perfectly adapted to where many people, especially Christians, are in their spiritual development.

I keep hearing the fifth epochal revelation is for the next 1,000 years. Perhaps our society, today and through the millennium to come, needs to improve its understanding of the fourth epochal revelation before being expected to comprehend the fifth. Without a remedial course in the life and teachings of Jesus (the fourth epochal revelation) prior to a serious undertaking of advanced topics and study, many will fail in their understanding of the fifth. After such "remedial work," then might we expect someone to start the book at the beginning and read through it with the desired sense of origin, history and destiny. (We who are experienced readers all know how continuous re-readings of the Jesus papers contribute greatly to our spiritual understanding.)

Our cherished papers tell us that actions, service, and creativity are valued. We are told to forbid not the strange

teacher. The outreach made possible by *JANR* is supported by these teachings.

As are many other activist readers, I too am concerned about the potential for "pitiful division" in the Urantia movement. That which bears no fruit is pruned by the Father. It is not the role of humans to judge alternative ministries. Some people offer negative opinions about the main reasons for *JANR's* publication; in contrast I believe the chief reason for publishing Part IV is simply to make the revelation more accessible. In my opinion, those who seek to undermine the ministry of others contribute to the pitiful division of readers.

The revelators made so great an attempt to make the information in the revelation accessible that they borrowed tremendously from human publications to convey their message. Currently there is inadequate choice in formats and inadequate context for the teachings in the fifth epochal revelation. The revelators clearly desire accessibility to this treasured knowledge. Publication of *JANR* mitigates these limitations. Humans need choice in revelatory packaging, organizational structure, and even leadership styles—all of which can work in harmony when judgments are minimized.

DEBBIE BARTMAN: Last Christmas my teenage daughter was singing in a Christmas carol concert and I drove her there early. I took my copy of *JANR* with me to read during the wait. It was easy to carry and very appropriate to take to a Christian church. I read about Jesus' trip with Ganid and Gonod, then participated in some great praise and worship of our Creator Son with the hundreds of other people in the room. It was sublime, true, beautiful, and good.

I believe that the Foundation must stop suing my brothers and sisters who are also working for the

dissemination of the revelation. The Ancients of Days, in the fullness of time, will determine whether our actions and efforts were wise or not. The UB is available to anyone online and we are in a new era of information availability. We cannot be overprotective and antagonistic. The spirit of the law is not necessarily the spirit of truth. Let's celebrate our diversity and different convictions of outreach.

The UF trustees have been talking about love and unity,

THE STRANGE PREACHER

John said to Jesus: "Master, yesterday I went over to Ashtaroth to see a man who was teaching in your name and even claiming to be able to cast out devils. Now this fellow had never been with us, neither does he follow after us; therefore I forbade him to do such things." Then said Jesus: "Forbid him not. Do you not perceive that this gospel of the kingdom shall presently be proclaimed in all the world? How can you expect that all who will believe the gospel shall be subject to your direction? Rejoice that already our teaching has begun to manifest itself beyond the bounds of our personal influence. Do you not see, John, that those who profess to do great works in my name must eventually support our cause? They certainly will not be quick to speak evil of me. My son, in matters of this sort it would be better for you to reckon that he who is not against us is for us. In the generations to come many who are not wholly worthy will do many strange things in my name, but I will not forbid them." (1764)

but they must also walk the walk. This dissension is harmful to new readers, our youth, the public, and our brothers and sisters. It hurts our family. Jesus did not allow his family to break up. He told his brothers: "Be patient. Be wise in your counsel and eloquent in your lives, that your young brother may first know the better way and then be constrained to follow you in it." The money spent in litigation could be put in a travel and education fund for youth, so they can get together, develop relationships, explore their spirituality, and take this revelation into the new century.

RON BESSER: One has to separate what is the public legal system from what is one's value system. I would hold the Foundation in contempt if it did not defend against illegal personal uses of the text. One may argue how well the Foundation has done its defending, but the law is there for a purpose and the trustees have discharged their responsibilities in accordance with their obligations under the law. This argument will never be won on a personal level; but the law must be defended on a public level until the Foundation relinquishes its protection of the text sometime in the next century. The Foundation is the only game in town when it comes to legally defending against the textual misuse of the Urantia Book. Like them or hate them, the trustees are the repository of last resort for defense and have the singular fiduciary responsibility to act or be in default of their purpose: to maintain the integrity of the Urantia Book.

NANCY BIGELOW: Why is it vitally important that *JANR* be published and given to mankind on Urantia? The achievement of brotherhood on this planet "requires far greater effort" in the here and now than it would have if our development as a world society had progressed normally. "Religious revelation is essential to the realization of brotherhood on Urantia." If the Urantia Foundation is successful in banning *JANR*, they will have effectively silenced the ministry of the spirit of the Prince of Peace. I don't think anyone who has read the Jesus papers will tell you that the Prince of Peace—as he is represented in the Bible—is a *living* minister in the manner he is alive within the text of the final 76 papers of the UB.

TRAVIS BINION: I had told Harry quite some time ago that I would support a fictional biography of Jesus based upon Part IV. In my mind that had little risk of adverse consequences and the potential to make *The New York Times* best seller list.

DAVID BRADLEY: I have difficulty understanding why the Foundation pursues litigation against people who love the Urantia Book, and who do meaningful outreach without distorting the text, spirit, or truth of the revelation. I have heard the trustees' justification that they have to pursue all technical copyright violations, goodhearted or not, or their copyright becomes meaningless.

I doubt that separate publication of Part IV will be harmful to the revelation. Truth is truth, and people will like and recognize it, or not. It would be bad if Harry McMullan had changed the wording, or did not explain where the material came from, but this is not the case here.

Stopping distorted or misused text is where the Foundation has a *real* job to do, and there are people out there who wouldn't hesitate to alter the meaning or the message.

I applaud the Foundation for its translations, and wish it

every success in its service outreach, provided it allows *others* to freely and independently do service outreach. Ministry and outreach are made more effective through the use of quoted text, which is the revelation, and the three-concentric-circles symbol of the Paradise Trinity. The Foundation controls, to some degree, use of the text and this symbol. It thus has an ability to inhibit the revelation, as well as protect it.

Is the Foundation just protecting the copyright, or controlling and inhibiting the service activities of other dedicated readers? Is the Foundation part of the team—protecting and benefiting the revelation—or is it functioning to some degree as a controlling empire builder with

egotistical and financial motives? The latter perception stems from seeing service workers with sincerity and true purpose being legally chastised and curtailed, and many times over. These legal actions signal a lack of willingness to find a way to "include and foster," as opposed to "curtail and restrict."

Can the Foundation use its resources to discern and foster friends of the Urantia Book (friends of God and truth), while at the same time discerning and opposing those who would do a disservice to humanity by distorting the text or truth (enemies of God and truth)? I believe so, and I believe that is the trustees' true challenge. Can permissions, if necessary, be granted to, instead of litigation taken against, good-hearted readers or groups? Can such permissions be instituted by broad written policy to avoid the "promiscuous license" argument (i.e., that if the trustees give too many permissions, they will have nothing left to protect)? I hope so, and wish everyone well.

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“If she [referring to a Methodist Sunday school teacher who claimed to rely solely on the Jesus papers] never reads anything but Part IV, she’s got a finer concept of God, and I’ll settle for that.”—Bill Sadler, Jr., at a talk given in Oklahoma, circa 1961.

a brief interview with **HARRY McMULLAN**

Q: *Do you want to “destroy” Urantia Foundation?*

HM: I have no interest at all in destroying Urantia Foundation, notwithstanding that’s what several trustees claim to be the case. People like me don’t want anything from Urantia Foundation except for it to stop hindering the proclamation of the gospel.

Q: *Many Urantians are upset at litigation involving the Urantia Book. Do you see any middle ground, any room for compromise which might settle this and subsequent lawsuits?*

HM: Yes, a wonderful solution does exist which promotes the interests of all parties. It’s called a General Public License, under which Urantia Foundation would permit anyone to reproduce any or all of the text of the Urantia Book so long as it was done in an “inviolable” manner. UF would retain all rights to sue anyone who reproduced the book or any part of the book in a corrupted manner, but otherwise the revelation would be free to the world. The disadvantage of this, in UF’s view, is that it would be shorn of monopoly power over the body of believers, and the current trustees are probably incapable of taking such an action.

Q: *What would be the effect of a General Public License on the average Urantian?*

HM: Everyone would be better off—most especially Urantia Foundation, which would be freed of the curse of trying to control everything and everyone. Guided by the Spirit of Truth, the revelation would find its way into the world in thousands of new and unpredictable ways—similar to the way in which immense telecommunication

progress resulted from abolishing the American AT&T telephone monopoly. Five power-hungry men are simply not as smart or capable as all the rest of us put together.

Q: *What is the argument against a General Public License?*

HM: I’ve heard two arguments. The first—unworthy of comment—is that the Urantia Book is merely a commercial book like all others and the trustees own it.

The other argument is that the revelators intended for Urantia Foundation to absolutely control everything to do with the Urantia Book. This argument is based on a questionable interpretation of Urantia Foundation’s Declaration of Trust, under which keeping the text inviolate is not enough—it has to prevent anyone from doing anything with respect to the revelation without its permission. This leg of the argument is based on the so-called “mandates,” which, in their selective disbursement, elevate the trustees of Urantia Foundation to the supermortal status of those representatives of the planetary government who must be obeyed by the rest of us.

Since the so-called “mandates” were not given to anyone currently alive, they are nothing more than hearsay, and we should find it an easy choice to obey the direct words of Jesus instead of such so-called “mandates,” which by their own terms were supposed to be burned many years ago. The relationship of the so-called “mandates” to the revelation itself is no more than a 20th century version of the oral traditions which the Sanhedrin taught were more sacred and binding upon the Jews than Scripture itself and against which oral traditions Jesus was in “constant collision.”

Q: *How do you feel about Urantia Foundation’s recent trademark registrations of the phrase “The Urantia Book”?*

HM: It’s part of a campaign to buttress UF control over the revelation through trademark registrations of the phrase “The Urantia Book” and the concentric circles by asserting both to be merely commercial symbols of their creation. This filing is for use on sportswear, caps, coffee mugs, and tote bags. If Urantians do not protest to the Patent and Trademark Office and this truly hideous plan succeeds, UF will file follow-up registrations in other product categories in furtherance of its control ambitions. If the trustees’ blatant attempt to deny others the right even to refer to the Urantia Book without their permission, and their denigration of the sacred symbol of the Paradise Trinity to a commercial trademark on sportswear weren’t so outrageous, this would be a hilarious epilogue to ex-trustee Tom Kendall’s oft-repeated justification of trademark registration with his story about the Urantia Massage Parlor. As it turned out, we had completely misunderstood Tom’s point: the trustees’ objection wasn’t the fact of the word Urantia being used in conjunction with a massage parlor, but only that the word wasn’t properly licensed!

Q: *What is the latest standing?*

HM: The case is in the initial claims and answers stage. The most important news is the fact that UF’s suit in Phoenix was dismissed, after which Michael Foundation filed a suit for declaratory judgment in Oklahoma, which is in the 10th Circuit. ■

NANCY MARIE BROWN: Here is the problem I have with Harry's assumption that he has the right to print the fourth part of the Urantia Book. In so doing, he instructed whomever to print the cover as he saw fit. Do not tell me that he was printing this part of the book for all mankind to benefit from. When one puts Jesus hanging on a cross on the cover of a book that was given to us to put the idea of Jesus hanging on a cross into a new, higher and better perspective, he is going directly against the teachings of the Urantia Book. Further, he is aiming his book towards the fundamentalist Christian world. We already know that the Oriental race rejected Christianity because of this very idea—that God would send His son to be crucified for our sins. Good old Harry decided to put this torturous picture on the book anyway. How will this affect the Moslem, Buddhist, and Taoist potential readership? And we wonder why we need a Foundation to protect this revelation? Give me a break.

PHIL CALABRESE: I am aware of the recent unauthorized—as far as Urantia Foundation is concerned—publication of all but the first of the Jesus papers of the Urantia Book in a separate book, a book which makes reference to the whole text as published by Urantia Foundation.

I have also recently read the Foundation's principled letter to the readership, the "congregation of readers of the UB," in order to understand its concerns regarding such publications. After considerable reflection I have concluded that UF is taking its role in the fifth epochal revelation too seriously. UF is supposed to *foster*, not lead, a revelation, and publish and protect authentic, inviolate copies of the first edition of the Urantia Book. It can do all this without having to maintain central control over the publication and presentation of parts or all of the book.

The Foundation brings up the possibility of various bastardizations and distortions of the Urantia Book as reasons for its need to carefully control all publications of the revelation, but these reasons seem to me in this day of quick communication and the World Wide Web to be just an after-the-fact excuse for maintaining itself as the central control point of UB revelatory presentations and publications—the one and only publisher and copyright holder of the Urantia Book. Unfortunately, as long as UF continues to see its role in this way, the presentation of the revelation will be stunted by the uniformity inherent in a central human control point. In its zeal—and overmuch self-concern—to present an ideal

and inviolate copy of the original manuscript, UF attempts too much in one direction while missing the larger picture of thousands of individual believers doing their own thing with the text, adapting it to their own needs and to the needs of the world's peoples.

It never was meant to be a perfect revelation, and so human reworking and representing is a good thing that can only lead more people right back to that same Urantia Book, which UF can continue to publish inviolately. With computers and communication now so generally available, it would take less than a day for anyone to trace the origin of material taken from the Urantia Book. Most authors would be happy to refer the whole text to anyone with the intellectual bent to read it and love it. To the Foundation: Please consider taking a more decentralized role in the presentation of the fifth epochal revelation and allow the revelation to breathe.

**“As long as the Declaration
of Trust is attacked, as
long as there is no respect
for copyright law, as long as
readers believe they must be
able to publish the book
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a movement conflicted.”**

—*Lee Armstrong*

CAROLYN CAMP: Regarding the problem that exists between the Foundation and Harry McMullan, this came to mind: What if Harry donated all of the profits above the cost of printing and distribution of *JANR* to the Urantia Foundation for use in printing Urantia Books—or maybe to some mutually agreed upon charity? In essence it would be as if Harry were publishing the book for the Foundation. After all, Harry's book is part of the Urantia

Book. I think Harry's motives in publishing the book are excellent and I believe the book would provide an encouragement to spiritual growth that might not be possible otherwise. We all know that many more people would be interested in reading this part of the Urantia Book than would ever consider reading the whole thing. What they got from it would have to be of benefit to them. If Harry's motives are (as I believe they are) simply to do what he can to encourage spiritual growth, then it seems that this might be a solution. In essence the Urantia Foundation would still have control of the publication of the FER thereby fulfilling its trust, and many more people would benefit—at least from part of it.

CRAIG CARMICHAEL: It seems to me there is some resemblance between the lone-star Part IV plan and the Serapatatia plan—trying to find some way to speed things up for local purposes regardless of whether it's the right thing to do or not, or whether the anticipated end result might even possibly be harmed by it. *“Democracy is the right way to*

do even a wrong thing.” It seems to me Harry McMullan has in effect said, “If I can’t get a majority consensus on this, I’ll use my money to overrule the majority decision of what is considered best.” Did he try to win others to his views before he did this on his own, or test what others thought before committing himself to this plan? “Means are ends in the making.” Personally, I think it is well to consider pretty carefully before resorting to hasty means.

Perhaps there will be a time when it is expedient to print Part IV alone, but this will be when the general public knows of the Urantia Book and its basic outline. Before then, doesn’t it just confuse the whole picture for new readers? It seems to me there is potential here for considerable harm, particularly but not solely by equating the Urantia Book with Christianity in people’s minds. It may alienate them and substantially delay general acceptance of the Urantia Book in foreign lands. We should be mindful that the views and needs of North Americans are not the only ones that need to be addressed in a revelation intended for the whole world, and that the actions of others on this planet—enlightened or otherwise—affect us here.

JUDITH COREA: I recently read the *URANTIAN NEWS* special issue and it cleared up a lot of things in my mind about the new *JANR* book that was published by Harry McMullan. I was happy to hear about the book at first, as I thought it would be a great way to introduce the Urantia Book to fundamentalist Christians. But now I see that *JANR* has not included the first paper that explains the Michael bestowal. That part is important to help lead new UB readers to want to read more—the *first* three parts of the UB. The bottom line is, what happens if someone somewhere only gets Part IV of the book and they want to read more, and what if they aren’t easily able to access books? Or what if someone reads *JANR* not realizing there is another part to the book, or what if they aren’t interested after that point? Wouldn’t that be tragic? The rest of the book should be there in front of them to challenge them to read it. Therefore I stand behind the trustees’ decision to defend the copyright, as they were charged to do by the revelators. They can’t break that promise, as they must follow the Father’s will. I believe that if God wants the Foundation to protect the text, He will be behind them during the trial.

LENNY COWLES: The great error I perceive in this long discussion stems from an incorrect assumption. The revelators required that the text of the Papers be protected.

Nowhere do we find indication that the revelators required that copyright was to be the only means to that end. Three original copies of the first edition remained protected in a vault by the Foundation. This alone fulfills the revelators’ requirements. In addition, as long as the Papers remain in public distribution, in their original form, they are further protected. Copyright cannot stop anyone from distorting or rewriting the conceptual ideology of the Papers to fit their own agenda. So you must ask yourself, does the cost of defending the copyright, the ill will and strife that has been created within the movement, justify the end?

RON CYR: Like the statement that a U.S. colonel made in Vietnam, “We had to destroy the village to save it,” can we say that the Foundation has to destroy the fifth epochal revelation to save it? It seems to me that the trustees’ excuse

that to save the FER they have to keep the copyright at all costs, is ludicrous. What is more important for uplifting mankind and saving souls, the copyright or the FER? Melchizedek and Jesus had full trust in the individual—and not in the secular laws—to proclaim their teachings to humankind. Why would the “owners” of this epochal revelation sue the individual instead of trusting the individual to proclaim the teachings to the world?

JIM DOWNS: Part IV of the Urantia Book, the *fifth* epochal revelation, is the best efforts of the revelators to let us know what the *fourth* epochal revelation was all about. They also let us know about the other three. It is not so much a question of *if* it should have been done, but if it was

done with as much wisdom as we have available. I do not think the revelators would fool themselves into thinking that the humans that they were giving this revelation to would not screw it up, break it up, twist it up, and generally play all manner of havoc with it—at least in the long run.

They probably hoped that we would be able to learn something from it and hopefully pass it on to the next 50 generations. It may be that they were hoping that the damage would not be done too quickly. Maybe things are not too bad yet. In 100 years if there are 37 factions of Urantia Book readers/believers, then maybe we screwed it up pretty badly, unless if in 500 years those 37 factions have cleared things up and got back to loving one another. We will just have to be patient and see.

All separations should refer back to the original text. Mr. McMullan should rename the Part IV book, *Jesus—The Fourth*

“The best way to protect the revelation is to get as many of the inviolate works into the world as possible. Indeed, if every person in the world had a copy in his hands, who would we need to protect it from?”
—*Paula Thompson*

Epochal Revelation with an explanation that the fifth ER is available and includes the first four. Bargain hunters will buy the fifth ER and save themselves a few bucks in the long run.

MARK AND KATHY GEORGE-MOORE: If we take a moment to reflect upon the teachings of Jesus in this same book that is causing the controversy, we need not go to law amongst ourselves. As ambassadors of the kingdom of our Father, we are commissioned to save men. Before the Foundation (and others) go to the law courts of this world, shouldn't they come to the readership, who are spiritually guided, for guidance and counseling? We all know how human justice is ruled. Discipline must be maintained, justice must be administered, but in all of these matters, the wisdom of the brotherhood of readers should prevail. We must seek to promulgate truth and establish righteousness by the brotherhood of man through the readership and not by the power of civil governments or by the enacting of secular laws. Let us remember that we are commissioned to disseminate this new revelation of Jesus and to do the Father's will. The Father's will is personal to each, we cannot judge a brother's decision on the Father's will in his life. What we can do is listen to the Spirit of Truth and receive its guidance. If the unknowing or unbelievers can qualify as superior decision makers in this matter, we should seriously question whether the roots of truth in our hearts have not died.

LARRY GEIS: I gave away about ten copies of *JANR* to members of my mother's family and their young Southern Baptist minister just before Christmas. The minister was invited to the family gathering, a brunch and gift exchange. They were all very eager to receive this book. I would not have felt comfortable gifting copies of the entire UB, no matter how attractively packaged. (I tried that long ago. As far as these people are concerned, *JANR* is something like a *Reader's Digest* condensation.) I've asked for their feedback, negative or positive, but so far have received none. It's an experiment as far as I'm concerned. All of these people are lifelong, sincere Christians and very active in church activities (mostly Southern Baptist). My mother is an ordained chaplain's assistant at her local Baptist hospital. We shall see what fruits all this will bear.

LARRY GWYNN: In the Foundation's open letter to Harry McMullan, one sentence stands out in which it claims to have "no choice" but to bring Mr. McMullan into a court of law for his publication of Part IV of the Urantia Papers. It has been my experience that when anyone says they have "no choice," they have backed themselves into a no-choice corner and consequently do not want to take responsibility for their choices, labeling some outside force as delimiting their choices. "No choice" cannot be used as a justification of a choice. Why can't the Foundation simply state that it is making a choice to sue Mr. McMullan because it wishes to protect the copyright of the Urantia Papers? Why can't the Foundation take responsibility and explain to the congregation why it feels the copyright is necessary as part of its mandate in the Declaration of Trust? Could it be that these reasons are not as clear and obvious in the minds of the congregation as they are now

formulated in the minds of the trustees? What part does the copyright play in the mandate to foster the common good in several specific areas as outlined in the Declaration of Trust?

The Foundation's ability to utilize the talents, resources and insights of the congregation (and being able to distinguish between those who would exploit and those who could help) will be the key to the Foundation's survival—survival in the sense of an ever-expanding vision of how to foster the mandates of the trustees. Any system that uses expulsion as a means of preserving unity has a built-in schism that will cause its failure.

Organizations need a degree of insularity in order to preserve themselves, but this becomes destructive when resources outside the organization are rejected due to protracted unresolved conflicts, especially as this reflects conflicts within the organization itself. Forever know and remember that what you do to one of us you do to all of us, including yourselves. I hereby petition the trustees to maintain a moratorium on lawsuits until such time as a conclave of a cross-section of the congregation can meet and openly share input as well as output. Let us all put light upon higher purposes and how we are going to strive to meet them in the first decade of the new millennium.

FRED HARRIS: I believe that the real root of the problem is the inappropriate legal structure of the Urantia Foundation. A self-perpetuating board with no democratic process is the

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**“Once the copyright expires
... people can and will divide
up the book in many
different ways, and the
marketplace will be flooded
with various versions of
the original. It is important
that we maintain a single and
unconfused identity for
the book in as many
languages as possible before
that time comes.”**

—*Steven Hecht*

POINT.GEIGERCOUNTERPOINT

Long-time reader Phil Geiger responds point by point to excerpts from the Foundation-sponsored open letter of 11/8/99 to the readership, prior to the UF's filing a lawsuit against Michael Foundation for copyright infringement and trademark violation.*

LETTER: *We, as leaders, former leaders, and members of the community of readers, seek to bring peace and good will to our movement regarding this controversial issue. We did not initiate this disagreement and seek no unnecessary confrontation.*

PHIL GEIGER: This statement confuses cause with effect. The decision to copyright the Urantia Papers is the genesis of the conflict. Without it, the current situation couldn't exist. The decision to use Caesar's laws to fulfill the duty of the trustees to keep the text inviolate was strictly a human policy decision. It set into motion powerful, impersonal forces of secular law, specifically commercial law, that have their own deterministic logic. To simply argue "Harry made us do it," and "We don't have any choice" is to gainsay the inevitable consequences that unleashing such forces entail. And, more fundamentally, it assumes that individuals and groups acting upon their own religious convictions to serve the revelation must subordinate their efforts to policy decisions made by humans a half century ago—policies which, though arguably appropriate for their time, contain no guarantee that they are the right policies today. Without a review of their current utility and a cost benefit analysis of their application, or a thorough investigation of alternative ways to the keep the text inviolate, this action is, at best, premature.

LETTER: *Both our time and energy, and Harry's time and energy, would be far better spent on dissemination, not litigation.*

PG: Ten million dollars minimum is my guess. I base this on the costs involved in a lengthy discovery process, depositions conducted over numerous states, a jury trial and a full course of appeals. (The Maaherra case was decided on the basis of a procedurally simple summary judgment, limited discovery, and a limited appeal effort.) All this is money that could otherwise go for translations, outreach and other dissemination efforts. Those who support this action should be prepared to reach deep into their pockets to help pay for letting loose the dogs of legal war.

LETTER: *Harry's publication violates copyright law.*

PG: So say the Foundation's lawyers. Michael Foundation's lawyers say differently—no big surprise there. One believer/attorney who has researched this issue in depth believes the Foundation will lose its copyright as a result. (He has also offered an alternative licensing policy that would enable the Foundation to maintain the copyright without having to instigate this and related actions.) But hey, that's what courts are for. It should be noted, however, that resolving copyright and fair use issues are not as simple as proving somebody ran a red light; and for good reason. Substantive issues of

public policy are involved. Though the Foundation might obtain a temporary injunction against distribution of *JANR*, resolving the substantive issues will likely involve a long, protracted struggle that could take over a decade to resolve.

LETTER: *It violates the processes of duly constituted group wisdom.*

PG: Which group is that? The trustees and their adjunct IUA, each dedicated uncompromisingly to the copyright? The Fellowship General Council and the Fellowship societies (duly constituted groups), in separate actions, declined to accede to the Foundation's entreaties to take a vote on the matter (one that would likely have divided the membership). Neither would participate in what now appears to be a well-orchestrated campaign (including even the enlistment of foreign study groups) to isolate Harry from his fellows.

LETTER: *It violates the spirit of the unity movement afoot within our community.*

PG: I see. Unity is to be defined exclusively by the holders and believers in the copyright. Suing Michael Foundation for publishing and distributing the life and teachings of Jesus will probably destroy not only the spirit of the unity movement, but its actuality as well.

LETTER: *As one of the few tools at the trustees' disposal to do this, the copyright must be maintained to ensure that translations are as true as possible to the original text. This is not a simple matter of choosing between competing groups of equally qualified translators, who may have different styles of translating. If the copyright in the English text is lost, enforceable copyrights could be obtained on translations of poor quality and on translations which amend, abridge, embellish, or purposefully distort the text.*

PG: Enforceable copyrights on inferior or distorted translations do not preclude copyrights from being awarded to competing, superior translations.

LETTER: *Once obtained, such a copyright could be enforced against all other translations, even against a translation of the original text.*

PG: How? What is the legal basis for this claim? It implies that the first one to translate Shakespeare into Greek enjoys a monopoly against all

*published in its entirety in the April-June *Circular*

subsequent Greek translations of Shakespeare. Can someone provide any legal authority whatsoever for this critical assertion? Maybe some examples of public domain works translated into a foreign language that became the one and only legal version for that country? (All this applies only to countries that are signatories to international copyright treaties. Non-member countries are of course free to do what they want, even now.)

LETTER: *Only by maintaining and enforcing the copyright can we ensure that the inviolate text will reach as many of the world's peoples as possible.*

PG: Even if the Foundation were to give up the copyright tomorrow, it could still ensure that quality translations approved by the Foundation are available internationally. With its (ahem) good will, established presence, and support of a unified readership, it could easily occupy the translation field. The amount of money that the Foundation could save on this lawsuit alone could produce some twenty translations available to foreign countries by the time the suit winds down. That's twenty good translations that won't be there to offset any bad ones should the Foundation lose.

LETTER: *We urge Harry to retract this illegal printing of copyrighted material and to agree in writing not to print or distribute any more volumes of Jesus—A New Revelation or any other materials infringing Urantia Foundation's copyrights and registered marks, with unsold copies to be turned over to Urantia Foundation. If Harry fails to comply with this request, the trustees of Urantia Foundation will have no choice but to exercise their fiduciary responsibility and their legal obligations under the Declaration of Trust.*

PG: The fiduciary duty of the Foundation trustees is to keep the text inviolate. All that is at risk here is the archaic *policy* they chose to realize it. (The word "copyright" does not occur once in the Declaration of Trust.) At the time the decision was made, copyright was one of the few tools available to protect the text. Apparently the only other affordable means was to take three copies of the original and lock them away in a safe somewhere. Another alternative—flooding the world with authenticated copies—perhaps the surest form of text protection, would have been very expensive. But even if the two methods actually utilized were appropriate half a century ago, that doesn't automatically make them the best tools for the job today. Other alternatives include (but are not necessarily limited to):

1. Posting encrypted copies of the text in digital form all over the World Wide Web.

2. Using digital publishing to download, print, and bind hardcopy texts at remote sites. This would help supply a critical mass of authenticated texts. (This would also have the added advantage of lowering the price of the book considerably by saving on such costs as shipping, insurance, export duties, spoilage, etc. This would be especially helpful in supplying affordable books to poorer countries.)

3. Adopting an open licensing policy. This would facilitate universal dissemination. It would also assure quality control over the primary text, secondary works, and translations. Additional

protection of foreign translations under such a policy is provided for by:

4. Exercising the "moral rights" associated with international copyright law. Article 6bis of the Berne Convention entitled "Moral Rights," states in part:

"(1) Independently of the author's economic rights, and even after the transfer of the said rights, the author shall have the right to... object to any distortion, mutilation or other modification of, or other derogatory action in relation to, the said work..."

Note: All these alternatives assume preservation of the existing copyright.

LETTER: *While we prefer to have this matter resolved privately, if Harry fails to comply with this request, the trustees of Urantia Foundation will—in order to defend, protect, and preserve the Foundation's copyright in the Urantia Book—exercise their legal option and request that the courts resolve this matter.*

PG: The last time the Foundation followed this route they ended up with a lot less protection than they'd enjoyed before. What did they get for all their trouble and expense? What the Supreme Court in Feist called "thin" protection on a compiled, composite work of non-copyrightable "facts" (co-authored by humans, no less). With this current gambit, the Foundation could lose it all, including the quality control they now exercise over secondary works and translations.

LETTER: *The legal process, while unpleasant, is used throughout the imperfect and evolving universes to resolve conflicts between beings.*

PG: To resolve secular conflicts amongst beings, yes. But the persistent denial of the religious dimension of this debate will only lead to long-term *religious* conflict within the Urantia movement. (One need only review the legacy of religious versus secular war to appreciate the power of the former compared to the latter.)

LETTER: *Such proceedings can and should be conducted in a dignified and gracious manner that reflects positively on how the revelation transforms human behavior.*

PG: Yes, by all means. Let us lovingly apply the lash to our own, and limit our cries to only expletive-deleted pain. Let us temper any wailing and gnashing of teeth over the millions of dollars that will be redirected from translations and myriad service projects to our lawyers' retirement funds. Let us show the world that we can do all this in a dignified and gracious manner.

LETTER: *Therefore, in the larger interest of the revelation, we respectfully ask that Harry cease the distribution of Jesus—A New Revelation and cancel any plans for its translation or future printing.*

PG: In the larger interest of the revelation, I encourage the trustees to exhaust all alternative ways of fulfilling their trust before starting out the third millennium after Christ mired in yet another expensive and fractious lawsuit. And I invite all who have signed or are considering signing this letter to perform their own due diligence. ■

seed that created this situation. The copyright issue and propensity to litigate are only symptoms of an autocratic organization. There are basically two ways to solve this problem: (1) have the Urantia Foundation voluntarily modify its organization, or (2) have its only source of power—its copyright—taken away. At this point it seems unlikely that the Urantia Foundation will voluntarily give up its autocracy, so it is choosing to take the litigation route to resolution.

The Foundation has finally bitten off more than it can chew, however, as I'm sure it well knows. Harry is a worthy and committed opponent. Frankly, the Foundation's copyright sustained a much greater hit in the Maaherra litigation than the UF is willing to admit and, with a concerted discovery effort, a well-financed legal battle defending against the Foundation's lawsuit will probably be successful. Even so, the money, energy and angst that is expended in the process makes it a difficult and uncertain campaign for both sides.

Maybe there is a third option. The Foundation has expressed an interest in maintaining its right to control the translations. In this area I believe it is beneficial to have all efforts funneled through a single organization and I feel that the Foundation has generally done a good job with this task. I don't otherwise see the need for the continued copyright for the UF. In fact, if the UF didn't have the copyright as a control device, it would have to be subject to the market demands for quality, price and innovation. That can't be bad. It has already resulted in an electronic version with a search engine and a smaller version of the UB.

There are ways to solve this problem without litigation, the most obvious of which is for the UF to issue an irrevocable public license allowing anyone to use the text and the trademarks without restriction—except for the translations, which rights could be retained. This is a very easy solution, but it requires the UF to let go of its perceived control in the other areas. If the Foundation is unwilling to make these concessions, then let the fur fly.

STEVEN HECHT: At this time in the FER's infancy, before the world has barely an inkling of its existence, I would be very wary of anyone publishing any of the parts separately. That is because each the four parts comprises an organic portion of the revelatory whole, a whole that needs to be better known around the world (and in this country) before one of its parts is. If *any* one of those parts were to gain popularity before, simultaneously with, or at the expense of

the whole Urantia Book in the marketplace it could well serve to confuse the public's understanding of what the genuine revelatory intent of the UB is. That intent is *not* contained by any one of the four parts of the book, but only by all four (see 19:1). The four sections of the UB are called "parts" for a very good reason—the revelators wrote them so as to interface in our minds and give rise to a whole revelation, and not as separate, self-contained "books" (if they had, the sections would have been called "Book I," "Book II," etc.). These parts have been designed by the revelators to conform to the now well-known pedagogical method described on page 215. Why is there an emergency to undo what they've done? Once the copyright expires [in the United States] in 2050 people can and will divide up the book in many different ways, and the marketplace will be flooded with various versions of the original. It is important that we maintain a single and unconfused identity for the book in as many languages as possible before that time comes.

“[Jesus’] life and teachings were *bequeathed* the universe as an inspirational and idealistic inheritance suitable for the spiritual guidance and moral instruction of all ages on all worlds.”(1583, italics added)

DAVID KANTOR: Not long ago a woman came to our study group and told how she had gone to a Renaissance Pleasure Faire and came upon a wandering bard who was passing out little scrolls to everyone which contained “The Inevitabilities” (3:5). She framed them, hung them on her wall and found herself reflecting on them almost daily; these few paragraphs provided her with spiritual sustenance for nearly three years.

Then it occurred to her that the wandering bard might have additional material. So she went back to the Faire that year and sure enough, there was the bard passing out scrolls. This time she received the Morontia Mota section from Paper 48. She took these home and hung them on her wall. By Faire time the following year she was convinced that there must be a yet more. So she went back to the Faire, located the bard, and drew him into conversation. She was soon reading the Urantia Book.

She related to us that at the time she received the first scroll she would not have given a text such as the Urantia Book a second glance; that living with those two scrolls for four years awakened in her a hunger for truth that led her into a rich and meaningful spiritual life. I am reminded of Jesus' comment on 133:4.2: “Give the milk of truth to those who are babes in spiritual perception. In your living and loving ministry serve spiritual food in attractive form and suited to the capacity of receptivity of each of your inquirers.”

But perhaps asking whether or not Part IV should be published separately is not the right question. Given Jesus'

comment above, it might be more appropriate to ask, “Would Jesus likely condone a plan which demanded the teaching of a 1,300 page cosmology as a prerequisite to sharing the story of his life and teachings?” Note that Jesus said, “I have come to seek and to save those who are lost,” not “those who have attained a sufficiently developed cosmology.” Said Jesus, “In an age to come the gospel which I declare to you will rule this very world. The ultimate goal of human progress is the reverent recognition of the Fatherhood of God and the loving materialization of the brotherhood of man” (143:1.4).

It is not clear to me how a separate presentation of Part IV might jeopardize or retard the attainment of these goals which the Master has set forth.

BUD KAGAN: At the summer session in Georgetown I told Harry I was against splitting up the Urantia Papers (although this was done in the initial French translation with the then-trustees’ blessing). Now that I see what Harry has done, I’ve changed my mind. I support his effort with unqualified resolve. Is it not said that knowing the life of Jesus is the most important thing a Urantia mortal can do?

LEONARD KATER: I fully agree with the criticisms of the cover of Harry’s printing of Part IV. At the Millennium Forum in New York recently, I visited a Catholic church at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza. Two popes have visited there, and in the church there is no Jesus hanging on a cross but a Jesus standing in the air in front of all. This is the image I like, because it reflects the Jesus all his disciples and followers were acquainted with. So if there is an image which could characterize Part IV, then it is this one. Would adoption of this image instead of the crossed one on the cover make the difference to stop all litigation and start negotiations for a settlement of this unhealthy dispute?

TERRY KRUGER: When we freely accepted the new gospel, each of us became obligated to freely give the good news to all nations. In making the true life and teachings of Jesus available in a single volume, Harry McMullan has acted on his personal evangelistic purpose and understanding of the Father’s will. It was God who elected to give Harry—and each of us—the right to personal religious action, and it was God who determined that the first cardinal feature of the kingdom of heaven was the preeminence of the individual. On the other hand, it is currently five men, elected by no one, who use the laws of man to sustain themselves with authority to own and control the fifth epochal revelation for the supposed benefit of the entire world. Five mortals claim this ownership of a copyright of an epochal revelation,

supported by supposed celestial “oral mandates,” which through the force of law gives them unwarranted “control and authority” over how each of us might choose to disseminate it.

Through the courts of this country they frequently prevent the personal religious action of others when it runs counter to what they have determined is “safe” and acceptable dissemination. In doing so, they defy this admonition from Jesus: “How can you expect that all who will believe the gospel shall be subject to your direction?”

But the collective spiritual vision of the trustees eschews evangelism; they are nothing like their Master, who possessed a “versatile and aggressive temperament.” He was “bold and emphatic” in announcing that his evangelistic “plan was worldwide, even universal.” His public efforts were progressively more “aggressive” and even “pretentious.” So too should be the public efforts of his contemporary evangelists, moved to personal religious action by his example and the power of God in their lives. And we bear witness to such an action in the publication of the Master’s life and teachings independent of the Urantia Book.

Harry speaks for many of us when he asserts that Urantia Foundation’s control over the fellowship of believers is “unjust.” You men and women who are comfortable with Urantia Foundation’s “authority” deny such “control” is unjust, because you welcome it as “guidance.” Many others do not. But no one should be forcibly dissuaded from their personal commission to evangelize by the litigious and fearful prohibitions used by the trustees against our personal religious efforts. The

trustees say this message should not be spread by “evangelization.” In doing so, they pervert the very message they seek to “protect”:

“If something has become a religion in your experience, it is self-evident that you already have become an active evangel of that religion.... If you are not a positive and missionary evangel of your religion, you are self-deceived in that what you call a religion is only a traditional belief or a mere system of intellectual philosophy.”

Those who sedate themselves with the mantra of “impatience is a spirit poison” would do well to rethink their personal responsibility to fulfill this charge, and start working for and achieving it *now*.

For three decades the trustees have used intimidation, lawyers, lawsuits, and millions of dollars to ensure that all public dissemination meets with their approval. If they would turn their full attention to achieving their principal objective in the Declaration of Trust, and thereby free themselves from their illusions of authority over the fifth epochal revelation, it would unfold through the personal religious action of the sons of God just as he intends. *Jesus—A New Revelation* could become the most important tool of Urantian evangelists, if

continued on page 26

“Of all human knowledge, that which is of greatest value is to know the religious life of Jesus and how he lived it.”
(2090)

THE COURT DOCUMENTS

May 10, 2000

COURT DISMISSES URANTIA FOUNDATION'S LAWSUIT

5/10/00 36 ORDER by Judge Roger G. Strand granting motion to dismiss case for change of venue pursuant to Rule 12(b) Federal Rules of Civil Procedure by dft Michael Foundation [10-1]

finding the motion to expedite discovery and schedule immediate hearing by pla Urantia Foundation [4-2] moot.,

finding the motion to waive usual procedures by pla Urantia Foundation [4-1] moot.,

finding the motion for extension of time (additional 3 days to file response) re opposition to petition for order to show cause for preliminary injunction by dft Michael Foundation [18-1] moot.,

finding the motion to file excess pages re: Pla's Reply Brief in Support of Mtn for Preliminary Injunction [30-1] moot

(cc: all counsel) (jw) [Entry date 05/10/00] [Edit date 05/11/00]

5/10/00 37 JUDGMENT: per the Court's order entered 5/10/00 granting dft Michael Foundation, Inc's motion to dismiss for change of venue pursuant to Rule 12(b) Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, this case and action are closed; pla to take nothing

(cc: all counsel/jgmdrw) (jw) [Entry date 05/10/00] [Edit date 05/11/00]

May 16, 2000 MICHAEL FOUNDATION FILES SUIT

Michael Foundation, Inc.; Complaint for Declaratory Judgment May 16, 2000 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA

Case No. 00-885-W MICHAEL FOUNDATION, INC., a Foreign Corporation, Plaintiff, v. URANTIA FOUNDATION, an Illinois Charitable Trust, COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY JUDGMENT

Michael Foundation, Inc., ("Michael Foundation") for its complaint against Urantia Foundation, states:

1. Michael Foundation is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Oklahoma with its principal place of business in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

2. Urantia Foundation is an Illinois charitable trust with its principal place of business at 533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois.

3. This action arises pursuant to the laws of the United States pertaining to copyright, 17 U.S.C. § 101 et. seq. This Court has federal question jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331.

4. Venue of this action is proper in this district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b) because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claim occurred in this district and because Urantia Foundation may be found in this district.

5. By this action, Michael Foundation seeks a declaratory judgment pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2201 determining the rights of the parties with respect to certain written materials described herein.

6. This case involves certain written revelations received during the 1920s and 1930s. Both parties profess to believe that the revelations were delivered by spiritual beings through an anonymous human being. The revelations were delivered in the form of papers known as the Urantia papers.

7. Michael Foundation is the publisher and distributor of a book called Jesus-A New Revelation ("JANR"). JANR consists of certain of the Urantia papers, Nos. 121 through 196.

8. Urantia Foundation publishes and distributes The URANTIA Book. The URANTIA Book is a compilation of all of the Urantia papers in the order in which they were delivered. Urantia Foundation has, on many occasions, represented to others and encouraged others to believe that no humans decided the content of The URANTIA Book and that the contents of The URANTIA Book are just as the non-human spiritual beings delivered it.

9. In 1955, the Urantia Foundation obtained a copyright for The URANTIA Book representing that it was the author of The URANTIA Book.

10. Urantia Foundation renewed the copyright in 1983, representing that it was the proprietor of a work-for-hire.

11. Urantia Foundation presently asserts that it is the holder of a valid copyright with respect to The URANTIA Book.

12. Urantia Foundation asserts that JANR infringes its copyright of The

WHAT IT MEANS:

The court dismissed the suit because the Foundation brought it in a Federal district (Arizona) which was not a proper venue. Venue is defined as "the particular county, or geographical area, in which a court with jurisdiction may hear or determine a case."

Harry had requested a change of venue because his alleged copyright violation took place in Oklahoma, not in Arizona. The reason for bringing the suit in Arizona was the prospect of getting a favorable hearing on appeal with the 9th Circuit Court, which reinstated the copyright in the Maaherra case.

"In federal cases the prosecutor's discretion regarding the location of the prosecution is limited by Article III, § 2, U.S. Const., which requires trial in the state where the offense "shall have been committed," and the Sixth Amendment, which guarantees an impartial jury "of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed."

Harry committed his alleged offense outside of the venue of the Arizona Federal Court. If the Foundation chooses to continue pursuing the case it will be forced to bring another suit in Oklahoma, Harry's home territory, and within a different Federal Circuit Court district, thus dimming its prospects of victory on appeal.—*Editor*

URANTIA Book. Among other things, Urantia Foundation has manifested its position through the following acts:

(a) By letter dated August 5, 1999, Urantia Foundation asserted that JANR infringed Urantia Foundation's copyright and demanded that Michael Foundation cease publication and distribution of JANR;

(b) By letter dated October 13, 1999, Urantia Foundation renewed its accusation that JANR infringed Urantia Foundation's copyright, demanded that Michael Foundation cease publication and distribution of JANR, and threatened litigation in the event Michael Foundation failed to comply with Urantia Foundation's demand; and

(c) On November 22, 1999, Urantia Foundation commenced suit against Michael Foundation in the United States District Court for the District of Arizona, which suit was subsequently dismissed due to improper venue.

13. The copyright claimed by Urantia Foundation in The URANTIA Book is invalid for the following reasons, among others:

(a) The contents of The URANTIA Book are uncopyrightable because no human being authored such contents;

(b) Urantia Foundation is estopped by its representations to various members of the public to assert that the contents of The URANTIA Book were organized, even in part, by any human being;

(c) Urantia Foundation established that the right to copyright the contents of The URANTIA Book was assigned by the original authors to Urantia Foundation; and

(d) Urantia Foundation is not a proprietor of a work-for-hire and the term has expired to renew its claimed copyright on any other grounds.

14. Even if Urantia Foundation's copyright were valid, JANR does not infringe such copyright.

15. An actual controversy exists between the parties due to Urantia Foundation's claims that Michael Foundation has infringed and is infringing Urantia Foundation's claimed copyright by publishing and distributing JANR. Michael Foundation therefore seeks a declaratory judgment declaring that Urantia Foundation's claimed copyright to the contents of The URANTIA Book is invalid or, in the alternative, that JANR does not infringe such copyright.

WHEREFORE, Michael Foundation prays this Court enter judgment in its favor against Urantia Foundation declaring that Urantia Foundation's claimed copyright to the contents of The URANTIA Book is invalid, or in the alternative, that JANR does not infringe such copyright, for Michael Foundation's costs of this action, including a reasonable attorneys' fee, and such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

Respectfully submitted,

[ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF]

June 16, 2000 URANTIA FOUNDATION'S RESPONSE TO MICHAEL FOUNDATION'S COMPLAINT

Michael Foundation, Inc., an organization founded and controlled by Harry McMullan III of Oklahoma City, filed suit against Urantia Foundation in the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma on May 12, 2000. Their suit requests the court to declare the copyright in *The Urantia Book* invalid or, alternatively, to rule that their publication entitled *Jesus—A New Revelation*, consisting of Papers 121-196 of *The Urantia Book*, does not infringe the copyright.

Urantia Foundation filed its response to the complaint June 16. Urantia Foundation's answer advises the court of the three prior cases where the copyright was contested and upheld

by the courts, most recently in *Maaherra v. Urantia Foundation*.

In light of Harry McMullan III's participation in the *Maaherra* case, his subsequent acts in violating the copyright constitute a reckless and conscious disregard for the rights of Urantia Foundation under law. Mr. McMullan was a substantial contributor of financial and non-financial support in that case. He personally attended the proceedings before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal in San Francisco. As a result of this participation, he had full knowledge of the validity of the copyright.

Urantia Foundation is therefore requesting the court to enter judgment in favor of Urantia

Foundation against Harry McMullan III and Michael Foundation for willful violations of copyright law; the anti-cybersquatting consumer protection act (for registering Internet domain names that violate Urantia Foundation's trademark rights); and the unfair and deceptive trade practices act.

Urantia Foundation is requesting an injunction barring Mr. McMullan and Michael Foundation from further violation of the copyright and trademarks as well as monetary damages prescribed by law and punitive damages. In addition, the court is asked to award Urantia Foundation its costs and attorneys' fees incurred in connection with this case. Urantia Foundation is requesting a jury trial.

SOME "MANDATES"

"You must learn to possess your souls in patience. You are in association with a revelation of truth which is a part of the natural evolution of religion on this world. Overrapid 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 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 future is not open to your mortal comprehension, but you will do well to diligently study the order, plan, and methods of progression as they were enacted in the earth life of Michael when the Word was made flesh. You are becoming actors in an ensuing episode when the Word is made Book. Great is the difference in these dispensations of religion, but many are the lessons which can be learned from a study of the former age."

"You have not done enough to safeguard your name. Make it very safe for one generation so the name URANTIA cannot be preempted. In a common-law trust you hold the name. You do it also in a corporation. A corporation has status in law. You also do it in the copyright. You must

carefully register it with the division of government that I have looked into, that controls trade relations, Trademark, and then you are protected in common law connected with a volunteer association such as you are planning in the Urantia Brotherhood. In all those ways you must safeguard the name. THIS IS ONE OF YOUR MOST IMPORTANT DUTIES. In 50, 75, or 100 years the name will be fairly safe. You safeguard it for a generation and it will largely take care of itself."

Here are some of the "mandates" given to the contact commission and/or to "The Seventy" (a select group of Forumites) to guide them when it was time for the revelation to be given to the world. They were obtained from Caolyn Kendall's article, *A Plan For The Urantia Book Revelation*, although that is not where they originated. Almost all of these messages had a notation at the bottom of the last page which read: "To be destroyed by fire not later than the appearance of the Urantia Papers in print." It was the design of our unseen friends to prevent the appearance of an "Urantia Apocrypha" subsequent to the publication of the Urantia Book.

"You must again study the times of Jesus on earth. You must carefully take note of how the kingdom of heaven was inaugurated in the world. Did it evolve slowly and unfold naturally? Or did it come with sudden show of force and with spectacular exhibition of power? Was it evolutionary or revolutionary?"

"Study of methods employed by Jesus in introducing his work on earth. Note how quietly he worked at first. We were advised to avoid all efforts to achieve early and spectacular recognition."

"However, one thing should be made clear. Nothing is to be done to interfere with the energetic and enthusiastic efforts of any individual to introduce the Urantia Book to his varied contacts and human associations."

FROM THE DECLARATION OF TRUST:

It shall be the primary duty of the Trustees to perpetually preserve inviolate the text of THE URANTIA BOOK, and the Trustees shall use and employ such means, methods, and facilities and apply and expend as much of the Trust Estate as in the judgment of the Trustees shall be necessary, proper, or appropriate, for the preserving and the safekeeping of copies of the original text of THE URANTIA BOOK, duly authenticated by the Trustees, from loss, damage, or destruction and from alteration, modification, revision, or change in any manner or in any particular.

the trustees' fearful and suspicious attitude which fuels a relentlessly litigious, overcontrolling institution could change to one of living faith and sacred responsibility to the brotherhood of believers.

The religion of the spirit means "effort, struggle, conflict, faith, determination, love, loyalty, and progress," and such a calling requires us to recognize that some of our fellows are far more faith-adventurous than others in their personal attempts at the establishment of our Father's kingdom in the hearts of mankind.

Let those willing to follow the example of Jesus use their right of personal religious action to boldly spread the fifth epochal revelation. And let those unwilling to go forward into that "uncertain and troublous future of proclaiming the new truths of the religion of the spirit, the kingdom of heaven in the hearts of men," cease to interfere with them, lest they find themselves fighting against God.

CHICK MONTGOMERY: For my own part, I take no one's side in the matter, for I love them all and respect their positions. Everyone has acted in good faith, in my opinion. That of course does not insure against evil being done; mistakes have been made and will continue to be made. Nevertheless, I am confident that the revelation will succeed and that Urantia is destined one day to enter light and life.

"Everyone was astonished at the lad's manner of speaking. Silently they all withdrew and left him standing alone with his parents. Presently the young man relieved the embarrassment of all three when he quietly said: 'Come, my parents, none has done aught but that which he thought best. Our Father in heaven has ordained these things; let us depart for home'" (1384).

MATTHEW RAPAPORT: I believe the Urantia Book should be kept intact, though any individual reader, having bought it or been given it, can cut it up any way he or she chooses. Jesus said to the miller, "Give the milk of truth to those who are babes in spiritual perception. In your living and loving ministry serve spiritual food in attractive form and suited to the capacity of receptivity of each of your inquirers" (1474). This passage tells us to *restate* the teachings in the UB appropriately for different audiences. Can we think of no way to *restate* the teachings in our own words? Have we nowhere seen summaries or reviews, or secondary works that do exactly as Jesus admonished the miller? Just how is cutting out one section of the book and publishing it out of

context giving "... the milk of truth to those who are babes ..."? That particular milk is already in the UB. Anyone who buys or receives a UB can choose to read only that section. Indeed, I think Jesus would encourage us to creatively restate what he teaches us—put it in new cultural metaphors, express it in modern phraseology, etc. This has nothing to do with *JANR*, which is already contained in the UB, and better for it because it is in context there. I am opposed to much of UF policy, but I also know that UF policy doesn't preclude me from doing what the Urantia Book tells all of us to do, to go out and spread the gospel. The gospel is *in* the UB, but the UB is not the gospel.

ZSHONETTE REED: I have read the open letter from the Urantia Foundation regarding Harry McMullan and several responses thereto. It seems that everyone involved seeks a peaceful resolution. Many good suggestions were offered, but I find one thing puzzling. Why are we talking about defending and protecting the Urantia Book as if it were a helpless infant unable to speak for itself? I personally find the revelation to be alive and sufficiently competent to defend itself. I direct your attention to the story of "The Strange Preacher." I believe the answer we all seek is contained in this section. As regards the Urantia Foundation's trust to "perpetually preserve inviolate the text of the Urantia Book and to disseminate the principles, teachings and doctrines of the Urantia Book," I do not see how Mr. McMullan's actions have any ability to affect that trust. This responsibility has been taken on by the Urantia Foundation alone. The

"The language of the trust does not impose this obligation [to preserve the text inviolate] on others. Mr. McMullan is not a member of the Urantia Foundation and therefore owes no duty to assist the Foundation in fulfilling its own obligation."
—*Zshonette Reed*

language of the trust does not impose this obligation on others. Mr. McMullan is not a member of the Urantia Foundation and therefore owes no duty to assist the Foundation in fulfilling its own obligation. Thus, if the Urantia Foundation's publications perpetually preserve the text inviolate, it has fulfilled its obligation. Personally, I am pleased that Mr. McMullan is taking an active part in spreading the message. He is setting a fine example of discipleship for all of us.

PAULA THOMPSON: The best way to protect the revelation is to get as many of the inviolate works into the world as possible. Indeed, if every person in the world had a copy in his hands, who would we need to protect it from? Isn't this the ultimate goal? All secondary works that credit the revelation act as a pointer back to it. To encourage them and allow them is beneficial to our ultimate goal. The only

real perversions are works that don't give credit to the source, and even they can end up pointing the way back. Benitez' books are a good example of this. It's literally true, "All things work together for good." However, for the minuscule amount of revelation laborers to be engaged in legal conflict (the very nature of lawsuits necessitates the taking of sides) over a transient copyright, is a pathetic waste of resources, and not at all beneficial to our ultimate goal. The fact that any believer was ever sued for unselfish dissemination through secondary works is our greatest disgrace. The fact that we continue to find a way to justify these methods of protection is testimony to our lack of creative vision, brotherly love, and faith.

I refuse to accept that the use of secular law is the only or best way to "protect" the revelation. An honest look at the fruits of these years of litigation should be adequate evidence that we need to try something else. We could set a loving precedent now that would benefit believers for centuries to come, when there is no copyright to fall back on. We need to come to the table with humility, accept each other as equals, admit that we have lost our way, and surrender any so-called notions of authority to our heavenly parents. We need to get down on our knees and pray with all sincerity to be shown a better way, or face the reality of years of bitter legal conflicts and a tragic waste of precious resources and opportunities.

LARRY WATKINS: I've given away several copies of *JANR* and echo Larry Geis's observations. I'd like the UB to be as eagerly accepted as my gifts of *JANR* have been, but, like most of us, I have found that for many the UB is too overwhelming and appears too cultish. We know the UB "takes" when one is ready to receive, but it is invariably rejected when offered to those who are not yet searching for it. *JANR* can lead seekers to the UB, though for many *JANR* will be all of the revelation they will be interested in. I'm saddened to observe resistance to this wonderful and exquisite publication which I expect will bear much spiritual fruit.

DARKA WATTERS: I support the Foundation because I believe it is doing what every parent would do for his or her offspring: protect them. I believe the Foundation will be victorious and win all the lawsuits brought against it simply because it has the best interests of the Urantia Book at heart. I remember a Biblical story about two women who went before King Solomon pleading for the possession of a baby. The king, not knowing who the real mother was, decided to find out by telling the women he would cut the baby in half and each woman could own half a baby. The real mother acted out of love for the child and offered her half of the baby to the other woman so the child would not be hurt. This was a real sacrifice for the true mother, but the king

knew from this and awarded the baby to the true mother. The Foundation does not want to see the book dismembered. The judge will award it victory because it is the only group that does not want to see the book dismembered. What it says in court is an act of parenthood and I would say the same for any one of my own children even at the risk of devaluing my own character. We all have an obligation to protect the Urantia Book and keep it in the pure form that it was presented to us by the contact commission and by all the wonderful beings who authored it.

AL WOLF: I would not have made the choice to publish the Jesus papers separately, nor would I have had anything to do with suing someone who did. Sometimes the biggest and best gains in life, the greatest advances and things that we learn and grow the most from, come from people and situations we don't exactly like, don't understand, or disagree with at the time. God has us all in His hands, and leads us all individually from within. If I hope for others to respect my attempt to follow the voice of God within me, then I must also respect others who try to follow that quiet loving voice of God in them—even when what they feel led to do goes in different directions from where I'm feeling led. There are other ways—and much better ways, I believe—to solve our differences than the way things are being handled now.

**“Think wrongly
if you please,
but in all cases
think for yourself.”
—Doris Lessing**

ESTHER WOOD: I wonder what would happen if all who claim alliance with the new revelation would let go of all the semantics of the law and focus more on the gospel of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of

man. The copyright is such a minor detail; every Bible I have seen has a copyright, and I'm willing to bet that every other "Holy Book" has a copyright these days. Why should a copyright stop anyone who desires to do God's will to live according to His will? The gospel is what we should be spreading, not so much the Urantia Book. Most of us already know that there simply are not that many people ready for the book. However, everyone is ready (and hungry) for the gospel. These supposed leaders would do more to spread the teachings of the Urantia Book if they would *live* according to the truths found therein, rather than quibble about mortal details surrounding the book. There are certain cults lurking about (i.e. The Aquarian Concepts Community) that I believe would delight in the dissolution of the copyrights in place to protect the Urantia Book. Why would anyone who understands the importance of the revelation want to make it fair game for those who would use it for their own purposes? If I could have one wish granted to me, it would be that everyone who reads the Urantia Book would focus on the details of serving God rather than worrying about the material details concerning the revelation. ■