

# PIPELINE TO GOD

Chapter 5 of

*How to Know What to Believe*

by Harold Sherman

While every incident and experience in this chapter is true, as reported, we have decided to give fictitious names to the book and to those directly concerned and to let the story speak for itself, illustrating as it does the fallacy of accepting any so-called "revelation," however received or supported by sincere believers, as the "infallible word of God."

Today there are many "spiritual" leaders who have attracted large followings and who profess to be inspired by God or Jesus or other Celestial Beings, even representing themselves as new messiahs.

This chapter, describing our personal experiences, is characteristic of many, demonstrating as it does the opportunity that always exists for human editing, human error, and sometimes deliberate falsification.

Martha and Harold Sherman

I have received scores of manuscripts (and continue to receive the same) from people who felt they had been chosen as special agents of God to be channels for the reception of spiritual knowledge. Many had aroused great anticipation in us but had only ended, upon examination, in disappointment.

Somehow Martha and I felt that this project in Chicago was different -- that it was, at last, what had been claimed for it: a true revelation, presented by a Corps of Higher Intelligences, designed to "serve humanity's needs for the next thousand years."

Undoubtedly, it was Harry Loose's feeling for it that had conditioned us. Our close association with him and our confidence in his own demonstrated higher powers of consciousness had caused us to accept the *Urantia Revelation* manuscript, sight unseen, as something really super.

Through Harry Loose's former connection as detective at Hull House, we had made arrangements with the attorneys in charge of the estate to permit me to dramatize the life of Jane Addams, world renowned Social Settlement woman, which gave us the excuse to come to Chicago in May of 1942 after having written the screenplay on the life of Mark Twain for Warner Brothers.

At a time in my writing career when practicality dictated that I should have taken advantage of the recognition and opportunity that had come to me on the coast, we might have stayed on in Hollywood and continued to write for pictures. Certainly it would have been much more lucrative than the gamble of this new creative assignment, but we were willing to put everything else aside.

Not only that, but to free our minds as much as possible for concentration on the massive *Urantia Revelation* manuscript, we sent our younger daughter, Marcia, to stay with relatives in Traverse City, Michigan, for the summer, and our older daughter, Mary, to a position as receptionist at Hull House. We had been told it would require a number of months to thoughtfully go through the manuscript once, and as a consequence, we mapped out a schedule of four to five hours reading a day.

How much Harry Loose knew about what we were to encounter, we perhaps will never know. He had been careful not to "color" in advance any impressions we might have of the *Great Book* and the people behind it by any comments he might make while in our presence.

In retrospect, he must have been aware of things that were

happening to the manuscript in its preparation, which was not going "according to plan" or as originally intended. What he may have thought that we or anyone could do about certain practices, which, if discovered, would need correction for protection of the integrity of the material, is likewise an open question.

With this build-up we had received, we were totally unprepared for our entrance upon one of the most challenging periods of our lives -- a period that would test our mental and physical endurance to the utmost, as well as our faith in human nature.

It should be stated here that Martha and I had stopped off in Chicago in July of 1941, en route to Hollywood, to meet Dr. William S. Sadler, noted psychiatrist, at which time we were accepted as Forum members upon signing a pledge of secrecy. This permitted us to return to Chicago, when possible, to read the *Urantia Revelation Papers* on the premises, but we were not allowed to mention or discuss them with anyone outside the Forum members until *The Urantia Book* itself was published.

The contact with Dr. Sadler and the *Urantia Revelation Papers* had been arranged by phone by his cousin, Mrs. Kellogg of Marion, Indiana -- who, with her doctor husband, Mr. Kellogg, had engaged in psychic research with us during the time we had lived in Marion in the early 1920s.

Later, when we arrived on the coast and told Harry Loose we had joined up in Chicago with those in charge of the *Great Book* manuscript, which he had written us about, Harry Loose was delighted.

It was perhaps because of my profession as a writer, the recent Mark Twain work, and the reputation that had come to me through the experiment in long distance telepathy with the Arctic Explorer, Sir Hubert Wilkins, that the presence of Martha and myself in Chicago to study the *Urantia Revelation Papers* caused quite a stir among Forum members.

This gave us an immediate personal contact with the doctor and his secretary, Miss Emma Christensen (Christy), and members of the doctor's family: his son, Bill Junior, and his son's wife, Leone; a brother-in-law and wife, Alfred and Lucy Buxton. There was also the financier Raymond Stafford, with his wife, his son, Ray Junior, and wife, Marjory.

It was somewhat embarrassing for us to be placed in such a favored position at the outset against so many old-time members, especially at social occasions when we were invited to sit at the

great man's table. However, all members seemed to accept any mandate of the doctor without question or complaint.

As new members, Martha and I had to do a vast amount of "catch-up" reading, which necessitated our spending some hours in the library of the three-story brick building each day. The Papers were brought to us from the vault in typewritten form by Christy, in chronological order -- ninety-two in all -- and it required almost three months for the entire Urantia Revelation manuscript to be completed, with Martha and I reading it together. We were told that the original script had been burned after typed copies had been made to preserve the anonymity as well as the identity of the human instrument through whom the "revelations" had come.

On August 20, our friends H.C. and Mary Mattern (real names) came through Chicago on their annual tour of big city firms for which they did the cleaning and preserving of leather-upholstered office furniture. We had planned to introduce them to Dr. Sadler on their arrival and to arrange for their membership in the Urantia Revelation Forum.

It was an evening appointment, and we found the doctor to be in an unusually amiable, talkative mood, disposed to give us a more complete version of the origin of the Papers than we had ever heard before or since. As soon as the long session was over, Martha and I crossed the street to our apartment in the Rutledge Hotel and worked into the early morning to make a detailed written record of the information that the doctor had imparted.

"About thirty-five years ago when Dr. Lena Kellogg Sadler [his wife] and I were young physicians together, we decided to move, but the place we had in mind was not yet available. We were directed to a furnished apartment in the neighborhood, which we took for several months until our place was ready.

"We had been there about two weeks, and some of the tenants had apparently learned we were physicians, because one of them, a woman living directly below us, rapped on our door about 11:00 p.m. as we were in the act of retiring. She said, 'Will you please come downstairs with me? Something has happened to my husband. He's gone to sleep; he's breathing very strangely, and I can't wake him up.'

"We slipped on our bathrobes and went down to her apartment, where I saw a medium-sized man, approaching middle age, asleep in bed, breathing very fitfully. He would take a couple of short, quick breaths and then would hold his breath for a time, long enough for any normal human to have gotten black in the face, but nothing happened. I took his pulse and was surprised to find it was normal. I then tried to arouse him with every known method, even to sticking pins in him -- but failed. His wife seemed to be a somewhat nervous and superstitious type. She was frankly frightened, even though I assured her that he seemed to be in good physical shape, despite his peculiar actions.

"We sat about and waited for him to return to consciousness, during which time his body gave several violent jumps and starts. Finally, after about an hour, he awoke and looked around and saw us. We had propped him up on pillows, and he now turned to his wife and asked, pointing at us, 'Who are these people?' She explained that we were doctors she had called in when she found she couldn't awaken him, and he said, 'What's

wrong? What's happened?'

"I asked him 'How do you feel?' He said, 'I feel fine.' I said, 'What have you been dreaming about?' He said, 'I haven't been dreaming at all.' I said, 'You've been jumping about on the bed.' He said, 'I don't know anything about that. I can't understand it.'

"I made him promise that he would come to my office the following morning for a complete physical exam. This he did, and I gave him every test but found him to be in excellent physical shape. I got his family history, and there were no cases of insanity or epilepsy among any of his antecedents or present relatives. In my investigation of psychic phenomena I had witnessed many so-called trance states, but this phenomenon he experienced seemed to be something different. Most of the trance cases I had contacted were those of emotionally unstable or hysterical women. But here was a hard-boiled business man, member of the board of trade and stock exchange, who didn't believe in any of this nonsense and who had no recollection of what happened during these strange unwakeable sleep states.

"I told him I would like to keep him under observation, to which he readily agreed.

"Nothing happened for several weeks, and then, one night, about the same time, his wife called us and said he was having one of those spells again. We went down, and I gave him some more tests and tried new ways to rouse him -- all without effect. His labored breathing, his sudden breaking off and then no breathing at all would have been alarming had not his pulse remained strong and even throughout. The whole thing was baffling. When he awakened, he was, as before, unconscious of anything having transpired.

"This sort of experience was repeated at different times of night until the fall of the year, when we were able to move to the residence of our choice. This man's lease expired that same fall, and he moved into an apartment house in the same block so he could be near us.

"One night, when we were called to his new address, as we sat by the bedside, Dr. Lena Kellogg Sadler noticed that he was moistening his lips as though he were preparing to speak. She said, 'Perhaps he wants to talk to us. Maybe if we ask him a question, we'll get an answer.'

"She did so, and to our great astonishment he did reply; but it was not his voice. It was that of what we afterward learned to be a *student visitor* on an observation trip here from a far distant planet! This being apparently conversed with us through this sleeping subject and expressed ideas and philosophies which struck us as entirely new.

"I had been led to believe, through previous study and research, that all such manifestations, however phenomenal, were the work of the subconscious. I therefore got this man in my office several days later, since other entities were apparently coming through him, and secured his permission to submit to hypnotism that I might explore his subconscious. It was difficult to get him under, but when I finally did so, I was amazed to find no consciousness whatsoever of the subjects discussed by these purported beings, which we had all, by this time, started to record

in long hand and later combined.

"I now felt that I needed help in solving the causes behind this mysterious phenomenon, and I called in other doctors and scientists, friends of mine, as well as Houdini and Thurston. They were equally unable to furnish any explanation. Finding by now that we could communicate by *direct voice* with different *student visitors* and other *beings*, we began to look forward to each 'contact,' as we came to call them, and enjoy the opportunity of asking questions, which always brought the most stimulating and unexpected answers.

"We took to writing out questions in advance about the universe and asking them verbally whenever given the chance. Finally, as a test, I worked out fifty-two questions privately and memorized them in my own mind [the doctor was noted for a photographic memory], deciding to wait and see whether these so-called *student visitors* might be able to divine what was in my own consciousness.

"One night, a particularly electrifying personality seemed to be present from a distant planet and had greatly excited us by his comments. As he was about to go, I addressed him, saying, 'How can you prove that you are who you say you are?' He replied, 'I cannot prove -- but you cannot prove that I am not.' He then stunned me by continuing, 'However, I have just received permission to answer forty-six of the fifty-two questions you have been holding in your mind.'

"Dr. Lena Kellogg Sadler spoke up and said, 'Why, Doc, you haven't any such questions, have you?' And I had to admit, 'Yes, Lena, the *exact* number!'

"This personality then proceeded to give me the answer to the forty-six as promised. When he had finished, he said, 'If you people really knew what you had here, you wouldn't take up our time asking silly, trivial questions like this. You would ask us something really significant and important.'

"We got home around one-thirty that night, but there was no sleep in the Sadler household. We stayed up the rest of the night discussing and formulating questions so that we might be prepared for the next contact.

"At this point I must go back and tell you that a few months previously I had made a lecture trip to the University of Kansas; and while there, I wrote a letter to my son, Bill, suggesting that since we seldom went to church, though I often talked in churches, I thought it would be a good idea if he and his mother would consider inviting in regularly for Sunday afternoon tea, about twenty or thirty friends with whom we might discuss religion or any other subject of mutual interest, and perhaps I would give them a little talk to stimulate these discussions. When I returned home the following Sunday noon, I found Dr. Lena Kellogg Sadler and Bill had already acted upon my suggestion and were having about thirty people in that afternoon. This was about the first of October, 1923, as I recall.

"It was in November that I was asked by some members of this little social group, which we had come to call the Forum, if I wouldn't tell of some of my experiences in abnormal psychology. And since we had not been prohibited from talking about the phenomena we had been witnessing, I related to them my

encounter with the *sleeping subject* and the strange communications we were receiving through him, and told of our being challenged to ask real questions. It suddenly occurred to me as I got to this point -- why not enlist the services of this group in the asking of such questions, and I called upon them to help me. I said, 'Come back next Sunday with all the profound questions you can think of, having to do with God and the universe, and we'll see if these intelligences can answer them.'

"The following Sunday the group arrived with over *four thousand* questions! Dr. Lena Kellogg Sadler and I spent several days sorting and classifying them. Then we held them in readiness, hoping for the opportunity of 'calling the bluff' of the higher intelligences. We were, as we thought, 'loaded for bear.'

"Some weeks went by and nothing happened. We thought we had them stumped, and then one morning at 6:00 a.m., the phone rang. It was the man's wife calling, 'Come over, quick!' she said. 'What's happened?' I asked. 'Is he still asleep?' 'Yes, but that's not it,' she replied. 'Please get over here -- hurry!'

"We dressed like volunteer firemen and arrived out of breath. She led us to the desk in his study and picked up a voluminous manuscript of 472 pages, written in his own hand. I said, 'Where did this come from?' She said, 'I don't know. He made some strange noises in his sleep and woke me up, and I saw it here on the desk.' I asked, 'Has he been out of bed?' She said, 'Not to my knowledge. I don't see how he could have gotten out without waking me -- and he's not awake yet.' I said, 'Is this his handwriting?' She said, 'It's his handwriting all right -- but I don't see how he could have done it.'

"*I took a look at the manuscript and saw to my great astonishment that it was the answer to all of the questions that had been formulated by ourselves in our Forum group!*

"I couldn't wait any longer. I took this bulky manuscript into the bedroom and wakened the subject. I said, 'Do you know what you have been doing in your sleep?' He said, 'I haven't been doing anything.' I said, 'Oh, yes, you have -- look at this! Isn't this your handwriting?' He stared at the manuscript. 'Yes, it's my handwriting,' he identified, 'but I didn't do it.'

"I estimated that it would take a normal individual seven to eight hours, writing at top speed, and the subject matter was so profound and yet so intelligently set down that I knew it was beyond human capacity to achieve. I phoned Christy and told her to bring over at once a 'grip device' for testing muscular fatigue. I reasoned, if he had physically written all this, his right arm would give evidence of it -- but the device registered no fatigue whatsoever.

"We took the Papers home and had them typed. They concerned the Universal Father, the Supreme Being, The Central and Super Universes, and the Isle of Paradise. It was an unforgettable occasion when I appeared before the Forum group and announced, 'Well, we got the answers to our questions all right,' and they sat awestruck and speechless as we read the Papers to them. This was all we needed. Reading of these Papers led to hundreds and thousands more questions, and more Papers commenced coming through.

"We found, there seemed to be an organized group of

high intelligences on `the other side,' prepared to present to us the whole astounding story of the universe, leading from God, the Universal Father, down to the origin of the human creature, man, and his ultimate glorious destiny beyond the reaches of time and space.

"This continued for perhaps seven or eight years when what we considered the first edition of the Papers was finished. At that time, the Forum received its first direct message, and its members were advised that now, since their knowledge had been expanded, they should be able to ask more intelligent questions and that if they would do so, as they commenced a rereading of each paper, these intelligences would completely revise the entire, tremendous manuscript.

"This job was finished about two to two and a half years ago, and again we all thought the manuscript was finally complete; but we were told, at this time, that the world events for which this revelation was designed were rapidly culminating [this was in 1939 before Hitler started his assault on the countries of Europe], and we would begin to see that those who had this revelation in charge did not intend to make it public until after the Second World War.

"It was finally decided by those controlling transmission of *The Urantia Book* to permit seventy-five Papers giving a detailed and comprehensive account of Jesus' life on earth, from His birth to His death, to be added. The book is eventually to be published without any human personalities to be identified with it in any way and no authorship ascribed to it. These higher beings have refused to use their own names and have only specified their *type* of being in the universe.

"There are only a few of us still living who were in touch with this phenomenon in the beginning, and when we die, the knowledge of it will die with us. Then the book will exist as a great spiritual mystery, and no human will know the manner in which it came about."

Different Forum members had heard different versions concerning the origin of the Papers. One of them was to the effect that a young stockbroker, name withheld, was found by his wife sitting at his writing table in his bedroom one night in a trance state, simultaneously writing two different Papers of deep philosophic content, one with each hand. The wife, unable to rouse him, phoned their friend, a psychiatrist, who arrived in time to witness the psychic phenomenon, and who read the stack of typewriter-sized pages that had been pushed off onto the floor, sheet by sheet.

Impressed as well as mystified, the doctor expressed the opinion that some passing psychic influence had taken possession of the sleeping subject, and it would probably never happen again -- but if it did, he was to be called. A few nights later, this phenomenon reoccurred, and the amazed doctor was told that he was to be the custodian of this incoming material, which was beyond the knowledge of the human instrument; and that a book, which would startle the world, was to be dictated by higher intelligences.

Thus began a strange and dramatic human saga which started in 1911 and continued for almost half a century, with paper

after paper of this voluminous manuscript appearing, each containing a chapter describing the nature of creation and the unthinkable great God behind it; the Seven Super Universes in which were countless inhabited planets; various classifications of beings, including guardian angels and ending up with a new life of Jesus, one of numberless Creator Sons who had the power to create worlds and all life thereon.

Some one to two hundred fascinated Forum members, exposed to these Papers, one by one each week, were purportedly observed in the Invisible by the higher intelligences who had dictated the material, their reactions studied, and Papers edited accordingly if some sections were not apparently understood. In any event, Papers were corrected from time to time, and sometimes magically appeared, they were told, even typed, on the desk in the doctor's office.

We observed that the Forum members accepted these stories without question. This blind acceptance of everything associated with the Urantia Revelation made it difficult for Martha and me to properly evaluate the Urantia Revelation material. As we became acquainted with more and more Forum members, they confided that after the death of the doctor's wife, Dr. Lena Kellogg Sadler, they had noticed a growing tendency for the doctor to be irascible and adamant whenever anyone associated with him showed indications of not conforming to his thoughts and ideas. They said he could be agreeable and even charming at times, until he felt himself to be crossed in any way or questioned about his conduct of the Urantia Revelation affairs. We were to have ample evidence of this developing side of his nature as time went on.

One of our basic observations that really disturbed us, after finishing a first reading of the Papers, was the fact that *The Urantia Book* purported to give a specific description of the appearance and nature of the physical universe but *presented no program for individual spiritual development*.

We wondered what service to humanity a book could be -- however profound and expansive with its precise mathematical statements of numbers of planets and universes and various classifications of intelligent beings -- if it did not deal with the *mind qualities* of human creatures and how they could be employed to advance their soul development on earth.

True, an entire section was devoted to a description of a neutral entity called a "Thought Controller," which the Creator supposedly assigned to dwell in each human consciousness, and whose duty it was to sort out the thoughts and deeds of the individual and help him develop "survival values." If this happened, the "TC," as it was abbreviated, took on personality and survived along with its "host." If the entity had not lived a sufficiently "good" life, the "TC" was then free to dwell in some other human consciousness at birth, carrying over the now nonexistent entity's experiences for use by the new "host" -- to give him a running start on possible survival. On this basis, the individual could not accomplish survival on his own and was dependent on this indwelling influence.

Martha and I could not accept this. We could accept the concept, which we had long believed, that a part of God, the Great Intelligence, *does* dwell in each human soul, and that man can

become aware of this Higher Power within him through right thinking and meditation -- and secure guidance and protection by adherence to the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual laws of his being.

The more we thought about *The Urantia Book*, the more we came up with more questions than answers. Since we had social access to the Sadlers, father and son, we took our questions to them, sometimes in written form. Bill Junior, like his father, had a photographic memory and could discourse on different chapters of the book, quoting them at length.

Some of the questions we raised were:

1. Why, with the detailed description of super beings and lines of communication existing between planets, was there no chapter in the book which explained the psychic phenomena taking place on earth?

2. How did it happen that the Jesus Papers "came through" after the book itself was announced as completed -- a book which had made no mention of Jesus as such?

3. Why, since the knowledge was supposed to be universal, applicable to all humanity, did it limit its scope and appeal and interpretation by adding a "new life of Jesus," tying it in with the Christian religion, after *The Urantia Book* was declared "finished" as of 1934?

Martha and I received no satisfactory answer to these questions. Instead, Dr. Sadler characteristically showed a flare of temper, to which we now had become accustomed, when any member asked him a question he considered impertinent or uncalled for.

Had it not been for our great and almost overwhelming interest in the Urantia Revelation Papers at the time, we would not have persisted. The interest of all Forum members had been heightened by the doctor's telling us in recent Forum sessions that we should be thinking and preparing for a time in the fall when he had been instructed to surrender his custodianship of the Urantia Revelation project to the Forum. When this happened, we must assume the responsibility for the financing, publication, and distribution of *The Urantia Book*.

One night we invited Christy to our apartment as a dinner guest. During the evening we quite naturally discussed *The Urantia Book*. I pointed out to her that when it would be published, people would wonder why no mention was made of telepathy or other psychic phenomena as a preparation for the existence of such powers in higher realms. Then came the "shocker." Christy said she agreed with my contention, and since Sir Hubert Wilkins and I, as a result of our thought transference tests, had perhaps as much knowledge as anyone, why didn't we write a chapter explaining them. The doctor could submit our paper for consideration of the "higher ups," and if they okayed it, it could be inserted in *The Urantia Book*!

"Why, I wouldn't pretend to have the authoritative knowledge that the intelligences behind this book have," I replied,

trying to conceal my astonishment. "Why don't you call this significant absence of needed connective material to their attention and let *them* supply the information?"

Christy indicated that they would think about it, and the subject was dropped. But for Christy to have made this suggestion clearly revealed that humanly written insertions had been put in the manuscript, and later evidence came to light when member Clyde Bedell, one of Chicago's prominent businessmen, confronted the doctor with extensive almost word-for-word quotes from author Emery Reeves' well-known book, *A Democratic Manifesto*, which were contained in a Urantia Revelation chapter. The explanation: "Occasionally, when the intelligences dictating the Urantia Revelation Papers come across something expressed on a subject by a human, as well as they could express it, they authorize its inclusion."

As a result of this disillusioning experience with Christy, I felt I should make one last attempt to impress Dr. Sadler with the seriousness of the matter, so I sent him a registered letter, hoping to command his personal attention. It read as follows:

Dear Dr. Sadler:

Some several months after we came here and had carefully read the Urantia Revelation Papers, I questioned you concerning the glaring absence of any paper on "psychic phenomena" -- such as humans have verifiably experienced on earth in times past and are experiencing now. And yet the book deals authoritatively with many phases of spiritual phenomena beyond the grasp, sensing, and actual understanding of average man.

Eventual readers of this great document in public form are going to be expected to accept the existence of all these higher phenomena on faith. But, since man is an experiential being, and we must consider him on the basis of his present development and enlightenment, he is going to be sorely perplexed at finding no mention or explanation of "psychic experiences" which he KNOWS he has had -- which give him evidence that TELEPATHY, under certain conditions, is a fact; that there are such things as ASTRAL visitations on occasion; and that the so-called DEAD are permitted to return on certain missions and under certain circumstances. I am not tailing spiritualism when I make this latter statement.

You decided, personally, long years ago on your own admission to me, that there were no genuine phenomena except that of the nature you had encountered with the "instrument" and the other "sleeping contacts" reported to you.

Millions of humans now living and still to be born will challenge this attitude as reflected in the pages of *The Urantia Book*, for too many "psychic experiences" are occurring right along to which they can testify. And no scientist can laugh these experiences off or explain them away.

It is a great error and will arouse great controversy, confusion, and dissension for *The Urantia Book* to indicate positively that no one can communicate with the dead and that the dead, under no circumstances, can or do return to this earth. This is a deliberate wrong statement -- an untruth -- and cannot have

been made by higher intelligences, for they KNOW better. With *The Urantia Book* containing such false inferences, many humans who have had genuine experiences are not going to know what sections of the book to believe or disbelieve, and they are apt to end up by doubting it all.

I submitted a series of questions covering the entire subject to "psychic phenomena" months ago. Were they carefully gone over by you and the other "contact commissioners" and presented for consideration and possible answering in the former regular manner, or were they pigeon-holed arbitrarily by you because you have a set human conviction that none of the "psychic phenomena" are actually existent?

Have you, by your attitude, altered or excluded any material or truths which should be in this *Urantia Revelation Book*?

You know, in your own mind and heart, the steps you have taken which have not been authorized by higher intelligences. You will have to answer for each one of these steps . . . but there is still time for you to clear up *much*.

It should hardly be necessary for me to remind you that, if any material intended for *The Urantia Book* has been withheld or wrongly interpreted or purposely misunderstood or altered for personal or biased reasons, or because of a "closed mind" attitude -- you will be held responsible as trusted custodian for centuries yet to come.

My only interest, as always, is in the purity, unadulterated genuineness, and complete authenticity of *The Urantia Book*. I shall know, and others will know, if when it is published, any of the Papers have been tampered with for any human reason whatsoever.

Sincerely,  
(signed) Harold Sherman

This communication, addressed to the doctor, brought no reply. But Martha and I were in for another disturbing factor when, upon reading the legal papers concerning the incorporation of the Urantia Foundation, we found provisions for a self-perpetuating board of directors ("Trustees") who never intended to give up custodianship, who could vote themselves any salaries they wished, or invest any monies received as desired, rather than putting the resources behind further exploitation and publication of the book itself. These stipulations ran counter to the directions purportedly received from the higher intelligences, as well as the assurances the doctor had given the members who had already contributed monies to books of his own that he had published, as well as toward the financing of the forthcoming *Urantia Book*.

For a man with the distinguished background of Dr. Sadler, who was one of the great pioneer psychiatrists of his day, an outstanding authority on comparative religions, who presented theological seminars for assemblies of The United Protestant ministers, it is readily understandable why he had been "chosen" as "custodian" by "higher intelligences" in charge of the reception of these spiritual messages. Old-time Forum members said that Dr. Lena Kellogg Sadler had been the "balance wheel" in this unusual medical team, but with her passing, the doctor seemed to become

less tolerant and more impatient with Forum members who disagreed with him.

With the closing down of the Sunday afternoon Forum meetings for the summer recess, the doctor again announced that he was surrendering his custodianship at the first fall session, which announcement was greeted with a fever of excitement and anticipation. The membership-at-large could hardly wait for a gathering shortly thereafter at the home of Ben and Beatrice Deane for the purpose of exchanging thoughts and ideas.

At this meeting I inquired if they knew, of course, that the charter for the Urantia Foundation did not permit any turnover of the custodianship, that it was held in trust for the doctor, his family, and the Staffords, and that the rank-and-file members actually had no voting control or participating rights. This was news to all present, although some recalled the doctor having read the charter straight through, when first drawn up, allowing no questions and calling for a vote of approval, which was unhesitatingly given.

Clyde Bedell, one of the most active members, volunteered to go to the doctor's office, read a copy of the charter, and report back.

Within a week, the Deanes phoned Forum members and invited them to come to their home again, stating that Clyde Bedell had read the charter and had a report to make.

"Harold was right," he said, "and I think something should be done about it."

He then produced a petition to be presented to Dr. Sadler, which he had personally drawn up, based on some of the points I had raised in my letter to the doctor. The petition was ready for signing. It called in a friendly way for a discussion of the charter as a first order of business when the Forum reconvened in the fall.

After some discussion, the petition was passed around and all except Bill and Dorothy Elms affixed their signatures.

"Come on," urged Clyde Bedell. "Let's make it a hundred percent!" And the reluctant Elms signed.

Then a volunteer committee of Larry Bolton, Ben Deane, and Nancy Dietrich was formed to call upon the doctor and present the petition.

The Elms suffered pangs of conscience intermingled with fear as they contemplated what they had done in putting their signatures on the petition. They didn't sleep that night, and when morning came, they were of one mind -- they must go to the doctor and privately inform him of what was getting ready to happen.

The doctor listened to the Elms' account and told them they had "been moved to protect the new revelation project by the higher intelligences," that they would be rewarded for their actions, and that he was "now receiving instructions" as to just how to handle this "uprising."

When the committee of three arrived later that day, the doctor surprised them by stating that he knew what they were coming to see him about, that he had been "*taken out of his physical body the night before and transported to the Deane home in his spirit form,*" where he "*saw and listened to everything that was said in the invisible.*"

He told the astounded committee that it had been revealed

to him that Harold Sherman was "under the influence of Lucifer for the purpose of destroying this Urantia Revelation by planting the seeds of distrust and revolt in Forum minds." The doctor went on to say that *Martha Sherman* was "an innocent dupe of this evil influence manifesting through her husband," but that Sherman would be dealt with; and that every Forum member who had signed this petition must come in, ask forgiveness, and personally scratch out his or her signature. Otherwise, they would run the risk of excommunication, even loss of eternal life.

The committee members retreated in utter confusion and bewilderment, leaving the signed petition in the doctors keeping. He told them that every member who had affixed his or her signature would be given a chance to undo what he had done before a sentence would be pronounced upon them.

Martha and I, situated in the Rutledge Hotel across the street, had previously been kept informed of all Forum interests by various members. Knowing the time the committee was to meet with the doctor, we awaited word as to the outcome. It did not come. A day passed, then another, no phone calls, complete silence from every front. We finally phoned several members at whose homes we had been dinner guests and had enjoyed the friendliest of relationships. All we could learn was that "something terrible happened," and that we would hear about it later, probably from the doctor himself. No one was talking.

Finally a telephone call from the hotel lobby. A woman Forum member whom we had not yet met introduced herself. "My name is Julia Fenderson. Could I come up and speak with you a moment?" She appeared to be in her fifties, soft-spoken, apparently deeply concerned.

"I've been told some awful things about you, especially Mr. Sherman," she said. "I just couldn't believe them, so I decided to come and see for myself."

Then she informed us for the first time of what had occurred -- and the wrathful action the doctor was now taking. Christy had been phoning and setting up appointments with each Forum member, at fifteen-minute intervals all day and into the night, and the doctor had been telling Forum members individually of the attempted "Lucifer rebellion." Each had been required to ask forgiveness, then take his or her name off the petition, following which the women members had received a kiss from the doctor as a "symbol" of their "forgiveness." The great majority of the signers were bowing to this decree. Julia Fenderson said that she, herself, had taken her name off the petition, but she didn't know why. But she refused to let the doctor kiss her and told him she would have to know more about both sides of this issue before she could make up her mind. She went on to say that she had never met the Shermans; but that they had seemed like nice, honorable people, and she found it hard to believe that Mr. Sherman had been animated by the Lucifer spirit.

When she told us that she knew of only four others of the entire group of signators who had resisted the purported command from the spiritual authors of *The Urantia Book* to have nothing to do with the Shermans, we commended her for her courage and forthrightness. Julia Fenderson said Forum members were being instructed to ostracize us completely, not to speak to us by phone

or in person or have anything to do with us directly or indirectly. We were to be treated as though we didn't exist; and members were led to believe that they were being spied upon in the invisible and that the doctor would be made aware of any infraction of this mandate, which would result in their punishment.

By dealing with the members singly, rather than facing them as a group, the doctor was able to exercise his authority without challenge, and each was given to understand that when all names had been expunged from the petition, the doctor would call in Harold and Martha Sherman and dispose of them in line with special instructions from higher sources.

Julia Fenderson went on to say that Forum members, talking among themselves, privately referred to Dr. Sadler as "the little Pope," and his specially selected "board of control" as the "Vatican," but all admitted their helplessness in speaking out against his rule, however such a protest might be justified. "We've got to go along with him, like it or not," Clyde Bedell conceded. "I don't know what to make of his charges of Sherman being animated by the spirit of Lucifer, but maybe the doctor has access to knowledge not possible to us. He's certainly taking radical action, and he told me that he had been instructed not to turn over the custodianship at the fall meeting -- that until the Lucifer rebellion had been put down, the destiny of the Urantia Revelation project was in peril and needed every protection."

It required a little over a week for every Forum member who had signed the petition to be contacted and put through the ritual of removing their signatures. Then, Dr. Sadler had announced, it would be the Shermans turn to "face judgment."

When Christy phoned us, Martha answered. She was crying as she told her that we were to see the doctor at four o'clock that afternoon without fail. Martha assured her that we would be there.

At the fateful hour of four, we were ushered into the presence of the "great man" by Christy, who gave evidence of being under high nervous tension. The doctor sat in the meeting room, his short, pudgy frame giving the impression of a "little Napoleon," as he gazed at us severely through thick-lensed glasses. He held some note Papers in his hand, containing penciled scribbling.

"Sit down!" he ordered, waving the Papers. "What I have to say applies mostly to Harold. I was told before Mrs. Kellogg sent you to us, to beware of a writer who will make application to join the Forum -- because he might be under the influence of Lucifer, without his knowledge, and might try to disrupt the Forum."

The doctor then referred to the notes, which he said he had made at the time and put in his file and never thought of again until this incident occurred. He said he had never even told Christy of this happening until now. He then implied that Harold needed psychiatric treatment to free him from this Lucifer influence and expressed sympathy for Martha who should be relieved to have Harold's mental condition corrected.

Martha and I looked at one another, and we both stood up at the same time.

"We don't believe a word of this!" I challenged. "Do you

mean to say you would have had a warning from higher intelligences in whom you profess to have such faith, and would have forgotten it, and not immediately associated it with us when we appeared on the scene? Those notes you made were all phony!"

With this we walked out.

It was mid-summer by this time, and in the weeks that followed few members got in touch with us; and if any chanced to see us on the street, they hastened to the other side or turned in the opposite direction to avoid any possible confrontation. At one time, I boarded a bus and saw Vern Grimsly seated at the other end. I moved toward him, and when Vern saw me coming, he leaped up and jumped off the bus with abject terror in his face. It was clearly evident that most Forum members had been completely dominated by fear.

What should or could we do about it? Should we fold up our tent and quietly steal away, or should we remain, attend the Forum meeting in the fall, and challenge the doctor to make his charges against us in public so we could answer them? Would this prove to the Forum members that they, themselves, should not fear the doctor or anything he or his higher powers could do to them, and perhaps bring the members to their senses, cause them to realize how ridiculous and false this whole procedure was?

After thoughtful deliberation, we decided to remain and face the issue, even though almost everyone had been turned against us and we knew the doctor was confident we would not dare show up again on his premises. This ostracism was his conceived method of driving us away and ridding the Forum and *The Urantia Book* of the Lucifer menace. We could tell from the frightened and apprehensive attitudes of the Forum members that they were expecting some awful fate to befall us at any moment, even to the point of our being annihilated.

However, something happened to me about this time which gave Dr. Sadler and Forum members a severe jolt. I was contracted by the Goldblatt Brothers Department Stores to present a radio series six nights a week over Chicago *Tribune* station WGN, based on my book *Your Key to Happiness*, which I had presented over the CBS radio network in New York City some years before. This made me a well-known personality in the Chicago area and the personal-philosophy, question-and-answer program proved highly popular, breaking all mall return records.

The eventful day for the reopening of @the Forum meetings finally arrived. Meeting time was always three o'clock sharp when Dr. Sadler would enter and take his position, a Urantia Revelation paper in hand, ready for reading. While the Forum members were coming in, the doctor often followed a routine of standing at the top of the stairs, on the landing, with his secretary, Christy, welcoming and shaking hands with the arrivals.

Just inside the door, on the lower level, it was usually the custom of the doctor's brother-in-law, Alfred Buxton, to take his stand. Anyone who didn't belong, who might have thought, with people going in, that this was a public meeting, could thus be screened out.

Five minutes before the starting time of three o'clock,

most of the Forum members already present, we made our appearance. As we entered the door, Mr. Buxton gave us a startled, unbelieving look and fled up the stairs to carry the news of our arrival to the doctor.

As we mounted the stairs, we caught a glimpse of the doctor hastily retreating from the stair landing, followed by Christy and Mr. Buxton, seeking to avoid direct contact.

As we stepped inside the small auditorium itself, we saw astonished Forum members wondering where we would elect to sit. We glimpsed a row with only two people in it, halfway back, two seats on the aisle, to which we headed. The Forum members in this row quickly vacated, so we had the whole row for ourselves. No one spoke; they looked toward the doctor, who was up front, as though expecting him to take some sort of barring action, but this was a situation that the doctor didn't know how to handle at the moment.

The reading of the Urantia Revelation paper began. Dr. Sadler's hands shook as he read; he glanced uneasily from time to time at his audience and particularly at us. Things weren't working out as he had planned. He knew now that he hadn't been able to intimidate us. We were still alive and well and unafraid of him. This was a challenge to his entire authority.

When intermission time arrived and the doctor prepared to leave the room, I stood up and addressed him as startled Forum members seemed to freeze in their seats.

"Dr. Sadler -- you have made charges against me behind my back, which I am prepared to answer. Will you now repeat these charges to my face?"

The doctor looked as though he might be on the verge of a stroke.

"You cannot speak!" he shouted. "You are a guest in my house!"

For answer, I left my row and walked, to the front to take a position beside the frustrated doctor.

"I am innocent of your charges and I demand the right to answer them!" I insisted.

"Sit down -- you can't speak -- you are a guest in my house. Sit down!" the doctor kept repeating.

At this point, the two husky Kulieke brothers, just back from military service together, left their seats and rushed forward, seizing me by the arms and shoulders.

"Shall we throw him out?" they said to the doctor.

Forum members were now in an uproar. Some were begging Martha to urge her husband to stop -- to go back to his seat before something awful happened. One man leaned over Martha's shoulder and whispered, "Sit tight!"

Bill Junior, the doctor's son, also of husky build, entered the scene threatening violence. The doctor stood by, not knowing what to do or say, as I held my ground.

At this critical moment, a new figure entered the picture. He came from the annex-type room off at the side and was a new face to most Forum members. He was our friend, H.C. Mattern, attending a Forum meeting for the first time, and we had not known he was present.

"Take your hands off that man!" he ordered, pushing the

surprised Kulieke brothers back and stepping between Bill Junior and me. Then he grabbed me and pressed me against the side wall so no one could get behind us.

"What do you think you're doing?" demanded Bill Junior. "You keep out of this!"

"Not until I know what this is all about!" said H.C. "But I know Harold Sherman, and if he is trying to defend himself against whatever has been said about him, he has a right to speak. I'd like to ask you all -- is God in this house?"

"I consider that an insult!" shouted Bill Junior.

"He can't speak -- he's a guest in my house!" the doctor once more repeated.

I was watching the reaction of the Forum members. I wanted to see if this demonstration was revealing to them -- was showing them how tyrannical the doctor was, that he must have something to fear, something he wanted to cover up, which he thought might come out in open discussion.

Amazingly enough, no one came to my defense. They sat petrified, as H.C. maintained his protective position, holding off the intended attackers.

Realizing that I had gone as far as I could in establishing that Martha and I had no fear of the doctor and no respect for the type of authority he was exercising over the Forum members, I went back to Martha, and the two of us left the auditorium.

Thereafter, for FIVE CONTINUOUS YEARS, we attended every Sunday Forum meeting, without exception, remaining only for a complete reading of the Urantia Revelation Papers to show our continuing interest in the material itself, and then leaving at intermission. We did not stay for the doctor's question and answer period, indicating a total lack of respect for or fear of him personally, and also demonstrating that he had no power to hurt or destroy us or anyone else . . . and that the doctor and his "ruling body" did not know how to cope with this situation. Help was obviously not coming from any higher source. All threats had been the doctor's own conniving and pretense.

All this time, we sat pretty much by ourselves, most members avoiding personal contact. They just could not understand why we had not been struck dead. In the interim, Ben Deane, disillusioned and threatened with blindness, committed suicide by shooting himself; the son of Bill Junior also committed suicide due to unhappy home conditions. There was no evidence that exposure to these spiritual messages had made Forum members any better humans. Less than a dozen Forum members, including Julia Fenderson, made friendly overtures toward us. But they kept us informed of Forum activities. They chose not to resign from the Forum in protest so they could keep in touch with the unusual Forum material.

As for us, we felt that the extraordinary nature of some of the writings gave proof of a high spiritual source, even though we now knew we could never endorse the book when it was finally published, because of editorial liberties that we were sure had been taken with it.

The mystery of the author of *The Urantia Book* remained. It was published anonymously in 1955, as though dictated by a host of higher intelligences. We, however, came upon a clue as to

who the human instrument might be -- and he was not the stockbroker, which story had served as a "cover" for so long. He was a person very close to the doctor, one who might have been least suspected, a self-effacing, quiet individual.

We left Chicago in May, 1947, to take up residence in the wilds of the beautiful Ozark hills. It was a great release from the tension-packed years of dedication to a project that may or may not have been worth all the pain and sacrifice. Then again, it may well have been, if the telling of this experience helps stabilize the thinking of others who have been involved in similar psychic adventures.

So as not to depend on our judgment alone, when the book was published in 1955, we sent copies to a number of people we considered outstanding metaphysical authorities, well qualified to evaluate its contents.

Sir Hubert Wilkins, whom we had interested in joining the Forum in our first enthusiasm for the material and who had been impressed, as had we, during the time the book was in preparation, distributed twelve copies to special friends. His report to us was that he had received only one interested response -- "some seemed to think it is a joke -- a novel -- or something of the kind. Anyway, the response is a good criterion of their real mind ability."

We found that most readers who attempted to study the book did not get beyond the first few pages, saying, "I don't understand it. It's too much for me," and "Who cares how many planets or ascending mortals there are? What can that mean to us?"

Christian S. Ronne (real name), a brilliant Frenchman, who has lived in this country for many years and who was formerly associated with Brentano's, New York, as head of their metaphysical book department, and later head of a similar department in Pickwick Bookshop, Hollywood, had this to say after a careful study of *The Urantia Book*.

"Since you asked for my opinion on this book, I can truthfully say, after a great deal of time spent in meditation -- over a year -- most careful and disinterested thought and study of many other similar books . . . that I cannot subscribe to the authenticity of these superhuman entities that seemingly were responsible for its inception. It is an impressive and powerful work and evidently brought together a group of influential people, no doubt men of good will, to finance its publication, in its present form. It is in the same class as many other inspired books that have resulted in bringing forth a new religion, or sect, due to the faith of tormented humans who crave to learn the TRUTH.

"How much, if any, of the original script was edited, I cannot venture to say. It is one of the very few books published in the United States that is absolutely free from typographical errors, and that is exceptional indeed in these times of hurry and stress and great imperfection in the printing of books, even so-called fine editions.

"Having read every word of its contents, I am convinced that the uniformity of its style denies the large number of its purported AUTHORS. This is aggravated considerably by the fact that there were so many differently constituted superhuman entities from vastly separated worlds and cosmoses who were employed to

dictate their special messages. Due to their tremendously different backgrounds from each world, they would have used contrasting styles of expression. There simply is too much uniformity in style, in vocabulary, and in point of view, throughout the thousands of pages of this book that deal with such a multiplicity of various subjects. To counter this criticism by saying that it was due to the fact that all these messages had to be channeled through the one subconscious mind of the medium would be a lame excuse. I am firmly convinced there was but one author, regardless of how many entities may have inspired him or how far he might have traveled on the several planes.

"There are some interesting new theories that require a great deal of thinking out. The THOUGHT CONTROLLERS and the role they play in the conditioning of the first inhabitants on this earth, especially, are most arresting until one realizes that it is a faulty and complicated way of saying that all men can receive the spirit of God in their hearts when the time comes, and when they are ready for this momentous happening in their lives as mortals.

"The detailed delineation of other strange beings is attempted and fills many, many pages. As for the chronological history of the various races of mankind, it does not agree with many top authorities. The story of Adam and Eve, and the geographical location are also quite new and most original, especially in reference to Eve and the Serpent. It is *ludicrous . . . gauche!*

"In conclusion, this book with all its tremendous array of new facts, does not explain the First Cause, which still remains unsolved, and the intrinsic difference between the Absolute and the Relative worlds, the Kingdom of God and its Creation, and the Kingdom of Man and its creation.

"All wise men, inspired men of God, have always and will always learn and then understand that TRUTH is extremely simple and can never be found through the Intellect, but only through the Heart. It is far, far better to hold one's tongue than to babble meaninglessly in the market place."

The reader should know that when I employed Mr. Ronne to make an exhaustive study of *The Urantia Book*, I gave him no information whatsoever except that it purportedly came through a "sleeping subject." I wanted to make sure that he wouldn't be prejudiced in any way in forming his opinion. Dr. Sadler had contended that *The Urantia Book* would speak for itself, and I was determined to give it every opportunity to do so. The same procedure was applied in my arrangements with my scientist friend, Adolph Thies (real name), whose comments follow.

"So, I read *The Urantia Revelation* and I could give my opinion in just one single word . . . but I dare not. Firstly, because I do not want to appear biased, and secondly, because I do not want to hurt your feelings. Honestly, Harold, I am very sorry to say to you that I failed completely to find the "profundity," and I cannot help it if this makes me a heel.

"On the whole, *The Urantia Revelation* is of no help. All the "revelations" add to the already too great burden of compulsory belief which is now breaking the back of religion. Yet, assuming

that all the Urantia Revelation presentation is true, what, then, does it offer? There is a central autocratic authority hopelessly entangled in a conflict between the Infinite and the Finite, its nature being explained with a host of phrases of adoration. All of it is functioning in a mountain of bureaucracy loaded with orders of Over and Under and In-Between Beings. The very few objectors in this set-up have been interned. All that ever was and ever will be, bearing a distinct flavor of English terminology and, sorry to note, ideology, bringing to mind the possibility that an Indian or Chinese patriarch might view the promise of his exalted future with considerable reservation.

"The anonymity of the work puts its very birth under an onerous cloud. I think the work is not only erroneous, it is fraudulent. I think the people behind this Urantia Revelation movement are trying to impose a new religion on the masses and are attempting a "piggy-back ride" on the Christian religion with the new life of Jesus story to do it.

"Strangely enough, not one of the 'whole gang' has the slightest inkling of the dawn of the atomic age. Please note how *The Urantia Revelation* always comes up with precise figures when it is safe to do so. A cycle in *The Urantia Revelation* can never be proved wrong if a phenomenon to which it applies cannot be proved.

"At this point I am upset enough to point, and point again, to the many samples of monstrous creations of wishful thinking which have deluded mankind."

All over the world there are psychics who, through use of the Ouija Board or automatic writing or direct voice or trance mediumship, are producing inspirational as well as factual material, which they interpret or have been told is coming from higher spiritual beings or sources, and which has led them to believe they have established an exclusive "pipeline" to God.

Usually these people, many sincere and dedicated, have attracted a faithful following, who have been guardedly jealous of this knowledge that has given them a privileged feeling that they have been favored over most humans.

Mary Margaret Wilson (real name) of Albuquerque, New Mexico, a highly developed woman, wrote us recently her concern over the trend of things in the psychic world -- the development of appealing but actually dangerous philosophies under the guise of Light and Truth, led by well-meaning and often deluded mediumistic men and women who are receiving messages and direction from higher sources, even purportedly from Jesus Himself.

These followers and their leaders have been told that they are the "chosen ones," selected to help save the world as well as themselves in the terrible destruction which is soon to engulf the earth.

"So many of the people involved in these groups," says M.M.W. "have become caught up in a force which has taken a very strong hold on their lives. They don't make a move without 'consulting spirit.' They follow some of the most ridiculous instructions. While they may have good intentions, it doesn't prove anything as far as their spirituality goes -- it only proves that they

will blindly follow instructions. These people are entrapped in an occult force -- not a spiritual force. And this is a point which I think it is very important to get across. How to recognize the difference between the occult and the spiritual forces.

"Quite some time ago, a psychic lady I know was caught up in such an occult force. Strangely enough, it was not a force which was received by her directly but by another person with whom she was friendly and sat in meditation. The entity came through the other person. It soon developed into the wildest tale you can ever imagine by the time they were through. True, the messages were sprinkled with many wonderful thoughts and how much good would come when they traveled all over the world as missionaries of the Lord.

"When I had an opportunity to read some of the messages, I learned that the entity had introduced himself as the 'Lama Dalai.' I immediately mentioned that they should check the encyclopedia for the proper title usage. They even refused to do that. The entity also presented himself as a dazzling spiritual being who came without light, because since he was of the 'highest' of God's beings, they couldn't stand his light. They were so adamant that their messages were coming from just such a high spiritual being that without question they followed whatever instructions they were given.

"They started to give away many of their possessions on the instructions of the entity. In fact, I still have an end table which was given to me by these people. I watched the situation develop to a point where the lady involved became nervous and distraught. She lost weight and looked haggard. When they were finally caught up in the heights of great expectation, the blow was struck and the moment of truth finally arrived. These people came to realize that they had been made the fool. No great amount of harm was done in this case, but I know of others where harm was perpetrated, and I am sure that your files reveal far more than I could ever surmise.

"But in this case, there was the same idea put forth. The entity tells that he is a very high spiritual force -- they are chosen to perform a grand mission -- they will receive instructions as they go along (almost like a soap opera) -- and they all seem to have the common message that they are to go out and speak to people to get others on 'the right track.' All of the nonspiritual experiences follow this same pattern.

"Many years ago, when I first became interested in extrasensory perception, my guidance cautioned me not to become a 'lost soul of the mind.' I puzzled about that phrase and never really understood what point was being made until I observed what happens when people submit to these forces without using their own good sense and investigate. This is what you stress in all your books -- for people to use caution and to investigate. How much wiser people would be if they just followed that bit of advice.

"It has always amazed me what people are willing to accept from an occult force. If a man walked into their living room and immediately started to tell them how great he was and spoke in lofty terms about himself, they would probably think he was an 'ass.' However, they don't have a bit of difficulty swallowing it from a nonphysical entity. It must be an ego trip, too, because

@the messages always have flattering words about the recipients of the messages. I strongly feel it is very necessary for people to sort out the real from the unreal at this critical time in our earth's history.

"If some of these blind followers of these dubious groups would stop for a minute and reflect on what would happen if everyone in the world did just what they are doing -- blindly following instructions which are given out piecemeal, not knowing why they are doing certain things -- they could reach no other conclusion but that the world would be in a state of utter chaos. Of course, they usually come back with the retort that it is a way of life for "them," but I have always thought that the essence of a spiritual life is for everyone. The results of their guidance also impinges itself on the lives of other people -- sometimes to the point of meddling -- so it really never is confined to a way of life for them only."

Our mail, as M.M.W. has surmised, is increasingly filled with tragic reports of misguided men and women who have placed their faith in such occult practices as she had described and we have experienced, only to have suffered disillusionment, often resulting in impairment of health in body and mind.

Robert von Gunten (real name) of New Midway, Maryland, who has devoted many years to the counseling of men and women seeking self-development, has this to say:

"I believe the hardest thing on me as I endeavor to make a contribution to this field is the encounters with individuals and members of some groups who are well meaning but SELF-DELUDED. Other than being direct and honest with them, I am many times not sure of their approval, for no one seems to want to be told of a delusion. It is difficult for me to understand why and how educated, sincere adults can be so deluded and blind. And what is just as bad is that others join with them in accepting and following the delusions. Certain things have been given me to know, but none of them need to be covered up in a maze of 'gobbly-de-gook,' egotism, or Savior complexes.

"I believe the same God Force is in all people, and the difference in people is their degree of choice in the direction and acceptance of that Power."

To all of which we agree.

## A SAD COMMENTARY

It must be said here that before Harry Loose passed on in the fall of 1943, he had sadly commented, in one of his last communications, that the Great Book, which he had originally recommended so highly, had been so altered because of mortal perversities and shortcomings that the project had become almost a total failure.

At that time, his statement was shocking to us and we were not yet ready to accept it. But, as things progressed, when we saw how little spiritual development came to the members and what a dictatorship existed, we were forced to conclude that Harry Loose had been right.

Now, thirty years later, as we view the unhappy aftermath, we have learned of what is happening and has happened to some

Forum members who devoted time, money, and talents in an effort to have *The Urantia Book* translated into foreign languages, to promote its sale, and to encourage the formation of study groups. They did this only to run into prosecution by the autocratic board of directors of the Urantia Foundation, overzealous in their determination to protect the copyright and the "integrity" of *The Urantia Book*, even to the point of *excommunicating* those who offend them. It is possible that the copyright itself is not valid because it is not copyrighted in any individual's name. This point may have to be decided, one day, in a court of law.

Meanwhile, three Forum members, probably more, have already sampled the legal wrath of the Urantia Foundation. Dr. Jacques Weiss, Paris member, translated and had published a French edition. Bob Burton, one of the original Forum members, financed a Spanish translation and published pamphlets containing passages from *The Urantia Book* for public distribution. Both men have become involved in litigation as a consequence, charged with violation of the copyright and other legal and ethical indiscretions. Their cases are still in the courts and Bob Burton has been made the victim of a "kangaroo court" proceeding, tried in absentia, found guilty, and excommunicated from the Urantia Brotherhood. He is still defying the mandate. Burton King, on the west coast, who has quoted freely from *The Urantia Book*, had a suit for copyright infringement brought against him, wherein he permitted the Urantia Foundation to take judgment. All of this underscores the tyrannical nature of the board of directors and their fanatical religious procedures. If *The Urantia Book* was hopefully designed to serve all mankind, why this overprotection?

Through the years, many of the Urantia Revelation followers have remained steadfastly faithful, held together more by fear than by love -- fear that severance from the Urantia Brotherhood might mean loss of identity or existence in the Hereafter.

Clyde Bedell, who took the lead at one time in protesting against the things he felt to be wrong, and who capitulated at the time of the so-called "Lucifer rebellion," has since then devoted

himself to creation of a brilliantly conceived, "Concordex of *The Urantia Book*." It is a colossal achievement, which had to have required some years in the making. To scan its amazing outline of subjects covered in *The Urantia Book* would make one feel that this authoritative list of contents must refer to a truly revelatory Second Bible.

I have the deepest admiration for Clyde Bedell, whom I have not seen or heard from since we left Chicago, for the example he has set in loyalty and the enormous energy he has expended in behalf of the Urantia Revelation project. I only regret for him and for all of us that this venture has not turned out as idealistically hoped for.

For some time after this disillusioning experience, Martha and I were disposed to look upon it as "love's labor lost," but the added perspective of more than thirty years has caused us to see compensatory values. We realized, for example, that this experience had freed us for all time from fear of religious persecution and concepts and regulations laid down by other humans in an attempt to dictate our conduct and thinking. This type of fanatical psychic practice is widespread today and is enslaving many innocent people who have been seeking answers to their mental and spiritual problems.

While we, as stated, cannot accept or endorse the book and its contents, it is fair to concede that we found some of its material thought-provoking. Perhaps you have had a similar experience with a group in support of a "psychic revelation," who have also felt or still feel they have established a "pipeline to God." If this is the case, it might be wise for you to remember that anything that goes through the mind of man is fallible and subject to possible error or fabrication. For this reason, we suggest that you question any purported "revelation," however impressive, whose mediums or sponsors declare it to be "the infallible word of God or His representatives."

(Names have been changed back to the original names).