

MINUTES OF
TRIENNIAL DELEGATE ASSEMBLY
OF
FIFTH EPOCHAL FELLOWSHIP

June 22-23, 1991

The Triennial Delegate Assembly of Fifth Epochal Fellowship was held on Saturday, June 22 and Sunday, June 23, 1991. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. in Reid Hall at Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, Illinois, U.S.A. pursuant to a call issued in May 1990.

The President, David N. Elders presided and the Secretary, Brent St. Denis, recorded the minutes of the meeting.

In addition to all of the Delegates and Alternates listed in the report of the Credentials Committee to follow were Executive Committee members Avi Dogim, Steve Dreier, Lynne Kulieke and Dan Massey along with guest speaker Melissa Wells. Also attending were approximately five observers and staff members John Hales and Matthew Block.

The Chairman welcomed the Delegates and Alternates and officially opened the Triennial Delegate Assembly.

Jim Jarnagin called upon the Delegates and Alternates to be sensitive to the views of all during the discussions to follow and for individuals to refrain from lengthy statements in the interest of group process.

Mr. Elders gave a brief address which was followed by an inspiring keynote speech delivered by Melissa Wells. A copy of each address is on file.

The Chairman called for the report of the Credentials Committee to be presented by its Chairman Steve Dreier. He reported that the credentials of the following Delegates and Alternates had been examined and found to be satisfactory. The committee recommended the seating of the following Delegates and Alternate Delegates:

<u>SOCIETY</u>	<u>DELEGATES</u>	<u>ALTERNATE DELEGATES</u>
First Society	David Kulieke	David Owen
First Society of Los Angeles	Janelle Balnicke	Marlene Chicoine
Society of Glenview	Paul Snider	Josh Snider
First Society of Oklahoma	Michael Challis	John Lange
Orvonton Society of Chicago	Scott Forsythe	Robert Buselli
Fort Wayne Society	C. Bud Bromley	Irene Sprunger
Evergreen Society of Washington	Howard Schoffen	Elaine Monesmith
First Society of Houston	James P. Jarnagin	Carol Weatherford
Golden Gate Circle for Students of <u>The Urantia Book</u>	Dolores Nice	Larry Geis
USCC (Central Connecticut)	Bill Rocap	Dale Ann Lugin
Dallas Society	Nancy Johnson	John Hyde
Rocky Mountain Spiritual Fellowship	Andre Radatus	Joan Batson Mullins

Pilot Light Society of Seattle	Janet Farrington	Marvin Gawryn
Heart of America Society of Kansas City	Betty Teresso	Don Heinerikson
Society of Greater New York	Lila Dogim	Dale Sztejnberg
The Ontario Fellowship	Scott McDougall	Cindy Hopper
Grand Canyon Society for Readers of <u>The Urantia Book</u>	Eve C. McMahon	Larry Bowman
Northern Light Society	No Delegate or Alternate elected	

Note: All vote counts are shown in parentheses as (yes, no, abstentions.)

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the report of the Credentials Committee. Carried (17,0,0).

A motion was made and seconded that the Nominations Committee and Resolutions Committee function as committees of the whole. Carried (17,0,0).

A motion was made and seconded to allow the Alternates to participate in the discussions of the meeting. Carried (17,0,0).

A motion was made and seconded that both Alternates and Delegates be considered for positions as chairs of the Nominations and Resolutions Committees. Carried (14,2,1).

It was the sense of the group that the chairs of the Nominations and Resolutions Committees be chosen exclusively from among the Delegates and Alternates.

A motion was made and seconded that Jim Jarnagin be appointed as Nominations Committee Chair. Carried (17,0,0).

A motion was made and seconded that Scott Forsythe be appointed as Resolutions Committee chair. Carried (17,0,0).

There was a consensus that the Delegates and Alternates would deal with its procedures and the adoption of its resolutions agenda within the closed session to follow.

The annual Census Report of the Fellowship was distributed, a corrected copy of which is on file. It indicated a total membership of 1,188 as of December 31, 1990.

A brief discussion was held concerning the qualifications and skills needed of General Council candidates. The relative merits of geography, willingness to serve on the Executive Committee, personal skills/talents, society representation and ability to fulfill the requirements of service were reviewed.

There were no questions or comments on the Annual Reports of the Fellowship Committee chairs and officers.

Mr. Elders reminded the Delegates and Alternates of the need to maintain confidentiality on the sensitive matters to be discussed in the closed session, especially pertaining to the election of Councilors.

At 10:10 A.M. the Triennial Delegate Assembly recessed to conduct the business of the Nomination and Resolutions Committees in closed session.

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The Triennial Delegate Assembly reconvened in formal session at 11:30 A.M. on Sunday, June 23.

Mr. Elders called the meeting to order and requested the report of the Nominations Committee. This was presented by Eve McMahon, who indicated that it was the wish of the Delegates to elect, by resolution, the 15 candidates nominated in the closed session.

A motion was made and seconded to place the following names in nomination and to elect same for the twelve 9-year terms and the three 3-year terms on the General Council:

9-Year Terms

3-Year Terms

- Claudia Ayers
- Beth Bartley
- Janet Farrington
- Scott Forsythe
- Marvin Gawryn
- John Hales
- Everwyn Hoedemaker
- Geri Johnson
- Paul Knott
- John Lange
- Lyn Davis Lear
- Lee F. S. Smith

- Glen Bell, Jr.
- Duane Faw
- Joseph Liszka

Carried (17,0,0).

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Mr. Elders called for the report of the Resolutions Committee. Scott Forsythe reported that it was the will of the group to pass single resolutions in formal session to ratify the vote counts and decisions made in closed session. The minutes of the Triennial Delegate Assembly were to record same as though they occurred in formal session.

The Chairman asked whether there were any objections to the recommendation. There were none.

A motion was made and seconded that all vote counts on resolutions recorded in the closed session be considered as the vote counts in formal session. Carried (17,0,0).

A motion was made and seconded that the resolutions dealt with in closed session be hereby ratified. Carried (17,0,0).

In accordance with the instructions of the Triennial Delegate Assembly here follows the record of resolutions and votes. (A summary of relevant discussion is also included). The record of the Resolutions Committee deliberations was prepared by Betty Teresso.

The Delegates agreed:

- . to allow Alternate Delegates to amend and make resolutions, although only Delegates would be allowed to vote
- . to destroy the election ballots (and records) after the adoption of the Nominations Committee report in formal session
- . to number each resolution and to deal with some as a group where appropriate

Resolutions #1 through #5 were grouped for discussion purposes. These generally deal with organizational issues such as society representation on the General Council, term of office, representation for members-at-large on the General Council, annual delegate assemblies and the need for changes in the present Fellowship constitution.

A motion was made and seconded that Resolutions #1 through #5 be combined for discussion purposes and that the text of these five resolutions along with the TDA's report of its debate on the principles within the said resolutions be sent to the General Council's Judicial Committee for further work and report.

Carried (11,4,0)

Resolution #1

WHEREAS Fifth Epochal Fellowship has greater freedom to accomplish its objectives and has undergone evolution in the direction of greater autonomy; and

WHEREAS Fifth Epochal Fellowship is a fraternal organization of reader-believers of The Urantia Book who value the ideals of representative government to the extent we are able to conceive of it in its highest forms; and

WHEREAS we, the membership, would have a democratic organization that better achieves the aims of representation, that is open and responsive to the changing needs and goals of its Societies, and seeks full participation of all its members by equitable representation on the General Council;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Each society with 20 active members or more would elect two representatives to serve on the General Council. Societies having less than 20 members would elect one representative; and

Each General Council member would be elected for a 6 year term. These terms would be staggered so that elections, whereby each Society would elect one Councilor, would be held every 3 years. Initially, in June

1994, there would be 2 tiers of terms whereby one representative would be elected for a 3 year term and the other would be elected for a 6 year term; and

The General Council would grow as new societies are formed, with each new society adding to the Council one or two representatives accordingly; and

Each Society shall hold its Triennial Election for General Councilors at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the new term of office; and

There would be no further need for a Triennial Delegate Assembly, which would be abolished after this 1991 assembly.

Resolution #2

WHEREAS Fifth Epochal Fellowship seeks to encourage membership in its Societies rather than membership-at-large, it nevertheless recognizes that in many cases membership in Societies may not be practical because of widespread geographical differences. Therefore, it realizes that until such time as there are enough Societies to eliminate the need for members-at-large, Fifth Epochal Fellowship needs to provide for their representation on its General Council;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The collective body of members-at-large shall have the power to elect General Councilors from their numbers to the General Council; and

The number of General Councilors elected by members-at-large shall not exceed one for every hundred members-at-large and shall not exceed one for every ten General Councilors elected by the Societies; and

Members-at-large shall serve on the General Council for three year terms; and

The Executive Committee of the General Council shall organize and administer the election of representatives of the members-at-large, so as to hold elections at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the new term of office.

Resolution #3

WHEREAS the 1988 Triennial Delegate Assembly passed the following resolution:

As the URANTIA movement grows and internationalizes, and as the number of societies grows, there will be increasing pressure to broaden participation on the General Council, perhaps by reducing the length of terms of office and/or limiting consecutive terms.

And, the Society Delegate meeting of February 15, 1991, passed the following resolutions:

That the General Council, in close cooperation with the Societies, develop a simple and effective mechanism for regular (at least annual) Society participation in the deliberations of the General Council, including each Society electing a General Councilor as well as all other relevant ideas be evaluated in developing such a mechanism.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

An amendment be made to the Constitution to provide for direct representation by each Society on the General Council.

That terms of office for General Councilors be reduced to six years.

That with respect to members-at-large, the Judicial Committee study the matter of finding ways to bring MALs into the organizational process.

THEREFORE, responsive to the intent of the aforesaid resolutions; and determined to lower real and perceived barriers to participation by Society members and members-at-large to service on the General Council; and

RECOGNIZING that a Society directly represented on the General Council is more fully integrated with the function of the international organization, and that voting membership on the General Council represents a level of involvement far greater than any among of mere consultation; and

PERSUADED that greater membership participation of the General Council will make it a stronger body, and further establish the Fellowship as an organization representative of the broadest cross-section of Urantia Book readers;

WE RESOLVE:

One: That each Fellowship Society in good standing be entitled to directly elect one Councilor to serve on the Fellowship General Council. Election of such Councilors shall be by each respective Society's membership for a term at the Society's discretion of up to six years. Councilors seated pursuant hereto shall serve in addition to the thirty-six Councilors elected by the Society Delegate Assembly.

Two: That the General Council be empowered to appoint up to ten members-at-large who have distinguished themselves in the service of the Fellowship to serve as General Councilors for terms of up to six years. These Councilors shall serve in addition to the thirty-six Councilors elected by the Society Delegate Assembly.

Three: That the term of office for General Councilors be reduced from nine years to six years; that the Society Delegate Assembly convene biennially to elect twelve Councilors, as well as to fill any vacancies which might occur in the thirty-six Councilors elected by the Society Delegate Assembly.

Four: That the Judicial Committee draft all appropriate language and implementation procedures to effect the aforesaid changes in the Fellowship Constitution, and submit same for consideration at the 1992 General Council.

Resolution #4

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The General Council begin deliberations to modify its Constitution so that the following principles are incorporated:

The General Council will at all times be composed of at least one representative from each Society in good standing with the Fellowship.

Each Society desiring such representation shall elect its own representative to the Council, such election being made part of the Society's charter requirements.

The Triennial Delegate Assembly shall confirm each Society's representative to the Council, then elect the balance of Councilors in the traditional fashion.

The term of General Councilors be reduced to three years, with re-election allowable for up to three consecutive terms.

Resolution #5

WHEREAS more frequent and more effective input into central organizational decision making is desired by the societies,

BE IT RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Fellowship sponsor an Annual Delegate Assembly of society representatives;
- (2) That each society be asked to elect its Delegate and Alternate to serve for a three-year term culminating in the Triennial Delegate Assembly;
- (3) That the first Annual Delegate Assembly take place in 1992;
- (4) That the Annual Delegate Assembly consider resolutions to be submitted to the General Council;
- (5) That Delegates and Alternates to the Annual Delegate Assembly be invited to attend meetings of the General Council as observers;
- (6) That the General Council report back to the Assembly concerning the status of submitted resolutions;
- (7) And that a society conclave for the purpose of sharing societal wisdom and experience be held on another day at the time of the meeting of the TDA.

The discussion on resolution #1 through #5 may be summarized as follows:

- . move toward more simplicity in the organization
- . emphasize the "field" and downplay the "central organization"
- . consider constitutional change carefully
- . improve ways to accommodate members-at-large
- . the General Council elections held today seemed to indicate that the TDA could deal with geographic and society representation but the perception of representation was an important consideration

In a series of straw votes the group expressed the following views:

- (a) Society Representation (9,5,2) that a broad spectrum of society representation is desirable as long as it is consistent with the selection of the best people available and that the constitution be amended to encourage these principles.
- (b) Size of General Council - (no discussion at this time).
- (c) Length of Term of Office - (no discussion at this time).

(d) Member-at-Large Representation - (no discussion at this time).

(e) Annual Delegate Assembly - (no discussion at this time).

In the discussions concerning Resolution #6 which follows it was suggested that in areas where there is both a Society and an Area Coordinator no duplication of function existed. It is the experience of many that they both can work together quite well.

Resolution #6

WHEREAS the Fellowship avows support of the group process; and

WHEREAS the society is the formal level of the organization, without which the Fellowship could not exist; and

WHEREAS the central organization of the Fellowship has often endorsed the importance of local activities, of the need for support for those in the field doing the crucial work of extending the teachings of The Urantia Book; and

WHEREAS that central organization has described its role as becoming increasingly one of backup, coordination, and support and less one of direct control as groups emerge and become societies in an area; and

WHEREAS the representatives at the Society Conclave of June, 1989, unanimously voted that an area coordinator in a society area should report to that society and work as a member of the society not with the society; and

WHEREAS a society is a formally chartered, organized, group-functioning unit of the Fellowship while area coordinators are individuals without a constitutional mandate:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That there no longer be area coordinators in areas where there are societies; and

That instead societies be encouraged to actively develop within their areas outreach and extension methods which include designating committees or individuals functioning as an area coordinator would but as a part of the activities of that society; and

That the Fellowship give its support to that area through that group function called a society, not through its own free agent.

Not carried (1,13,2).

Concerning Resolution #7 dealing with the biography provided by General council candidates it was generally felt that more relevant information was needed. The possibility of amending the current biography form, requesting a photograph and requiring a one-page letter from each candidate were discussed.

Resolution #7

WHEREAS the selection of General Council members is of utmost importance to the direction and ideals of the Fellowship, and because the addition of new societies will mean less personal familiarity with each prospective member;

BE IT RESOLVED that hereafter, all General Council candidates be encouraged to include one page of supplementary material, to be included with the application form, listing reasons why said candidate desires to serve, as well as any other information which said candidate deems to be appropriate.

Carried (9,6,0).

Resolution #8 was proposed in response to a recommendation which has been made to the General Council concerning the Fellowship's possible involvement in the North American Interfaith Network and the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions planned for Chicago. The issue being whether affiliation of this kind implied the Fellowship was becoming a religion.

Resolution #8

WHEREAS the Fellowship was created, in part, to promote the leavening influence of The Urantia Book among all world religions and religious bodies - to enhance, deepen, and uplift the spiritual understanding and vitality of all faiths; and

WHEREAS the concept of the Fellowship is unique in that its mission encompasses all world religions and religious organizations, and for this reason the Fellowship cannot ever be one of them; and

WHEREAS to remain consistent with this purpose the Fellowship of Urantia Book readers cannot become identified as a religion, a substitute religion, or as simply another alternative among a broad diversity of competing religions; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the General Council and the Executive Committee exercise profound vigilance with regard to the way the collective identity of the Fellowship is portrayed both within and without the boundaries of this organization; and

THAT corporate membership in any other organization would tend to create confusion that would be detrimental to our overall purpose; and

THAT the General Council and Executive Committee unequivocally make clear that the Fellowship of Urantia Book readers does not aspire to become a religion in and of itself, but that it is a fellowship of individual truth seekers drawn from all religions and religious groups, representing every part of the spectrum of the human condition.

Not carried (4,9,3).

Resolution #9

BE IT RESOLVED that the proposed agenda for General Council meetings and, if requested, supporting materials be sent to the President and Secretary of each Society at least 60 days prior to any meeting of the General Council.

Carried (12,3,0).

Resolution #10

BE IT RESOLVED that the preliminary and unapproved minutes of General Council meetings be distributed upon request to the President and Secretary of any Society within 45 days of the General Council meeting.

Carried (16,1,0).

Resolution #11

WHEREAS the current trustees of Urantia Foundation have denied the religious nature of the sacred symbol of the Paradise Trinity using that symbol instead to control the Urantia movement;

WHEREAS the trustees have caused their attorneys in many court statements to cast doubt on the authenticity of The Urantia Book as a divine revelation of religious truth, and thereby brought discredit on The Urantia Book, the Urantia Foundation as a trust entity, and on the current trustees, themselves;

WHEREAS the current trustees of Urantia Foundation have promoted a litigious atmosphere rather than one of ongoing dialogue and the attempt to foster understanding within the Urantia movement;

WHEREAS the current trustees of Urantia Foundation have squandered the assets of Urantia Foundation on the promotion of such litigation rather than using such assets for the study and dissemination of the teachings of The Urantia Book;

WHEREAS the current trustees of Urantia Foundation have been unwilling to responsibly consider the advice of six out of seven past trustees of Urantia Foundation who are now living, who have formally cautioned the current trustees with regard to their actions;

WHEREAS the current trustees of Urantia Foundation have taken action to limit the distribution of The Urantia Book through the normal channels of distribution within the marketplace for books and have thereby limited access to The Urantia Book and disheartened the vast majority of individuals within the Urantia movement;

WHEREAS the broader community of readers of The Urantia Book supports the principles for which the Urantia Foundation was founded, and the legitimate and proper implementation of those principles;

WHEREAS we sincerely believe, for the reasons stated, that the current trustees of Urantia Foundation have violated their solemn trust and responsibility as trustees;

THEREFORE we, a representative community of Urantia Book readers, hereby call for the resignation of all current trustees of Urantia Foundation to enable the restoration of Urantia Foundation, whose principles as a trust entity we support, to properly administer its primary trust purpose to establish The Urantia Book as an epochal revelation of religious truth to our beleaguered planet.

Carried (15,2,0).

Resolution #12

WHEREAS we desire a visual symbol for purposes of identity and association;

WHEREAS the members of the Fellowship are currently denied the use of the concentric circles symbol in association with their group activities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the General Council be directed to conduct research that would result in the development of one or more graphic symbols for temporary use by the Fellowship and that these symbols be presented for consideration at the winter, 1992 meeting of the General Council.

Not carried (4,13,0).

Resolution #13

BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the 1991 TDA hereby send greetings to the Northern Light Society of Alaska, and wish them to know that their presence at and participation in the 1991 TDA meeting was sincerely missed. And further that the Secretary of the General Council be requested to send the above resolution, on Fellowship letterhead, to the Northern Light Society of Alaska.

Carried (17,0,0).

Resolution #14

WHEREAS the Fellowship is now a fully autonomous organization; and

WHEREAS it is important for the structure of the Fellowship to meet the current and future service requirements of members;

BE IT RESOLVED that the General Council, in consultation with Societies and Members-at-Large, undertake a review of its committee structure and that the existence of such committees be limited to a specific time span thereby ensuring a regular relevancy review.

Carried (16,1,0).

Resolution #15

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Prior to joining any organization the Executive Committee and/or the General Council will notify and consult with societies and members-at-large.

Carried (13,2,2).

Resolution #16

WHEREAS as societies have gained valuable group experience, insight and opportunity for expression through the society conclave process, BE IT RESOLVED that the societies call for an annual conclave meeting during non-TDA years.

Carried (16,1,0).

Resolution #17

A motion was made and seconded that, at each future Triennial Delegate Assembly, the Orientation Committee highlight the value of society representation on the General Council.

Not carried (3,14,0).

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The Chairman asked if there was any Old Business to be addressed. There was none.

The Chairman asked whether there was any New Business to address. There was none.

A motion was made and seconded to waive the reading of the minutes with the understanding they would be mailed out to the Delegates and Alternates following the TDA meeting.

Carried (17,0,0).

There being no further business the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 11:40 A.M., sine die.


Secretary

Approved:


Chair