

THE URANTIA BOOK

An Adventure into Faith and Fear over Celestial Contact

An E-Book of Part 5

The Teaching Mission, volume 1

A New Foundation of Spirituality for a Quickening Planet

Paths of Truth; Corridors of Credulity: Unraveling Urantia's Conflict with Celestial Contact

by Jim Cleveland

How could the Teaching Mission hope to take root and grow within a movement that quickly gave a resounding and stinging rebuke to our sessions with the celestial teachers? We were branded as ‘nefarious channelers’ in an official publication devoted to students of *The Urantia Book* and disdained from ever holding a Urantia Foundation affiliation.

Even though the teachers extolled the Urantia text as the highest collection of spiritual wisdom on the planet, we were seen as coat-tailing onto that proclaimed epochal revelation with ‘sordid spiritualism.’ Channeling was distracting, unreliable, and had no business within official book study groups.

I decided to do some research into Urantian history. It would be a detective story, to find and define this schism between what I considered a published celestial revelation and the celestial teachers who come now to support it.

As a benchmark, I knew that the Urantia Foundation’s highly-touted papers were, in some measure, the unknowing vocalizations of a mysterious altered state ‘sleeping subject’ who spoke it like rote, without conscious involvement or even interest in what was being dictated to him. Urantia lore also includes actual ‘materializations’ of printed words inside a bank vault. The phenomenon was adamantly stated to not be related to the channeling séance sessions which were more prevalent in the early years of the 20th century.

During that time, a collective of Chicago area scholars was formed under the leadership of Dr. William Sadler, a medical doctor, an academician, author, former Seventh Day Adventist, and an active debunker of spiritist scams. The group was called the Contact Commission and they were allegedly in touch with “midwayers,” Urantia-related personalities who bridge the spirit world, in forging the final printed book. They deemed it an epochal spiritual revelation and the midwayers formed a Revelatory Commission to work with the humans.

The name of the conduit human remains purposefully anonymous so that the text can be considered as itself, and without the distracting involvement of some “special” human personality.

The Commission, now the Urantia Foundation, finally published the text in 1955, after several

decades of preparation. As a publishing enterprise in an era before computers or even fax machines, it was quite an undertaking.

The publishers expected the 2,097 page tome to be well-received by thoughtful world leaders. It was sent to a list of luminaries. Such was not the case.

Since that time, it's been a struggle for the Urantia papers to get beyond the occult world and into the mainstream of science, religion and philosophy discussion, where I think it should be. It synthesizes them well. But there seems to be no room in those fields for a purportedly dictated revelation from spirit world personalities.

To the custodians of the 196 papers, this was a one-time rare and bonafide communication with celestials. Civilization was just not ready to understand and accept it, especially in its conflicts with existing religious scripture. Over the movement's history it soon appeared that anything else purporting to be received from celestials would always fall short of the pristine perfect English quality of their text.

Ironically, Urantia readers had largely debunked the Judeo-Christian Bible as heavily flawed. In turn, their tome had been largely rejected by Christians. And now both camps would likely debunk our celestial teachers today.

The Urantia Book was accepted, to the word, as infallible scripture by its movements. Their primary objective was to protect it, keep it inviolate. Unreliable and uncontrolled channeling could bring forth many falsehoods and aberrational fantasies that influential Urantia leaders saw as rampant in the so-called 'new age' arena.

Our Teaching Mission concept that individuals in worshipful silence and in communion with others can actually contact and learn from celestial teachers was a concept to be battled, a re-emergence of the spiritist séance factions that Dr. Sadler and the Urantia founders so disdained last century.

It didn't seem logical to brand us with this. We weren't bringing back dead relatives to chat and the ability to receive and transmit, a new process, was available to anyone who put forth the effort. Make your own connection; get your own individual lessons. Read these 'fruits of the spirit' we transcribe and make up your own mind.

It seemed to me a battle over the reality of a new wave of spiritual guidance and the validity of Stillness time of worship, prayer and up-reach to actually make these connections. The book's official custodians condemned these efforts as unreliable given the inadequacies and trickeries of the human mind. Some even believed that opening oneself in stillness would open the door for the Luciferian demons of their lore to come in and control us.

On the other hand, after all these years, I knew that my free will had always been respected by the teachers, and they are kind, gracious, and very knowledgeable on the ways of the universe and the role of ascending mortals in God's plan.

If this spiritual consciousness threshold is indeed available, as we have experienced, then why

don't the custodians of an epochal revelation want to open themselves to this reality too? What fears are involved and are they valid in any respect? We are natural extensions of the text; we now have teachers for the text. Or so it seemed to me. Was it true?

INTERPLANETARY IMPLICATIONS

Within all these streams of thoughts finally came a realization that impressed itself upon me insistently, as the teachers can be.

The Teaching Mission is interplanetary and includes all the worlds of the Lucifer Rebellion.

Yes. And so the Urantia movement is actually part of the Teaching Mission on the planet, along with everything else. The Urantia movement presumes erroneously that we would be part of them, just because they are custodians of the text. And yet the book and the teachers are for everyone, every living soul, and on more planets than this one. Organizations of readers should not impede the continuing revelation or the broadness of its application.

Where was the fault line that separates book students who work to spread a textual revelation on the planet and those of us who interact with celestial teachers to help us realize more truth, beauty and goodness in our lives, and bring the text to dramatic life? Who drew the fault line and why?

There is a time factor. Just as the book's believers consider it to be the planet's highest revelation of truth, many think that, in its complexity, it will suffice as revelation for the planet for a long time to come, over many generations. They cite mandates pointing to the need for vast numbers of book study groups in the world and more generations of evolutionary struggle toward an era of planetary enlightenment. They believe in patience and slow word-of-mouth growth, no media to criticize them. World thinking is just not ready for some of the truths within Urantia's pages, but future generations will be.

While the book says that Urantia is "quivering on the brink" of massive change, many devotees seem most inclined to consider a very long view.

So, in 1992, when the First Urantia Society in Los Angeles heard the official announcement of the Teaching Mission and an interplanetary "Time of Correction" following the recent adjudication of the Lucifer Rebellion against God, many did not believe it and they have pursued a determined course of opposition. They also distrust and disdain the process of 'channeling' as they define it.

Numerous narratives from the Urantia Papers do show that the universe is teeming with teachers and universities, from the mortal level all the way through the human ascension plan, including seven teaching spheres dedicated wholly to the education of ascending mortals. None of these pages have appeased the doubters.

A CLOSET OF DISCONTENT

It was the Vern Grimsley/Family of God debacle, of course. That was the schism, the breaking

point, where Urantia officials drew a line in the sand against celestial messages. It seemed that channeled voice predictions of World War III did not happen, simple as that, and so purported messages from those celestials who gave humanity the Urantia papers can't be trusted any more.

The tumultuous political struggle that developed over the authenticity of the messages had resulted in Grimsley's retirement from Urantia involvement and the ascension to power of former friends, now critics, who would cement their hold over the Urantia Foundation and fortify an indelible disdain for a lot of things they considered "New Age."

The Foundation took the stance that the midwayers had left humans on their own here many years ago, and that adherence to the revelation meant using it as the one and only source of spiritual enlightenment, the one sure thing. They equated the book with a new religion of authentic Jesus teachings, not on the false atonement doctrine of Christianity influenced by Paul, which had constructed a religion 'about' Jesus which was not true to his teachings about God as a loving parent.

Grimsley seemed to be doing that at the Family of God Foundation in California, but in time, he had been charged with having "audio hallucinations" about war. This evaporated Urantia support, and the Foundation collapsed.

This prevailing blanket opposition to celestial messaging, then, had seemingly aligned the Foundation only with itself and its own self-declared higher truths going forward. This made it fundamentalist, judgmental, and unwilling to meet any of the other numerous spiritual paths on the planet on any terms except from its own critical judgments. This was like another church, which many Urantia readers said they didn't want to be.

This judgmental attitude is hardly espousing the new religion of Jesus that the book mandates, I thought. This kind of spiritual elitism cements a "holy scripture" view of the book, rather than accept it for what it is: a transitional guidepost for all of humanity, every individual child of God, to learn and shape their spiritual destiny by loving and working with one another. Religious belief systems are generally beside the point. Loving one another and learning to work together is the point.

AUTOCRACY AND CONTROL

As the Urantia Foundation established its autocratic rule in the 1970s, I discovered, it had led to an era of stringent licensing demands, and debilitating and divisive protectionist lawsuits against many loyal readers. This seems to have also destroyed the best and brightest hope for some meaningful evangelism for the book, especially with the Family of God conflict. There, the movement had a charismatic minister with strong Urantia knowledge and a worldwide radio audience for his Urantian message of all one people under God.

But I knew there could be a big difference in what seems to be and the facts. My ideas could be wrong. I asked myself what really happened with the WWII scare at the Family

of God since new information had revealed just how perilously close we actually were to an attack by the Soviets in those pivotal autumn days of 1983.

Urantia's midwayer personalities are also residents of our planet, invisible to our material eyes, living in a dimension between the physical and the spiritual. So says the Urantia revelation. They would be greatly concerned about nuclear war, as most people in the U.S. and the Soviet Union were.

But our Teaching Mission today had only a peripheral relationship with the midwayer personalities. We were working in a prescribed personal growth curriculum with ascending teachers who were previously mortals, and their Melchizedek mentors. Authority of the mission rested with Christ Michael, who was incarnated as Jesus on the planet, and was now here again to redeem it with the anticipated 'Second Coming.'

Compared to our mission, midwayer doomsday warnings would seem to be another matter entirely. Our teachers' messages are not warnings designed to save lives and carry forward the epochal revelation. They are lessons for personal spiritual growth. So was there any actual relationship with what happened at the Family of God Foundation and our teachers today?

Fortuitously, some information began to fall in place, as if that was the celestial plan. Eventually, I would find that the simplistic summations and hearsay history of the Family of God war scare contained deeper and different layers of reality.

First, however, came a research narrative that made me finally convinced that the Teaching Mission is a natural extension of the Urantia Revelation.

FAITH OVER APOCALYPSE

In the summer 2010 issue of the Fellowship Herald magazine, published by the Urantia Fellowship, I came upon a feature story by two longtime Urantian leaders. The purpose of the article was to refute the plethora of doomsday stories in the media. It pointed out on page after page that the Urantia revelation shows a much greater destiny for the planet and in many ways.

I was absolutely stunned to see that every quote and supposition pointed directly to the advent of the Teaching Mission and described it well. Beyond that, the article moved directly into the Magisterial Son Mission that is destined for the planet, and I came to realize that the large archive of lessons now being produced by Magisterial Son Monjoronson are also linked directly to what *the Urantia Book* says is coming to this "quickenings" planet.

No longer did I have to be concerned with any disunity in the book and the teachers. There is none. And the authors had excellent credentials. Carolyn Kendall has been a reader since before publication; and along with her parents, brother, and late husband, was a founding member of the First Urantia Society of Chicago. She and her husband Tom served in various leadership roles. Co-author Barbara Newsom had studied *the Urantia Book* since 1965 and also served in leadership roles. Their presentation came at an April 11, 2010 meeting in Schaumburg, Illinois, and was printed in the Fellowship Herald in the summer issue.

The authors state an optimistic view of the future: "*In contrast to these fearful forecasts, the Urantia Revelation promises that the world does have a future! It is our contention that the Book projects in considerable detail an increasingly spiritualized planet. Not only will Urantia continue to circle the sun, it is evolving toward an inspiring and radiant future.*"

"Urantia is now quivering on the very brink of one of its most amazing and enthralling epochs of social readjustment, moral quickening, and spiritual enlightenment." [195:9.2] (P. 2082)

The authors stated early-on that *the Urantia Book* itself was not the whole story: "This revelation is a unique phenomenon in the local universe: it is in written form. The book is probably not a finished revelation — an end in itself; but rather a precursor — the first stage of an on-going revelatory process that will continue to unfold in future years."

The authors effectively opened the door here for continuing revelation and living truth, the stuff of planetary evolution. I could never believe the revelators gave us a scripture and then left us on our own to absorb its complexities.

Following a review of planetary history to date, *The Fellowship Herald* authors begin to touch upon the most divisive issue between readers. Has the Lucifer Rebellion really been adjudicated, as a number of Teaching Mission personalities report? The authors, neither of them Teaching Mission participants, open a crack in another door:

"And now, 2,000 years after the bestowal of Michael, and 200,000 years after the Lucifer Rebellion, there are subtle indications that the case against the perpetrators is moving toward adjudication, and that our isolation may be coming to an end in the not too distant future. The Urantia Book reveals the following intriguing details:

"The first hearing in the case of Gabriel vs. Lucifer occurred on Uversa, the capitol of the superuniverse, 'during the time of effecting this revelation.' [54:4.8] (P. 616) Why is this significant? We are told that immediately after Lucifer and his associates are annihilated, the circuits of communication between our world and the headquarters worlds of the

system, constellation, and local universe will be reinstated. Worlds not in isolation ordinarily receive broadcasts of events transpiring in the universe. "

In the Teaching Mission, we are advised that Gabriel won the case, the energy circuits are being opened incrementally, some rebels chose rehabilitation and others, including Lucifer, chose annihilation, and this has cleared the way to send a vast amount of help to the planet. With the adjudication effected in the local universe, some of us believe that we see it well underway on the planet as well, as the forces of darkness and light come into much clearer view and each one of us will make decisions on where we will stand. I can see 'times of correction' everywhere, though I realize that many others see only the continued greed and drudgery.

The Urantian authors continue to speculate on precursors to a coming planetary adjudication, noting that Lucifer's accomplice, Satan, had been detained during the 20th Century presentation of the Urantia papers, and that an archangel divisional headquarters had been established on the planet in "more recent times." They note that the archangels are major participants in planetary dispensations, which are the mass resurrections of mortal souls, so-called "sleeping survivors" of the ages. The last recorded dispensation on the planet had followed the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus, whose triumphant life as a mortal finally destroyed the Lucifer Rebellion and bankrupted Lucifer's philosophies.

Teachers in the Mission have stated that a dispensation occurred at or near the same time the Gabriel vs. Lucifer case was adjudicated, but say that the events were not related. They state that the residual effects of evil that remain after the adjudication of Lucifer and company are a considerable challenge for all of humanity, and for them.

The authors quote the Urantia text: "*Archangels are also the advance guard and right-hand associates of Paradise Avonal Sons during magisterial missions to the inhabited planets of time. Think about this enigmatic passage: 'Do you grasp the significance of the fact that your lowly and confused planet has become a divisional headquarters for the universe administration and direction of certain archangel activities having to do with the Paradise ascension scheme? This undoubtedly presages the future concentration of other ascendant activities on the bestowal world of Michael and lends a tremendous and solemn import to the Master's personal promise, I will come again.'*" [37:3.4] (P. 409)

The authors speculate on the "concentration of other ascendant activities" with these passages.

"It would not only refer to the mass resurrection of our own sleeping survivors of the current dispensation, but it may also be a subtle way of telling us that survivors from other isolated worlds will be brought to our world to be trained after their resurrection on the mansion worlds. If this is true, it could be planned to happen in conjunction with

Michael's promise to return. If that seems like wild speculation, recall that after Jesus was resurrected, the surviving morontia mortals and their associated directors from the seven mansion worlds were brought to Urantia to go through the morontia experience with the risen Jesus here on earth. The planet upon which the Creator Son completed his bestowal career will be an important field trip for a new class of morontia beings."

Correct. The teachers often refer to how much they are learning from humans and events on this rebellion-retarded planet. Truly, Michael has returned with a great wave of morontian (graduate school?) teachers, as well as Melchizedeks and other spiritual personalities. It is a reclamation and redemption mission to all of the worlds of the Lucifer Rebellion. With the dispensation and adjudication of the cosmic court case, Urantia and the other rebellion planets are receiving the mercy, compassion and forgiveness that are the hallmarks of Christ Michael, and others in his local universe are getting great, even unprecedented, opportunities for education and service on these troubled worlds.

I looked up the passages from the Urantia papers in this particular time frame of Jesus' appearances after his resurrection: "The next day, Monday, was spent wholly with the morontia creatures then present on Urantia. As participants in the Master's morontia-transition experience there had come to Urantia more than one million morontia directors and associates, coming together with transition mortals of various orders from the seven mansion worlds of Satania.

The morontia Jesus sojourned with these splendid intelligences for forty days. He instructed them and learned from their directors the life of morontia transition as it is traversed by the mortals of the inhabited worlds or Satania, as they pass through the system morontia spheres."

All is education, at all levels short of God.

Kendall and Newsom delve more into Archangels: "The Urantia Book *notes that Archangels are "dedicated to the work of creature survival and to the furtherance of the ascending needs of his realms. A Master Son may at will vary the order of the spiritual adjudication and evolutionary adjustment of the inhabited planets. And such Sons do make and carry out the plans of their own choosing in all matters of special planetary needs, in particular regarding the worlds of their creature sojourn and still more concerning the realm of terminal bestowal, the planet of incarnation in the likeness of mortal flesh."*

I thought upon reading: "*The rebellion planet of Michael's bestowal as Jesus seems a fitting place for the Archangel headquarters, and their role appears to be key to the recent dispensation and to the personal survival of these millions of souls caught up in*

the Lucifer rebellion adjudication and rehabilitations.”

In the Teaching Mission, we believe in the deep involvement of Christ Michael himself in nurturing we humans who would represent him. He has spoken personally to many modest gatherings, that in itself provoking criticism that he would not have time for such visits. They underestimate his powers, which go well beyond time and space, and they underestimate the deep empathy and caring that he is capable of showing to every mortal child on the planet, every sheep in his flock.

Besides, we have taken a big step of faith to go into the Stillness and seek contact. That and other steps of faith seem to always open new possibilities and realities. Those who seek God, it is said, can be assured that God has already found them. I believed each individual step of faith is rewarded in incremental expansions of truth, beauty and goodness.

AN EXPERIMENTAL PLANET

The *Herald* article then picks up the Urantia notation that our planet is among the 1-in-10 designated for experimental expansion of the standard planetary life forms. It is also said to be unique in actually having a printed planetary history. The authors conclude that this makes *the Urantia book* an experimental book on an experimental planet. Surely, much can indeed happen on such a planet whose leaders revolted against God himself, where the incarnated Creator Son was executed, and where evil forces of greed have now put the planet's resources and well-being in great jeopardy.

But what is the solution? The authors quote *The Urantia Book* to note: "*Michael cannot bestow himself a second time in human form, but he could be manifested in some other manner. Add his not-so- veiled promise to return to the mix: 'When this gospel of the kingdom shall have been proclaimed to all the world for the salvation of all peoples, and when the fullness of the age has come to pass, the Father will send you another dispensational bestowal, or else the Son of Man will return to adjudge the age'*" [176:2.5] (P. 1915)

So, while Michael is not personally incarnated now, there are legions of Correcting Time personalities and resources dedicated to the task of cleaning up after the rebellion and making the way for his promised return.

More clues come to the authors' minds that lead to the reality of spiritual activity now, right now, on the planet.

“The supervisor of Nebadon’s decimal (life experimental) planets is Tabamantia, who visited our world on a periodic inspection 38,000 years ago. Within one hundred years of

that visit, Adam and Eve arrived. We know from subsequent information that his latest visit occurred just a few months before the first Urantia papers were transmitted. Might we look forward to the arrival of a divine visitor within one hundred years of Tabamantia's last inspection? "

In a word, yes. Not counting Christ Michael's Teaching Mission, we have the recent messages of Magisterial Son Monjoronson. With my research interest whetted in this purported divine adjudicator, I went to read his transcripts, including 101 Q&A sessions with human transmitters I knew, under auspice of www.monjoronson.com. I found that the transcripts add admirably to a collected body of transmissions at several related websites without any alarming red flags. Is this a logical flow, I asked, from the book to the celestial teachers to the Magisterial Mission?

The authors added more possible substantiation. They note that we are not so different from a neighboring planet described in The Urantia Book, one with a single progressive and advanced continent and others that were much more primitive. The article quotes The Urantia Book: "If a Magisterial Son should soon come to [the most] advanced nation, great things could quickly happen on this world." [72:12.2] (P. 820).

The writers respond: *"The inference that an Avonal (Magisterial) Son would come to a world where only one nation or continent has risen to a requisite level of civilization is both intriguing and reassuring. Apparently, an entire world is not required to reach readiness for revelation as the criteria for a super-mortal visitation."*

Indeed it isn't. It could be argued that planets in greater need would get the help, worlds that were thrown into disarray not altogether by the failings of its citizens, but by the principal failures of Lucifer and of Adam and Eve who also defaulted their biological uplifting responsibilities. It might be believed that worlds suffering from such deleterious activities of our assigned celestials would qualify for some very special, extraordinary help.

Authors Kendall and Newsom speculate further: *"Another perplexing passage: 'Only a bestowal Son can re-establish interplanetary lines of communication on such a spiritually isolated world.'* [35:9.9] (P. 394) We've already had our one allotted bestowal Son. Since only a 'bestowal Son' can re-open the circuits, and a Magisterial Son cannot come on a "bestowal mission" then who will re-establish the circuits? They tease us with this: *'ordinarily only once will a bestowal Son serve on the sphere.'* [20:5.4] (P. 228).

So, which Son will end our isolation? Will a Magisterial Son be sent on another bestowal mission to terminate the dispensation and reestablish the circuits when the Lucifer Rebellion is settled? Or will our bestowal Son Michael return specifically to 'reestablish

interplanetary lines of communication?””

ENERGIES, OPPORTUNITIES RISING

Relating this to the Teaching Mission, we hear that the energy circuits are being incrementally re-established, not all at once. We see Michael's overall leadership of the Correcting Time in the rebellion worlds, with Machiventa Melchizedek in direct charge and specifically headquartered on this planet. After some 20 years in the Teaching Mission, we have seen a melding into the Magisterial Mission of Monjoronson, and his transmitter/ receivers are saying that eventually he will be incarnated here in the flesh.

It might be noted here that Teaching Mission participants have, through the years, questioned the authenticity of some transmissions and even transmitters. We have not been uniformly accepting of all messages, seeking validations, maintaining healthy doubts, and even quarreling on internet discussion lists. Some, at this date, are not fully accepting of Monjoronson's presence or his messages.

This, of course, does not invalidate 20 years of exceptionally good spiritual advice from these teachers that are highly compatible with Urantia, considering that some things have changed since its 1955 publication, such as the continuation and quickening of evolution. Inaccurate so-called transmissions can be expected on this bizarre, rebellion-scarred world, where many would-be individual 'transmitters' might well prove to be unreliable.

An important tenet of the Teaching Mission is Stillness, wherein participants center themselves in worship and prayer and love, creating this aura and making it much more than a metaphysical exercise of curiosity and wonder. We are knocking on God's door, our creator Michael's door, with every good intention. Who will answer?

Upon its publication in 1955, *the Urantia Book* stated that the planet "is a full dispensation and more behind the average planetary schedule."

To Teaching Mission believers, there was a reported dispensation of some kind, apparently in 1984 or 1985 by our calendar. This would presumably be with our assigned Magisterial Son's participation. The task at hand is now to clear the residual aftermath of the Lucifer rebellion. Though Lucifer may be dematerialized, becoming as if he never were, I believe that his philosophies endure and the "dog eat dog" world is at least a reflection of that, and our natural animalistic evolution from mammals is now spirit imbued but is a long way from being perfected.

The Urantia Book, as quoted by Kendall and Newsom, speaks a lot about Monjoronson's identity: "Magisterial Sons are the high magistrates of the realms, the adjudicators of the

successive dispensations....They preside over the awakening of the sleeping survivors... [and]reassign the space creatures of planetary ministry to the tasks of the new dispensation ... His presence constitutes a judgment of the realm.” [20:3.1&4] (P. 226) “When Paradise Avonals come on magisterial missions, at least the initial one, they are always incarnated.” [52:4.4] (P. 594) appearing “as an adult of the realm by a technique not involving mortal birth” [20:2.6] (P. 225) and are in “physical contact with the mortal creatures of his day and generation.” [20:4.1] (P. 226)

As teachers, Magisterial Sons bring spiritual enlightenment to the mortal races, as with the recorded lessons of Monjoronsen to date. Will we be alive if and when Monjoronsen makes a physical incarnation on the planet to bring us into fruitful, cooperative service? We wait and see together.

Given that the Teaching Mission critics don't believe any of this, while still believing in the pristine perfection of their text, is a strong indication that these people will never be able to accept any continuance of their print-bound pages into real life. This could change with the dramatic appearance of a charismatic leader personality or the inevitable contact with extraterrestrial visitors. But there again, these people might well allow their fears and see devils and the anti-Christ in anything of this nature and battle against it.

BEYOND IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

Authors Kendall and Newsom go well beyond The Urantia Book's publication in 1955 to help unconsciously validate the advent of teachers. They relate a reading from the midwayer revelators to assembled Urantians right after permission was given to publish the book. It is recorded that the midwayers said:

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

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

“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. Over-rapid growth would be suicidal. The book is being given to those who are ready for it long before the day of its world-wide mission. Thousands of study groups must be brought into existence and the book must be translated into many tongues. Thus will the book be in readiness 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 midwayers note twice that the book is a part of normal evolution on the planet, though the planet has been abnormal in many ways. They separate it from “spectacular episodes of epochal revolution,” such as, presumably, World War II.

But they also discuss “the present ideological struggle” and the “chaos of the present confusion.” Do they mean the ideological struggle with Communism, this being in the volatile times of the Cold War with the Soviet Union? A Contact Commission member had once stated in a newsletter that the midwayers had declared war on godless Communism and were determined to prevail no matter how many years it might require.

The United Midwayers of Urantia are said to be a proud and determined group, with a motto stating that whatever they undertake, they accomplish. While humans could not see the end of Communism in the 1950s, the midwayers reportedly could foresee victory confidently, and so they gave permission to go ahead with publication of the book.

Is this accurate? Were they so confident in their creed and in conditions on the ground, since the world was in for more horrendous Cold War chapters, including arms build-ups, confrontational facedowns, terrorist attacks, all with nuclear holocaust just a button push away, and with hostile, angry and frustrated men poised over them. I noted to myself that the Family of God episode was still decades away.

RUSSIAN AND COSMIC REALITIES

History will indeed reveal that the facade of Soviet strength was even then beginning to unravel as the empire began to slow down and stagnate from societal malaise, low living standards, inefficiencies, corruption, and outmoded technology. It was a system that just didn't work, lacked resources and was spread too thin trying to maintain so many satellite territories and a massive military readiness.

The decline would come into sharp focus in the country's soul-searching and self-examination during the later ascension of Mikhail Gorbachev, leading to dissolution of the union and perhaps the victory the midwayers proclaimed.

Early-on, the midwayers might have been able to see the foundational rot that would lead

to ruin. They have been living here during the life of the planet, after all, and have seen passing generations of transient humans, who are in an ascension plan that they, themselves, will follow once the planet is settled into an era of Light and Life. Achieving that path is their long-enduring mission on Urantia, and they have seen many generations of humans come and go.

But perhaps they didn't refer to Communism at all, I now thought. We humans often have a narrow and limited view. With an expanded perspective, we see a much greater struggle—the adjudication of the Lucifer Rebellion and full restoration of the validity of the Universal Father/First Source and Center and his myriad time and space ascension worlds plan. These concepts were directly challenged by Lucifer and he brought 37 worlds into his ideological rebellion. The court case of Gabriel vs. Lucifer had begun in 1935 and was well underway.

Or perhaps the midwayers referred to both. Perhaps Communism on our planet has close kinship with Lucifer's ideas and they represent the same parallel threat to humanity, and to God, on different levels. Could that be possible? Two great struggles mirroring one another? God versus atheism on both cosmic and mortal fronts?

One has to remember, of course, that the expressed ideals of Communism did not survive in the reality of the oppressive Soviet state, which did not live up to them in any respect. In like measure, our expressed American ideals when the Constitution was written, did not jibe with the reality of slavery and generational streams of inequalities and corruptions. Stating ideals is one thing; reality is another. The midwayers would not go to war with idealisms of equality but with the Soviet's perversions, and most vitally, the state's atheistic doctrine.

MOBILIZING HUMANS

As the Herald article continued, I was further enlightened on the logical relationship between the Urantia papers and the teachers of today. In 1967, a Contact Commissioner reportedly ended her speech with an excerpt from Revelatory Commission (midwayer) instructions, and the article quotes:

“I have heretofore reminded you that the celestial supervisors of Urantia are mobilizing small groups of spirit-led men and women throughout the world—among all nations—and these truth battalions, these selectmen, are concerned today with scores of vital enterprises which have to do with the rehabilitation of the world following the ending of the present distressing conflicts.” (She uses the plural, “conflicts.”)

“And of all the emergency corps of mortal selectmen on Urantia, none is charged with a more solemn obligation than our group. We have been called to the great work of taking

the first step of offering to mortal man a new light, a new revelation, of the love of God. The easy jog-trot religion of former days no longer suffices to meet the challenges of today. Following Jesus' way of life calls for an act of complete commitment, a dedicated intention, a resolute purpose, a trumpet call to a life that will not compromise."

So if dedicated souls are being assembled on Urantia for service, then the Urantia readers who are among the 'selectmen' must surely be some of our Teaching Mission folks and all of the various service projects they have spawned, supported and nurtured over the years. Our teachers tell us essentially what this contact commissioner said so many years ago in the first lessons. It's time to take on the Father's business: learn the basics of personal religion and go out in service, spreading goodness, love, and random acts of kindness.

It seemed to me that much of the point of the Urantia revelation was getting beyond dogma and developing that self-same relationship with the Universal Father. This can only lead to a service venue.

But I also reminded myself that the celestial Correcting Time is interplanetary and includes all of the worlds of the rebellion. As Urantia readers are urged to do in the text, we need to have 'universe awareness' and 'cosmic consciousness.' And this dictates that we expand our mind even more.

Creator Son Michael (who incarnated here as Jesus) is credited with creating this entire local universe of planets. The after-effects and the adjudication of the Lucifer Rebellion provide a valuable, even essential, learning experience for all the worlds. It is said in the book that the positive results of the Lucifer Rebellion, ironically, have now far outweighed the damages done by it. It has been a massive teaching tool that continues on. And with the adjudication, celestials themselves can now come and lend a hand in one of the greatest service opportunities of all time, learning themselves all the while.

TEXT AND TEACHERS TOGETHER

In concluding their Fellowship Herald article, the authors state their assumption again, that *The Urantia Book* is the first phase of a two-stage epochal revelation.

Our mission, then, would be a logical blending of teachers to text, just like a material university. We have administrators, professors and instructors. We have a curriculum and texts. And with the Urantia Papers midwayer project, we have a printed history for our planet. So our teachers are also using the best collected wisdom on the planet, and with mortal participants going out to seed the teachings once more.

Urantia insiders will recall that much of *The Urantia Book* is gleaned from human writings, confirmed by years of source research. The revelators were straightforward in

noting that they used the best spiritual knowledge available on the planet at the time, while embellishing it with revelation, and while still avoiding the revelation of information that could be considered unearned— information that we can preferably discover ourselves in keeping with the evolutionary world mandates.

Disdaining the 'dark projections of our media and literature,' the Herald authors state that we must be ready for the advent of a Magisterial Son and the possibility of a return visit by Michael: “Although we are advised not to attach Michael’s return to any particular era, as he or others could come at any time, they WILL come; of that there can be no doubt!”

Earlier in the piece, the authors had noted that Michael's return would/could not be in human form. So with the Teaching Mission it would appear that he has sent waves of teachers and Correcting Time administrators in preparation for his personal return at a later time, maybe soon, maybe later.

The authors can see the future from the prophecies of the Urantia papers:

"Our eternal lives will be played out on the architectural worlds of space, but our immediate planetary futures are linked with orders of beings who are managing our world behind the scenes. The purpose of The Urantia Book is 'to endeavor to expand cosmic consciousness and enhance spiritual perception.'" [F:0.1] (P.1) *"The quickest way to realize the brotherhood of man on Urantia is to effect the spiritual transformation of present-day humanity. The only technique for accelerating the natural trend of social evolution is that of applying spiritual pressure from above..."* [52:6.7](P. 598) *"Religious revelation is essential to the realization of brotherhood on Urantia,"* the authors state.

Yes, and I expect it to be continuing.

The authors' summation and quotes were further instructive. The Teaching Mission can be considered that gentle pressure from above, urging us to spiritize our minds, and this must come in comprehensible increments. The teachers themselves pay tribute to the midwayers, who live between the material and spiritual planes and reportedly provide vital conduits to contact.

Quoting the Urantia papers again: *"What a transcendent service if, through this revelation, the Son of Man should be recovered from the tomb of traditional theology and be presented as the living Jesus to the church that bears his name, and to all other religions!"* [196:1.2] (P. 2090)

I believe that. And let's employ our cosmic consciousness and universe awareness as best we can. I don't believe that the Teaching Mission or *the Urantia Book* initiatives are

nearly all of the Correcting Time on Planet Urantia. A spiritual renaissance is underway, an adjudication, and of course, it encompasses all of the worlds that rebelled, and it also includes the remainder of the local universe of Nebadon where the rebellion is a powerful teaching tool.

Even beyond the local universe of well over 600 inhabited planets, one would think that the adjudication of a 37-planet rebellion against God would warrant broadcast news.

I turned to the Urantia papers themselves for a summary of the magazine piece, and on page 1025 it poured out some perceptions that fused much of my understanding on how our mission experiences dating back to New Zealand link into the Urantia papers.

“Recent rulings handed down from the Most Highs of Edentia, and later confirmed by the Ancients of Days of Uversa, strongly suggest that this bestowal Melchizedek is destined to take the place of the fallen planetary prince, Caligastia. If our conjectures in this respect are correct, it is altogether possible that Machiventa Melchizedek may again appear in person on Urantia and in some modified manner resume the role of the dethroned Planetary Prince, or else appear on earth to function as vicegerent Planetary Prince representing Christ Michael, who now actually holds the title of Planetary Prince of Urantia.”

The paper also states: *“And all these speculations associated with the certainty of future appearances of both Magisterial and Trinity Teacher Sons, in conjunction with the explicit promise of the Creator Son to return sometime, make Urantia a planet of future uncertainty and render it one of the most interesting and intriguing spheres in all the universe of Nebadon. It is altogether possible that, in some future age when Urantia is approaching the era of Light and Life, after the affairs of the Lucifer rebellion and the Caligastia secession have been finally adjudicated, we may witness the presence on Urantia, simultaneously, of Machiventa, Adam, Eve, and Christ Michael, as well as either a Magisterial Son or even Trinity Teacher Sons.”*

A BROKEN LINK TO CELESTIALS

There was still more research to do. As I was more convinced than ever that Michael and the Teaching Mission are an authentic extension of the Fifth Epochal Revelation to Urantia, I had even more incentive to explore the broken link that had defamed and eliminated the Urantia movement's evangelical wings, created a bastion of defense against any celestial messages from anywhere, and forged what seemed to be an elitist attitude that spanned from the traditional churches all the way to the new age mystics. It seemed that they believed one should only use the new religion of Jesus in the Urantia papers, and nothing else. I believed such an attitude would lead immediately to religious

bigotry based on immature human judgments.

But I knew the Urantia Foundation and Urantia Brotherhood, which had united to take firm anti-Grimsley control and power over the book in 1984 had itself fallen apart disastrously in the early 1990's. As an enthusiastic new reader in 1991, I was barraged with a blizzard of paper, legal and personal accusations, defenses and counter-charges.

I was quite impressed with the text of the book, and unimpressed with what seemed a broadside of personality spats.

Who were these battling personalities? It turns out that the main players in Urantian discord over the years were five fraternity brothers from the University of Kansas, all of whom would become leaders in the movement. They were Martin Myers, Vern Grimsley, Richard Keeler, David Gray and Hoite Caston.

I learned that the conflict over messages and who is receiving them had roots much deeper than 1983. The biggest issue shaped up as some Urantia gossipists had talked about from time to time: Who is the anointed heir to Urantia, the one who represents a new generation of leadership, the one who might be contacted by celestials, the real and genuine member of the "Reserve Corps of Destiny," a designation of honor that seemed to be so relevant to Urantians, and a point of contention.

A TRADITION OF DISCORD

I recalled at this point the much-respected "Christy," the late Emma Christensen, who had survived Dr. Sadler's death in 1969 and had passed in 1982. In her final words to the movement, she urged leaders to rise above the current acrimony, divisiveness and regional rivalries and "make spirituality a priority" in the days ahead. So discord was happening then, in 1982.

I recalled more history: Martin Myers, a lawyer, had taken residence in Chicago in 1968 to help manage the Urantia Revelation and look after Dr. and Mrs. Lena Sadler. They reportedly had longed for 'some young man' to come and help with the revelatory work. Christy was a prolific transcriber and administrator from the beginning, in those long ago days of manual typewriters and carbon paper. She was also aging, and the batons had to be passed.

I thought,... if I were to write a movie treatment about Urantia history today, I might pattern it after the Facebook epic, The Social Network, and call it The Urantia Network: Five fraternity brothers from Kansas vie for control of a sacred book, an epochal spiritual revelation.

Where were the first signs of conflict over celestial messages? It surfaced in a book by Larry Mullins, *A History of the Urantia Papers*, written with Rev. Meredith Springer.

Remarkably, I discovered that critics such as Mullins and Hoite Caston had painted Christy with the very same brush as they would paint Grimsley many years later.

Mullins' book noted that Christy was becoming increasingly irritated by Myers' take-charge attitudes and actions in the Chicago headquarters in the 1970's. I recalled that she urged an end to personal, competitive strife before she died, and to establish "spiritual priorities" and work together.

Myers moved strongly toward protecting the Urantia Papers and the trademark blue circles by copyright. Christy agreed with the copyright mandate. He ordered the original printing plates for *the Urantia Book* destroyed in 1971, the same year that he and Grimsley, in California, were named as Special Agents for the Urantia organizations.

Urantia Foundation trustees are appointed by themselves, not elected. Myers joined the board in 1973. He would be deposed in 1992 after an acrimonious era of divisive legal battles with book study organizations. He sued to get back on the board and failed.

Mullins' main point of contention with Christy was her using alleged midwayer contact in matters of Urantia Book editing, including the correction of grammatical errors in the first edition of 1955. He demeans her alleged "unique" status with the published pages, and the reality of her contact. He states that there has been and will not be any future contact with midwayers since the book's publication. He quotes the aging Dr. Sadler, before his death, noting that the midwayers had told humans that we are 'on our own' and that they had left 'without even a goodbye.' Rev. Meredith Sprunger, who assisted Mullins with his book, had made this point of the midwayers leaving as an absolute truth as well.

When the midwayers stated that we are "on our own," then I can only assume that Mullins and others took it to mean for all time to come, eternity. How could they believe that when such a proclamation for eternity could never be made in the spiritual realms? How could they not surmise that the comment had to do with the actual publishing of the book, the job at hand, which humans themselves had to do? Why do the two men want to close the door to midwayer or celestial contact in the certainty that it isn't possible? They unabashedly speak for the celestials in this matter, when they seem not to be able to speak objectively themselves.

Their reasoning for Christy and later for Grimsley, is that emotional stresses were just too much, her bearing the full weight of the revelation and Dr. Sadler now 92; and that Grimsley, in 1983 was also in a "serious emotional state" after Christy's death and in the

midst of purchasing a 25-acre property in Clayton, CA, for his Family of God Foundation's Spiritual Renaissance Institute. There must be some logical reason for hearing 'voices,' and Mullins and Sprunger grapple with any other reality except the reality of such celestial guidance.

CHRISTY AND VERN

The reality of a close relationship between Vern and Christy is evidenced in a letter from the period. It also expresses their vision of bringing forward the biblical Jesus of Nazareth into his greater reality as Christ Michael of Urantia's Jesus papers. This would wed the 4th and 5th epochal revelations.

It seems there were already forces that didn't agree with their ideas, their plans or their methods. Grimsley wrote:

Miss Emma Christensen 533 Diversey Parkway Chicago, Illinois 60614

Dear Christy,

Your recent, delightful letter – in which you shared with us your joy over our new URANTIA Society and our global radio broadcasting – was a pleasure to us all.

Moreover, the enthusiastic words in your letter regarding our worldwide Family of God broadcast – "This is a real inspiration. Just wish Poppy Sadler were here to know about it" – started me thinking about those earlier days which Nancy and I shared with you and Dr. Sadler in the planning of our mission. I too wish he were here to rejoice with us in our subsequent growth. Thus, in a mood of nostalgia, I took out some of my personal files (consisting of hundreds of letters from Urantia friends) and reviewed our many past correspondences and my notes from countless telephone conversations with 533 Diversey through the years, clear back to the middle and late 1950s.

One letter from Dr. Sadler particularly caught my eye. It was his immediate response to our Family of God Foundation Prospectus, in which we formally outlined our project of U.S. radio coverage by the end of 1975, global broadcasting by 1980, the training of teachers and leaders and serving as a "John the Baptist" movement to prepare the way for the eventual worldwide acceptance of *the URANTIA Book* on the planet. I am enclosing a Xeroxed copy of that particular letter from Dr. Sadler, and his reaction to the idea of the Family of God Foundation; it brings back to my mind many memories of conversations with him both before and after he wrote that letter, and the numerous excellent bits of advice and counsel which he provided us in founding and developing the Family of God Foundation.

It also brought me a fleeting moment of pain as I reflected upon the unfortunate misunderstandings on the parts of two or three newer members of the movement who have not been fully aware of this long history of the development of the Family of God Foundation in complete cooperation with the URANTIA Foundation and the URANTIA Brotherhood, and the well-thought reasons for which, during all these years, the Family of God Foundation has been carefully fostered. In reviewing our years of correspondence with Chicago this morning, I became mightily moved by the conviction that nothing must be permitted to drive the slightest wedge of suspicion or distrust between the work of the Family of God Foundation and the headquarters of the URANTIA movement in Chicago.

Here in Berkeley, we require that all Family of God Foundation coworkers must FIRST become members of the URANTIA Brotherhood; this has always been our policy. Our loyalties to Chicago are clear and unwavering. The Family of God Foundation has become both a helpful spiritual ministry within the URANTIA movement (see the Oregon letter for example) and a growing spiritual ministry to the entirety of the world.

We have long enjoyed strong support from old forum members, Brotherhood Executive Committeemen and URANTIA Foundation trustees. There are good reasons for this support: These long-term students of *the URANTIA Book* are more aware of the history, development and purposes of the Family of God Foundation. They are more vividly cognizant of such quotes in the book as these:

A Melchizedek of Nebabon writes on page 1041, "All Urantia is waiting for the proclamation of the ennobling message of Michael, unencumbered by the accumulated doctrines and dogmas of nineteenth centuries of contact with the religions of evolutionary origin. The hour is striking for presenting to Buddhism, to Christianity, to Hinduism, even to the peoples of all faiths, not the gospel about Jesus, but the living, spiritual reality of the gospel of Jesus." And the Master himself declares on page 1930: "The persistent preaching of this gospel of the kingdom will some day bring to all nations a new and unbelievable liberation, intellectual freedom, and religious liberty."

Thus – as you so well know – *the URANTIA Book* clearly and repeatedly calls for the preaching of this spiritual message in our day. This the Family of God Foundation is doing. And it was a moving experience for all of us last summer when we heard longtime URANTIA leader Anna Rawson at the General Conference in Evanston declare before the full assembly of hundreds of Brotherhood members that in her opinion the work of the Family of God Foundation is comparable in scope and planetary importance to the work of the apostle Paul, and that we are carrying the URANTIA message to mankind "with such enthusiasm and newness and freshness" that we are destined to "revive" the world.

Your support has meant so much to us too. For instance, in one of your letters to me back in March of 1966, you not only gave us some superb advice, you succinctly expressed the essential purpose of the Family of God Foundation. It has been this sort of advice which has been so valuable to us through the years, and which we have been attempting to follow. You wrote:

"I agree heartily with you in your thinking regarding the mention of *The Urantia Book* in your lectures and on the radio. Of course this should not be done. In other words, Vern, what we want to do is to try to get across to the public some of the truths contained in *the Urantia Book*; in short to lay some fuses for its eventual wide distribution, but that time has not yet come. I am glad you are bootlegging some of the materials in your sermons. The book is of course secondary to the revelation. We must teach the soul-stirring message of the book. Jesus carried no book under his arm as 'he went about doing good' and teaching about his heavenly Father. I depend upon your judgment and know you will be wise in what you say."

This very idea – that the Family of God Foundation is laying fuses for the eventual wide distribution of *the URANTIA Book* – is the fundamental concept underlying both our lifework and the Family of God Foundation itself. It is this which you and Dr. Sadler and numerous other leaders of the URANTIA movement have for years encouraged us to do. And now we are doing it. Your counsel has been of tremendous assistance.

As you well know, the Family of God Foundation was no causal accident. It did not just "happen." It came into existence as the result of many years of prayer and seeking of the Father's will, and what we are doing is based on two decades of study of the teachings of *the URANTIA Book*. The URANTIA movement, rightly, does not engage in publicity campaigns. "The hour has not come" for proclaiming the book to the world. BUT – "The hour IS striking" (direct quote from 104) for proclaiming the newly-revealed religion of Jesus to the world ... in order to prepare the way for the ultimate planetary acceptance of the fifth epochal revelation. The Family of God Foundation is engaged in precisely that task. And we are presently reaching over 100 million people internationally yearly with "the greatest truths that mortal man can ever hear – the living gospel of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. (2086)

The reason we at the Family of God Foundation established this work of spiritual teaching as a legal entity – a nonprofit foundation – was in order to facilitate our function in a world of myriad legalities. Example: lawyers long ago advised us that it was better to sign our broadcasting contracts with radio stations as a corporate foundation rather than as private individuals. (It even enables us to acquire a 15% reduction in broadcasting costs). Needless to say, our foundation was not established in competition with the

URANTIA movement, but in service of the URANTIA movement.

The Family of God Foundation has brought into existence within the URANTIA movement for good and important reasons – many of which are so far-reaching that none of us will live to witness their full consummation. Just one example among many: the first known URANTIA study group in all of Asia came into existence in Yeditha, India, in 1975 through the broadcasting outreach of the Family of God Foundation. And such events as these are but the first intimations of thrilling things to come.

You, Christy, have personally helped, inspired and encouraged us immensely in our work through all these years. I am writing on behalf of all of us here at the Family of God Foundation to express our profound gratitude to you. You have in every way assisted and backed us – and the result is now a worldwide work of spiritual teaching which is preparing the planet for the fifth epochal revelation. The Father's hand is in this rapidly and attained such impact globally in such a short span of time without tremendous help from on high. And we thank the Father for the tremendous privilege of engaging in such a joyous task.

Bless you, Christy, for all your assistance to us! And much love to you from a fellow coworker in the URANTIA movement!

Affectionately, Vern VBG/vbg

So, in 1976, one can see cracks beginning to appear in the relationship with Chicago leadership. Myers has already begun his litigation-riddled reign and there would be struggles ahead for prominence, control, and monetary support.

Where Grimsley saw a ministry for the 'entirety' of the world's people, Myers saw a 'sin-seared' and rebellion-scarred planet where the sacred book must be protected by law. Where Grimsley wanted to bring a spiritually hungry world gently into the Urantia teachings through the common bond of Jesus, critics talked of his 'bootlegging' the book without giving credit.

In summing up the years before 1983, I could see discord from the beginning about the validity of Christy's messages after Dr. Sadler's assertion that the midways had left.

Christy's death may have aborted any further criticisms of her alleged contact, but in 1982 the mantle of leadership seemed to have been passed on to the charismatic Grimsley, an exceptional orator and philosophy scholar, the colorful presence who had become the centerpiece of the Urantia movement. He was not a Trustee, as was Myers

and remained a Urantia 'special agent.'

He would become a big target, especially since Christy had noted frequently that he was indeed a member of Urantia's Corps of Destiny. The book says: "The twelve groups of Urantia destiny reservists are composed of mortal inhabitants of the sphere who have been rehearsed for numerous critical positions on earth and are in readiness to act in possible planetary emergencies."

This became a matter of prestige, personalities and politics. The Family of God profile continued to grow and bring in more money, some of it no doubt diverted from contributions that might have been directed to the Urantia Brotherhood in Chicago.

Then came the pivotal year of 1983. Grimsley began getting messages from the midwayers. He was told to be prepared for a nuclear attack that would 'touch American soil.' There was the strong backlash from the Urantia movement. The Reagan administration and the Soviet regime went to the very brink of nuclear war. It was a fascinating three-way timeline, all leading to the weekend of November 18-20.

FIRST STRIKE AS STRATEGY

First, I plowed into former Central Intelligence Agency analyst Peter Pry's well-documented book, *War Scare*, and the CIA website, both providing historical information on exactly how close we came to all-out nuclear war in September and also November, 1983, and especially near the dates when the Family of God was seriously worried about it. The sources reveal a situation much more perilous than U.S. intelligence thought at the time, leading them to greatly underestimate the impact that the Reagan administration's words and policies were having inside the Soviet Union.

In fact, Reagan's confrontational rhetoric and the huge U.S. arms build-up were substantiating a long-held view in the Soviet military that the U.S. was maneuvering toward a first strike, and that, indeed, a first strike was the best possible option and likely the only option that they themselves had to win such a war. Soviet textbooks from the 70s and 80s now confirm the prevalence of both views, as have former Soviet military officers.

In 1981, the Soviets were already fearful and frustrated that their defenses weren't adequate, having been revealed so by U.S. spy plane probes which happened with impunity. Premier Leonid Brezhnev announced to a reportedly amazed audience that the U.S. was planning a first strike once it achieved military superiority.

He also announced the advent of Operation VRYAN, which mobilized every worldwide Russian resource to glean every possible bit of information about the intentions of the

U.S. and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The partnership of two jealous and bickering agencies, the GRU and the KGB, was surprising enough. The massive devotion of manpower to this mission was unprecedented. At that time, War Scare author Peter Pry notes that the KGB alone "dwarfed both the CIA and FBI" in its size.

So, seemingly unknown to U.S. intelligence, the Soviets expected to be attacked at some point. Reagan, as late as 1983, expressed disbelief that they would think such a thing. There has been revealed by subsequent history a serious disconnect between our intelligence understandings at the time and cold reality.

Tensions, arms build-ups, missile placements, and nasty rhetoric were all part of the Cold War scene. The military machines rolled in both countries, and when Brezhnev passed on in 1982, his successor was Yuri Andropov. He is described by Pry as the architect of VRYAN, which is a Russian acronym for 'surprise first nuclear strike.' So a man implicated in massive oppressions and millions of deaths in Poland succeeded as premier.

In September, 1983, a KAL Korean airliner was shot down by a Soviet jet, ushering in a dangerous game of inflammatory accusations and condemnations. Reagan called the USSR an 'evil empire' in a speech to evangelical Christians and it surprisingly hit global headlines.

The facts now show that U.S. military submarines and jets had been repeatedly violating Soviet territory for months before the airliner shoot-down. More than 20 U-2 spy planes had actually been shot down over the years, dating back to the days of President Dwight Eisenhower.

The U.S. was consistently testing Soviet defenses, finding gaps that embarrassed the Russians, raising their fear level and promoting an indelible idea in Russia that the U.S. had gained superiority and they were lagging dangerously behind.

As Reagan escalated the conflict, fears grew of a U.S. first strike, with that related idea that only a Soviet first strike could win a war. Conversely, the attitude that seemed to be prevalent in the U.S. was that we were trying to catch up to the Soviets or so went the political rhetoric to get military build-up funds through Congress.

In either and both cases, it led to huge expenditures of money and manpower in the production of bombs, missiles, tanks, planes, nuclear subs, and all the other trappings of war. It fueled the war industries and heightened tensions constantly. It was all keeping up with the Joneses in a highly volatile way.

The Korean airliner reportedly entered Soviet airspace along its parallel route from New York to Seoul. This presumed navigation error scrambled Soviet defenses. When it

reportedly crossed into Soviet airspace a second time, a Russian jet pilot chose to shoot it down, with two missiles.

A key to pilot Gennadi Osipovich's motivation may be seen in the fact that he was paid for the kill and complained that it should have been more. In an interview 13 years later, the dedicated communist, said he had seen that it was a passenger plane but knew they could be easily fitted for a spy mission. He took some pride in his kill and reasoned that it should have been worth more than 200 rubles.

At any rate, the Soviets maintained it was indeed a spy plane and that the provocation had been created by the Americans to discredit the Soviets, condemn them to the world for the senseless loss of life, and pave the way for the subsequent congressional bills that greatly expanded the U.S. war machine in its quest for superiority.

BATTLES AT THE BRINK

Highly advanced Pershing II missiles were also set to be deployed in Europe to face Russia and counter their many missiles already facing the NATO countries. The Soviet knew that these placements would disastrously reduce their possible time for reaction to a first strike, to about six minutes. This heightened fear of an anticipated U.S. first strike fueled the strategy of making a first strike as the best and only way to win.

The deployment had not yet begun, but some Soviets believed that it would create a decisive element of surprise for the U.S. to attack well before the deployment. And the combined American-British war game in November would then be an even better cover.

This would be the largest WWII simulation war exercise in history, ABLE ARCHER-83, November 2-12, 1983. It would be a full-scale alert and a full round of simulated reactions. The Soviet Operation VRYAN was on full alert to tip off any signs of a NATO strike.

At the time, the Reagan administration was also financing insurgencies in Angola and Nicaragua, and had actually invaded the island of Grenada on October 26 to overthrow an aborted reign by Cuban revolutionaries. Battle lines were drawn. The Soviets expected a possible invasion of Nicaragua. The U.S. was concerned about possible missile placements there.

Reagan's announcement of the Strategic Defense Initiative, bringing outer space into the Cold War equation, prompted loud denunciations from the Soviet, which called it aggression and a provocation to war.

British complaints about the Grenada invasion greatly increased communications

between Margaret Thatcher's government and the Reagan administration. Grenada was part of the British Commonwealth and the British were left out of the mix, which infuriated Prime Minister Thatcher. The Soviets reportedly mistook this spike as war planning for that strategic first strike against them.

Meanwhile, Reagan and advisors appeared oblivious to the seriousness of the situation, seeming to believe that the strong protestations in Russia were only political rhetoric, generated for the Russian people. I wondered: Did he think the Soviet rhetoric mirrored the kind of political posturing he himself was taking to get military funding for the Pentagon and its war industries?

I recalled President Eisenhower warning the American people of this self-same war industry that could suck up our wealth and literally leave hungry children in its wake. Prime Minister Thatcher eventually visited Reagan personally in early 1984, advising him to tone down his evil empire provocations because the Russians were taking it more seriously than he was.

Thus, in November 1983 fear of nuclear war was commonplace in the U.S. and there was a 'better safe than sorry' run to build shelters and locate the nearest civil defense haven. If the midwayers had an ideal place to safeguard *the Urantia Book* and some knowledgeable, spiritual-minded survivors, then the Family of God's new center might be it, a safer location than Chicago. But critics still note today that Clayton was within range of some likely military targets.

Pry's book notes that ABLE ARCHER 83 that November did not trigger WWII because the situation cooled because of the last minute revelations of two embedded Soviet spies.

CALLING ON MIDWAYERS

I decided I should go next to the midwayers themselves, and so to their alleged point of contact on the planet, George Barnard, and the 11.11 platoon of midwayers and teachers. I had corresponded with George years ago. He was still in Northern Australia, and now had a global network of channelers and spiritual activists who are attuned to the 11.11 prompts and transmit lessons from a variety of spiritual personalities.

They seemed to exist in parallel service to the Correcting Time but I couldn't begin to fathom the various roles of the myriad of universe personalities who were involved on the planet in these eventful years.

Even though the midwayers had worked with the *The Urantia Book* commission and Dr. Sadler's forum for years, I didn't know about a connection today, after their alleged departure from the project, and the alleged and contested connections that followed. I

wondered if connections were forever severed today between the midwayers and the custodians of the book.

Barnard himself has no Urantia roots. He only came to realize in the 1990's that the supposed 'dead spirits' he had been seeing since childhood, around the family dinner table, were those self-same 1,111 planetary secondary midwayers and co-residents of the planet described in *the Urantia book*. Once this discovery was made, George visited some of the Teaching Mission groups in the U.S. He maintains friendships and continues to market an Akashic Construct for meditation that came from his hypnotism therapy work. In his books, he relates how midwayers have long been sending him troubled patients for healing.

When I approached him for midwayer input, George already was aware of an incident in September, 1983, that colored his thinking. For some years, people have been equating this earlier incident with the episode in November, but the dates don't match with Grimsley's messages. Midwayers, however, may well have been involved.

In September, with alerts heightened after the Korean airliner went down, the Soviets had launched a brand new eye-in-the-sky surveillance system called OKO. It was very new, and when it indicated on September 26, shortly after midnight, that the U.S. had fired its intercontinental Minuteman missiles and a nuclear attack was underway (as expected), it posed a frightening dilemma for Lt. Col. Stainslav Petrov, the duty officer in charge of the surveillance satellite.

Petrov waited for several agonizing minutes without signaling the alarm, painfully waiting for radar confirmation. It did not confirm, and the duty officer decided on his own that the new system had malfunctioned and given a false warning. Those few minutes of nuclear nightmare ended Petrov's military career with a nervous breakdown. He reportedly received a small retirement home outside Moscow and did not have to wait his turn to get a telephone.

The Soviets were likely distressed again, over the failure of their new advanced warning system. ABLE ARCHER 83 was only five weeks away.

On October 10, 2010, George Barnard replied to my inquiry with a transmission that truly lifted my question of their involvement up to a level that relates to their long experience on the planet. The words came from Bzutu, a midwayer Chief:

"There are circumstances under which a simple 'yes or no' to your earnest questions will hardly suffice, and this is one of those circumstances. However, this lecture is not to be a 'poor, poor me' on either your part or mine, because misunderstandings will continue to plague us for centuries to come, as we try to bring the only partially-adept-to-receive into

line with those of more regular worlds.

"Consider now the claim of Nostradamus that 'the god stands nearby.' Hardly! His Thought Adjuster had business to attend elsewhere, and the fully appraised DEF-5 was certainly no god, nor has she attained that elevated status by this present time.

"Your dear friend ... and mine ... Dante Alighieri was allowed to catch but a fleeting glimpse of the smartly attired Beatrice (ABC-3), neither knowing her to be a permanent resident of the planet, nor ever understanding just how many celestials shared in his writings.

"And, my brother, your Joan of Arc was equally fooled by her own mind in believing she was under instructions from Saints Michael, Margaret and Catharine. Michael, yes! Once again, here we find a project succeeding well, yet misunderstandings galore.

"How we battled for so many years to make you hear, understand, catch on, to what we wanted you to know and act upon, when you battled to understand, yet excelled in seeing us before you, each time we attempted to converse. Not in our world's past nor future will we find many that are ideal on both scores – the visual and the audible. We carry on with our tasks, never give up, and only in retrospect will those of your kin who assisted us find recognition on Mansonia and beyond, as will the one (Vern Grimsley) about whom you inquire.

"We, on our part, may well be advised about circumstances that may become a close call in potentially dooming all life on this planet, and we may be ordered to go into action. We are rarely, if ever apprised in advance of the outcome of our efforts to thwart human free will, as was the case in which you viewed the Russian technician."

Along with the transmission, George offered the idea that the midwayers have nothing more to say on the matter.

I noticed a quotation on the bottom of George's e-mail: "*You lit a Flame, and it will become a Raging Fire.*" – ABC-22.

Was this the midwayer personality who worked with Dr. William Sadler and his group in bringing forth the Urantia text? In a memorial service to Emma Christensen, I had heard Grimsley on an audiotape asking the departed matriarch to 'say hello to ABC and the others.' Barnard later told me that it was not the same midwayer personality.

I wondered if the roles of Grimsley and Barnard were related, both being humans working with midwayers, both helping them with emergency situations on the planet. Again, the Urantia papers provided perspective on humans who are pressed into service.

On page 1257, the book notes that these mortals benefit from spiritual influences that the midwayers are important in facilitating, as they were in the appearance of the Urantia papers in the last century. "Such potential contact mortals of the evolutionary worlds are mobilized in the numerous reserve corps, and it is, to a certain extent, through these small groups of forward-looking personalities that spiritual civilization is advanced and the Most Highs are able to rule in the kingdoms of men." The book notes that "these reservists of destiny have seldom been emblazoned on the pages of human history."

The teachers have told us in recent years that the ranks of this Corps of Destiny have been greatly expanded with the ongoing Correcting Time on the worlds of the rebellion.

I wondered if ABC-22 of today could actually be persuaded to provide more information, something less philosophical and more direct. Perhaps I should produce that timeline sequence of Cold War events and Family of God messages.

MESSAGES PROMPT TIRADE

To capture the political element in the drama, a new document came into hand that appeared to show the very crux of the determined attack that eventually brought Grimsley's organization down. It includes the transcript of a meeting between Grimsley and 26 Urantia movement leaders in California on November 1, 1983. Grimsley had been receiving audio messages at odd times, and the latest one: "*Prepare for World War III*" had caused a stir.

The revealing document was a lengthy report to the Urantia Foundation and Brotherhood published on June 17, 1984, copyrighted by the author, Hoite Caston, and called "Vern Grimsley Message Evaluation." It is replete with warnings that quoting is not permissible and it is intended only for people in the Urantia movement. As I had been an active reader for over 30 years, and also a journalist doing historical research, I read it.

It was caustic and deeply personal. His condemnations of Grimsley's messages were strong, and apparently influential in the demise of FOG and Grimsley's retirement from the Urantia movement. A full reading would share much additional perspective and provide a strong sense of the Urantia community discussions centering around the messages, especially Caston's November 1, 1983, tape-recorded session featuring Grimsley and those members of the California Urantia communities.

Caston showed up ready to do battle, following up the meeting with a long list of his concerns and using the tape recording in his subsequent evaluation reports. As he faced off against the strong physical and rhetorical presence of Grimsley in that room, it now seems to have been the first battle in a war for control of this little known epochal revelation. Caston felt his precious revelation had been upstaged by either hallucinations

or by manipulation. He was adamant that the Revelation could positively not be held hostage to someone who hears mysterious, disembodied, and alleged messages and uses them to control the movement.

How did this major personal confrontation come to pass? I decided to do the three-way timeline, linking the world war that did not happen, the war within Urantia that did happen, and find some vital pieces of the puzzle to understand all of this in a proper context.

I was betting that some essential points had been missed, as always. This might be in like manner to the *Fellowship Herald* article that proclaimed the reality of the Teaching Mission and the Magisterial Mission without knowing it, and looked into the possible future without observing the realities of the present, and the past 20 years.

TIMELINE 1982-84

November 1982. Leonid Brezhnev dies and hard-core mass murderer Yuri Andropov, called the 'Butcher of Poland', takes over as premier. Hatred and distrust in the Cold War ratchets up. U.S. President Ronald Reagan is staunchly anti-communist.

December 16, 1982. Vern Grimsley surveys a property near Clayton, California, for the growth of the Family of God Foundation and the new Spiritual Renaissance Institute, now at about 40 staff members. He receives what he called a 'contact' while standing under a large oak tree. The voice says: "*This is it.*" He calls Martin Myers about it, for one.

At the November 1 meeting, Grimsley had already told the story a number of times. He spoke again:

"I was instructed by a contact, not just a mental guidance, but a very different, and for me the first time, a very different phenomenon, which I'm not going to discuss in detail. Dr. Sadler used to say, 'If I told you everything I knew about the exact details of how *The Urantia Book* came through, you'd still be just as confused as ever, and just as confused as I am.' And so, therefore, I am not going to be talking about the mechanics of it, but it was very different from the sort of praying and getting a sense of some inner guidance ... but an actual contact. And I did, as you know, purchase that place, St. Anthony's College, in Northern California."

January 7, 1983. Grimsley reports a "voice" telling him that he and members of the Family of God should be especially diligent for their safety, since they are an important team.

January 21. Grimsley reports the message: "*The hour has not come to publicize the*

book." He relates on November 1 that he was not aware at the time of a movement by wealthy and dedicated reader Harry McMullen, a former FOG member, to launch a national magazine advertising campaign for *the Urantia Book*, due to hit in March. When he finds out via a phone call from Carolyn Kendall, he states that he subsequently shared the message with the Urantia Foundation and Brotherhood.

Critics would later note that Grimsley had said "*the hour has not come*" to promote the book for some years, nothing new except the claim of spiritual imposition. They note that McMullen had previous disagreements with Grimsley.

On November 1, Grimsley professes not to know the reason for the "hour has not come" message. He mentions a "mustard seed project" in Houston, Texas, Urantia circles, but didn't think that would be worth "this very sort of stern, loving but stern, wording" from the midwayers.

February. Premier Yuri Andropov, architect of the worldwide Operation VRYAN, is an advocate of the strike-first nuclear strategy—to find any inkling of an anticipated U.S. first strike, and then preempt it. His kidneys fail sometime this month. As a suffering near-invalid facing death, his mental state could be questioned.

February 26, 1983. Grimsley's meeting with the executive committee leads to an official statement by the Foundation, the Brotherhood, the General Council and the Trustees of the Foundation that there will be no media advertising and publicity about the book. Caston states later that this is but a reiteration of Grimsley's long-standing position and that his influence on the authorities was over-stated at the November 1 gathering. He makes note that the advertising campaign would have been very modest, only with reader ads in the back of magazines such as *Psychology Today*.

March 1983. Reagan announces the Strategic Defense Initiative. Moscow sees it as an act of aggression, to implement secret space weapons against the USSR.

September 1. Soviets shoot down the Korean airliner, killing all aboard, and leading to an escalation of fear and tension. The official Soviet newspaper, Tass, summed up their position: "The plan was to carry out without a hitch the intelligence operation, but if it was stymied, to turn all this into a political provocation against the Soviet Union... the entire responsibility for this tragedy rests wholly and fully with the leaders of the United States of America."

September 16. Grimsley gets the message: "*Don't split up the book.*" It initiated a ten-minute session with the celestials who clarified that it should not be published in multiple volumes because the whole book is needed to understand the parts. They referred to such a division with the French translation that had led to uneven sales, and applauded the

newer decision to print it in one volume.

Again, Grimsley appears unaware of another idea by McMullen. He relates on November 1: "Well, it turns out there was something of a movement afoot to ... want to put out maybe a paperback ... copies of *the Urantia Book* in multiple volumes. And some people are talking about just printing The Life and Teachings of Jesus as a kind of 'come on' ..."

Critic Hoite Caston later would note that McMullen was one of the first five members of the Family of God, had left the movement for family business reasons, but had been involved in several policy arguments with Grimsley over the years. He speculates in his report that this could have been a factor in the messages, which he nevertheless claims were only reiterations of Grimsley's long-held opinions about publishing the book.

The Caston report is filled with suppositions, speculations, hearsay, and rhetorical questions. It includes quotes from McMullen saying that the movement shouldn't be influenced by people who 'get messages in their bathtub,' as was the claim, and that the war scare messages could bring a torrent of damaging doomsday cult media coverage and discredit the Revelation.

September 1983. Andropov's health worsens. A kidney is removed. He moves into a special VIP hospital suite. He tries to continue running the country through associates, including Politburo protégé Mikhail Gorbachev.

September 26. The Soviet duty officer overrides a new surveillance system's warning that the U.S. had fired missiles. Had he heeded the message and not suspected a malfunction, the Soviets would have moved to full battle alert.

October 6. Grimsley receives an afternoon message: "*Prepare for the third world war. Be not anxious. Fear not. But be prepared.*" He later noted that they put strong emphasis on the last two sentences. When the messengers were questioned they added "*Actively prepare*" And Grimsley was also told: "*Tell people you don't know when because we don't know when.*" And also: "*Get maps of escape routes. Store food and water. Know where fallout shelters are, or build them as needed. This one will touch American soil.*"

Grimsley related later that he had received some inkling that this kind of message would be coming forth. He and the voices had initiated a protocol he insisted upon, "almost a ritualistic series of checking and rechecking before I pass any of this along to anybody else, because this is a very difficult subject."

October 7. The next message to Grimsley is "*Confirmed. Proceed.*"

October 10. Urantia Foundation and Brotherhood leaders gather in Chicago to hear

Brotherhood President John Hales report on the events in California, from where he had just returned.

October 11. Grimsley gets a call from Hales. By telephone he writes down eight questions pertaining to the messages and the role of the Urantia organizations. He sips on some more coffee and opens a session with the "Voice."

On November 1, he relates that the answers came in two different sessions. In the first, the midwayers had been brief and guarded in their responses, but after a break to obtain additional permission, they returned and were more forthcoming.

To the first question of whether he had any doubts of the messages, Grimsley said he had none, and noted that about 50 people at the Family of God shared his belief in the contact.

Is World War III inevitable? The answer was: *"Yes, unless we send an emergency son on an emergency mission. This is under active discussion. This is our view as of Tuesday morning, October 11, 1983."*

Is nuclear holocaust inevitable? The answer was a curt: *"No."* Grimsley noted that this didn't change from the first and second session.

Should the Urantia Brotherhood take any official action? The answer: *"Only what you have agreed and discussed. You have been well led in your deliberations."* Grimsley acknowledged that this was the beginning of some "kind of fuzzy answers" since he and Urantia officials had talked about so many things and not always agreed.

In the second session, the message was amplified. *"The institute in Clayton is projected to be in the top ten percent of functional/protectable locations given current data."* Conversely, the Chicago Urantia headquarters was in the top ten functional but the bottom ten percent in protectable. The 'voice' advised keeping open the mailing address but be prepared for a possible evacuation to Clayton as an emergency headquarters.

How much advance notice will we get? *"Maybe none. Study the news daily. Rely on radio over TV. Keep fresh batteries in cold storage and tube radios tuned to all news stations."*

Truly, in a push-button nuclear war, missiles were only minutes away from any major target on the globe. With Cold War confrontations happening constantly, one can imagine the collective concerns of a group of spiritual people in the influence of a persuasive minister who laid out the messages in a caring and sharing way. If Grimsley was using all this to control people, however, it was certainly subtle. He himself expressed wonder himself and presided over a scenario of joint exploration.

The second session with the midwayers was "a lot more laid back," said Grimsley. "It's like they were kicking their feet up on the desk and saying: 'Okay, well, we'll talk about it'." They shared these messages:

"Concerning timing, as difficult as this may be to mortal comprehension, there is much that we don't know... There is much that we don't know. Concerning many of these matters, we can only speculate. So we therefore repeat: You may not know because we may not know. Be not anxious. Fear not, but be prepared. And we love you, all of you. Proceed as if this were your final instruction."

Grimsley noted that this touch of finality was a relief to him personally. "Otherwise," he said, "it's like waiting for the other shoe to drop all the time."

At the November 1 gathering in Los Angeles, Grimsley added a layer of his understanding regarding "Prepare for World War III," noting: "I checked the definition of a world war. It means one in which all the major powers of the world are involved. That's the usual definition."

As I mulled over this, I was reminded of the status of midwayers on the planet, certainly co-residents but, like us, not knowledgeable about what future events may come. Midwayer Chief Bzutu had said that they simply go into action, not knowing the outcome for sure. And here seemed a case like others Bzutu had mentioned, in which human understanding is askew and the results undetermined. Neither humans nor midwayers have the proverbial crystal ball, both of us being just children of the universe.

October 16. The Family of God mails letters to 100 Urantia leaders around the world, especially new contacts in Paris and Asia, advising of the war warnings and the sanctuary efforts at the Clayton institute, which is nestled on three sides by mountain peaks but actually not deemed by experts to be a completely safe haven from nuclear fallout.

The mailing was not on behalf of the Urantia Foundation and Brotherhood though Grimsley had been a "special agent" for some ten years. It would become a point of contention that the mailing was not authorized and that it deleteriously linked the Urantia organizations to the alleged messages, guilt by association, as Grimsley was a well-known champion of the book.

His supposed "messages" were apparently appearing to some as manipulation, using proxy votes from unseen messengers on high to effect policy for the organizations. I recalled that the two projects to divide the book and promote it in the media had been undermined by these special orders. But Grimsley, of course, had admitted little or no concrete knowledge of McMullen's ideas at the November 1 meeting.

It crossed my mind that his reports of a celestial message might also be added inducement to get the financing to buy St. Anthony's in the first place. It seems that motives are always questioned, everybody's and all the time. Both Caston's motives and Grimsley's could be questioned; my motives could be questioned for doing this research and writing something from it. If I'm criticized, the motives of my critics can be questioned.

I also recalled that Grimsley advised the Urantia questioners that the midwayers said they should take no official actions on the matter. The mailing, then, was naturally from the Family of God, which was committed to the messages where the Urantia organizations were definitely not. Grimsley once said he would be the "lightning rod" for the messages if they proved to be false.

Later, Caston would liken this and other of Grimsley's actions as working to effect a Urantia power transfer to his Clayton Institute and to pre-empt the democratic workings of the organizations. He sarcastically noted, in what was perhaps the biggest crisis to threaten the movement, if not the whole world, that the democratic Urantia organizations were being asked not to lead.

I was thinking again, at this point, that money would either be flowing to the Urantia organizations or to the Family of God and the new Spiritual Renaissance Institute. The question at the time could have been whether the Revelation itself is being serviced with funding, or Grimsley's institutions, which were taking a much broader position, to represent every child of God on the planet.

October 23. Jim Mills writes a letter to Martin Myers, later posted on the Urantia Fellowship archive. He notes his work at Florida State University in studying psychic phenomenon.

Mills quotes some notes from Dr. Sadler regarding the reception of the Urantia papers in the 1920's. Sadler notes that there are "some unusual activities of the marginal consciousness." Says Mills: "These included writing, talking, hearing, which he called 'clairaudience,' seeing, thinking, remembering, acting, personalization, and combined and associated psychic."

Mills quotes Dr. Sadler dramatically: "The technique of the reception of *The Urantia Book* in no way parallels or impinges upon any of the above phenomena of the marginal consciousness." In his twisted reasoning, he comments on Grimsley's messages: "This removes it from claims of consideration for any events related to the Urantia Revelation."

Here it was. The research was striking gold. Mills can only see that methods used by celestials to produce a printed 2,100 page book on the planet, are not the same methods

by which spiritual forces have been communicating with humans for generations. To Mills, this one method of communication, which mysteriously produced a singular book on the planet is okay since it involves his perfect English Urantia Book. But in his mind he separates this particular form and incident of communications from any other, and expresses doubt about anyone, any movement, any other kind communications technique, or any kind of message at all. I truly believe that the celestials can use any number of communications methods to reach humans and they have told us so.

Mills dismisses all other forms of alleged communications with spiritual messengers because they don't have *the Urantia Book* to prove them. Seemingly under the influence of academic strictures of proof and lab experiments, Mills writes a narrative that gives the Foundation all the rationale they need to ban the concept of getting spiritual advice from spiritual teachers for the foreseeable future. The policy is based on the false rationale that none of the other methods other than the mysterious, still hazy book creation project are reliable for guidance of any kind, personal or group.

Mills notes that all of the “‘clairaudience’ techniques are ‘products of the subconscious mind,’ although he fails to quote Dr. Sadler in saying so. He comes down hard: The people at the Family of God getting these messages ‘need diagnosis rather than responsibility. I would be fearful of placing my future in the hands of such people. I would strongly recommend that they be impeached for conduct unbecoming their offices.’”

He goes on into another blistering paragraph: “Now, this is the kind of conduct common to esoteric cults and the occult-oriented groups. If word gets out, where is the dignity of the Urantia Brotherhood and Foundation? It is lost for at least a generation. It would be better for us to close shop right now and reopen in about 25 years. If we don't stop this nonsense immediately, we better join the rest and rent a mountain top where we can establish a colony to await the end of the world or 'the second coming.' This will be the image these people are sponsoring And, once established, we may never be able to get rid of it. I cannot criticize and deplore enough the conduct of people who are fostering this image whether acting in good faith or not. The same people who are writing with so much dubious erudition on 'advertising' are the very ones whose activities question whether they can be trusted with anything more intellectually demanding that [sic] using an electric pencil sharpener.”

"Let's forget about all this 'love' for a moment," says Mills, "and take a look at the second paragraph from the bottom of page 1222 in *the Urantia Book*. This is the way we have to react in a real world. We have been overly sentimental in the conduct of our business for far too long. Now it's a deeply-ingrained habit, difficult to eliminate"

That paragraph reads: *“The expansion of material knowledge permits a greater intellectual appreciation of the meanings of ideas and the values of ideals. A human being can find truth in his inner experience, but he needs a clear knowledge of facts to apply his personal discovery of truth to the ruthlessly practical demands of everyday life.”*

Mills' condemnations were even nastier than Caston's. And unfortunately, Mills had philosophically, psychologically, emotionally and vindictively deemed any kind of celestial communications as "subconscious mind" figments. *The Urantia Book* is unique and it is the one and only truly reliable spiritual revelation on the planet, according to him, and the Foundation.

October 26. The Reagan administration invades and "liberates" Grenada from the rule of communists aligned with Cuba. Operation VRYAN gets very suspicious of the heightened amount of ciphered communications between Reagan and Thatcher, not linking it to Britain's anger at having a commonwealth country invaded. The Soviets reportedly considered it part of the ongoing planning of the two 'war parties' of the West that would lead to an invasion of Nicaragua and the veiled and disguised actual attack that would come during the November 2-12 war games.

October 26. Caston hears the WWII messages straight from Grimsley at the new Spiritual Renaissance Institute in Clayton. He later stated that he was in shock, not wanting to believe the messages. He reports talking to Grimsley by phone later, and being urged to talk to Martin Myers about accepting the messages. If he didn't, it could lead to trouble in the movement.

October 27. At a meeting in Boulder, Colorado, Morris (Mo) Siegel, founder of Celestial Seasonings teas and longtime Urantia leader, speaks about the messages and preparations for war. On November 1, Grimsley had recalled a chat with Siegel in which they calmly and without fear decided on the better-safe-than-sorry approach. Grimsley quoted Siegel as saying they should err on the side of caution. If they didn't, he didn't want to face having his 'butt kicked' all over the heavens for failing to take action. Could they have imagined at the time that just by taking precautions, and even with a sense of humor, they would eventually wind up on the backside of a political broadside?

Siegel noted that there were enough shelters for all of Boulder's population of 120,000. He said the reports on fallout severity are overblown, and that people can survive. He talks with them on being prepared whatever the case and being more safe than sorry.

The Boulder (Urantia) School had been abuzz about the messages for some weeks. Those running the meeting demanded that the night's lesson on "Forgiveness" be delivered, and that the buzz must not interfere with the book study as it had previous evenings. Clyde

Bedell, who produced a concordex to *the Urantia Book*, came to the meeting with a written narrative "To Be (Upset) Or Not To Be."

After the formal meeting, Siegel presented what Bedell would derisively call a "scare talk." Bedell was not coming from a political stance but rather speaking for his faith in God. In the course of colorful, wide-ranging remarks, he stated:

"This is a time for Urantia-inspired love to embrace us all, of whatever opinions. Let this affair not divide us, but lead us to embrace our guidon more warmly than ever. Whatever is your brother's or sister's conviction regarding possible catastrophe, he or she will be strengthened by words of sympathy rather than criticism in this so-distressing time for some readers. Our Overseeing friends are resourceful. They surely will see that an all-out nuclear war is avoided if that is at all possible. All things are possible with God. You may be quite sure that NO CIVILIZATION DESTROYING holocaust will occur."

To me, and with my faith, this made perfect sense. I don't know if I had that amount of faith in 1983, but I don't see today that God/Spirit and the celestials would allow our infantile and bellicose condition here and stupid free will decisions, to destroy millions of innocent people and set back the evolution plan so badly. Some will disagree and say that God doesn't micro-manage and we are left to our fates, even if it is planetary destruction. Faith in God is likely involved here, and certainly faith in humankind.

October 29. Caston calls Martin Myers with his concerns and is told that the messages are not reliable. Both Grimsley and Myers, in Caston's reporting, had concerns about Myers being jealous that Grimsley was chosen as a receiver of celestial messages. Myers denied the charge and Caston reports that he laughed uproariously at the idea.

October 30. Caston and wife fly to San Diego to meet with Mr. and Mrs. Richard Keeler. He reports that after several hours of questioning and speculation, and then after re-reading *The Urantia Book* on subjects relating to mysticism, leadings, and spiritual communications, he began to develop in his mind a disturbing scenario of what could be happening with Grimsley. Later, he would complete the defamatory evaluation report which he defined as mostly "a study of Vern's credibility, based on his past and present actions, and an evaluation of the origin and content of the 'messages.'" He would later give credit to Keeler for his "tough editorial eye" that greatly strengthened his document.

Importantly, Keeler was a financial supporter of the Family of God. Over the years he had contributed heavily to the organization, and had reportedly earned the organization a lot of money with his investments. His will contained a large gift to the Family of God. Mullins' book says it is his entire estate.

October 30. Trustees of the Urantia Foundation and Brotherhood vote to revoke

Grimsley's "Special Representative" status. Caston reports that Grimsley again asks him to talk to Myers, persuading him not to do anything "rash" that would cause problems in the movement.

October 31. Caston flies to Chicago, compiling notes during the flight, and has an evening visit with Martin Myers and Diane Elder regarding the FOG messages. He reports that he was impressed with their "sane reasoning" and loving attitudes, and left convinced that the Grimsley messages represented a "major crisis" for the Urantia movement. He committed himself to a presentation at the Los Angeles meeting, which he said he did not know Grimsley would attend.

November 1. The first Pershing II missiles were scheduled to arrive in Europe, but the project is behind schedule. They were nonetheless included in the ten-day war game for the first time. Operation VRYAN is on high alert, and Moscow presses all agents worldwide for information, especially anomalies in normal operational procedures.

November 1. Grimsley meets with 26 concerned Urantia Book leaders in Los Angeles, including Caston, who arrives late and later states that he didn't hear the early request not to tape the proceedings. He said he placed his recorder on a table in plain sight and did so. Not realizing that Grimsley himself would be at the meeting, he decided to use his limited tape to record Grimsley's presentation rather than save the tape for his own, as he had intended.

Caston's verbal confrontation with Grimsley that closed the evening was not recorded. Caston subsequently included a transcript of the recording in his message evaluation report, which was mostly Grimsley's discussion of the messages.

Ironically, as Grimsley had viewed Caston as a mediator with Myers, Caston turns out to be the one who directly confronts him. He had in hand a list of 23 questions and observations that he had intended to air, and when he was called upon in the question-answer portion of the meeting, Grimsley's presence didn't deter his presentation. Caston notes later that confronting Grimsley on any matter was a formidable task and he states that he must have gone into "fight or flight" mode.

During the subsequent exchange of views, Grimsley admonished Caston for not bringing his questions and concerns to Clayton as he and others had been invited to do, before unloading them at the meeting. Caston felt vindicated based on his busy schedule of conferring with Myers, Keeler and perhaps others in his travels from Seattle down to San Diego during the past week. So let's deal with them now.

One attendant noted that it was Caston who seemed frantic and quarrelsome, and not Grimsley, who was, after all, an extraordinary preacher, remaining calm and reasoning. If

that were indeed the sense of the meeting, it might help explain why Caston, embarrassed, might take the issue on as a vendetta to validate himself. At any rate, he left the confrontation undeterred and began a systematic campaign to get feedback, corrections to his presumptions, and any information that would refute his charges against Grimsley. He would confront the Grimsleys directly.

His premise is stated as number six in a list of possible scenarios that would explain and characterize the "Grimsley incident." This is the one Caston said he believes, whereupon he launches into a lengthy document of suppositions and assumptions to prove it.

He states his belief that the messages are false, but actually believed by the receiver as part of his "marginal consciousness." He states that the messages are "auditory hallucinations" and that they spring from "the seeds of mental fatigue, emotional stress, self-delusion, or some form of ego-based, self-fulfilling desire, all planted in the fertile seed of a religious cult."

And so, I thought, it was all going back to the time-tested homily that if he's hearing voices, he's psychotic. Well, then, was the mysterious so-called "sleeping subject" who anchored the incoming Urantia revelation psychotic too? Ironically, some people who had received arguably the most comprehensive and admirable piece of channeled material on the planet seemed to be fighting the whole concept that they lived under.

Or was it just Grimsley, personally, who was unconsciously manipulating everything with invalid and unreliable imaginings with his self-anointed special status? Midwayers may exist, but they're not talking to Vern. Celestial contact is real, but not this time. Mystery rages on when we are always questioning people's motivations.

Caston is highly critical of Grimsley's claim that Christy had confirmed him as a member of the Reserve Corps of Destiny. While Grimsley did not call himself a member of the Reserve Corps, Caston disdainfully notes that he had, more than once, relayed the statement by Christy, using it manipulatively.

November 2. ABLE ARCHER-83 begins, six days after the U.S. crushes the upstart communist regime in Grenada. Andropov condemns the U.S. as warmongers in very strong terms. KGB operatives worldwide get the message that the situation is critical, and to expect a surprise U.S. missile attack. Originally, it was planned that Reagan and Vice President George H.W. Bush would themselves participate in the exercise. For unclear reasons, it was decided that they would not, perhaps in deference to Soviet concerns.

November 6. At the height of ABLE ARCHER-83, the U.S. Navy and a Soviet submarine are playing cat-and-mouse games in the deep Atlantic, 470 miles off the U.S. coast east of Charleston, South Carolina. This was standard procedure to train personnel

and protect U.S. ships. The Victor III Russian sub was equipped and designed to kill U.S. subs before they could launch their intercontinental missiles. The U.S. part of the scenario was to destroy the Victor first.

Victor III becomes disabled and floats to the surface, becoming a major embarrassment to the Soviets as it floats helplessly toward a haven in Cuba each day, with U.S. planes buzzing overhead. Author Peter Pry thinks the presence of the Russian sub near Charleston was not likely a coincidence to ABLE ARCHER-83.

November 6. With the Victor III drama playing out, Soviet VRYAN reports that ABLE ARCHER-83 is like an acronym-laden actual countdown to a U.S. first strike. Intelligence estimates went worldwide, that it would likely take 7-10 days to put everything together to launch a nuclear attack. Dating from November 6, then, they could expect a U.S. strike in 3-6 days, from November 9-12.

November 8 or 9. When allied forces simulate the highest alert DEFCON-1 status, the Russians mistake it as real and put their own forces on a highest alert status, including nuclear capable planes in East Germany and Poland. They are celebrating a Communist Revolution holiday and some believe that the U.S. might think them distracted. U.S. intelligence services remain oblivious, according to Pry, who believes the Russians made a too-literal interpretation of work processes.

November 10. A letter from Church of Christ Minister Meredith Sprunger, an ardent student of the Revelation, disdains Grimsley's messages and their supposed political manipulation of the Urantia movement. He speaks strongly on behalf of Democratic rule.

November 11. ABLE ARCHER-83 ends. In War Scare, author and former CIA analyst Peter Pry thinks that even another 24-hour cycle might have led to a nuclear holocaust. In these critical days and hours, for whatever reasons, no missiles were launched. Much credit can apparently be given to two embedded Soviet spies, Oleg Gordievsky in London and code name 'Topaz' in NATO, who both assured the Soviets near the end that NATO was definitely not involved with any war action and had turned out the lights and gone home.

It seems that two well-placed Soviet spies gave the all-clear then that eased the precipitous pressure being felt in the Soviet and finally ended the war threat.

November 16. Grimsley converts foundation assets to gold, explains that gold should have a higher real value after a nuclear war. It amounts to about \$1,300,000.

November 16. On that day, Caston mails the first version of his message evaluation report to Grimsley, with a separate copy to wife Nancy Grimsley, and other officials of FOG.

He asks for correction of any errors. At the same time, he says that he mailed it to other FOG officials and the executive board of the Urantia Brotherhood. He knew they would be meeting the following weekend and wanted to give them "another perspective." Later in his report, he notes that he also sent the report to eight Urantia Book students, unidentified, for their evaluation.

Caston said he also had a two-hour conversation with Grimsley about the package, during which he admonished Caston for not talking to him personally before distributing the report, and for strongly implying that Grimsley knew his "special representative" status had already been revoked at the time of the November 1 meeting. Grimsley denied knowing it.

November 18. Concerns at the Family of God are reportedly high and Caston says that people are coming to the Clayton shelter, fearing events of the weekend.

A telephone conversation with Delores Nice, a former Family member, takes issue that the gathering that weekend was a war scare. She noted that members were simply working on an upcoming anniversary celebration in December. She also notes that there was no bomb shelter in Clayton, that it was more like a storage area. Importantly, she refutes rumors that members were storing arms to protect themselves after an apocalypse. She adds that Caston's report was rife with errors.

In that very report, Grimsley denies that he had celestial messages about the weekend, only some premonitions in his own head. He has a speaking engagement in Oregon for Saturday evening, and comments that the location should be a safe one in case of a nuclear attack. He was said to have speculated, "Maybe that's not a coincidence."

By this time, other FOG members had reportedly been encouraged to engage their "marginal consciousness." One person's reported vision of the future was of Grimsley signing papers for the St. Anthony's purchase, and he made reference to it in his meeting under the oak tree. Encouraging such mysticism, engaging in 'marginal consciousness' in others was another of Caston's numerous indictments of Grimsley's leadership.

In his report, Caston also relates that a member of the Family of God, name unrevealed, had served on a Grand Jury during the fall, and a spy case involving nuclear strikes had provided inside information that was truly disturbing to the individual. No doubt these sharings would have raised the anxiety level within the Family.

November 19. Grimsley reports receiving a message saying simply: "We've won." He reportedly sends the message to the Urantia Brotherhood, which was scheduled to discuss the matter that very day. What could the message mean? He goes to his Oregon meeting.

In his criticisms, Caston decries the brevity of the message and its lack of meaning, asking whether the messengers would really give us such short shrift. But at the same time, he notes that Grimsley has been subjected to growing criticism and was increasingly reluctant to share any more messages.

Caston says speculators look at three scenarios. First, that FOG has enough executive committee votes to prevent a strong stand against the messages; second, that sufficient numbers of people in Urantia would be supporting the revelations; and third, that an emergency son would indeed be sent to avert a nuclear war.

Amazingly, there seems no speculation that takes the midwayers into consideration, only a human and political interpretation. Perhaps they were saying that the dangers of a Soviet first strike are over for now, as of the ending of ABLE ARCHER-83, and World War III won't happen. That would be a 'win' and that was truly the most important battle going on.

November 19. John Hales chairs a meeting of the executive council of the Urantia Brotherhood to discuss the events in California. A letter was to be drafted, separating the war messages from any relationship to the Brotherhood.

November 20. Keeler resigns from FOG, announces that he has taken the organization out of his will because of his disagreements with the war preparations.

In the matter of complete accuracy, I recalled that the midwayers had assuredly not predicted World War III but urged that we prepare calmly for the worst scenario. American citizens were being encouraged into that very action by Civil Defense authorities. They urged people not to be fearful but to be prepared, just like the civil defense authorities. Grimsley did understand them to say that it would "touch American soil."

The midwayers apparently offered no advice on how to deal with a political "kill-the-prophet" fallout that would seriously fracture the movement all the way to the present time.

November 24. Andropov announces that the USSR would implement an "analogous response" to the Pershing II deployments. Soviet mobile nuclear missiles would be moved closer to Western Europe and nuclear-armed submarines would move closer to the United States. The old guard Soviets still feared a U.S. first strike and considered their own preemptive strike the best strategy.

November 28: Post Office returns Caston's express mail package to Grimsley. His phone number is handwritten on the envelope. It is marked "Unclaimed." Caston reports the

conversation with Grimsley, and says he is told by Keeler that Grimsley considers the report to be "vindictive, libelous and slanderous" and with "a reckless disregard for the truth."

December 15. The Urantia Brotherhood sends the official statement to the full membership. Signed by Hales, the letter never mentions Grimsley or the Family of God by name. It adheres to the Caston-Keeler-Myers position. "Urantia Brotherhood must conduct its affairs through the insights acquired from evolutionary experiential wisdom, epochal revelation, and the personal guidance of its members as all of these resources find group expression in the democratic process." Hales pleads for unity whether or not one believes the messages.

The statement said, in effect, that Grimsley's messages or guidance is a personal thing, not for the Urantia Brotherhood to condone or refute. Such guidance should be personal and separate from the decision-making processes of the board. I thought here that Grimsley might agree and recalled he had always employed more of a democratic than autocratic position in revealing the messages and openly discussing their authenticity and meaning.

December 31, 1983. Tom Kendall, President of the Urantia Foundation, is deposed. His had been the lone dissenting vote for the December 15 Brotherhood letter to Grimsley. In Mullins' book, he reports that Tom and wife Carolyn Kendall had gone from Chicago to visit the Grimsley's in December, even as Myers demanded that he not go officially representing the Foundation. By the time he returns, he has been removed from power by Myers and the rest of the board.

Kendall is quoted by author Mullins as saying: "I began to realize that Martin believed that he, not I, should be president of the Board of Trustees.... I suspected that he was waiting for a plausible excuse to have himself installed as president. The Vern Grimsley controversy presented the opportunity."

Myers' document charged Kendall with being "subject to the influence of psychic phenomena" and that such as this "were in degradation of the teaching of *The Urantia Book* in that the book urges the function of evolutionary wisdom and rational judgment as amplified by one's own spiritual experience in solving problems and challenges."

I knew from having read the voluminous Urantia Book for many years that, like scripture and even more so, its massive weight of science, philosophy and religion is not easily understood in its entirety and dangerous to pull out of context. Yes, we are to rely on ourselves in this mortal adventure and, yes, there will also be continuing revelation and constant, unspecified spiritual assistance.

I noted to myself that the ouster of Kendall at the end of 1983 climaxed a good year for Myers. He had taken over as board president and discredited Grimsley, ultimately leading to the destruction of the Family of God. This would thereby bring a lot of money back to the Chicago power structure and not into Vern's charismatic grip. The Family would no longer take the spotlight or the money.

January 16, 1984. The influential minister, Meredith Sprunger, delivered another blow to the Family of God with a condescending call for members to renounce their erroneous path and come back into the Urantia mainstream as repentant and subservient. In this letter, after revisiting his earlier call for more democracy and a competitive slate for every election, he delved into what he called the "Clayton incident."

Sprunger wrote: "There are many who feel it would be unwise to ask Vern or the Family of God to fill leadership or speaker roles at the General Conference in August. I, personally, love Vern and the Family of God people and believe they have some of the finest talents in the URANTIA movement. I think our objective in our relationships with them should be to help restore their credibility and lay the foundations for their renewed service in the Brotherhood."

Sprunger thus takes on the mantle of the anti-FOG forces that there was no WWII threat and it was all a misguided fantasy. Now, given the facts of history, I knew the threat was real and so did the highest powers in the U.S. and in the Soviet. But Grimsley's critics would allow him no slack.

Sprunger continues by suggesting that Family of God people serve in "non-leadership positions for a couple of years and through fellowship allow confidence to rebuild by this quiet person to person relationship."

"I would hope," said the Church of Christ minister, that Vern would not continue to publicize his 'special' position of 'special' messages. I pray that this 'contact personality' phase of his experience will go into quiescence or may function as a quiet personal religious experience and that he will be able to serve with humility in the democratic processes of the Brotherhood. If this does not happen the service of his great talents will be largely lost to the Brotherhood."

Having FOG members play prominent roles in the upcoming conference, Sprunger reasoned, would "only deepen the divisiveness within the Brotherhood and lessen their future service potential." Members of FOG should be accepted and loved, he said, and other Urantian authorities should be "helping them regain the confidence they once enjoyed in the Brotherhood."

The letter was too much "repent and do penance" for me given that the nuclear attack

could have been imminent. Since it didn't happen, and we were saved by whatever means, doesn't mean that legitimate fears and warnings from FOG should be cause for punishment, ejection from meaningful Urantian service and banishment to a subservient acquiescence to the doubters and cynics.

But the FOG attacks were persistent and the Urantia support went away. While Caston noted that Grimsley was pretending to "get back to normal" in Clayton in the early part of 1984, he still prodded hard to know if Grimsley was still hearing voices to the detriment of the movement, or was ready to renounce the war warnings. The pressure stayed on.

Grimsley persistently stood by his messages, I had been told, until his death in 2010. Since his passing, many in the Urantia movement have expressed appreciation for his life's work, and resurrected some of his radio broadcasts. They precisely voice the very same new religion of Jesus that the Urantia papers say is most needed in the world. The Family of God was doing it. In Jesus' incarnation on the planet, he also gave people exactly what they needed, I reasoned, and he was killed for it.

February 27, 1984. Caston writes Nancy Grimsley and sends her three copies of his report. While he asks for any factual corrections, it's a loaded offer, specifying that he would correct any errors of logic or interpretation if he could actually be convinced of the inaccuracies. This would open a long and contentious debate not in the best interests of FOG or the Urantia movement, he was told, first by Mrs. Grimsley, then by attorney Bob Blackstock on FOG stationary.

Both urge Caston not to publish the report because of numerous inaccuracies and distortions and because it amounts to legal malice. He is undeterred; he is dealing with a crisis that was threatening democratic processes. Blackstock contends there are over 300 errors in the first 105 pages; Caston continues to demand that even one be pointed out. Correspondence continues, with Caston imposing two deadlines for the Grimsleys' responses, both being ignored.

Caston manages to talk to Mrs. Grimsley by phone. She reportedly explains that her husband believed the messages and believed that they should be shared, and that proving the validity of them "would be like proving the existence of God." Failing to get any FOG feedback, Caston subsequently makes widespread distribution of his report within Urantia circles.

March 9, 1984. Andropov dies.

June 17, 1984. Caston publishes the report, 238 pages plus appendix. He puts everyone in the Urantia movement into a difficult position. Either you vote for democratic rule, or Grimsley or any other such instigator could try to manipulate and control the movement

on celestial authority. In its August 1984 annual Council meeting, the Urantia Brotherhood voted to support democratic standards, though falling short of any criticism of Grimsley or the Family of God Foundation. I would look for the minutes.

In his conclusions, Caston stated displeasure at what he called a weak Brotherhood statement. He openly advocates that any human at all who professed to receive celestial messages in relation to this "aberrant episode" in Urantia history be forbidden to hold any leadership status at all in the movement.

This seemed, in effect, to disdain any kind of spiritual guidance that Urantian leaders might feel, as it could be unreliable, and could therefore interfere with the democratic principles that should govern the movement. If you are on the Council, for example, and you feel spiritually guided to a position, then keep it to yourself, don't ask and don't tell, and don't admit that you seek and receive spiritual guidance in all matters. It's assumed that you do, but don't speak of any "messages."

Today, Teaching Mission participants are constantly urged to seek direct spiritual guidance on all of our issues in our Stillness time, and with attunement to one's own indwelling spirit, can continually be guided by spirit and live in the spirit. But such persons would have to be truly open to celestial guidance, and not fearful of it, and not be fearful of one's own mind.

I could see, at this point, that the possible midwayer effort to preserve the Urantia revelation in case of nuclear attack had not been proven or disproven in the report. As hard as Caston tries, he can't disprove them. He dissects Grimsley's every word and action to question his motives and speculate the very worst, all to his own discredit, and he still doesn't make a reasonable case.

He makes note of possibly 3-4 million dollars going to FOG because of Grimsley, funds that he says could have supported more book translations. I recalled at this point that Caston remained on Facebook today speaking unofficially for the current Urantia Foundation, extolling the outstanding book translation and dissemination work that they have done over the years, with more needed.

The conclusion of his 1984 report also smacked of resentments against the way Grimsley operated FOG. On the one hand, the report criticized him for "bootlegging" the Urantia teachings by not giving proper credit to the book as their source. On the other hand, he is critical that Grimsley uses the support of the Urantia organizations to bolster his own credibility.

The contradictory logic continues. Caston is obliquely grateful that Grimsley is a bootlegger and doesn't mention *the Urantia Book* directly, given the WWII "doomsday

cult” pronouncements and its guilt by association. He worries loudly that people will link him to the official Urantia movement, besmirching its reputation as a sane and stable organization. He even takes issue with a FOG newsletter note that its contents are not copyrighted and can be disseminated freely. Somehow, this violated his sense that the newsletter should be for Urantia people only. Somehow, he doesn't seem to understand that the Family of God Foundation was not subservient, and confined to communicating with only Urantia readers, and that being a “special agent” shouldn't necessarily tie Grimsley's hands or oversee FOG operations in some way.

I decided at that point to apply Caston's original summed-up charges against Grimsley to himself, given that he had traversed the country, devoted many days of contentious battle and later moved into an official Trustee position in Urantia politics because of his relentless drive. Here are the reversed charges with only slight change of wording, as noted:

"Caston's charges are false, but they are sincerely believed by their deliverer. The 'voices' of his thoughts are a product of his 'marginal consciousness.' They are hallucinations springing from the seeds of mental fatigue, emotional stress, self-delusion, or some form of ego- based, self-fulfilling desire, all planted in the fertile soil of a religious cult."

Yes, I decided. This all seemed to apply to Mr. Caston, according to his own document anyway. And from his heated rhetoric on Facebook, I could believe that he and Myers were cut from the same bolt of yarn. A staff member once described Myers as subject to paranoid rages in the 1970's and 80's, stomping about the room and railing about those who would ruin "my revelation."

Live by the law, die by it, I thought. The midwayers and the celestials both likely wanted the Urantia text to be shared with the world in the 21st century, and they may have actually helped remove it from the hands of the Urantia Foundation, which espoused a go-slow, one person at a time sharing philosophy and one source, themselves, for books that had become cost prohibitive for the common man. At any rate, the midwayers would not likely support legal controls over a book they freely presented to humans, hoping for widespread sharing, without the shackles of shortsighted control battles.

It was interesting that Myers was deposed as the 1990s got underway, at about the same time that celestial teachers started arriving on the planet to implement the continuing Fifth Epochal Revelation. The copyright control was lifted as an unnecessary barrier to revelation.

A NEW TIMELINE TO DISASTER

But while Urantia officials made their split with the Family of God over Grimsley's 1983

messages, the drama was far from over. The Family and its new Spiritual Renaissance Institute in Clayton was seriously damaged by a declining membership and the breach with the Urantia Foundation but it was plodding along and may have survived.

Then came a flurry of new war messages, revealed in a new timeline provided by a loyal FOG staff member. It led me to more published documents that traced the complete destruction of the organization when a precise and very wrong prediction of a nuclear attack came for 3-5 a.m. on the morning on March 24, 1985.

Given the consequences of the 1983 messages and the institute's much-criticized preparations for survival, I wondered how this could possibly happen. Much was revealed, as we follow the action based on a timeline report provided by a FOG staff member who wishes to remain anonymous.

October 12, 1983. Urantia organizations are much astir about Grimsley's war messages, not wanting to appear as a doomsday cult, and striving to elevate themselves from perceived occult status and into meaningful recognition by society's institutions.

The Family of God meets that day in its Berkeley, CA, headquarters to discuss how broadly Grimsley's messages should be disseminated. Staff member Tery McCade is reported to be alone in voting against any dissemination. The timeline also notes that FOG members were asked on that date to sign a secrecy pledge and not to divulge the war warnings.

November 1983. Even as Grimsley's messages are becoming controversial within Urantia circles, he and the Family of God staff are moving to the new Clayton property in eastern California, some 200 miles from San Francisco. Food stores would include such items as wheat, beans, sugar, flour, and canned goods, all carefully packed in plastic containers with dry ice and stored in 55-gallon drums. Sandbags were filled, as possible barriers to radiation contamination. In case of war and social breakdown, the institute planned to have food for themselves and survivors in the surrounding area.

Critics within Urantia would later relate that the new institute, with its submerged Urantian ties, would be part of a power grab from Chicago. It was cemented by the war messages, with the assertion that vital Urantian documents might be much safer in Clayton. That would seemingly draw the new power base to California, and with all the attendant opportunities to bring in money.

I thought here: There are human minds which seem to be eternally political, and focused on power, money and control, territorialism in the animal world. It seemed altogether possible, on the other hand, that Grimsley was trying to be a good Apostle, a vanguard for the Urantian enlargement of Jesus, and was not concerned with Urantian politics at

all. He had preached unity and friendship with the Urantian powers until his passing.

November 20, 1983. Richard Keeler tells the Family of God that his resignation as treasurer has nothing to do with Grimsley's request that all liquid assets be turned to gold. He disagrees with the war preparation activities.

January, 1984. Nancy Grimsley leaves full-time employment at the University of California at Berkeley to work full-time for the institute.

February 8, 1984. Grimsley volunteers for a "psychiatric consultive examination" with Dr. F.C. Newsom, a longtime psychologist practicing in Wichita, KS. The diagnosis: No mental disorder.

January-June, 1984. Institute work included the building of a recording studio, landscaping and drilling of a water well, which proved difficult and required three holes. A short landing strip was leveled for a Cessna 180 aircraft that had been leased by FOG. Bob Blackstock was the pilot. One insider said he doubted that Grimsley ever rode in the plane.

Early 1984. Though controversial and criticized, Grimsley is reported determined to fill his speaking engagements. It would be his last tour.

He returned to FOG and was producing one to two new radio broadcasts every week. They were heard first by the FOG crew and voted up or down. There was apparently a democracy at work. David Kantor, a dedicated Urantia scholar, had designed the recording studio at FOG, and had become a salaried staff person.

Weekly meetings included a discussion of the ongoing messages conflict, responses to mail, and hearing Grimsley's new broadcasts. There was a designated person to report on world news. When Kantor took over the role, he reportedly brings touches of humor. He notes on one occasion that news stories can be twisted in a particular direction by reporting all of the facts accurately except for one, and then twisting that single fact into another direction – the art of deception.

June, 1984. Caston's report is read to FOG members and considered to be "filled with half-truths, innuendos and flawed conclusions." He is advised not to publish it, but does so anyway.

July, 1984. The Family is still publishing a newsletter, and I was favorably impressed with the words of Editor Rebecca Marshall. I was further enlightened about the Family's vision, and how it extended far beyond Urantia's politics.

"The Family of God Foundation, Inc. is one small part of a growing global effort to bring

about a spiritual awakening on our troubled planet. Individuals and groups participating in this worldwide ministry can be found on every continent and in every race and religion. These thousands of people may not know one another but we do share one thing in common – wholehearted dedication to the proclamation of a new and uplifting planetary perspective, one which views all men, women and children as brothers and sisters in God's universal family.

"Every person who participates in this great adventure is a pioneer; the ways in which these seeds of hope are being planted are as unique as the individuals and groups who are planting them. The work is challenging, even difficult, sometimes even misunderstood, but the joys of introducing our brothers and sisters to the good place of their place in the Father's family are equaled only by the enthralling experiences of one's own personal relationship with God.

"We are grateful for the words of love and support which have been sent our way during these past few months. Every letter has truly made a difference, and we thank all of you who have continued to inspire us with your encouragement as we press onward toward our goal – a spiritual renaissance predicated on the global realization of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all mankind."

I found more telling words in the July 1984 newsletter from Nancy Grimsley herself in the Family of God Diary.

"Growth doesn't occur without turbulence, and I doubt any living thing on this planet, be it an individual or an organization, survives two decades without difficulty. In fact, we can jolly well count on it. If human beings are involved in any project we can figure there will be humor, frustration, happiness, distress, and probably a goodly dose of misunderstanding. But there is inherent joy in struggling through it all, and keeping on keeping on with the varied perspectives that make up life. It is my experience that there is a lot of goodness in life and in people, if you keep looking for it.

"Look for our big twentieth anniversary issue in the fall." – Nancy.

Grimsley himself was also taking a candid look at himself, his situation and what he would later in life refer to as “my prophecies.”

November 4, 1984. A letter turned up in Urantia’s historical online archives – from Grimsley to John Hales on this date. The letterhead is: VERN BENNOM GRIMSLEY, International Broadcaster, headquartered in Berkeley, California. He wishes Hales well with the Boulder, CO, Urantia School, then operational, and refers him to a letter he wrote to Clyde Bedell on November 1 of ‘84. Since it was his first written response to the

events of the past year, he wanted to share a copy.

I noted the November 1 date—exactly a year from the night when Grimsley and Caston went head-to-head at the Urantia gathering in 1983, breeding the defaming diatribe and the eventual historical disruptions. From Grimsley:

Dear Clyde,

I just received your letter today and feel that I must address a serious, though certainly sincerely held, misunderstanding you appear to have about me.

You requested that I ‘desist from your present self-casting as an inerrant Creator Son, and become Vern Grimsley, human being, capable of possible error.’

The fact that I have continued to stand unwaveringly by what I have said regarding the need to prepare for a war is in no way, shape or form equivalent to casting myself as ‘an inerrant Creator Son!’ Such an accusation deeply wounds me, Clyde, and I think it only could have emerged in the midst of the storms of distortion, rumor, hearsay and untruths which have swirled across our movement over the past year. I have never made such claims, nor do I now. I have never had such delusions of grandeur, nor do I now.

I, and all the other people who have ever known me or have ever worked with me, know full well that I am an unquestionably less-than-perfect specimen of Homo Urantius. I am subject to the same sorts of human faults and failings as anybody else – from errors of judgment and misunderstandings to taking on more projects than I should. But since I have never made any such claim as you assert, there is no way I can retract it.

I am a man born and reared in the farming and ranching flatlands of western Kansas. I was so painfully shy as a boy that I took up the hobbies of doing magic tricks and ventriloquism to help me overcome it. My shyness has oftentimes been misinterpreted as aloofness (a shortcoming I am working to overcome.) But, for as long as I can remember, I have thirsted in my soul to know spiritual truth. Imagine my joy back in the mid-fifties when Dr. Sprunger introduced me to *the URANTIA book!* I was overcome with feelings of gratitude which are undiminished to this day.

Among the greatest privileges of my life were knowing Dr. Sadler and Christy. When she, the last of the contact commissioners, asked that I preach her memorial sermon, it was one of the highest honors I have ever had bestowed on me.

But – for reasons now only known to her – before she died, Christy chose to tell not only me but a number of other leaders in the URANTIA movement in Europe, Canada and the U.S. that I am a member of the Reserve Corps of Destiny.

She told none of us that it was a secret. She gave no admonition that it shouldn't be discussed. Indeed, having told as many people as we know she did, she virtually guaranteed that eventually it would be discussed. At the Green Lake Conference this summer, several leaders told me that, messages or no messages, in their opinions it was only a matter of time before I became very politically controversial in the URANTIA movement because Christy had told a number of people I was a reservist before she died. Maybe they're right. I don't know. There's a lot I don't know. Anyway, I'm certain Christy had some good reason for doing it. Literally, all I know is that Christy told me that, and that I have had some very unusual experiences the past couple of years. Period. Add it up any way you want to, Clyde – that's all I know about it.

Believe it or not, I have done the best I could through all of this. The twistings and distortions of my life and our ministry have sometimes been extreme. There are hundreds of distortions and errors in the 'report' to which you alluded. If you're willing to believe that thing, I've got some swampland in Georgia you might be interested in.

Here is an excerpt from a letter a URANTIA Book student in New Mexico wrote to me.

“You are probably very familiar with this Abraham Lincoln pronouncement but I want to share it with you anyway: ‘If I were to try to read, much less answer, all the attacks made on me, this shop might as well be closed for any other business. I do the very best I know how – the very best I can, and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, 10 angels swearing I was right would make no difference.’ It is the most difficult test of the very fibers that make up our beings, when the attacks come from the very people who should be, if not supportive, at least tolerant. Unkindness, intolerance, harshness, condemnation and all other unlovely behaviors have no place in the program and daily will of our Father for us. We can only pray for those who are still clinging to those unlovely characteristics in their lives in the name of whatever they elect to set up as right. We all have so much to learn and it may take some really tough school days in order for us to learn it. I often chafe against the process but I do desire the final outcome.”

That pretty much sums up why I haven't been publishing rebuttals or scheduling public debates on all this during the past year.

And since you also asked about my 'mental stability,' I am enclosing a copy of my psychiatric diagnosis.

I was saddened to read in your letter, “I still would like to see you redeem yourself with most of the active leadership of our Movement, and I, of course, do not refer to the inactive and negative leadership (?) at 533.” [*Editor's note: Urantia Foundation headquarters was at 533 Diversey Parkway in Chicago*] Clyde, I continue to support

both the URANTIA Brotherhood and URANTIA Foundation with vigor. The people at 533 are wonderful folks who are doing the best they can amid difficult circumstances. I was saddened too, to read what appeared to be a spiritually judgmental attack on Martin Myers. It is not for us to make such judgments, I know Martin, and know his dedication and sincerity to be wholehearted.

I love you lots, my dear man, but I will ask you kindly to cease and desist from telling people that this highly imperfect, grey-templed, cigar-smoking, bar-b-q loving, joke telling, post-nasal dripping back-aching, arthritic Kansas cowboy and amateur evangelist has convinced himself he's 'an inerrant Creator Son.'

Your brother in our Father's family,

(s) Vern

Vern Bennom Grimsley VBG/rm

Grimsley's self-effacing graciousness here mirrored his open sharings of the messages a year earlier, in 1983, hoping in vain to share the phenomenon of continued midwayer contact with the Urantia community in an open-minded exploration of... wherever it might lead.

His personality seemed consistent here, with tolerance for Myers' sincerity and a desire for Urantia unity. It would be another seven years or so until Myers would be forced out, but Bedell's letter already showed dissatisfaction with the Chicago power structure, which had been growing since 1970.

I also noted that he had enclosed a psychologist's report in his letter to Bedell, likely the one from Dr. Newsom in Wichita. This apparently was in reply to Caston's heavy-handed indictment of psychosis due to overwork and mental strain and his solicitation of his own psychologist to make an analysis. It was a matter of dueling psychiatrists.

I thought at this point that the character who had suffered the most mental strain was Caston himself, with his political machinations, the exhaustive hatchet job of a report, his harassment of the Grimsleys to start a debate, and all of the blowhard rhetoric he had put on internet discussion groups over the years even into 2012, and even with veiled threats of more exposures about the Family of God. His Facebook condemnations of the Teaching Mission had been particularly nasty.

I was pleased to detect no mental strain with Grimsley here, only a wise and graceful response which verified some of my previous determinations and added some new details.

August 11, 1984. On this date the General Council of the Urantia Brotherhood held its annual meeting in Green Lake, Wisconsin, with 35 voting members on hand. The minutes are a masterful presentation of understatement regarding the lengthy discussions about the FOG messages. Those on hand included familiar players Nancy Grimsley, Carolyn Kendall, Thomas Kendall, Harry McMullen III, FOG officer David Gray, Martin W. Myers, Mo Siegel and Rev. Meredith J. Sprunger.

The minutes report: "The Chairman (John Hales) reported the history of events as concerns the actions taken by the Urantia Brotherhood in response to activities of the Family of God Foundation in Clayton, California, concerning preparations for war. An individual was claiming to be receiving messages from unidentified sources directing this activity. In response to the concern and confusion created among readers of *the Urantia Book*, the Brotherhood sent a letter, December 15, 1983, to the entire mailing list stating its disassociation with such phenomena. A lengthy discussion followed."

There were three petitions to the Council from individual members, Caston's included. They were read to the Council by Duane Faw, who had introduced Grimsley at the November 1 meeting when Caston made his confrontation. Faw is notable to Teaching Mission members as a retired U.S. Army general who became an advocate of the teachers and hosted the transmissions of celestial teacher Rayson in his Malibu home about a decade later.

The Council battled over an official statement until the following afternoon and finally approved this one: "We support the policies and positions of Urantia Foundation and the Executive Committee of Urantia Brotherhood which reject and disregard unidentified voice communications to an individual as a basis for official action."

The statement seemed reasonable, but my impression was that Grimsley himself would have voted to approve it. I recalled that he never presented the messages as dogma but rather as a phenomenon. He had indeed passed on these messages to movement leaders, but he would deny that they were a manipulative tool to get his way. He would also deny that the midwayers predicted nuclear holocaust and were only prescient in seeing and logically preparing for the dangers posed by those incredibly critical days in November.

There was one final refutation of Grimsley and the Family at that August 1984 Council meeting. He had to be nominated from the floor to compete with Ronald S. Law to chair the committee on fraternal relations. This was simply a committee post and Grimsley lost the vote 27-8.

Tom Kendall, also a FOG member and supporter of Grimsley who was purged in December, was also nominated from the floor to compete with Philip A. Rolnick as

judicial committee chair. He lost 20-15.

During this time the FOG timeline reports that the membership was feeling isolated and under siege. With no new messages, 'we just kept trudging along.' The financial condition was deteriorating as interest and membership declined.

At the Wisconsin conference, Grimsley kept a low profile and members reportedly felt ostracized, a reality that showed itself in the board minutes. "Vern was subject to a great deal of criticism and he was an easy target," said one friend. "His reaction to this was to somewhat isolate himself. No one enjoyed being constantly attacked."

Fall, 1984. Grimsley continues his broadcasts. The FOG crew is reported to be increasingly critical. Internal dissension about the merits of Caston's report and what is called the 'current controversy' further divides the membership, which is plummeting.

December 1984. The Family celebrates 20 years of radio broadcasting. Gathering is estimated at 50-100 people.

January, 1985. Sara Blackstock says she has been contacted and is receiving messages, and she reads them to the crew. Tery McCade walks out, stating his disbelief. For several weeks, she maintains her contact which is again centered around World War III preparations. The timeline says the remaining FOG members were somewhat reinvigorated.

"Vern is silent and appears to be in a conundrum," an anonymous insider reports. "He can't take the position that only he can receive messages, and he doesn't really validate Sara's messages. So he is silent. He is losing control of the Family of God."

Late January, 1985. David Kantor announces with certainty that he has been contacted, just after taking a shower. He describes the experience. His wife, Sue, asks if the group wants to hear her opinion. After assent, she states that she doesn't believe any of the messages. While the group is reportedly taken aback, there is also faith in Kantor, a FOG mainstay with much internal responsibility, including a near open checkbook for the war budget.

Kantor begins to control FOG with his hand-written celestial messages, usually 1-2 pages, and in the form of questions and answers. The new messages become the central point of weekly meetings. As they start coming, a budget is established and a pre-emptive strike from the Soviet Union is expected.

A request is made to gather the lessons of Blackstock, Kantor and Grimsley so that they could be studied together and without the human commentaries. This didn't come about.

Late February, 1985. Kantor receives the specific message – a nuclear strike between 3-5 a.m. on March 25, 1985. It is stated that many Americans will never recover.

Within this time frame, Grimsley wants to provide a disclaimer for anyone calling the institute, to the effect that messages are being received that can't be validated. This was reported to either have been voted down or ignored.

One member asked that Kantor ask the midwayers how many socks were in his top drawer as a validation. The test was not done.

Doubts began to rise when Kantor's messages said more phone lines should be installed for heavy traffic a week before the March 25 nuclear strike. In fact, there were few phone calls during the week, raising suspicions that all wasn't well.

March 24-25, 1985. Some 20-25 FOG members spend overnight in the institute's shop. Grimsley spends the night in his second floor area. Sue Kantor stays home. The couple was destined for a divorce.

By 7 a.m. the group was disillusioned with the false prophecy and most went home to deal with it. A smaller group stayed at the institute to discuss what had happened, with Kantor absent and gone. McCade reportedly heard him say, 'it's all gibberish' when he left the building. Kantor also reportedly approached Nancy Grimsley in a laughing manner and said he had just telephoned Keeler.

It was a somber meeting, but when a FOG member showed up with coffee and donuts, one staff member thought it humorous, and saw it as one of the best comments that could be made given the circumstances.

Early 1985. In the Soviet Union at this time, there were the enduring tensions that the U.S. was striving for military superiority. Andropov had died in 1984 but Soviet generals remained fixated on a possible first strike scenario. They believed that the U.S. space shuttle might well be a secret 'space bomber' for that purpose. In February, 1984, the KGB stated: "With the aid of this system (SDI), the Americans expect to be able to ensure that United States territory is completely invulnerable to Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles, which would enable the United States to count on mounting a nuclear attack on the Soviet Union with impunity."

March-early April, 1985. The war date debacle had been devastatingly embarrassing. FOG members drafted an apology letter for the Urantia movement that 19 members signed. It was not signed by a few members, including Grimsley, McCade and Ms. Kantor. Perhaps this trio felt they had no apology to make.

Grimsley is also reported to have written a letter attempting to explain the more recent messages, but the group rejected the letter. The letter hasn't been seen, and neither have the 1985 messages that dealt the institute its lethal blow.

Spring-Summer, 1985. Grimsley goes into the community to replenish defections, leading him to spend more time on his talents as a guitarist and singer. More music is heard in the institute, and he plays other engagements with friends. On one of these, on a rainy night, he is seriously shocked by a microphone and is rushed to emergency care. He later recalls a remarkable near-death experience, saying that he had crossed over and returned.

At that time, FOG had already laid plans to file a suit against the Catholic order from which they had purchased the Clayton property, citing discrepancies in selling prices and disclosures. With Grimsley disabled for a time, much of this work fell upon Nancy.

During the litigation process, Kantor is accused of communicating with the Catholic order and criticized for it. In one last meeting at FOG, Kantor reportedly urges the group to vacate the premises so that the church order could move in. He is still on salary at FOG at the time, but McCade demands the return of his keys.

March 25, 1986. The institute is lost to foreclosure and on this date, exactly a year after Kantor's war watch episode, it is repossessed by eviction. The sheriff and the attorney for the Catholic order showed up to serve the papers. A small group was there.

Grimsley reportedly walked out of the glass front doors and showed the attorney the plaque that he had made for the institute. It read: "This studio is dedicated to Jesus of Nazareth and the continuation of his mission and message – the Spiritual Renaissance Institute, Clayton, California."

He carried it with him and continued to make radio broadcasts from a new home he called "The Ranch." He and Nancy lived on the western slopes of the Sierra Mountains near Yosemite National Park.

Through the years, he moved on and continued his ministry, never disavowing his midwayer messages and staying away from Urantia politics.

THE AFTERMATH: Voices of Explanation

Two central players in FOG and the 1985 incident, however, were more vocal as the years went by. I still couldn't connect for certain midwayer warnings of decades earlier with Urantia's sour view of our teachers today, but I would continue trying by seeing what people thought in the aftermath. Was there a prevailing Urantia mindset now that

precluded any celestial contact? Did the March 25 debacle irrevocably end the possibility of the Teaching Mission being accepted within the book's organizations?

Mr. Kantor spoke candidly in 1993-4 on the new internet e-mail discussion group called UrantiaL, a forum managed by Michael Million. It was rich in Teaching Mission validity debate in 1993-94 and hundreds of pages are chronicled at www.tmarchives.com on its history pages. When the forum developed more traffic than Million could manage, he turned it over to the Urantia Foundation in 1995.

Ms. Blackstock made a Urantia presentation of the follies of FOG as well, and also challenged a message from an alleged midwayer trying to comfort her. Both personalities remain prominent speakers and leaders in the Urantia family and speak well to the events within the Family to help us understand the workings of their minds.

On January 30, 1993, Kantor addressed a San Francisco forum to study revelatory processes.

“The last time I addressed a group of readers of *The Urantia Book* was the occasion of a dinner which The Family of God Foundation put on to celebrate 25 years of radio broadcasting. My objective on that occasion was the articulation of arguments which would convince the listeners that we at The Family of God Foundation were working with the Planetary Spiritual Government and were involved in a special project which was a critical component of the fifth epochal revelation – the protection of the revelation during a period of global chaos and the training of teachers to be involved in the subsequent rebuilding of the world.

“In the course of pursuing those delusions an estimated \$3,000,000 in resources was consumed. In addition, we destroyed a twenty-five year effort to create a service organization which was beginning to establish international operations. Numerous individuals experienced substantial personal suffering in the destruction of ideals, hopes, marriages, careers and life savings.

“An even greater loss was the destruction of Urantia Brotherhood by Urantia Foundation and the millions of dollars consumed by the latter organization on legal matters of dubious value.

“We must wake up and recognize that at the source of each of these tragedies lies the claim that someone is acting as a special agent of the source of the fifth epochal revelation. Until we come to terms with this reality, we will continue to flounder as a movement and will continue to consume the resources of the group dealing with the

repercussions of failing to wisely manage ourselves.”

PITFALLS IN THE MIND; DANGERS WITHIN THE STILLNESS

On March 8, 1993, Kantor authored a post for UrantiaL called ‘Fog reflections in TM twilight’ in response to fervent debater Leo Elliott. With the emergence of the Teaching Mission, he goes back to FOG history to issue a strong labyrinth of warnings and admonitions. While this was all posted as one paragraph, I’ve sub-divided it to enhance readability.

Hello Logondonters;

It's a pleasure to participate in this exchange and I again thank Michael Million for making this possible. Leo (where do you get time to write all that stuff?) and others have been prodding me for a story about the FOG affair and I find it very difficult to even know where to begin.

While I cannot claim to have any particular purchase on objective reality, I can make some comments about how the process of functioning as a conscious entity in this strange enchanted world appears to me; my comments here are strictly subjective observations.

There is a problem with adequately describing my experience. This is not due to any repressed emotional reactions to the topic, but rather to the nature of the experience and the virtual impossibility of adequately describing it. This problem stems from the fact that symbolic communication presupposes a description of a logical sequence of events or facts, or an analogy in which the known is compared with the unknown so that its nature may be communicated. Because our experience became increasingly non-rational as time went on, it does not lend itself well to communication with symbols which require a rationally structured linguistic foundation as a presupposition to their use.

My experience at FOG (and I have to restrict myself to my own experience – there are as many stories as people involved) was such that with receiving messages and changing our lives so that we were increasingly living relative to their content, we gradually, almost unconsciously, over a period of many months, slowly left the domain of rational access to our thoughts and actions. There seems to be a holistic quality to consciousness in that patterns of cognition and responses to stimuli which occur under certain circumstances begin to affect one's cognition and responses in all circumstances. There cannot (in a healthy mind) be radically different modes of conscious response from one set of stimuli to another.

The primary task of the ego is to maintain integration within the psyche. Rationality is a human artifact brought to the system – the ego could care less about it. So when we make

a conscious choice to suspend rational judgement in one domain of our conscious functioning, and that particular domain comes to have a powerful attraction for us, the ego will slowly begin to take these new patterns of associative activity and apply them to other domains of our conscious activity.

The reception of our messages required the complete suspension of critical judgement and evaluation. In order to receive them, it was necessary to enter into a stillness and let them enter, uninhibited by any humanly-created factors in our consciousness. This was difficult at first, but became easier with practice. It was made easier by the emotional rush of thinking that we were actually in contact with the planetary administration, and by the social closeness which was felt with other individuals who were experiencing the same thing. What had formerly been critical consciousness wherein ideas and experiences were evaluated by more normative criteria of rationality and relatedness to other known phenomena gave way to a hyper-critical consciousness which evaluated every experience and idea for confirmatory reinforcement that what we believed to be happening was actually so.

This is somewhat akin to putting out to sea in a sailboat and then deciding that the mast and sail are blocking the view and proceeding to destroy them. This makes for a great unobstructed view and one has some time to enjoy the uncluttered view of the horizon and the full dome of stars at night. But sooner or later, a storm is going to come up. Good Luck. I hope you enjoyed your unobstructed view because now the only thing of any concern is going to be survival. You no longer have any means of negotiating the sea because of your impulsive foolishness. The elements are unleashing a fury unlike anything you ever imagined. If you survive the storm, you will be fortunate. Once the storm is over you will still have the problem of getting back to land to repair your ship and make it seaworthy once more. And if you were foolish enough to take all your friends with you in your boat, there won't even be anyone back on shore to help you make your way back in.

In a situation such as prevailed at FOG, we had been into it for so long that all our closest friends were involved. When the moment of truth came and reality shattered, we could no longer turn to each other for advice and support because we realized how we had all led each other into this blind alley – no one could be trusted to render a clear picture of our situation. It was very lonely and psychologically scary – we had the unpleasant experience of peering into the abyss of total insanity and comprehending its nature. I cannot overstate the danger, neither do I have confidence in my ability to communicate the nature of this danger. It is beyond rational articulation.

At any rate, we slowly, willingly abdicated rationality to the point that when things started getting really strange, we were unable to evaluate or act in any way other than

trying to get more messages to clarify our situation. The stranger things got, the stranger the messages became as we found ourselves in an undocumented region of collective consciousness which resembled a multi-dimensional hall of mirrors. Our whole orientation to reality had become conditioned by our messages and our personal identities had become wholly tied up in being persons who received such messages.

I think the situation is made even more difficult at the present time because of the contemporary influence of traditional eastern mysticism on Christian religious culture. The problem lies in the divergent objectives of the two. Eastern mysticism concerns itself with providing the disciple with the means of attaining a specific state of consciousness – with using techniques of consciousness to bring about a particular neurological state which can then be experienced by that consciousness. Christian culture is far more concerned with gaining access to information and with the processes by which that information can be used to bring about a spiritual transformation of human culture.

Christianity is a communal religion. I think it is a particularly illusive undertaking which attempts to utilize the techniques originating in eastern mysticism to attempt to achievement of the purposes embodied in Christian culture. Consider the issues of the Lucifer Rebellion. The primary issue was that Lucifer felt the culture which the Creator Sons brought to the planets in their local universes was imported for purposes of political control and maintained by conspiratorial consensus amongst the Creator Sons and their staffs. Lucifer proclaimed the doctrine of individual liberty and rejected the conceptual foundations which our Creator Son was attempting to utilize as a basis for evolving spiritual life from biological antecedents in these domains which we now inhabit. These issues need to be more fully understood by our community of readers.

I would be foolish to say that contact with superhuman intelligences was impossible or should be completely ruled out. Our problem here is one of epistemology and predates our old testament heritage. This problem of "discerning of spirits" has a long history and has posed serious difficulties for the best spiritual minds on this planet for over 2,000 years. *The Urantia Book* simply gives a more detailed conceptual foundation upon which the same issues are being recast.

For me, this heritage of Christian thought is a gold mine of diaries and journals of fellow travelers. I find much succor here. It's as if I lived in the mid 19th century on the east coast of the US and wanted to load up my stuff in a wagon and head out west. Would I be wise to trust my rugged independence and personal judgement, and simply point my team and wagon towards the sunset? It might be fine as I made my way across Iowa and Kansas but when I hit the canyonlands of southern Utah or the Rocky Mountains, I might begin to wish I had spent a little time in the saloons in St. Louis, talking with people who had made the journey before and knew the way through what would otherwise be

insurmountable obstacles.

But then this is an adventure, right? A quest on the part of each individual, and each one of us must chart our courses and be loyal to whatever we most deeply believe to be the truth. We are all lost in a labyrinth and can only follow the Master's advice about knowing the truth and the truth making us free. Wherever we happen to exist in that labyrinth, we can be certain that the honest pursuit of truth will get us out. We will take odd routes, get stuck in cul-de-sacs, take long detours when we could have taken a shortcut, but it's important that we are on our journey, that we are actively involved in it and that we are sincerely pursuing truth and utilizing all available resources in that pursuit.

Take care, friends; I greet you through the soft hail of electrons upon which this message is modulated

Kantor had framed the stillness experience as an invitation to profound errors, a dangerous course to follow. I reminded myself that the Stillness we advocated required the mind to be turned off so that it wouldn't play tricks on us. It seems to have done so with Kantor, or at least he blames it.

But he also seemed to believe that turning off the mind would open one to dangerous influences as well, seemingly the loss of rational judgment. He himself could not seem to turn off the judgments in subsequent posts which became more candid.

JUDGMENTS AND THEIR SUSPENSION

On March 10, 1993, Kantor explores on the list his mindset upon first joining the Family:

“You are very perceptive in your comments about isolation having set in with the FOG crew prior to any messages. Not only this, but the beginnings of suspension of rational judgement had also set in long before the messages.

“When I first visited FOG, I was really turned off by their approach to dealing with the 5th and I thought that Vern was a bit marginal. The only reason I went over there was because in the late 60's, I had spent several days in Chicago visiting with Emma (Christy) Christensen discussing the possibilities open to a young person fairly committed to same 5th. She had spoken highly of Vern's work and suggested that I consider working with him.

“So when I visited Berkeley and observed my reactions, I chided myself for being so judgmental and critical – after all, weren't they getting the teachings of Jesus out over the

airwaves? (airwaves – now there's an interesting term!) So I thought I needed to suspend my own prejudices in order to participate in a group effort, x and I think I was correct in my assumption that I could accomplish far more as part of a group than as an individual.

“I'm not rationalizing here, simply recounting the beginnings. I really got into it and appreciated the opportunity to produce and publish the multi-media programs which were performed over the years. I felt some really good work got done. Incidentally, this issue remains a problem – doesn't one always have to sacrifice some personal freedom and independence in order to participate in a group effort? And where does one cross the line separating social accommodation from a loss of personal integrity?”

“So I made my compromises with my ideals (having read in the UB that one's highest ideals are not necessarily synonymous with the will of God) and proceeded on my path. This turns out to have been the experience of many of us with FOG, so you can see the developing nature of the self-selected sample which later crashed and burned when these compromises continued to develop to their logical conclusion.”

Kantor says nothing about a new religion of Jesus and more about trying to suspend his prejudices.

Immediately, Kantor was questioned on UrantiaL by Byron Belitsos, an author and publisher with strong Urantian roots and a Teaching Mission explorer. He makes an effort to gain access to the 1985 messages for the good of the movement. Belitsos writes:

“Ex-Foggers aside from Vern himself believe that the messages received by Vern, and by Dave Kantor and Sara Blackstock (whose transmissions in early 1985 further embellished Vern's original WWIII messages), were of origin in their own subconscious – yarns of the mind at mischief. It would be a true service to the community if the actual content of these messages, and the inside story of the FOG experience, were fully disclosed. Eight years is enough time for healing and reflection. This event profoundly affected us all; therefore, it now belongs to the whole community. These 'channeled' texts belong to the public domain. It is part of our lore, yarns or not. I for one call upon Sara and Dave – and even Vern – to disclose the details of their contacts. Does anyone out there join me? The two made a good start at this disclosure during the Forum.”

Kantor replied on March 10:

“I appreciate your call for more information about our experience at FOG. I think there are important lessons there for all of us to learn, but I am not sure how to access or present the relevant information. My talk at the forum was a start. I have been critical of the failure of the readership to assimilate these lessons but I have been unable to contribute information which might facilitate this process and remain uncertain about

how to do so. I am leaning toward the opinion that such disclosure can only be relevant when it is a part of an interaction with other individuals, which is why I am participating in this electronic forum – perhaps a way will be made clear.

“I was somewhat surprised by your statement that "eight years is enough time for healing and reflection." Upon what do you base this? How do you come up with a time period after which an individual should have "recovered" from an experience whose nature, by your own statements, you do not understand? We didn't fall down and scrape a knee.

“In many ways your call for us to disclose our experiences is a request to do something which is humanly impossible. This is due to the unique nature of the experience and not to any residual feelings about it. I feel a sense of responsibility to try to share our experiences more broadly, particularly in light of the present enchantment with the TM, but I remain mystified as to how to adequately do so. Any factual description of our experience would fall far short of communicating its essence.

“Your call is similar to a request to publicly describe my experience of the death of my child after a long illness. Such a description would be humanly impossible to render – not because of its emotional nature but because its depth far exceeds the conceptual capacity of linguistic symbols. (I have not had such an experience but use it as an example). Such experiences can at best be communicated through metaphor or poetry but certainly not in a factual disclosure.

“If you aggressively try to probe into these matters I can guarantee you that you will destroy a process which has taken eight years to begin. There are many individuals who were involved who will probably not recover during the course of their mortal lives.

“The best I can offer at this point is to try to be in sincere dialog regarding the issues. I am willing to share my ideas but have no interest in attempting to dissuade anyone from pursuing whatever experiences they wish to pursue. Neither do I have any interest in mounting a defense of my position.

“While I feel that my position is well-grounded and based on the best I know as well as being under continuous scrutiny and processing, I could well be wrong – it's happened before. In addition, I have a great deal of personal respect for the privacy of my fellows who shared in the experience.

“No amount of factual disclosure could reveal truth. A collection of facts would only provide a basis for individuals who did not share the experience to project their own meanings on the facts and I think the present situation with the TMers indicates massive, uncontrolled psychological projective processes are in full operation within the readership. The meanings of facts cannot be ascertained apart from the values of the

individual attempting to assimilate the facts.

“The real bottom line is that I am not really very interested in the topic – I am involved in a number of things at the present time which I find to be far more stimulating, productive and relevant.

“It's been a matter of interest to see that those individuals who experienced the FOG episode who are involved today with the TM scene, are almost without exception, individuals who telephoned me within a few weeks of the FOG collapse to tell me that they didn't think we made a mistake, that somehow the situation had changed and that it was the external situation and not our messages that was the problem. I couldn't believe my ears when I heard this happening and I see these same people today, eagerly embracing the TM movement. They appear to me as individuals who were unable to assimilate essential lessons the first time around and I suspect they will have to repeat the class until they do.

“You have called for me to disclose details of my contacts but I have repeatedly stated that there were no contacts. In addition, I have attempted to articulate some of the factors which I think led us to believe that we had contacts. If you have questions about the FOG situation which are relevant to your own on-going quest for truth please contact me here, publicly or privately. If you seek information for any other purpose, please look elsewhere. I don't believe that anyone's personal experience, under any circumstances, is public property.

“I encourage you to utilize your critical consciousness which I have seen you effectively bring to bear on many situations in the past.”

Kantor is correct that FOG didn't just scrape a toe. Purported messages into untrustworthy minds did bring down the organization. Grimsley still stood by his 1983 contacts, even as Kantor was painting him with the same brush he was painting himself and others such as Blackstock, who professed being deluded. He spoke out again on March 12, and revealed a stronger judgment of Grimsley.

“You state that we had "the rest of the UB movement to turn to ..." which from an external view would seem true, but from my viewpoint was not possible because I had destroyed my connection with that larger community. The fact that that larger community may have been available was of no help until I could change enough to reach out for it. You are absolutely right that we "REFUSED deliberately and knowingly to turn outwards for critical evaluation" and that "many opportunities were given..." I can remember Vern consigning letters which had been written by concerned UB students to the trash without

even reading them. I did not want to even hear from anyone who didn't believe our messages because my own hold on them was so tenuous and I relied on that hold for my entire social identity and psychological well-being.

“I know this must sound stupid and incredulous, but I must report my best recollection of the experience for better or for worse – this is not a forum for my articulation of my good judgement. And, while I must assume responsibility for my own attitudes and participation, I will say that Vern fostered a sense of superiority in the group which we all bought into. He (as well as Christy, when she was alive) would constantly tell us about our special mission, how we were chosen to bring a special message to a benighted world, how we each had very experienced thought adjusters, how we had all been brought together by divine guidance, etc., etc., etc., ad nauseam. – And I and others bought into it. Because our entire sense of self was thus built up over a long period of time, many of us were ready to defend this source of reality-definition to the death because we had become it and it had become who we thought we were.

“This is precisely the type of closed, subjective isolation of self which I see beginning to develop in the TM movement. The danger of the illusion is that it creates within the individual the perception that he/she is becoming more in contact with the universal while in reality he/she is becoming increasingly isolated in a subjectivity which is increasingly reinforced by other individuals experiencing the same thing. As events continued at FOG and got worse and worse, the psychological stress was such that we simply could not entertain the cognitive dissonance which would result from a serious consideration of an alternative viewpoint. Rather than honestly confront the critical assessments of our actions, we chose to categorize the individuals who were providing the criticism as ignorant of the true reality of what we were about; therefore their criticism was seen as irrelevant and ill-informed.

“I suspect that Vern purposely isolated his organization from you folks on the other side of the bay because he recognized that your critical assessment of his activities would reveal him to be like the wizard of oz, hiding behind his screen manipulating the images of himself which were seen by the public. I sincerely apologize for my participation in this unfair and un-Christlike isolation of one group of believers from another.”

Kantor soon says more on the list, relating the Teaching Mission to the violent confrontation between federal agents and well-armed religious zealots in Waco, TX.

“How close was FOG to the kind of situation which developed in Waco? Good question. It is fortunate that the UB does not present the image of a violent God as is portrayed in much of the Bible. Compare the images of violence and wrath and apocalyptic presented

in the Bible with those presented in the UB. Not much in the UB, is there? So even when UB readers go non-linear and become overpowered by their archetypes, those archetypes are not likely to contain images of violence, so I think it would take a particularly misled group to stray so far from the images contained in the UB that they would take such drastic action.

As an aside, it is interesting to see how easy it is for individuals and groups to accumulate substantial arsenals of weapons and ammunition in our culture. We never were able to locate a 50-caliber machine gun though; I have to hand it to those folks in Waco—they do know how to run a serious show and there's little doubt that they fully believe in what they're doing...they would probably tell you about the kind, sincere, loving guidance that David Koresh has provided for the group and how wonderful the group was....

“Let's describe the situation that developed at FOG as “potentially” volatile. We did manage to extricate ourselves before things really got out of hand, but the potential for disaster was within reach. In light of the fact that we had substantial supplies as well as \$1.5 million in gold stashed at the institute, Vern had told me to do whatever I thought was necessary to provide for security, including purchase of weapons and seeing to it that people were trained in their use, and had given me access to virtually unlimited amounts of money with which to do so, although he told me that he didn't want to know anything about it so that if anyone asked him about it he could legitimately deny knowledge.

“Now I'm not a person particularly prone to violence and the individuals in our group pretty much abhorred the idea of guns even existing on the premises – it was a matter of no small controversy within the group. We did not develop this potential beyond the purchasing of a few rifles and handguns, not much more than would be used by a security force on a college campus, but had Vern given such free reign to someone whose underlying social pathology was a little more developed than mine, the results could have been substantially different.

“To me, one of the most curious remaining questions from the FOG episode has to do with the nature of social psychology. If you posit a group level of the collective unconscious as is posited in Jung's work, and if you give this group level of consciousness some pre-volitional attributes, a very interesting model of what happened at FOG emerges. My interpretation (based on only a superficial understanding of Jung's work—I have not studied it in detail) of Jung's ideas would lead me to believe that, just as the ego strives to maintain integration of the various components of the individual psyche, there are similar forces at work on various associative levels of the collective unconscious as well. I think this idea is fairly well substantiated with studies on family psychology and tribal psycho-social systems.

“In other words, these social systems have their own innate psychological dynamics which work to maintain the unity and integrity of the group. Here is what is so interesting to me about what happened at FOG: I think that by the early 80's there was a general recognition by the group that Vern's—let's call it "style"—was not very conducive to the kind of growth and development of our organization which we all could sense needed to take place. Vern was having an increasingly difficult time managing his organization, his marriage was plagued with violence, and he was developing an alcohol dependency (although these latter two elements were well concealed from most of the group.)

“His claim to be getting messages “immediately” brought the organization back under his full control. Once the organization was fully back in his grip, his own paranoid tendencies began to dominate his messages. As time went by, he stopped getting messages and his power within the group again began to weaken, but he attempted to maintain power and control by taking an unyielding stance and attempting to assert authoritative power. How could the group possibly rescue itself and maintain its integrity when it's [sic] objectives had become so dominated by this man's delusions and shaped by his unresolved psychological conflicts?

“Here's how: The group seized full power by beginning to get its own messages independent of Vern; he became confused and organizationally impotent. These messages even pointed out defects in Vern's personality as reasons why he was no longer competent to get messages, isolating him even farther from the center of group power.

“In addition, we were able to set a date by which Vern's original messages would be either proven to be true or disproven—the collective unconscious of the group engineered and executed a very effective solution.

“Once we rescued ourselves from the psychological hole we had gotten into, I personally (for better or worse) got involved in some specific legal actions which would do as much as possible to prevent Vern from being able to do the same thing again with another group of individuals anytime in the near future and perhaps for the remainder of his life, and this last statement is really all I want to say on the legal issues, as all the relevant documents have been sealed by the courts and are inaccessible.

“Please bear in mind that the above psychological story is only one model, only one way of looking at what happened, but I find it an interesting speculation on the dynamics which were in operation within the group; it provides an explanation of the dynamics involved which is accepted by many who were a part of the group.”

ENDING OF A THREAD

At this point, I had heard quite enough from Kantor. In this narrative, he appears to

outline how the organization was wrested from Grimsley's control in 1984, after Urantia's crippling withdrawal, with members establishing independence from his outdated style, and setting up the March 25 event to finally prove the idiocy of channeled messages. In all of his very informative rhetoric, I heard nothing related to spirituality coming from him at all. I could only recall that he had to submerge his prejudices when he joined FOG in the first place, and now he seemed to be Grimsley's biggest critic.

And once a person gets into marital discords and personal attack on an internet forum, it's altogether more than I wanted to research. I only knew that the Kantors divorced and he was subsequently married to FOG staff member Rebecca Marshall. There was hearsay that he and Vern were not on good terms.

But my basic research question was why the Urantia movement is suspicious to disdainful of channeled messages from their advocates. There seemed no relationship between the Teaching Mission's spiritual lessons and Urantia's controversial midwayer message board which contained no semblance of spiritual information. And with Kantor's constant and voluminous confessional warnings, into which he inappropriately pulls Grimsley, it's no wonder that Urantia is consistently fearful of the process.

They are fearful of the trickery of their own minds. They should learn to control them.

And they are fearful of turning off their minds and releasing to spirit. It perhaps had not occurred to many that when one goes into stillness to know and experience the Universal Father, with worship, prayer and the desire to grow, then that will surely happen. But TM people seemed to have a faith not present in the analytical and fearful Urantia circles. If you weren't constantly thinking and judging, you could slip into a danger zone and be deleteriously influenced by your lower self.

The teachers have constantly reminded us that we are all either motivated by fear or love, and we can make the choice.

Kantor's motivations over the succeeding years have been to charge various personalities with manipulating the Fifth Epochal Revelation to their own ends, including Grimsley, Myers, McMullen and Christy. Later, there would be vehement criticism of the Urantia Foundation's policies. There was a falling-out with Keeler, the first person he called after his March 25 debacle. He accused Keeler of making a death threat when he reportedly said he would like to see Kantor experience "a slow and painful death." Much of this dirty laundry and more played out on internet discussions.

I had been warned in the beginning not to get embroiled in Urantian politics. I could see why. To equate all of this with the Teaching Mission purposes, the curriculum, and twenty years of foundational spiritual wisdom was an impossible stretch, but Urantia

readers were making it routinely.

THE AFTERMATH: The Blackstock Papers

But what of Ms. Blackstock, known as a loving and caring person with plenty of intellect. She made some confessions in a paper called "Pitfalls of Spiritual Community," delivered at a gathering in Illinois. She is not kind to herself.

"The little vignette I am going to share with you came literally at the very end of this experiment with spiritual community. You may not remember that day about seven years ago in March of 1985 when about 40 of us almost literally disappeared into our own fog – down into a shelter which we had spent more than a year preparing based on 'channeled' messages which predicted a nuclear war."

As I read the paper, I saw the power of human psychology once more, as the author turned her rationalizations in that direction. I recalled that she was married to lawyer Bob Blackstock, who had represented FOG and Nancy Grimsley in communications with Caston over his infamous evaluation report. I recalled that Caston had enlisted a psychologist, Dr. Paul Knott, who agreed with his perceptions about the Grimsley messages. Dr. Knott, the psychologist and a Urantia Book reader, noted that people in stress can indeed hear a perceptible voice, like the reassuring words of a loving parent.

"The difficult decision is thus made for him," said Dr. Knott, "his anxiety is relieved, and the purchase (of the Clayton property) is subsequently made." This explained everything for Caston, about both Christy and Grimsley.

Blackstock admits to an "all in" commitment that WWII would hit on that March 25 date. She and her husband loaded survival goods onto a rented trailer and uprooted their whole life to get to the shelter by midnight. They brought aged "Grandma Lou" with her potty chair and privacy screen. Her son had been allowed to get camouflage clothes and a dirt bike so that he could be a messenger boy after the apocalypse. For days after March 25, she admits to breaking down in tears over the experience, even while stating that all of her experiences in the Family of God contributed to her spiritual growth.

She outlines several pitfalls associated with a spiritual community in general, as well as antidotes for each.

First pitfall was an evaluation that "the group was following an ideal as a 'shell' because many did not have the foundation within their own lives." She notes that some had even skipped the "essential experience" of family in their own lives, including the Grimsleys. Others had skipped scholastic opportunities or family callings to pursue the work of the Family. Blackstock thinks people should pay primary attention to building "foundational

ideas in their own lives"first. She says people in spiritual communities should "get their priorities straight" and "It is NOT to first go out and tell the world about God; it is to first live it in one's own personal life."

With pitfall one, Blackstock clearly describes herself since that is what she knows. It isn't clear if her judgments do indeed pertain to others who didn't get their priorities straight and devoted too much time to FOG service and too little to other things that she considers priorities. It seemed reasonable to me that all people must make decisions between building their own spiritual lives and living lives of service to others. One is also free to raise a family or not on the planet without having their decisions questioned. First-hand parenting experience didn't seem mandatory before building a Jesus ministry or a fellowship of altruistic believers.

Pitfall two for Blackstock was a vacuum of knowledge within FOG of cult and channeling phenomena and "psychological processes accompanying social and spiritual development." She mentions textbook definitions of falsely predicted catastrophes and influential preachers who hold people in their sway. She points to a book on channeling published by Arthur Hastings in 1990 and a workshop on Urantia and the psychology of Carl Jung, sponsored by the Golden Gate (Urantia) Society of the San Francisco Bay area.

With psychologists continually trumpeting how the mind can be untrustworthy, I wondered how you could persuade people to go into stillness and trust any messages at all. Psychologists seem to feed the fearful with what they fear.

Conversely, the teachers say that if you can't trust your mind when you open to God, then you should learn to do that first. It's your first consideration.

It seemed rather perverse that the custodians of the most complete cosmology of the universe and the true story of Jesus' incarnation should spend so much time battling the concept of celestial connection, and letting psychologists rationalize it as unreal. After all, I believed that most academic and practicing psychologists on the planet today would throw huge doubts at the revelatory claims of their beloved Urantia papers. Urantia advocates want respect from academia, but the academy doesn't respect spiritual revelation. Urantia advocates often try to distance themselves from the so-called 'new age' paths, and it only retards sharing and acceptance of their book in those active circles.

Pitfall number three for Blackstock was a "chosen people" attitude that she saw developing among the Family members. This again was her speculative judgment of others. It seemed to me that people who are doing significant spiritual work likely do believe themselves to be imbued with spirit and doing special service. I didn't see a clear relationship in her argument, but her key antidote is to "live a normal, ordinary life, and

to establish the kingdom by such methods." She makes a clear, free will choice that many have made when public service gets to be too much – get back to spiritual basics in my own life.

Pitfall four for Ms. Blackstock is that FOG members lacked the ability to be self-critical as an organization. That seemed to me a problem with any kind of organization and, in reflection, her other pitfall-antidote mixes could be applied to other spiritual and secular organizations of all kinds.

So did pitfall five, in which she thinks they gave over too much personal decision-making to other people. She states:

"This is probably one of the more elusive and difficult ones to analyze because each one of us thought that we were asking the Father what His will was, and each of us thought that we were following that will to one degree or another. We really felt that we were willing to go anywhere, do anything to serve God. It did appear that we participated in making our own decisions within the context of the group. I don't think at the time we felt we were being controlled by our own unconscious desires to be great and do great things, or that we were responding to archetypes of leadership or importance."

She concludes that people didn't realize "we were being controlled by our own unconscious desires to be great and do great things." Is she saying this is a bad thing? Isn't it a good thing to be inspired to do great work and at least attempt it?

This language of 'unconscious desire' seemed again to smack of a psychiatrist's couch or the thick theories of an academic paper. If there was really communication with midwayers, it must supercede earthbound academic explanations. They can no more explain it than Blackstock can. They can no more refute the messages or confirm them than anyone else can.

Blackstock's antidote on decision-making comes appropriately from the Urantia Papers: "Sometimes the planting of a seed necessitates its death, the death of your fondest hopes, before it can be reborn to bear the fruits of new life and new opportunity. And from them (the ministering reserve seraphim) you will learn to suffer less through sorrow and disappointment, first, by making fewer personal plans concerning other personalities, and then, by accepting your lot when you have faithfully performed your duty." (p.555) [Blackstock's parenthetic]

She also quotes the perceived wisdom of Grandma Lou, who said she got one of the best nights of sleep in a long time in the shelter. She later said she knew there would be no war, and also commented about the people involved: "And they all looked so normal."

In her report, Blackstock never mentions receiving any messages from midwayers, nor anyone else.

A MIDWAYER RESPONSE

In February, 1993, as the Teaching Mission was getting underway, Lamphere, identifying himself as a primary midwayer, transmitted a message intended for Ms. Blackstock through a young and uncertain new transmitter in Sarasota, Florida, with the spirit name, Patije. After some equivocation, doubt and delay, the transmitter passed on the message.

Patije had met her at a Urantia conference and admired her, but didn't know her very well and was hesitant to pass the message on. As it turns out, this was an important dialogue to understand the Urantia reader mindset.

While intended to be private to her, Blackstock made a public reply to Lamphere's message and the transmitter on UrantiaL, in February of 1993. This was a Urantia-based internet discussion group, whose postings can be read at www.teamarchives.com in the history section.

After reading the message and the reply, I could see more of the enormous differences in the way midwayers and humans think. They have lived here through many generations of humans, while each of us starts as an innocent, unknowing babe with a finite future. Think of the differences in perception regarding God's universal plan.

Lamphere, the midwayer, made these statements to the transmitter (Patije) after she was awakened from sleep and made a commitment at that moment to do the Father's will.

"I am Lamphere, primary midwayer, faithful and true without default. My partner and I have worked for many of your planetary centuries of time measurement. It has been our responsibility to warn those who had the revelation . . . textbook during crises times upon your planet.

"Several years ago, there was a crisis building in which all of our efforts seemed not to come to fruition until the very last moments of human free will choice. During this time we were advised by Christ Michael to appear to selected mortals to begin a counter-effort for preservation of the epochal revelation and those mortals who were prepared to execute preparations for the Reserve Corps of Destiny, which had not yet been activated but would soon be so.

"It is unfortunate that humans have the unforeseeable make-up of debilitating doubt or extreme intensity about carrying forth what they know that they know. Much progress has been made for the celestial contact upon Urantia in this Correcting Time. I want you to

know me. My integrity is without blemish. There is one who suffers great alarm at any suggestion of possible contact by a midwayer. I desire to relieve her suffering. However, not understanding the dire circumstances and being devastated by disappointment, my efforts to illuminate have been thoroughly and unequivocally rebuffed from explanation.

“Inform that dear one, Sara Blackstock, to wrap herself in God’s light of protection and ask to have an explanation which will be for her ears and knowingness alone. None other will understand the devastation and betrayal that dear one has known. She alone will know the truth of what is to be said. Her loyalty and steadfast faith was sorely tried and the sensitivity of knowing not from where the message originates nor why she responds within while rejecting from the strength of her mind – which is great! –causes bewilderment and confusion to her.

“We would say to her: Put aside fear and embrace the Father’s will. You will not be forsaken nor betrayed for your faith in truth, beauty and goodness. We are here. We are real. This is contact. This is not evil. You know us by your experience and you never got to know the fruits of your labor, only the consequences of the negative side of the action which did not materialize. Only moments intervened to enable us to enjoy in our success to divert the disaster for which you were prepared.

“With regrets we honor your free will choice and stand by allowing the pain and disillusionment to soften and disappear. We are only a short ways from you, dear sorrowful one. You can call upon us with but a whispered word. We await your call.

“My assurance not to compromise nor interdict (?) your unquestioned free will accompanies this message. We will not overstay our welcome if you bid us passage(?). It will remain your choice – always. [Question notations concern whether this is the correct word that is being transmitted.]

“I, Lamphere, draw close to the end of my message. It is true even we are limited by the free will choice of the individuals to which we are drawn. We stand by helplessly wishing to relieve discomfort and promote healing and can do nothing until it is asked for in prayer and accepted in knowing from the knowing point within one – the spirit of truth speaks softly.”

In response, Ms. Blackstock utilized the list to explain how she had dealt with the episode.

“It was indeed a short-term devastating experience, but as I began to realize how egocentric it was of me to feel ‘devastated,’ about NO WAR, and I began to understand some of the causes for the downfall of FOG, and I got more integrated into REAL LIFE, and I felt the love and support of all around me, grieving occurred and over a period of

time I feel that I have been not only healed but liberated from that experience.

“It is no secret that I do not believe that the channeling phenomenon is what it says it is – messages and teachings from superhuman or ‘others.’ There are several views on this subject, perhaps with a little of each making up the Truth. I tend to embrace the psychological explanation, maybe because I understand it reasonably well, living with my husband who has read Carl Jung for years. He and I have had hundreds of hours of conversations about basic concepts in psychology, such as the personal unconscious, the collective unconscious, collective consciousness, projection, compensation, archetypes, and the alter-ego and wish-fulfillment concepts. I also gained a deeper understanding of what *the Urantia Book* means when it says that “Mind does not well stand conflict.” These psychological understandings helped me to express my grief, going through a very intense and real grieving experience over the loss of a commitment and an ideal, and then to understand, at least partially, how it happened that I ended up getting messages from ‘others.’

“Because of my own experiential understandings and my progressing education about psychological concepts and an increasing, although still limited understanding of the workings of the material mind, at least my own, it appears to me that every student of *the Urantia Book* ought to be educated in at least the basic concepts of psychology in order to evaluate his/her experiences with the powerful realities which are presented to us in *the Urantia Book*. If we do not educate ourselves we will continue to fall prey to our own fantasies, needs and confusion over the archetypes which have been developing in our collective unconscious since the times of Dalamatia.

“I do believe that everyone I have talked to who are TR’s, or are involved in the channeling phenomenon are very sincere people, dedicated to God and doing his will, and are truly searching for truth, and thinking they have found truth in the ‘Teaching Mission.’ I have even seen some ‘fruits’ in the sense that people have been told to read *the Urantia Book* more, to pray more. I believe that their own soul and consciousness is telling them to do what they should have been doing from the time of realizing that God was real. But it is good that they are doing more of this now. And probably very few of us are overdoing worship!

“I am very disturbed, however, that you and many others think that this phenomena is REAL. We are all CHANNELS. We all have true spirit guides living within us and interacting on a constant basis with us – the highest guides in the universe – a spark of divinity, the Spirit of Truth, the Universe Mother Spirit, and all of the agencies that work with her, and our own angels. If we ‘listen’ to these perfect guides and do what the deepest and truest part of ourselves tells us, we do not have to have any other ‘guides’ who make gross errors which seem to be easily rationalized away. If the universe

teachers were as disorganized as they seem from the transcripts I have read, the predictions which have not panned out, and some major errors, then it would indeed be a universe unworthy of our hard work to progress.”

It seemed clear that Jungian theory worked for Ms. Blackstone. She could rationalize the Urantia revelation as being true, but seemed to believe that further efforts to reach into the spirit world would likely send you into the world of psychosis, perhaps onto a psychiatrist’s couch, and you would be talking to variations of yourself and your unreliable mind. There seemed no notice that one can transmit volumes of well-founded personal spiritual advice as seen in our archives. There seemed instead an obsession with the process of transmitting itself when the focus should be on the fruits of the spirit. And our mode of conveyance and communications with the teachers seemed personal, unobtrusive and gracious, especially after our groups center themselves in spirit with worship, prayer and dedication to service.

Ms. Blackstock correctly asserted the truest guidance as being God’s indwelling spirit, the Spirit of Truth, and the Universe Mother Spirit, but then so do the Teaching Mission Melchizedeks and morontia teachers, all together, part of the plan and not competitors. Morontian teachers, I knew, filled an intermediary role, like university instructors, learning, teaching and ascending themselves all the while. Some Urantia readers disdained these intermediary connections as unnecessary, distracting and fraught with the opportunity for error.

Ms. Blackstock continued her internet post by directly challenging the voice known as Lamphere, especially his analysis of her mental state.

She is apparently stung by Lamphere’s statement: “I desire to relieve her suffering” and despite her earlier pitfalls paper, in which she said she could only cry and look at the walls, she counterattacks now: “I lead a wonderful and joyous life, richer and more challenging than ever, with love being experienced everywhere I turn. I would hope that our midwayers have more to do than to ‘comfort’ one who does not need it. If I do need comfort I go directly to God, and then to my husband and my friends.”

I thought, at this point, that the midwayers really don’t have anything better to do than to look after the welfare of spiritually dedicated humans such as Ms. Blackstock. This is what they sought to do in the Grimsley affair, and in its aftermath where they sought to comfort and advise her but were disdained in favor of psychological explanations.

Ms. Blackstock seemed unable to separate that Lamphere’s remarks were for her suffering ‘then’ and not related to her life ‘now.’ Neither is the connection made (and exemplified through Lamphere’s empathy) that the celestial realms have subsequently blessed her and are surely active in promoting her current well-being. She is loved for

who she is and her life of service is both blessed and facilitated.

But at the time of this writing, she is ready to take issue with another Lamphere term, “dear sorrowful one.” She again answers from the perspective of her present life.

“I feel myself to be filled with joy most of the time. I do sorrow but it is no longer about FOG, but over the tragedies which my loved ones bring upon themselves, the distortion and distraction in the Urantia movement over the ‘teaching mission’, the lack of laborers who really are willing to get their hands dirty and serve where it counts instead of sitting around muttering phrases filled with errors.”

I only thought here of the dedicated workers and service projects that have been inspired by Teaching Mission believers and hoped that the extensive list published here would be complete.

Lamphere had also noted that “... you never got to know the fruits of your labor, only the consequences of the negative side of the action which did not materialize....”

Ms. Blackstock interjected: “This is just not true! This may be the way Patije looks at me, but any midwayer would know that my personal experience was quite different. I did indeed get to know the fruits of the ‘messages.’ I saw most of my friends and longtime coworkers freed from an imploding phenomena of egocentric importance regarding the position of FOG and the revelation. Many of us climbed up out of that shelter which we had built to protect ourselves from the ravages of a nuclear war, very desirous of leading a normal, average life. I climbed up out of the physical, mental, psychological and spiritual ‘shelter’ with a deep conviction to attempt to live the rest of my life as did Jesus.”

She quotes *the Urantia Book*: “The secret of his unparalleled religious life was this consciousness of the presence of God; and he attained it by intelligent prayer and sincere worship – unbroken communion with God – and not by leadings, voices, visions or extraordinary religious practices.”

“I decided,” said Ms. Blackstock, that if this was good enough for the Master, then whatever meager attempts I may make toward this way of living would be more than good enough for me.”

The Urantia quote reminded me that the lessons of worship, prayer and developing a deep personal relationship with God is indeed the central tenet of the Teaching Mission and the goal is unbroken communion with the Universal Father. This communion was central to Jesus in his incarnation; it is central to our incarnations in flesh and blood as well.

As Christ Michael, he has now followed the Lucifer adjudication by sending waves of teachers to our planet. It was a pity that some see an either/or situation with Michael's Teaching Mission, but I was sure she would be no less blessed, and she has been, as a prominent personality in the Urantian community, and a frequent speaker.

But I believed in this case that her adamant stand about having seen the fruits of her labors was misapplied to her personal life. I thought that Lamphere was referring to the dissolution of the Family of God, arguably a much greater loss than what any of the humans might have individually suffered. It was the evangelical arm of the Urantia Revelation.

FEAR OF THE SEDUCTIVE

On the UrantiaL list Ms. Blackstock responded authoritatively to more prodding from publisher Belitsos regarding the Teaching Mission:

“Let us discourse on this. My experience with this stuff from the very first seconds of the "contact" I experienced 8 years ago in the middle of the night that said: "We are here," and continued on for the next 3 months on a daily basis re FOG preparation for WW III has continually been one of opening to such and then pulling back with increased discriminatory thinking processes as I became and become clearer about at least my experiences.

“I felt somewhat open to Rebecca's message from "Ham" in L.A. in Jan. '92 but as I continued to read the transcripts which I had been able to write verbatim because the communication was so slow, I was very disappointed in the quality of the answers to the questions and the outright evasion of some of the questions. There is a seductivity about these which is troublesome.

“I have experienced this at other times too as I have opened myself to the possibility of the reality of them. Bob Slagle told me his TM got the message that the WW III was averted and I played an important role in this. For one second, or one minute I felt elated to think that I could have helped the spiritual government in this way. And then I left that feeling and began thinking. That's where the problem with this stuff happens - on the logical level of thinking.

“I really appreciated Marvin Gawryn's question to Rebecca in L.A. - what is it that you need out of this experience? This made a lot of sense to me based on looking at my own experiences with FOG era messages. I needed some things from those messages which my subconscious created:

1. “I was in conflict and you know what the UB says about that. My conflict was

several fold – I had dedicated the rest of my life to working for FOG; I had raised my sons– 12 years – with Vern as a model for him; I was watching my friends leave FOG as the preparations for nuclear war went on; and my husband was having more and more doubts about the situation and Vern's messages which had come about a year prior to mine which I began to receive in early Jan. 1985. This is a lot of conflict when you consider that my belief and devotion was "consciously" unshaken and grew stronger with each passing carrot which was stuck in the sand and sand bag which was filled.

2. “For my 15 or so years of working with FOG I worked mostly with the children-I loved doing this and felt that it was important, but I was far from the INNER CIRCLE of people. I realize now that on a subconscious level I really wanted to offer something more to the group than taking care of the kids. I believe that my subconscious found a way to do this.
3. “Although Vern was always kind toward me through all of those years, I certainly was not one who he would ask any advice of and I felt that he thought all I could talk about was kids. I realize now that I wanted to feel important and recognized by Vern for something else other than working with kids. There are other aspects that I could talk about, but this is enough to give you a good idea of things that I became aware of after the fact.

“If I had had some basic education in basic principles of psychology, perhaps I could have recognized my neediness and conflict and would not have elevated what was "alter ego" type of thinking to the realms of being "messages" from others. Obviously at several levels of unconscious activity my mind was trying to work out these obvious and strong conflicts and needs (not obvious at the time). As you know from some of your past experiences our minds can be very creative in rationalizing our assumptions and belief systems. Hence people come up with 25 past lives with great detail and ingenuity; hence people come up with superhuman beings who talk to them.

“I do feel repelled by the seductiveness of Lamphere's message: "We are only a short ways from you, dear sorrowful one. You can call upon us with but a whispered word. We wait for your call." It is my understanding that this is not even what primary midwayers do and why they want to comfort me when there are people in great need dying for great causes all over this planet who really need to be comforted is to me a dead giveaway as to the psychological nature of this stuff, not the spiritual reality of it.

“I would hope that Patije is mature enough to recognize that we must develop the ability to express ourselves with the integrity of our own thinking and experience in a clear,

concise, and logical way with ideas and opinions about which we may have strong disagreement while feeling kind, compassionate and loving about the person with whom we are discoursing. I work with over 100 school age children and a staff of 12 as we attempt to do this every day as we live together in the day care center.

“If anyone on this network missed the "message" from Lamphere - a primary midwayer - via of Patije Mills and my response which Bryon calls a vehement rejection, let me know and I will download it again. I believe that it was sent out via David Kantor last Thursday. It is too bad Patije heard about her letter being out there before she got it. This is a very fast way of communicating compared to mail and perhaps it would have been more diplomatic to have been sure she received her letter first. Sorry, Patije.

“Life calls - must go be a "boss" and hang out with 100 kids and laugh with my staff, etc. I look forward to further discourse. I believe that I may have told Byron that after 8 years of processing the FOG thing that I thought I was 99.9 % clear about my interpretation of my experiences, I feel it would be presumptuous of me to assume 100 % certainty - this leaves a little window for me to look at each and every thing that comes my way, and I have read many transcripts and heard tapes and talked, talked to many who think this is REAL, and continue to be greatly disappointed. I am not sure if it is dangerous or not - I am still analyzing it. One thing for sure a lot of people are going to learn something, one way or another!”

“As I tell the kids - the first person who does a put down - negates another - is the one who first throws the weapon with desire to hurt. We see this as being much different than saying - "I do not agree with you and here's why; or I do not like what you are doing; or what you are doing makes me angry or hurts me." Amongst 300 school age children there is hardly ever a "put down" and if there is I often hear about it. But kids are talking all the time about their problems and their differences. I would I hope that we can do as well here.”

There was much to appreciate in Blackstock’s overall analysis. She clearly is an example that we should take to heart. A person can apparently trick themselves into thinking that what ‘comes to them’ in their mind is actually a spirit voice, a higher being with guidance. And in the Family of God, no doubt you could tend to put yourself in a special place because of your record of dedicated service.

I was also reminded that the teachers advised us not to ‘try’ so hard to make connection, that we would fail. In trying to force a connection, there is mind activity. One does better to simply release to spirit without calculated effort.

Could these failures at the Family of God have assisted in designing Michael's teaching curriculum today, with ways to avoid the pitfalls when humans encounter the doubts and fears of spiritual communication. In history, it seems that celestial messengers always appear with the same words: Fear Not. Fear of channeling, however, seemed rampant in the Urantia communities.

So came the first instructions to us – get your minds out of the way. Still your busy mind and open to the Father. I hoped that twenty years of Teaching Mission transcripts might assuage some of the fears and show the value of the insights being shared with us. I hoped that Urantia's analytical scholars might see that they are basic lessons for everyman and not intended to compete with their epochal tome from the Spiritual Hierarchy.

There is no special person involved in the Teaching Mission who would seek to control Urantia politics, although Caston and other critics do accuse us of assuming a 'chosen persons' role. This truly does not exist, when all are invited into the stillness for contact. All are invited to receive. All are encouraged to seek that quiet, still voice inside.

If we would influence or guide the Urantia movement, it would be to encourage persons into regular stillness practice to develop the personal relationship with God that supersedes human dogma and represents the highest possible kind of religion, according to the book. And, yes, if a person hears messages from spirit, he should listen, consider, and use the experience in his decision-making within any framework. I had read no evidence anywhere that this is not wise and workable.

Beyond politics and psychology, the Teaching Mission is more concerned with its honest explorations of the phenomenon and its continuing evolution than with continuing the conflicts that have long sullied the Urantia movement. We never intended to cause yet another political battle; we only wanted to learn the stillness and work with our celestial teachers, not thinking it would cause an uproar of 'nefarious channelers' accusations. I remembered that Abraham had told us early on: "God is simple, mankind complicates."

I concluded that it was several years of personal spiritual contact that convinced me of the mission's reality. I couldn't confirm that Grimsley received any messages, or that he didn't, and neither could anyone else. But we were truly on the brink of a nuclear attack when his came. Kantor said his own alleged messages were trash and I tend to agree since that's his appraisal.

The same statement is true for the Teaching Mission today. One can say we are talking to ourselves; one could say prayer is talking to oneself too. One could say that the celestials would not be communicating with us like this and there is no evidence that the rebellion is adjudicated. One could also say that this is the best and less obtrusive way to

communicate with free-willed individuals on the planet, and that they should believe the messages about adjudication, and observe it happening all around us.

So many people, even Urantia readers, could not seem to see realities on a planet that the book says is 'quivering on the brink' of massive changes.

THE AFTERMATH: Soviet Stagnations

Looking at the nuclear war situation today, it was instructive to see how things have worked out since the tumultuous events of November 1983.

In the Soviet Union, Andropov's incapacitation in 1983 and eventual death in March, 1984, made the situation all the more dangerous, thinks author Peter Pry. After all, the dying premier was involved in the death of some 20 million people over his long career in the Soviet military and KGB, including the oppressions of Stalin and the genocide inflicted in Poland. In his condition, he might be all the more willing to carry out a first strike for the USSR, especially when he thought the U.S. was planning to launch one.

His death was the beginning of the end for the old guard in Russia, as aging personalities died and a new wave of leadership came on. Tired of a succession of decrepit fossils, the Soviets in 1985 named Gorbachev as president. He was only 60, the first Soviet leader who hadn't served in World War II.

With prescience, he could see that the Soviets were hopelessly lagging in technology and many agencies were shells of inefficiency and corruption. The old guard still seemed to believe that war was imminent and inevitable, and a first strike, more than ever, would now would be the only way the beleaguered Soviet system could win. Calmer heads made more sense, in that nuclear war victory is no victory at all.

The tense situation with the U.S. would continue for a while, but Gorbachev came into power with a mission of pulling the world back from the nuclear brink. He was, in fact, a well educated and dedicated Communist. He believed that corruption and inefficiencies had betrayed the ideals of Communism and led to the country's problems.

If the midwayers had truly declared war on Communism, then the dissolution of the USSR and easing of the hair-trigger war scare status has to be counted for a victory. Today, we see Communism in China and no doubt more adventure for mankind ahead.

With an idealist like Gorbachev in power, it seems that the battle was against corruption all the time. Perhaps the conflict is always with those who disdain and corrupt good and great ideas. The true stated ideals of Communism rival our own Constitution in its promises for our individual and mutual welfare. Corruption destroys ideals.

As for the 1983 war scare, it has been validated again by declassified documents and by extensive published notes from still-classified documents, that nuclear war could have been minutes away. The Center for Public Integrity collected documents for a file report, which adds detail to the history, and frames the top secret Able Archer-83 simulated war exercise as part of a larger Soviet face-off program called "Autumn Forge," initiated in the summer of '83.

Sources in the report believe the '83 initiatives were intentionally provocative and amounted to 'sabre-rattling' to intimidate the Soviets and impress them with superior American power.

In the United States, governments have come and gone. The provocative Reagan era did not produce nuclear holocaust in the end, but the immediate dangers are now more fully appreciated. And intelligence reports to Reagan at the time have been discredited.

Pry references a national intelligence estimate that went to President Reagan in early 1984. It stated: "Soviet talk about the increased likelihood of nuclear war ... has been deliberately manipulated to rationalize military efforts with domestic audiences and to influence Western political elites. Some Soviet military activities have also been designed to have an alarming or intimidating effect."

It was seven years later that the intelligence community recanted the report and deemed it "a major intelligence failure" in a 1990 classified report by the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

An unclassified 1996 study by the CIA's Center for Historical Intelligence noted that many Western observers discounted the '83 war scare because its worst case scenario, a surprise nuclear attack, was "too out of touch with reality" to be credible. The report notes that Americans just didn't see things like they did in the Soviet.

Today, Republican partisans credit Reagan with winning the Cold War. His administration did build a near invincible military machine with huge outlays of money. Was our strength the reason that the Soviets never implemented their first strike strategy? Or was it the reluctances that anyone would have in initiating global holocaust so that the surviving government could declare 'victory' at a horrible price? Even Andropov, who had already killed millions, did not do it. Did celestial forces have a hand? They never seem to leave a trace.

THE AFTERMATH: Urantia in Recovery

In the Urantia movement, there are signs that the massive split between the Urantia Foundation and the Brotherhood, which is now called The Fellowship, are healing. At the

Fellowship's 2008 international conference in Los Angeles, it was reported that people were talking who earlier 'couldn't stand to be in the same room with one another.' Such is a modicum of progress, even as conference attendance has dropped considerably since the debilitating animosity of the big split, continuing its slide in 2011 in Salt Lake City.

The Foundation maintains a strong policy position against any form of channeling. It competes with Fellowship study groups with its own network of groups. The Fellowship has attempted to straddle the fence, not wanting to anger the Foundation and its monetary supporters, but not wanting to pass unspiritual judgments and restrictions upon the good people in the Teaching Mission and the service groups it has fostered, not to mention other free-thinking and loving souls who don't want to be restricted by an arbitrary five unelected Foundation trustees who are accountable to no one.

New age pollution was the enemy under Myers. And there were some interesting episodes to come as Myers invoked licensing controls, and brought copyright and trademark protection lawsuits against various Urantia societies and even a conceptual artist.

In time, Myers would alienate large numbers of people. In 1981, he sued Arizona homemaker Kristen Maaherra for sending out an electronic study guide to the book, which did not exist at the time, and then sued companion Eric Schaveland for using the concentric circles logo on a website. Some critical battle lines formed and his days were numbered.

The couple received numerous Urantia reader donations for their legal expenses, and the near decade long court battle sapped Keeler and the Foundation of much of the war chest they had used to sue readers. Myers was forced off the board by Keeler and associates in 1992 and went out kicking and screaming with yet another lawsuit, this time against the trustees.

While the Foundation eventually won the Maaherra lawsuit on appeal, and caused untold personal stress and damage to their victims, some of the factors which arose led to a second suit in Arizona which brought down the copyright for good, after pulling more valuable dollars out of the movement for legal fees. The Foundation was reduced to characterizing the book as a "work for hire" because humans did some cosmetic roles such as organizing the papers. The federal courts did not agree.

At this writing, the Foundation continues to hold onto the trademark registration of the three blue concentric circles. *The Urantia Book* says that this is the banner of the Trinity Sons of God. Nothing in the text indicates that humans should trademark the symbol and license it for use. But they maintain it is a seal of approval that theirs is the authentic, inviolate text. The same text, of course, is now available from various sources across the

world, including the Fellowship's published book and also downloadable electronic files of all 196 Papers. There is also a burgeoning library of secondary study materials.

I think the midwayers won this battle too. Worldwide interest in the Urantia papers is growing, and there is a groundswell of interest in higher spiritual values, personal guidance and the Family of God's "all one people" theology.

THE AFTERMATH: Ragings blow hard

Do these conflicts continue today? Yes, they do. Caston continues to rail against any kind of celestial communications that “threaten the credibility” of *the Urantia Book*, represented in recent years by the Teaching Mission. He wishes for acceptance of the Revelation within the academic community, at long last, but association with the occult is damaging to its credibility.

Caston avers that Grimsley would have nothing to do with the Teaching Mission today because he loves the book too much “to be associated with a group that poses so much danger to the Revelation.” He could be wrong, since I’ve been told by several Teaching Mission adherents that they’ve enjoyed a personal visit with the Grimsleys in their home.

Caston notes that Grimsley’s reputation is “irretrievably tarnished by his association with dubious, ‘channeled’ messages.” It seemed to me, however, that Caston was a ringleader in tarnishing Vern’s reputation with the incessant vendetta which continued months after the episode, and that same insulting, protectionist rhetoric persists to this day. It is not comforting to know that this rancorous former trustee speaks for the Urantia revelation.

Says Caston on Facebook in May of 2011: “For the sake of Vern’s peace of mind and the good memories that remain of his tattered reputation, I would advise you not to risk getting to the darker allegations that were left hidden in the behind-the-scenes shadows of the cult- like operations of his former Family of God Foundation.”

So, even 28 years after the FOG crisis, here was Caston ad nauseum, still poised to deliver character attacks of some sort to support his “audio hallucinations” theory. I personally could not imagine that the midwayers would refuse to work with appropriate humans in regard to the war danger, no matter the details of their personal lives.

It appeared that Caston was still standing ready to stir up more discord than the Grimsleys would ever want to endure today. But I could spin the situation. If the Grimsleys were indeed rid of the people that took over the Urantia Foundation, then they came out of all this best of all. — rid of Myers, Keeler, Caston and Kantor. Good! I can see good reasons why the Grimsleys would have no need for Urantia politics, ever again.

Then, in late 2011, Vern Grimsley passed on. Caston reportedly went to his side during his final hours. Mrs. Caston lauded him in a Facebook post. Yet Caston himself attacked the Teaching Mission with another lengthy broadside only days later.

He called the mission “group hysteria” and noted: “It is a Urantia Book induced ‘channeling’ phenomenon that was triggered by the death of Emma ‘Christy’ Christenson, the last remaining contact commissioner and the only person who could have spoken with authority on the legitimacy of such purported ‘messages’ from sources alleged to have a direct relation to the Fifth Epochal Revelation.”

Since Caston had issues with Christy transmitting messages herself, it seems strange that he notes her as a name-dropped authority here, one who could sanction these messages or not. It is my view that Christy would continue her strong support for the Family of God were she living today. And while Caston could be considered irrelevant today, his writings reach a lot of people on Urantia lists, and he unfortunately provides a face and voice for the Fifth Epochal Revelation in his rantings.

THE AFTERMATH: Sprunger takes another stand

As this text was being written, Rev. Meredith Sprunger, respected patriarch of the Urantia family, whom we visited on earlier pages, also passed on and into the higher education spheres of the Mansion Worlds.

Once more upon the revelatory internet, I discovered another letter from the Reverend which summed up his ideas following a second disillusionment – first Grimsley, then Myers. It was written in May of 1991, as Myers’ reign was being ended. The recipient name is blank. As Dr. Sprunger is considered one of the finest scholars of Urantia, then it demanded study.

Sprunger relates his history as friends of the Sadlers and a reader of the first edition. He maintained that the Urantia Foundation and Urantia Brotherhood were designed to be “separate and independent organizations with synchronized and supporting relationships.” He relates how “legal minds” devised a way to control the entire movement with its stringent copyright and licensing regulations. He notes the resignations of three Urantia Foundation Trustees in 1989 in objection to Myers’ “autocratic domination.”

Sprunger says that Urantia societies and members can follow this “power oriented leadership” if they choose. “I’m confident,” he said, “that the spiritual purposes of the Fifth Epochal Revelation will overcome any roadblocks placed in its way. The potentials of the Urantia movement have never been better. We have escaped attempts at charismatic captivity and legalistic-autocratic control. The freedom of the spirit working

through the dynamics of participatory democracy will lead us into creative ministry. Let us have the courage and stamina to turn from those who would waste our energies in controversies and dedicate ourselves to the joy of spirit-guided service.”

So the Reverend saw a charismatic threat from the Family of God and a legalistic threat on another end of the spectrum. He took the Family’s dissolution as a victory just as he did Myers’ discredited reign. How ironic that these opposites be lumped together by him as being threats to the Fifth Epochal Revelations – - too much mysticism and altruism on the one side, too many court suits on the other. And he was a Church of Christ minister serving with what he had in-between.

It was a greater irony that the Teaching Mission personalities have unanimously brought its students along a path to “the joy of spirit-guided service” that the Reverend visualized. Even the basic tenant of the Urantia papers is celebrated by the teachers, a personal religion built upon a “Be Still and Know That I Am God” mandate, a Urantia text ascension plan built around God’s “Be Ye Perfect” evolutionary design, and a clear example of what can be done on the planet and how to do it by studying the life of Jesus.

It seems today that the basic, elemental, foundational lessons of truth from the Teaching Mission personalities are just too unfettered and simple for people with complicated minds and political agendas. It’s personal. It’s not another clash of belief systems.

The Teaching Mission is entry level spirituality for most souls on our Urantia/Earth, and that is just what is needed. The teachers are here to teach its true values, not laden by dogmatic baggage. They show the way to spiritual comprehensions and clarities in your own individual and unique life, your own personal guided path to answers that reside within.

I raised a voice on a Urantia Facebook discussion in an effort to correct falsehoods and provide a more clear picture of the Teaching Mission.

Hello – my brother, and others,

Your post gives me a great deal more clarity on the roots of the hanging tree built by our Teaching Mission critics. I do appreciate your thoughtful analysis and willingness to keystroke your arguments to the list. Many of your points are well taken, but are flung in other directions than the Teaching Mission I've experienced for some 20 years.

You are simply looking for the wrong teachers in the wrong locations at the wrong times, and I expect you're misreading the curriculum as well.

We are working with Melchizedeks and many Morontian teachers, who are serving in their ascension plan, not angels, midwayers or your dead uncle. Urantia speaks at length on our constant and continuing education in our ascension careers, including within the Celestial Overseers section. Seeking our authenticity within Urantia, we ourselves have large collections of quotes that support us from the Revelation itself. The whole universe is a school.

We're not talking with midwayers in the Teaching Mission and, to my knowledge, no one has ever heard an 'audio hallucination' message by a 'chosen person' in all these years. Midwayers have many roles other than teaching us a curriculum of basic spiritual values. Such as helping mightily to save our butts from a near nuclear war. But that story has a lot more to do with Urantia politics than it has to do with personal spiritual growth with teachers sent by Christ Michael, following the adjudication of the Lucifer Rebellion in the early 80s.

The right location to find the Teaching Mission is within yourselves. It's not about going to meetings and hearing a fellow spirit who is bold enough and gracious enough to be a group transmitter. This is social growth. The real growth is in one's willingness to go into Stillness time and throw yourself in front of God. Dump the world, clear your mind. Worship God and develop that real, personal relationship with the Universal Father that the Revelation extolls. Stillness is deeper than meditation and requires the complete release to Spirit in faith and in dedication to being perfect in the plan. If you have fear of this, your own mind, then this is your first problem to overcome.

Guidance from spirit can only lead to a service venue. Knowing and feeling the spirit inside, Teaching Mission folks are serving well in many places. The place they went to begin the journey was into the Stillness, to consciously take a step of faith, to embrace the Thought Adjuster, embrace the Mother Spirit, embrace the Spirit of Truth, embrace the Guardian and Service Angels, embrace the teachers, artisans and spirits of your own Melchizedek University, a Church Inside.

Critics may also be looking at the wrong time to identify the Teaching Mission. We have group sharing sessions but the real connection is made between you and your Thought Adjuster, and the teachers that are assigned to you, for your specific needs to grow in spirit. This is a connection that every free will individual can make, and no one else can make for you. This can eventually lead to making the time of connection anytime that you walk the earth, in the balance of character that Jesus himself represented as a mortal day after day, as he passed by.

A wrong reason to seek the Teaching Mission is to get prophecies of doom or resurrection, of planetary cleansing or evacuation, or renaissance. Our Morontian

teachers would like to reach every soul on the planet first of all with basic foundations for personal spiritual growth, not changing the world but changing ourselves, so that we will go out and do it, the Father's Business, our contributions on a quickening planet quivering on the brink of great changes. After 20 years absorbing thousands of pages of spiritual growth lessons, along with *the Urantia Book's* prior foundation, I am like so many others, motivated to service in a world where needs are critical everywhere you look.

Once connected to Spirit, you can more satisfyingly enjoy little moments throughout your day, mini-stillnesses because you are open to spirit, open to giving a kindness, open to hearing bursts of insight through your vitalized and energized Thought Adjuster, who is now more radiantly alive because you made the connection and became more greatly aware of this Inner Light. Some of our more experienced transmitters have learned to bring forth inspirations from their own Adjusters that are well worth the reading and consideration, and that's all they ask. Teachers help facilitate Thought Adjuster contact, and Midwayers help facilitate many things which have to be downstepped to mortal comprehension.

What do the teachers do then, and why do you need them beyond the *Urantia* text? To bring your inner spirit alive and to recognize and embrace Christ Michael, the Melchizedeks and a wave of loving Morontian teachers.

If a critic wishes to remain logical, he may now read tens of thousands of pages of teacher lessons in libraries and archives. If a critic wishes to actually have personal spiritual guidance, he must merely ask God about it and RELEASE oneself to the messages by turning off the analytical buzzbomb in your head.

This is what Faith is all about. Christians, too, may equate it with going to meetings at God's house. They spend a lot of time building them, often for modest use.

But you are God's house. You are his child. God has not just built a house inside you; He has built a Home, a family that can grow together.

Be Still, and know that I AM God. This is the opportunity of the Teaching Mission. Do it otherwise if you wish.

And it is pointless to criticize us, the humans who are participating in the spiritual phenomenon. We only know what we've learned by hearing and experiencing the Teachers. As with *the Urantia Book*, we are students. There are no human experts on either. We have been guided well, plain to see, and we still love the Revelation.

One of our most prolific teachers, Rayson, has noted that the behavior of humans in going

to other humans for spiritual guidance is "baffling." In time, we will all learn this truth.

SOME AUTHOR CONCLUSIONS

Why, then, do many Urantia readers disdain the Teaching Mission? They don't know what it is. They misidentify it based on their own tumultuous politics and personality spats, and it has nothing to do with either. They compare the quality of our teachers transmitting basic entry-level spiritual lessons in our living rooms with a 2,100 page spiritual revelation. Our critics resent the teachers' support of the Urantia text in their disbelief of the teachers, but if it is the highest collection of wisdom on the planet, why wouldn't they recommend it?

The altruistic message of the Family of God and the Spiritual Renaissance Institute is in many places today though the organization is gone. Urantia's Fellowship and Foundation are still trying to mend their differences and still not integrated into the science, philosophy and religion mainstream.

It's just sad that while the entire nation was on edge for a possible nuclear attack in those tense Cold War days, the Urantia personalities who shattered the Family of God and usurped the movement somehow found the logic to demonize the greatest evangelist and global networker they had because his organization was simply prepared as best they could be.

It seemingly didn't matter to the Urantia coup members that the cold war had escalated into a precarious day-by-day situation given the Korean airliner shootdown, the Grenada invasion, missiles build-ups and a dangerous, dying mass murderer at the helm in the Soviet Union. It didn't matter that every city in the country had civil defense plans and shelters and that Able Archer 83 had greatly aggravated the tension.

What mattered was their struggle to configure and control their copyright, knowing its spiritual and market value, and to get rid of Vern Grimsley and his family of mankind philosophy. Myers and Caston saw a global threat to the Revelation from new age spiritualists and channelers. They saw a troubled world racked with rebellion, replete with Lucifer and his kind on the ready to dupe us and compromise or even destroy their epochal revelation. Opening one's stilled mind to such possible intrusions was unadvisable to unthinkable.

The mainstream world simply didn't know about the Lucifer Rebellion and its dark curse on the planet. The mainstream needed the inviolate, copyright-protected Revelation. The Myers regime ran on for two decades and drew many battle lines to fight in court.

Today, there is no church or fellowship devoted to a Jesus of Urantia ministry, even as

the text says it will someday come. But there is indeed fear – yes, more fear – of trying to start one. We don't need yet another church, some assert, apparently not acknowledging that it doesn't have to be flawed in the ways that they see other religions. It could represent what the Urantia papers say. It is an opportunity to transcend.

But their collective thinking is really miniscule in the context of personal child of God realities. What matters is the “entirety of the planet” that Grimsley noted. What matters is every soul on the planet finding and embracing God's grace and will in their lives. What matters is going into the stillness and working on your spiritual growth with the Universal Father/God/First Source and Center. This opportunity is what all humans should know, what the Teaching Mission is about, and what this book should help affirm.

What matters is not the conflicts and struggles among the myriad array of rebellion-scarred people on this planet, but to muster up that “universe awareness” and “cosmic consciousness” and know and live the reality of the fact and the opportunity.

In the end, the protagonists given voice on these pages were all thinking and doing what they believed to be the right thing at the time, what they had to do or needed to do. It's not my job to judge them; it's their responsibility to evaluate themselves, and be of greater, more enlightened service going forward. Listening in the stillness will bring insights that help along the way. It will bring the broadened realization that.... The Teaching Mission is interplanetary and includes all of the worlds of the Lucifer rebellion.

The Urantia Revelation movement for this planet needs to expand to include every soul in this world and respect their sincere paths. With that purpose, I have proposed a new Universal Urantia Family which adheres to the principles of ONEness among all people and disdains bigotry and spiritual judgments. Here are our eight principles:

Urantia Universal

1. We believe the Urantia Revelation is compatible and should be desirable by all faith movements to whom we can introduce it and we are not fearful of stepping forward with it. We who share it should show non-judgmental respect and good will toward others on their particular spiritual paths, whether it be ancient or new. We can find common truths and still care for one another through diversities. We believe in pursuing the Oneness of all humanity and the Oneness of spirit which resides within each of us.

2. We believe in receiving spiritual guidance through concerted practice of the Stillness, and, as our spirits develop, in minute-by-minute interaction with our Indwelling Spirit and other spiritual presences, in living a fruitful life of service.

3. We will counter any forms of bigotry within our Urantia family. We are dedicated to an exploration of how the Urantia Revelation relates to the world, to science, philosophy, religion and the everyday challenges of life. We have long studied the book; we want to understand how we can relate it to our societies and use its principles to unify people and build communities around the "Love One Another" concept.

4. We encourage those who would serve the revelation of truth-beauty-and-goodness to hear each other's views and concerns, and to work proactively and creatively to foster meaningful relationships with proponents of the emerging new spiritual movements. There is a place for the foundational spiritual truths of Urantia everywhere. Our greatest task is learning to work together in harmony and progress.

5. We know from two decades of experience and our huge archive of spiritual lessons that both the celestial teachers and Christ Michael's mission to reclaim Urantia and the rebellion worlds are real. As co-signers we stand on this truth without apology and encourage others to make this contact. We reject the idea that the Urantia Papers refute these realities in any way. We believe that much in the Revelation supports our experiences with teachers and spiritual influences. We also believe that much has happened to change conditions on our planet and in the spiritual worlds since the Papers were published in 1955 and we don't hold the Papers to be the end of all reliable truth.

6. We believe that a person achieving spiritual contact in the Stillness would be one of his life's greatest achievements. It is the threshold to the development of Personal Religion, the only religion that the Urantia text considers to be real.

7. We believe that we are all one people on Urantia. We love the Father, and the Father tells us to love each other. We love Michael and the incarnated Jesus, and they tell us to love one another. Within Urantia our first mission is clear then. And if we practice it, we will be less judgmental about things we don't understand. And the more we truly know our fellows, the more we will come to love them.

8. We believe any and all leaders in Urantia should work actively toward establishing the new Religion of Jesus that the text mandates. We see no reason to wait. We see a lot of hesitating and a lot of non-cooperation and non-support of various Urantia-based initiatives. We need to support inspired secondary works which explain, clarify and promote our central text.

These are the keys to the Urantian revelation taking strong root and growing on the planet. It is now a time to build bridges, not fences . . . a time to find common spiritual ground and stand up on it together.

CELESTIAL CONCLUSIONS

While mine seemed a fitting set of conclusions about the Teaching Mission, I subsequently found that the most revealing and illuminating commentaries on these matters would come, not from the human side, but from the celestial side. Several transmissions put much more in perspective for me than I had been able to glean on my own.

As far as receiving personal guidance in the Stillness, the midwayers of today offer a greatly simplified reality that we should know, from transmitted lessons published by the 11.11 Progress Group in February, 2013.

Allowing This Cultivation

Mentor: *“Thank you for lending me your ear. Please type what you hear and when you fall behind in your typing and lose track of what is being said, do not abort the project as I am about to convey things that need to be said.*

“I may at times sound somewhat stern, but that is for a reason. You mortals spend too little time listening to the Still Voice within from where all insights come. You mortals are more prone to be obsessed by the outward clamor and noises of the world around you, hardly giving yourselves time to come to your senses. You are heir to many pitfalls in your world, due to your lack of quality thinking, and you also indulge in negative thinking, which only makes your life more difficult and somber.

“Think about how the Guiding Light, that Spark from God, is there within you to help guide you in the right and positive way of life. When will you learn to walk on the sunny side of the street? Oh yes, there will be shadows but that is merely what they are. Darkness and light are always in balance to help shape you, and for you to become more aware of how all things work together for good.

“There are many people who have lost the ability to think for themselves, so they need a guru, or some other guide to help them sort things out, and they will go to great lengths to spend great sums of money so others can spoon-feed them. Do you not know or remember that the greatest Guide lives within you, and all you need to do is go into the stillness of your hearts and allow this Guide, this personal Spark from the Creator God, an opportunity to speak?

“Please, train and allow yourselves the development of your inner listening skills by giving yourselves permission and allowing yourselves some daily time to acquire this most important habit. It will be the best time you will ever spend on yourselves. In doing so, you will overcome many maladies in your mental-emotional realm. It will also reflect

on your physical well-being as you learn to better cope with the vicissitudes of life.

“There simply is no better way than for you to develop the ultimate trust in the highest Power possible. Life can be so simple, so why do you persist in making it so difficult? All you need to do is get into the habit and allow yourself the time to develop your inner listening skills. It will be your best habit ever to cultivate and it will give you an indescribable and untold deep inner joy and feeling of belonging to God’s great family to eventually meet your other kin from other worlds, who are likewise cultivating their souls to perfection.

“It is the Eternal Creator’s greatest pleasure to create mortals with the capacity to think for their selves and return to Paradise as perfected beings. This after they have enjoyed their ages-long exhilarating ascension adventure to refine their character, polish and cultivate their personality and shape themselves increasingly towards perfection, all through an ongoing choice and decision making process.

“This is the true allowing and cultivating yourselves to become what you are capable of becoming.”

Celestial Receptivity

Thought Adjuster: *“In a regular world, communication with Celestials is a common occurrence, almost a routine affair. The vast majority of various populations enjoys this experience, and is more spiritually receptive than you are. This is also subject to the kinds of brains the mortals on certain planets have. The ones with three brains are the most receptive, followed by the kind with two brains – as are the mortals of Urantia. Least receptive are those with one brain.*

“In this world it is particularly difficult to develop faith in what cannot be seen or heard. Even whilst you are of the two-brained kind, your spiritual receptivity is almost nil. Few among you have managed to gather enough faith to ‘listen’ and believe they have heard. Since this phenomenon is rather rare those who listen are considered strange. The experience of listening is something that cannot be taught, because it is an individual and private experience; something that has to be tried and succeeded with in order to be comprehended.

“Now your sphere is being re-routed onto the normal path of evolutionary worlds. The number of humans who listen grows each day, and your children are being born with a greater ability to receive. In a very short time – compared to general world time lines – those who listen will be the majority and the phenomenon of communication with the Father and His ‘agents’ will no longer be a mystery, or a fantastic occurrence. The

increase in the number of those who desire to know God on a personal level will be the impulse this world needs to establish the age of light and life.

“Those who have learned to listen in these times of doubt and confusion are the pioneers – the agondonters – whose faith is beyond normal. [In Urantia terminology, this is a person who can believe in God through faith and without physical evidence.] It is a great accomplishment for your future to have done this by your own means of overcoming your limitations. What you are doing will not even come close to what future generations will be able to achieve in this area of celestial communication. However, you can do plenty with your fragile faith and your desire to know more – your love for things spiritual.

“You can be sure your Father understands and knows of your struggles. He sees the doubts in your heart and doesn’t judge you because of this, since he knows well how hard it is for a mortal creature in a world such as this to free his or her mind of external influences, and to learn to think freely and independently. This is always a personal choice of a few courageous souls that jump into the adventure, onto the roads that have seldom been traveled by their peers of the past. This is being a true pioneer, and a true agondonter.

“Let my words serve as an encouragement and provide the impulse to help you move forward. You have achieved much but it is just a drop in the ocean to what is still unknown to you. Continue exploring, continue searching and ask for what you need, because this is the way you open your mind and your consciousness to receive. It is up to you to identify the gifts of the Father and take advantage of them to do His Will.”

The Teaching Mission

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THE MAGISTERIAL MISSION ... IF YOU'RE READY

On May 10, 2013, the Northern Colorado Teaching Mission group, held its 75th “Conversations with Monjoranson” series. Transmitter was Daniel Raphael. He answered several direct questions with perspectives on both the Family of God crisis and human involvement in the Correcting Time.

He was asked if he had a comment on humans being part of it.

MONJORONSON: “One moment. Yes, briefly. That is that the Correcting Time being a co-creative development has two partners: that of spirit, which is personal and which is

planetary and local universe in dimension, and our mortal companions. There is a true need for your conscious participation with us to bring this Correcting Time into development and fruition. This cannot be done without you, and I am here to tell you that we will not do it without you!

“We ask you to be open and receptive to those opportunities which come to you, and if you ask, we will make them so forthright, so obvious that in order to ignore this opportunity you would have to be quite spiritually and energetically blind.

“We are not talking about intuitively aware, but to be obviously aware in the dimensions of your world around you, to be aware and cognizant of opportunities, something that presents itself which does not look like the past, something which is developmentally new—familiar, but new—something that you could participate with and contribute to. This is what we ask of you, to do this.

“You see, the events and developments that are occurring on your world right now will continue on, and though you live here securely in one of the states of this nation and other nations around the world that live in peace—relative peace—you are seeing events in the world which are powerfully changing the future, destructively. Your conscious participation is needed to change that destructive future to a constructive one.

“It is a process. It is not done by instantaneous miracle. Just as you see the fragmentation and disintegration of civil life in the Middle East, you also see this as a gradual development.

“Your participation helps to change the development of events into the positive and constructive. You may not see that, and it may not be obvious to you, but you are needed to assist us. Even if you do not have hands-on contributions to what we are doing, you can have conscious minded hands-on participation with us. This is definitely needed.

It is not that we are dithering and do not have a clue about how to proceed—quite the contrary—we are very definitely aware of what is needed and the probable outcomes. We need to assist you to guide those positive constructive probable outcomes.

“I hope you understand that at any given moment, there are multiple, probable lines of development that can occur from that moment. They can vary from the most destructive to the most constructive. Your consciousness, your conscious participation with us can tip the scale in the direction of positive outcomes. You are needed. You are useful. And though you are one of billions, you are powerful to affect the course of those billions. You simply have to believe so and consciously direct your minded energy to positive outcomes—even if it is solely to the extent of asking us to participate in a positive

outcome for some development.

“If you ask us to do that, you might also want to ask, “Are you in agreement with that? Would you support that?” and almost all of you will hear our response. If it is “No,” that will be very clear; if it is “Yes,” that will be very clear. And if it is “yes,” then we ask you to urge us on to do the work.

“It is like asking your partner or one of your children, or a friend to come over and assist you to plant the garden: “Would you help me to open the packages and plant the seeds in the furrow to help me do this?” “Would you be willing to do this?” and they say, “Yes.” “Then please come on over in a half hour and we will begin.”

“So, our relationship with you is just as pragmatic as it is with your friends, neighbors and family; it is an agreement. Many of you ask us to do something, but you assume that we are sent to do so. When it is for the obvious good of something, you can assume that we will. However, when it calls for co-creative enterprises and activities, then it is best to check with us to see if we will.

“Oftentimes, mortals ask us to do something and we do not do it, simply because it would work against the ultimate good of the individual or someone else or your environment. This conscious relationship helps you know where you are with us, and you can know what we support or do not support. This is a learning activity. Do you see that you are in a learning situation?

“Many social action scientists have described these two situations as: Learning situation #1, and learning situation #2. What you want for a learning situation #2 is feedback whether you are on course or not. And when you understand you are on course, then of course, obviously you would want to always amend your statements of empowerment to us, to align yourselves with God’s Will through us, so that your will and our will and God’s Will are in alignment.

“This is where you want to be in this lifetime, all of your morontial lifetimes, and all of your spiritual lifetimes and your eternal exercise in the Corps of Finality.”

Later came a question that led to this explanation of the Grimsley controversy.

MONJORONSON: “. . . Mr. Grimsley did rightly perceive and receive the messages that support the pronouncement he made at the convention in Los Angeles. The world was on the brink of nuclear war.

“As you recall, the situation that developed, which the celestials foretold Mr. Grimsley about, developed from the NATO exercises in the North Sea near Russia. The United

States and NATO forces were conducting their training exercises using live ammunition and so on. It was a very hostile and threatening situation to Russia and it was done with the intention on the part of NATO members to actually threaten Russia with the power of its might.

“Of course, given Russia’s background of disempowerment to most individuals, the culture that gave rise to serfdom and its permanence in the genetic code of those people, it raised their arrogance, their anger and their hostilities to the point where they too had activated their nuclear defense systems and were in preparation to make pre-emptory strikes at the NATO forces, and then at the capitols and major cities of NATO members around the world.

“It was only through the open-mindedness of individuals—several individuals, but particularly one who came to the courageous position to call and ask the Russian Commander what the situation was. Your celestial friends had been an influence to the minds of all involved in making those ultimate decisions, giving them options for probable outcomes. Individuals chose to stand down, backup and to neutralize their systems—put them in the inactive mode—and prevent a nuclear war.

“It was a period of far less than a minute in which those ultimate decisions were deferred. Now, listeners, I wish you to see the power that we co-creatively have with you, to give you and others options for decision-making. This is co-creative participation. Mr. Grimsley did the right thing for the right reasons, with the right intentions to develop the right outcomes. Now, if you were a Planetary Manager, what would you say? That was the wrong outcome? Peace? Standing down from nuclear war? It was the right outcome.

“Now, what was the outcome for Mr. Grimsley? We knew beforehand the probable outcomes of his personal life and his professional demise, yet in the management of a planet, this is a hugely important and necessary sacrifice. Mr. Grimsley’s recovery from that has been a wonderful process to see. Had he committed suicide that would have ended his possibility of recovery in this terrible personal and professional cataclysm. He was strong to remain among you.

“Those who stood by him also suffered tremendously. In the saving of your planet and your civilization, 25 years ago—or longer—this was a necessary sacrifice that even the process of revelation from the Father to each individual, would be in denial by the fundamentalists of the Urantia Book movement.

“These things can be recovered in time, though this situation has persevered for so long with such tremendous negative impact upon the spiritual growth of your planet, it nonetheless will recover in time, as will the understanding of every individual once they

cross into the morontial realm.

“The most destructive outcome of all from this, besides the collapse of marriages, professional lives and the loss of personal resources, is that personal revelation has been denigrated because of the beliefs of these few people.

“Why is it, do you think, that the Urantia Book movement is still held as a cult movement in the world? It is because it has not come around to accept personal revelation that occurs new to each generation. God speaks to you. God speaks to you through himself as your Thought Adjuster; God speaks to you through his delegates, his hierarchy of light. These are directly in alignment with his authority and his personhood.

“Christ Michael speaks to you personally, as personal revelation of the Father. What is needed for The Urantia Book and its membership to come into the light of this world is to reunite with the acceptance of revelation. This is immensely important.

“If you look at the success or the growth of the Urantia movement in relationship to your world population, it has failed every year. The percentage of believers of the Urantia Book movement has decreased percentage-wise every year since its beginning, particularly more so as the world population grows.

These are hard words for me to deliver to you, but there is a somber message for each of you, that God loves you, God speaks to you, your angel speaks to you, your celestial teacher speaks to you and has words of wisdom for you to accept. All we ask is that you be personally discerning in your wisdom quotient to understand whether these statements by celestial beings are in agreement with God and God’s Will.

“Though the miscreants of the rebellion are gone, yet the remnants of negativity and disincarnate beings still remain. Some of these are benign; some are totally neutralized; others actively affect those people who are naïve and who are untrained.

“The Teaching Mission came here to do several things, one of which was to tell you that you are sons of God, that God is with you, that you need to learn the moral, ethical socially conscious ways of living to grow spiritually, to know what revelation is again, to identify and discern what is of the Father and what is not. And in this discerning, you discern also what is from the Father through your fellow brothers and sisters.

“Many of them are religious, but they are not spiritual, and in their religiosity, they are even egotistical. You must discern what is of God and what is not of God.

“We are not anti-religion, as you know; we thoroughly support religion of the worship of the Father. We also support the revelation of God through his speaking in your mind; his

speaking through myself; through Christ Michael—as he did through his Son, Jesus Christ.

“Revelation continues; be open to it; discern it; learn it; and learn how to work in co-creative participation with us. This is what is needed to heal your world, to bring it into the days of light and life, co-creatively with us. If you are unable to learn those things, your world will continue as it is—that would be most unfortunate.

“Later, you will be able to see clearly in your monorail review time, where you failed to take advantage of those opportunities that were so blatantly obvious in front of you.

“You see, although it is not a sin not to take advantage of these opportunities, it is an act of omission. We ask you to act in commission, co-creatively to heal your world and to literally save it from centuries of darkness.”

With all of these perspectives in hand, from both humans and celestials, it is finally left to the reader to evaluate, discern, judge and continue to exercise free will to influence the planet. I believe these same spiritual insights were in the heart and mind of Vern Grimsley. He spoke eloquently to them.

All humankind are one vast family This world our home.

We sleep beneath one roof, the starry sky.

We warm ourselves before one hearth, the blazing sun.

From one floor of soil we stand

And breathe one air

And drink one water

And walk the night Beneath one luminescent moon.

The children of one God we are

And brothers of one blood

And members in one worldwide Family of God.