

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

Sadler's Grave Error

As human mortals we shall never know all the reasons Sadler was chosen for the task of the Revelation. There may be many qualities that shall remain buried to our limited eyes. But other qualities are obvious.

He was devoted to God. He began as a youth, he held fast through disillusionment, and, out of that devotion, gave himself to the welfare of others throughout his life. He never denied a personal God, and he never denied a living relationship with God. That quality was essential to his personal integrity and to the integrity of the Revelation. Nothing would deter him from the responsibility that had been placed upon his shoulders. Nothing would jeopardize that trust.

He had high moral integrity. His praise was universal among those who knew him. The crisis Harold Sherman created did not deter Sadler from the responsibility he felt to a mighty Revelation. Nor did it deter him from the responsibilities he felt to his fellows for the benefit he saw in the superior quality of the Revelation, regardless of his estimate of its miraculous nature.

He was a highly intelligent man. He had ability to estimate situations, and to deal with the complexities of human relationships. He had phenomenal memory, and retention of episodes in his life which resulted in the later entertainment of many persons through his anecdotal accounts.

He was a straight, middle-of-the-road, conservative, mid-western American, who believed in God and country. Psychic phenomena were interpreted in terms of mental aberrations; they were either from the sub-conscious, or fraudulent. He long withheld judgment on the Revelation because it went beyond his conservative world view.

For all of his talents, training, experience, and devotion, Sadler made some damaging errors, and monumental blunders in human judgment that ripple yet today.

As an indication of his forward-looking perspectives consider his work on *Race Decadence*, 1922. The sub-title was *An Examination of the Causes of Racial Degeneracy in the United States*. He concentrated on two areas: Physical Decadence and Mental Degeneracy. As a physician he felt he witnessed an alarming increase in cancer, venereal disease, and so-called "old-age" disorders. As a psychiatrist he saw an apparent increase in mental and nervous diseases — feeble mindedness, epilepsy, insanity, and so on, "as they threaten the integrity and stability of the American people." He then went on to a meticulous delineation of case histories, discussion, and proposed solutions.

"We must possess more knowledge and more people must possess the knowledge which we today have, before we can begin the more sure and positive purging of the nation by corrective legislation."

He believed in applied Eugenics, and expected to write a book about it, toward

"a practical application of the laws of heredity to the human race. It will present a full and frank discussion of eugenics, with a sane and practical program for Race Betterment."

Sadler was certainly no Hitler, proposing to "cleanse" the human race toward some superior elite. However we have cause to question the wisdom of his views. He had a theory that the western world was divided between "round-heads" and "long-heads." In 1918 his book by that title was published. In the intense zeal of patriotism of World War I many were looking for the causes behind Germany's creation of that conflict. The idea of racial decadence was not uncommon. It was Sadler's theory that the Prussian "Round-Heads" had come to dominate the German race and thus national policies, while the "Long-Heads" had been suppressed racially over the centuries. The latter were supposedly more intelligent, had more noble aspirations for the betterment of mankind, and were more peaceful minded. A gradual selection toward the more aggressive "Round-Heads" then led to increasing national conflicts. Sadler presented those ideas in lectures designed to increase patriotic fervor in the United States. The United States government asked him to prepare these ideas in book form for more easy circulation.

Today we would not believe that these contrasting human traits are identifiable through such simplistic anatomical differences, although virtually all of us have had experience with individuals who are more mild mannered and others who are more belligerent. But we are far from the wisdom necessary to distinguish the true causes. Unless we could discover the genetic components we could not suggest a program of breeding to enhance the better qualities, nor would we have the wisdom to recognize the long-term ramifications of select mating. We are not competent to such "genetic engineering."

The Urantia Papers speak to just such problems in the weaknesses now being propagated through the human races.

Page 585: These six evolutionary races are destined to be blended and exalted by amalgamation with the progeny of the Adamic uplifters. But before these peoples are blended, the inferior and unfit are largely eliminated. The Planetary Prince and the Material Son, with other suitable planetary authorities, pass upon the fitness of the reproducing strains. The difficulty of executing such a radical program on Urantia consists in the absence of competent judges to pass upon the biologic fitness or unfitness of the individuals of your world races. Notwithstanding this obstacle, it seems that you ought to be able to agree upon the biologic disfellowshipping of your more markedly unfit, defective, degenerate, and antisocial stocks.

In the racial insanity and ultra-liberal notions of today's world such talk is enough to set a vast majority off into paroxysms of rage. As a people we little realize that unless something is done to control the witless reproduction of the human races we will ultimately degenerate into chaos. Our ancestors worried about such problems but the world of today is oblivious to the long-term ramifications.

We are not competent to pass upon the biologic fitness or unfitness of the individuals of our world races. But why do we not agree upon the biologic disfellowshipping of our more markedly unfit, defective, degenerate, and antisocial stocks? The answer is simple. We are an undisciplined society which has promulgated unbridled liberty as the personal right of each of us.

Sadler recognized these elements as necessary for a continued robust, vigorous, and healthy social order, even though his ideas of possible solutions were awry.

We cannot be certain how much Sadler may have been influenced by the Revelation. The notion of race improvement was not new, nor was it confined to religious sects. His books on Race were written during an early phase of the unfolding phenomena of the Sleeping Subject, before there was a Forum, and many years before the actual Revelation.

Regardless of these elements, Sadler's ideas were contained within the context of *improvement of the current social order*. It did not occur to him that a total revamping of the social order, a new world age, might be necessary to achieve such lofty goals.

Sadler's conservative mind-set not only led to his personal notions of race improvement; it also planted the seeds for serious trouble and future turmoil in the dissemination and care of the Revelation.

First, he desired some social mechanism for care of the Revelation when he would release his hand. He conceived of an absolute oligarchy of select individuals who would perform that task. They would transfer power from one individual to another when one would cease serving.

Second, he resorted to commercial law to fulfill his obligation of preservation of an inviolate text. These were the instructions he had received; these were the instructions he would satisfy. He did his best according to his understanding and his trust in human institutions.

Third, and most devastating, he permitted the Devil to enter into 533 and exercise corrupting influence upon the Revelation.

How did he execute this trust? He gathered around him an inner circle of counselors. His purpose was stable direction of the Revelation. He did not want it to slip into unsteady, immature, or hasty hands. He looked to members of the Forum who could offer mature advice.

Foremost of his counselors was G. Willard Hales. Hales had two attributes which were important to Sadler. One, Hales knew SS personally and, two, he was a highly successful business man who was also a member of the Chicago Board of Trade.

According to the *Who's Who In Chicago* for 1931, G(eorge) Willard Hales was a grain merchant who was born on a farm in Henrietta Township, Lorain County, Ohio on December 18, 1874. This made him a mere six months older than Sadler, and thus the two men felt a bond on that fact alone. His father and mother were George E. and Linda B. (Ross). He was educated at the Oberlin Academy. He married Carrie Parker Merchant of St. Joseph, Michigan on July 30, 1902. They had three children: Burton W., William M., and Caroline. Hales taught country schools and later engaged in flour milling in Ohio. He moved to Chicago in 1900. Through the help of his uncle, Burton F. Hales, who lived just up the street in Oak Park, he established a business to sell grain products. Thus he became president of Hales and Hunter Co., president of Northwestern Malt and Grain Co. from 1910, a director of the Avenue State Bank of Oak Park, and served in other prominent community and social positions, including president of the Oak Park and River Forest High School Board. He was a Republican and attended the Congregation-
alist Church.

He became a member of the Chicago Board of Trade in 1907, and continued as a member until 1952.

This last fact led me to believe that he knew SS through paths other than Sadler's remote report. If Sadler's account to Sherman was true, as attested by my ability to date their first contact, both SS and Hales were members of the Board of Trade when Sadler first met SS. Was it possible that SS felt a strong need to confide in some of his business associates concerning the unique night episodes? Did he confide in Hales? Did SS ask Sadler to make Hales a member of Contact Commission? Was this the route through which Hales became a member of the Forum, and his later important influence in the policies affecting the care and dissemination of the Revelation?

I wrote a letter to John Hales, past president of the Urantia Brotherhood, faithful administrator of Chicago Urantia functions for many years, and grandson to G. Willard Hales. Perhaps he could cast light on this question. Following is the text of that letter.

December 12, 1996

Dear John:

As you may know, after a three-year lapse I have returned to research and writing on the history of William Sadler and the circumstances surrounding the origin, publication, and dissemination of the Book. Among other elements I shall emphasize the nature and character of the people who surrounded Sadler, and who may have been influential in helping to bring the Book to the world. The Hales family, from grandfather, to father, to son, certainly were important contributors to that process.

It was many years before I came to realize that Sadler had no control over when the episodes with the sleeping subject would occur. But this realization led to acute understanding. Since the episodes occurred only when the man was asleep, they would occur only at night. Description of two episodes, both early in the phenomenon, show one at 11:00 in the evening, and another very early in the morning. Sadler used the phrase "night vigils." Since the onset of these episodes could not be predicted, Sadler was dependent upon the man's wife to alert him. Furthermore, we know from Sadler's

remarks that when he moved to a residence in La Grange the man moved to an apartment in close geographical proximity to Sadler.

Also, since the process continued as late as 1930, and since Sadler had moved to north Chicago, it was impractical that he travel from there back to La Grange when another episode would occur. Therefore, it became apparent that the sleeping subject had to move with Sadler, at least to an adjacent neighborhood. Sadler first moved into a posh neighborhood at Lincoln Park West, where he lived for several years. Sadler also stated to numerous people that the man was a "broker," although there is debate over the type of brokerage activity. This suggested also that he had an income which would permit him to live in a similar posh neighborhood.

All of these factors further suggested that it might be possible to trace the identity of the sleeping subject. We know addresses and dates for Sadler. Therefore, the man might be moving at the same time and to similar locations as Sadler. Given his occupation, city directories, and US census, the path seemed open to identify someone with moves similar to Sadler. Although I spent some hours pouring over records, I concluded that perhaps it would be better to leave the matter alone.

These elements led me to recognize that your grandfather could not have been the sleeping subject. He was in the wrong places. However, the research led to other possibilities. I surmise that your grandfather knew the sleeping subject before there was a Forum, prior to 1923. At that point there was no Christy, nor a Bill Sadler, Jr. who would have been old enough. That limited persons to Sadler, Lena, Anna, and Wilfred, or anyone else Sadler may have brought in as a consultant. I know from remarks in his books that Sadler, for example, was consulting with Howard Thurston prior to 1923. If Thurston were going to advise Sadler he quite probably was invited, without prior warning, to a "night vigil."

I believe the contact with your grandfather took place in the following manner. I believe SS and your grandfather knew each other professionally. I believe SS spoke with your grandfather in confidence about this problem he was having while he was asleep. Not only was Sadler looking around for answers, so also was SS. But he had to keep matters discreet. Otherwise, he would have brought social and professional problems upon himself. Therefore, the number of people he personally consulted probably was severely limited. SS may have invited your grandfather to witness one of the night episodes. This led to your grandfather's contact with Sadler. Your grandfather thus became one of the "group" who were witness to the "night vigils."

I would like to gather more concrete facts concerning your grandfather, your father, and yourself in contribution to the revelation process. We have *Who's Who*, but that is scanty information. We have city and telephone directories to locate addresses. We could go over the records of professional organizations and societies, and newspaper accounts, but that would be a long and tedious process, perhaps with the labor not worth the final results.

Would you be willing to help? Would you consent to an interview? Would you be willing to share personal information? Would you be willing to help elucidate the process with SS, and the path which led to contributions on publication of the Book? The source of your information would be held strictly confidential, or used according to your desires.

I would greatly appreciate any contributions you could make.

Ernest

John did not respond to the letter. In a later luncheon meeting with John in Chicago on Thursday April 3, 1997 he also did not mention it, nor did I pursue the letter any further. John has consistently maintained silence concerning family history, and the Hales association with the unfolding and publication of the Revelation. I felt that if he wanted to discuss my query he would do so; if not I would not place pressure upon him. It is also John's personality to remain quiet and unassuming in the background while serving the Urantia community. He is not an evangelist nor an aggressive promoter of revelations.

Therefore, I could not, on the grounds of silence alone, conclude that John was hiding facts. But he certainly did not volunteer to keep me straight on possible errors in my suggestions. This last point led me to believe that perhaps I was not too far from the truth.

Furthermore, when I stated at our luncheon meeting that his grandfather had been a member of the Board of Trade he denied it. I responded that I had three different sources which confirmed his membership. Two mornings previously I had visited the Records Department of the Board of Trade and obtained a membership list for 1908. G. Willard Hales was on that list. The United States Census for 1910 showed him as a grain buyer, and *Who's Who* also listed him a member of the Board of Trade.

I puzzled over why John would deny such an obvious fact, something he had to know. Perhaps he did not realize the depth of my research and was attempting to sidetrack my investigations. I could hardly come to any other conclusion. This behavior suggested even more strongly that my deductions were not too far from the mark.

If such background of relationships actually existed we can better understand why Sadler made Hales his most important confidant. They both were men with great confidence in the current social system, and both had mature social experience. If they had formed a bond through the early investigations into the behavior of SS their relationship would have been that much stronger.

We also can better understand why Harry Loose had such fear of the Hales family. A loose Chicago detective, with personality and emotional problems, would have cause to fear the social judgment of persons with the maturity of Hales.

It was in such social relationships that other members of the Forum had to interplay. As with all of us, Sadler had a preference for his counselors; not all persons were regarded equally. If Sadler had a proclivity to more conventional minds his direction would be influenced by that outlook. More excitable, less balanced, or less astute individuals would not be part of the "inner circle."

Thus we have a better handle on the response Clyde Bedell may have received from Sadler and the "inner circle" when he expressed his concerns over future direction of management of the Revelation. Bedell may have been an astute individual, with excellent experience in the advertising world, but he was not someone who had an implicit faith "in the way things are done." He had enough sense to know that human personalities, no matter what their social prestige, are often weak and shortsighted.

Barrie Bedell kindly shared with me a copy of a letter his father wrote to Wilfred Kellogg in the early 1930's. That letter expressed Clyde Bedell's concern over publication of the Revelation, and the structure that would be entrusted with its care after Sadler would release his hand. The letter was highly revealing for it showed that the thinking of both Sadler and Bedell was firm at that early stage.

From the letter we see that Wilfred Kellogg was a buffer between Forum members and Sadler. He served in an administrative role, taking care of many tasks, such as making copies of the text for Forum members, handling details of the week-to-week activities, and gathering opinions and ideas.

Following is the text. The numbers in parentheses refer to notes at the end of the chapter.

NOTE TO THE READER:

Publication of this Letter here is intended for your private information and use. It shall not be copied to other public media sources, reprinted, or republished without the express written consent of Barrie Bedell. You may contact Barrie at PO Box 30571, Santa Barbara, CA 93130.

Mr. Wilfred Kellog(g)
Diversey Parkway
Chicago:
October 30, 1933
Dear Mr. Kellog(g)

Will you kindly throw this letter into the hopper with whatever other suggestions you may be receiving — for consideration by Dr. Sadler and the rest of you?

I am doing this typing on a borrowed typewriter, I am not a stenographer, and my time is short. I ask pardon in advance for miscues.

*

Please don't impute to me a desire to see a loose-knit or nondescript board for the U Society. I perceive that precautions must be taken. I too wish to see stable direction of this revelation's distribution. But I feel there must be a middle course which will appear to be fair and defensible. Fair to the book itself, fair to the directors whoever they may be, and fair to the people for whom after all we incorporate — the part of the public we can interest.

The following points are self-explanatory. First though, I wish to say that unless it would handicap him professionally I believe there are almost inescapable reasons why Dr. William should be on the board — if indeed he is not its chairman.

WHY SHOULD A SELF-APPOINTED BOARD HOLD OFFICE FOR LIFE?

a. I believe we cannot warrantably expect any religious or secular enterprise on earth to be better governed by old men in their dotage than by a board deliberately designed to avoid that possibility.

b. A board for "life" smacks of the papacy — but has the worse aspect of never being swayed by counsel when one man is won, but only when four or more are won(1).

c. The incorporators are placed in the position of saying "We are the only persons on earth qualified to do this job, and the only seven in our lifetime who COULD do it — but, let the unwashed and misguided public provide the money to do our bidding(2). "

d. The incorporators may be made to appear to place their interest in the society before the society's welfare, inasmuch as they presume no persons so well qualified as themselves will become members of the organization as it grows and develops(3).

e. Why should ANY seven of those fortunate to be in on this revelation to date, say that out of the thousands of splendid people we hope to have join us, none can ever qualify so long as the seven may live, to participate finally, actively, and directly in the society's direction(4)?

f. Jesus took no such water-tight precautions in connection with the dissemination of the new conception of religion. Should we be so circumscribing and narrow in connection with this book(5)?

g. If genuinely aged men can do the job well why not seek some such to participate now?

h. To me, closing the board as proposed is entirely out of harmony with the spirit and the breadth of the revelations we wish to see promulgated.

i. It seems inconsistent to me to say in one breath, "This is too vital and important to risk letting the mob have a voice," and in the next, "It will be of so little importance in a few years that the direction of old men will be good enough(6). "

j. WHAT GOOD REASON is there for doing it? If it is to keep good and trusted men in, they can reelect themselves every year or five or ten, as may be arranged — so long as their consciences would permit. If it (is) to form an inviolate autocracy to keep other good men out, it discredits the incorporators.

k. A conscientious young man would, I believe, refuse to accept life membership on such a board. I would never want inviolate right of tenure to keep me on a body which should occasionally draft onto itself enthusiastic and fresher blood.

l. Your proposals contemplate provision for "kicking off" unworthy members. That is an admission of human fallibility. A simple provision for "terms of so many years" would obviate all necessity for so deplorable a possibility as you contemplate(7).

m. Failure to reelect a man would appear more desirable to me than trial and recrimination and bitterness.

n. The great disseminators of religion have generally been young men. There was some militancy even in Jesus. Venerable men may be splendid for sitting and counselling, but they have never been generally famed for active direction and aggressive enterprise. There should be a little of that always on the board, should there not(8)?

o. If the "permission is given" we owe it to this revelation to permit it every possibility for wider and more adequate promulgation as the years go by. I cannot prescribe to the guess in the dark that the society's work will possibly be done in twenty or thirty years and that an aged board at that time will be no handicap. We owe it to the revelation to presume work of its dissemination may be even more important to be directed by strong and sure hands than than now(9).

p. We deliberately deny some hardihood and sincere heartfelt devotion to the revelation for a future date — when we deny its board the opportunity to grow and keep alive and active — which the revelation itself has in itself. That's poorly said. I mean, the revelation is a great potential all in itself. It is young and new and vital and alive. Its growth and acceptance may be dependent on the vitality and aliveness, the great devotion and sincerity and stamina, of the man who directs its distribution. Should we deny the book a board kept always partially vital and refreshed?

q. If we believe the work will be completed (I don't) before the first board becomes impaired and befogged by too much living, why incorporate? If we incorporate to provide a continuing entity to the society, why not provide that the entity be a vigorous one as well as illustrious, sincere, dignified — and whenever, or whatever the case may be(10)?

r. The Supreme Court was not incorporated — or elected — or sponsored — by itself.

s. The Supreme Court is a receiving and digesting body. It has never advertised or tried to sell or distribute a decision. Our society's board should be a disseminating and radiating body. Please don't believe I want to see it a cheaply commercialized thing. But the preaching of John the Baptist — and of Saul to nearly all the Greeks — was warm, alive, vigorous, aggressive(11).

I am afraid I weary you. Let me more briefly come to the other point.

WHY DENY A VOICE — TO SOME EXTENT AT LEAST — TO THE PEOPLE WHO PAY? TO THE PEOPLE WHO MUST CARRY THE WORD ON? TO THE PEOPLE FROM WHOM WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE — THE REVELATION IS MADE — THE PUBLIC WE CAN INTEREST?

a. It seems hardly fair to ascribe religious perception to those who would join us and then to call them a mob unfit to participate even indirectly in the choice of men who will direct further efforts to get more people like them to perceive.

b. It seems hardly fair to say, "Give us your money, but not your opinion. You can practice this religion in your own sphere, but we don't think you have enough of it to help elect a minority of our directors(12)."

c. It rather appears to me that to refuse supporting members some voice in naming directors directly or indirectly is subversive of a lot the world has learned politically, economically, and spiritually(13).

d. After all too — we are seeking live, thinking, dynamic people to embrace this book — not sheep.

e. Disseminators of a new revelation might be warranted in leaning over backwards in taking precautions to avoid appearances of an unwarranted "divine preceptorship(14)."

f. I feel it is a little specious — or something of this kind — to extend a "Jesus book" while saying, "We must protect ourselves against pollution by association of your choosing."

g. Do we wish to say, "You are spiritual enough to see this book should be disseminated, but you are not spiritual enough to see that one man can do a better job than another of disseminating it."

h. It hardly seems fair to me to impugn today, the motives of the people whom we will have won to this book five or ten years from today.

i. After this inviolate board begins to die off, will we not have to turn to people such as we propose barring for a long period of years? If we say, "The job will be done then," it might be remarked that Jesus started a dissemination 2000 years ago which isn't done yet. Nor did he appoint a closed regimen to carry it along. Although a certain group of believers did.

I am sorry I am so verbose.

Let me start to stop.

Without jeopardizing the interests of the society, or lessening the protection you wish it afforded, terms could be made for stated periods, with power of re-election in the hands of the board. Thus you would cause each director to face squarely at the termination of a term the question as to his fitness, and the possibility of some new adherent who might serve better. You would secure the security you wish. You would eliminate a good share of the possibilities for regret.

Next, why have the entire board from any one source? Or elected in any one way? Dr. Sadler's thought that the council might name a few directors would solve most of the objections which occur to me in connection with denying the membership a voice.

Is the following worth thinking about?

Three incorporating directors to serve until the book is about to be published, or is published?

Then, upon publication, let them start terms of six years. Then, at the start of those terms, let them name three more directors to serve for two years each.

And let the council concurrently, and upon its election, name three directors to begin terms of four years each, one of whom would be chairman of the council.

Then as terms expired, the directors would name a new directors' director, and the council, the council's directors, always for 6-year terms.

Perhaps a few things might be said in favor of having each group of three named above, including a 2-year, a 4-year, and a 6-year director. And as each term expired, the new term would be for 6 years. Thus, instead of a group of three from the council expiring together, one would expire each two years, et cetera.

Had I not made so sudden a departure from New York, I would have sent this to you sooner. All best wishes, and be sure I have confidence that your final decisions — be they one way or another — will work out. Somehow they always do.

Yours, (Signed) Clyde Bedell

Bedell's hopes were misplaced. His worst fears were realized. The letter is an amazing forecast of the troubles which were to beset the Urantia Foundation.

This letter adds to our perception of Bedell's personality. His *Petition*, the *Response to Sherman*, and this document all reveal a peppery, verbose individual who was not afraid to express his thoughts, or to let everyone know where he stood. He cared more for right than what others thought of him.

He had an acute sense of right and wrong. He knew human nature. He recognized the inherent limitations of the proposed structures.

Bedell believed in the Revelation. He was fully converted to the potential of its changing the world. He wanted to see it get into action in his lifetime. Because of this view he was highly concerned about the human organization which would be entrusted with its care. He wanted it to be active and aggressive, traits he felt would be in younger blood. He trembled at the thought of old men "in their dotage" who might become an impediment to that aggressive promulgation into the world.

This bright hope led Bedell to spend a major portion of his life on his *Concordex*, a reference work he hoped would assist others in becoming familiar with the Revelation, and also as a help in its promulgation.

But Bedell's letter does more than serve as a measure of his personality, his hopes, his dreams, and his concerns. It is highly informative, and revealing, in many ways.

The time is 1933. Sadler and the Forum do not yet have the actual revelation. They have those materials which are the precursor to the first three Parts of the Revelation. They also do not have the Jesus Papers!

Two items are under heavy discussion:

- a. Publication of the materials they now possess, and
- b. The structure of an organization to be entrusted with care and publication of the Revelation.

From Elsie Baumgartner's letter we know Sadler was keeping members of the Forum informed about his thinking and plans for an organization to care for the Revelation in 1943. Bedell's letter shows that similar thinking was going on in 1933. Sadler probably proposed these actions to the body of the Forum, seeking their advice and approval. Bedell, who was then 35 years old, and in keeping with his personality, was reacting. He desired to, and believed he could, have an influence on the final outcome, although it is evident that he did so from an inferior position. Even at that time he recognized that the organization wheels were in motion, and hoped that he could affect the final outcome according to his expectations.

We have other confirmation of Sadler's strong plans at that early date, and his desire to place the Revelation under secular commercial law through copyright. In a newsletter dated May, 1996, the Urantia Foundation stated:

As early as 1932, the early custodians of the book initiated correspondence with the United States Copyright Office in order to obtain a copyright which would "protect [the text] against infringement for an indefinite period."

Through the kindness of Robert Solone at the Urantia Foundation offices I have copies of those letters. All were on letterhead of

The Sadlers and Associates
Physicians and Surgeons
533 Diversey Parkway
Chicago

October 12, 1932
Register of Copyrights
Washington, DC

Dear Sirs:
Would you please send us a copy of the new copyright laws?
Yours very truly,
(Signed) Wilfred C. Kellogg, Manager

November 14, 1932
Mr. William L. Brown
Acting Register of Copyrights
Washington, DC

Dear Sir:
Will you be good enough to define the meaning of the term "proprietor" as it appears in the first line of the section 8 of the current "Copyright Law," Bulletin No. 14?

I am assuming that a corporation, association, or society can take out a copyright in its own name as proprietor. That is, the copyright need not necessarily be originally issued to the author and then transferred by him to such organization. Am I correct?
Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Norma Lucas, Secretary to Dr. Sadler

November 28, 1932
Register of Copyrights
Washington, DC

Dear Sir:
Will you be good enough to advise me as to where I can secure information regarding taking out copyrights in foreign countries. Can a copyright be taken out in some one country that affords protection in all others?
Sincerely,
(Signed) Wilfred C. Kellogg, Manager

We should not accuse Sadler of being presumptuous. He had no instructions at that point to inhibit his planning about the method, timing, or protection of the publication. For him, at that time, the Revelation was an unexplained phenomenon with powerful content. It was natural for him, as a mid-western conservative, to think about methods for care and protection of the text.

Sadler's belief in the source of the Revelation did not in any way affect his decision; he certainly must have felt the material sufficiently superior to deserve publication, regardless of his views about its divine authenticity.

If he was not convinced that it was of divine authenticity he may have felt he could treat it as any other written work. In fact, we know he held that view regardless of his belief in its origins. Thus he early placed reliance on secular institutions, a habit of mind from which he never departed. Only when he became convinced of divine authority in care of the Revelation might we expect him to feel obligation from purely religious concerns. Unfortunately, he never came to distinguish that difference.

In 1933 Sadler and the Forum had in their possession revised versions of the text of the first three Parts, but not the final revelation. They did not have Part IV. Having been through the process of several revisions of the text they may have felt they had the final version. They would not have known they were in an incipient stage of actual revelation. Were statements contained in those precursor Papers which might have served as warning flags? Could Sadler have ignored those remarks? For example, on page 1007 the statement is made that there are many events of revelation but only five of epochal significance. The Papers then go on to list those five, *including the present one*. Did Sadler merely pass over this remark? Did he not recognize the momentous nature of the statement? Or was it not part of the precursor materials; did that passage first come in 1934? If those statements were present in the materials prior to 1934 they certainly should have influenced Sadler's thinking. And why did they not influence Sadler to more devout religious thinking after 1934, rather than to secular solutions? Why did the statements on epochal significance not alter his views as a divine revelation?

But the situation raised a conflict in Bedell's mind. How could one go in a slow deliberate manner and not curtail the enthusiasm the Papers would certainly generate? How could one hold strongly to a religious belief, with consequent evangelistic fervor, and be held at bay by secular structures? Bedell's concern was how a zealous and spirited body of believers could be placed under the control of an autocratic body? Was this not a revelation to the world? Did it not have the potential to turn the world upside down? This was Bedell's dilemma; although he may not have worked out all the possible ramifications, his instincts were sure.

But to Sadler it seemed best to create a small group of trustworthy people who could insure the safety of this magnificent work.

There was another side to their concerns. Sadler and G. Willard Hales were 58 years old in 1933. Hales was a member of the Chicago Board of Trade dealing in commercial commodities. He had considerable experience in the dangers and pitfalls of a cutthroat business world. Something must be done to protect the Revelation from perversion. Between them, or with other senior counselors, they

found recourse in the mechanisms of secular commercial law. It was natural to believe in copyright as a means of preventing unauthorized reproduction of the text.

These men were senior to Bedell by 25 years. He saw them in their conservative stage of life. But he could not perceive how a body of men "in their dotage" could be the wellspring of a dynamic and aggressive religion, out to save the world. Bedell wanted to see people who were "*warm, alive, vigorous, aggressive.*" He believed, and rightly so, that only youthful persons could bring that bright fervor to the world.

Bedell believed this body of conservative persons might look like a "papacy," with dictatorial control on views and conduct coming down from on top. He felt it was specious to extend a "Jesus" book to the world, and then be concerned about pollution from association. How can any body of religious believers predetermine how that body shall grow or develop, and what ultimate spiritual flavor will issue forth? Therefore, how could anyone create a corporate structure that reflected Sadler's transient concerns, but which could not respond healthily to future developments?

Sadler's policy views definitely were not religious. They were commercial from all aspects. Furthermore, Sadler may have had cause for his policies, derived from the Revelation. It had cautioned against building a body of religious believers.

Page 1087: Religionists must function in society, in industry, and in politics as individuals, not as groups, parties, or institutions. A religious group which presumes to function as such, apart from religious activities, immediately becomes a political party, an economic organization, or a social institution. Religious collectivism must confine its efforts to the furtherance of religious causes.

Page 1092: But as religion becomes institutionalized, its power for good is curtailed, while the possibilities for evil are greatly multiplied. The dangers of formalized religion are: fixation of beliefs and crystallization of sentiments; accumulation of vested interests with increase of secularization; tendency to standardize and fossilize truth; diversion of religion from the service of God to the service of the church; inclination of leaders to become administrators instead of ministers; tendency to form sects and competitive divisions; establishment of oppressive ecclesiastical authority; creation of the aristocratic "chosen-people" attitude; fostering of false and exaggerated ideas of sacredness; the routinizing of religion and the petrification of worship; tendency to venerate the past while ignoring present demands; failure to make up-to-date interpretations of religion; entanglement with functions of secular institutions; it creates the evil discrimination of religious castes; it becomes an intolerant judge of orthodoxy; it fails to hold the interest of adventurous youth and gradually loses the saving message of the gospel of eternal salvation.

Little did Sadler, or all the Trustees to this date, realize how they have fulfilled this dire prediction.

Formal religion restrains men in their personal spiritual activities instead of releasing them for heightened service as kingdom builders.

Page 1089: True religion is a meaningful way of living dynamically face to face with the commonplace realities of everyday life. But if religion is to stimulate individual development of character and augment integration of personality, it must not be standardized. If it is to stimulate evaluation of experience and serve as a value-lure, it must not be stereotyped. If religion is to promote supreme loyalties, it must not be formalized.

Sadler, and the persons who surrounded him, were strongly influenced by these admonitions. The people of the world should be given an opportunity to incorporate the Revelation into their lives without the formulations of a caretaking group, or the doctrines of an organized “church.” How could the organization entrusted with its care not be secular if it were to be neutral religiously?

This view continues to influence the Urantia Foundation to this day. In a newsletter dated May, 1994 the Trustees made these remarks:

THE FOSTERING OF A RELIGION

The Declaration of Trust Creating URANTIA Foundation states that “the principal object for which this Foundation is created is . . .” and what follows is a statement of goals, some of which are to be accomplished “. . . through the fostering of a religion, a philosophy, and a cosmology which are commensurate with Man’s intellectual and cultural development.” All Trustees, current and past, since the inception of the Foundation in 1950, have interpreted this statement to mean the fostering of a personal religion. Some readers think that “the fostering of a religion” means that the Foundation should foster a new, institutional religion. Some of these readers support their position by quoting William S. Sadler, Jr., one of the first Trustees, who said:

“I think there is a possibility of developing from this blue book a religion the like of which this world has never yet seen.”

Was Mr. Sadler referring to a new, institutional religion? You be the judge. What follows is his statement in context.

“I think there is a possibility of developing from this blue book a religion the like of which this world has never yet seen; a religion that’s full of good humor; a religion which is full of the joy of existence; a religion which is totally devoid of fear...a religion which has nothing to do with any one day of a week; a religion which pervades the whole of a human life twenty-four hours a day...a religion which is part of a human being . . .This is a religion which you’re good-natured about.

. . . you breathe it like you breathe air. You drink it like you drink water. It’s a normal part of living. It’s real. It’s not something that’s dissociated, compartmentalized, or set off . . . it’s something which you just are.”

Making the point unquestionably clear, Mr. Sadler said:

“This book is not religion. This book is a cosmology, a philosophy, a metaphysics, a theology. Anything which is in written language is not religion. It’s intellectual. That should be very, very clear...” This book is a tool. Use it when you need it, but if you don’t need it...don’t bring it into the picture. It’s sort of like the guy that’s using a pitch fork, and he finds it such a handy tool that he takes it with him wherever he goes, including to a tea party.

“I many times discuss God with men, and I seldom mention The URANTIA Book unless I sense that this tool is needed to complete this job, and then I get it going with everything I have.”

The Trustees of the URANTIA Foundation do not see The URANTIA Book (nor its social organization, IUA) as a competitor to the current religions of the world but as a powerful, instructional aid which should further the good purposes of institutional religions.

Unfortunately, the policies and organizational structures of the Urantia Foundation are doing exactly the thing they are trying to avoid. They ask members to sign an oath of allegiance to become part of their organization. Hence they have created a sect with competitive division from those "outside the pale." They have created a fixation of belief as to the purpose of the Revelation, and its meaning in the world. I know from personal experience on their Internet discussion lists that anyone who speaks in opposition to those fixed beliefs is quickly expelled from the group. They believe they are the "chosen people," and that other religionists are inferior to their superior wisdom. They possess false and exaggerated ideas as to the sacredness of their understanding. The religious expression fostered by the Foundation has developed a religious caste which is intolerant of other religious expressions. They have rapidly become an institutionalized expression of religion, with its power for good curtailed, and its possibility of evil greatly multiplied.

Bedell had another concern. The Forum members were being asked to contribute financially to the publication of the Papers. If they made such contributions why should they not have a voice in the policies that would determine promulgation and dissemination?

Thus, in 1933, Bedell captured in essence the heart of a dilemma whose repercussions were to unfold as the years rolled by. The formal and legal creation of the control body did not take place until 1950. World War II interfered with everyone's plans and brought delay. Wartime mandates prohibited printing. Then Sadler, beset with other problems, held back even further.

Harry Loose may have been correct in the steady hand Lena Sadler brought to the activities at 533 and with the Forum. Sadler may have relied on her advice and views. When she died he was left bereft of more than a wife. He was also left without that correcting influence.

More importantly, the fact of the actual revelation coming after the formulation of these plans may have placed Sadler in an even more cautious position. If he had anticipated publication, only to find that his plans were premature, that the actual revelation was not in those plans, he may have become concerned, at that point, that he should not presume against the unseen Revelators. This double blow, the premature thinking, and the loss of Lena, may have caused him to hesitate.

Meanwhile, the conservative views of the elderly members of the group, those with the strongest voice in shaping policy, were becoming ever more conservative, ever more cautious, ever more reliant on commercial mechanisms.

Consider the ramifications of the use of commercial copyright law to protect the Revelation.

Copyright was devised to protect the financial interests of an author of a creative work. He could sell his work, or copies, without others borrowing or imitating it for their own gain.

Therefore, copyright protection is commercial. It was intended to ensure the financial rewards of a person's labor. If there were no selling or buying of an authored work copyright law would be superfluous.

World courts recognize that conceptual protection was impossible; such legal protection would stifle all creative labors. Copyright protects the form of expression, the manner in which an author expresses his inspiration or the form of his labors. If two different authors express the same concepts, or discuss the same subjects, but differently, they both can obtain commercial copyright protection.

From this one infers that copyright serves to protect a given text. Other persons may not reproduce that identical text, although they may create another related expression. This was Sadler's inference, probably through legal advice. Late 1970's letters from Clyde Bedell, in contest with Urantia Foundation policies, show that he continued to support this understanding of copyright law even though he disagreed with the operation of the organization.

But protection of text was not the heart of the purpose behind copyright law. The purpose was secular — a commercial financial protection.

Thus, when Sadler obtained copyright on *The Urantia Papers* he subjected them to secular commercial law.

Since copyright was intended to protect the commercial financial interests of an author, the application from the Library of Congress asks the name of the author. The Urantia Foundation answered that they were the authors of *The Urantia Papers*.

That was a blatant falsehood, and a lethal lie. Refer to this intent already expressed in the 1932 letters.

Sadler, and the Trustees of the Foundation, knew that it would be impossible to claim divine beings as the authors. Such claim would have been denied by the United States Copyright Office as beyond its jurisdiction. At that point Sadler had committed himself to the potent and deadly ramifications of a falsehood associated with a divine revelation.

Thereupon, the Urantia Foundation became the earthly owners of a divine revelation. But the Urantia Foundation is not some anonymous and mysterious legal entity. The Urantia Foundation is a Board of Trustees. The Trustees, individually and collectively, become the owners of a divine revelation. United States laws conferred upon them the legal right to stop printing if they so wished.

The same laws conferred upon them the legal right to alter the text according to their private desires. They then could obtain a new copyright to the altered text. All that was needed was a consensus among the Trustees that such changes were useful, according to their private judgements.

This was a deadly fault of Sadler's conception. He assumed that all following caretakers would have the same feelings of honored trust as he. They would want to preserve the text inviolate. But this circumstance was not controlled by human secular law. Copyright law could not protect against changes in text, if the owners of the text, the Urantia Foundation Trustees, wished to alter it.

In fact, changes were made in the text of *The Urantia Papers* from printing to printing, for all printings. Some of those changes were due to spelling errors, some were grammatical, some were due to logical inconsistencies, and some were done for purposes which the Trustees of the Urantia Foundation never explained, although in a Newsletter dated November, 1995, they made the following remarks:

CORRECTIONS TO THE TEXT

From time to time, readers have inquired about minor changes which the Foundation has made to the text of the book over the years. The URANTIA Book is now in its twelfth printing. Over the course of these twelve printings, changes have been made to the text in order to correct misspellings, punctuation errors, proofreading errors, and printing imperfections. Almost half of these changes, including fewer than ten that might be considered to be more than minor corrections, were made in the second and third printings. These changes were made by those very individuals who were given the responsibility of preparing the original text for publication.

The Foundation provides, upon request, a list of all the corrections to the text.

Unfortunately, this statement does not specify the important changes to the text made by Sadler for the second printing before he died.

This admission would not have come had Kristen Maaherra, in her legal defense pleadings, not shown the mendacity of the Foundation in its pretense of an inviolate and uncorrected text.

Therefore, Sadler's reliance on copyright law to preserve the text inviolate was voided by himself after the first printing.

But equally important, Martin Myers, as President of the Board of Trustees, at one point stopped printing of the Papers. He did so to obtain absolute control on dissemination because he feared the evangelistic efforts of many who believed in the Revelation. He aborted the use of commercial distributors, and thus cut off supplies from all book stores. At that point the world could not obtain copies of the Papers. Therefore, Sadler's reliance on copyright law resulted in absolute human control of a divine revelation that was intended for the blessing of all mankind.

From this brief review we can see that the original thinking and planning by Sadler, described by Bedell in his 1933 letter, set the stage for serious trouble in the dissemination and promulgation of the Revelation. Sadler, Hales, and the other senior counselors failed to perceive the truly great fault of their scheme. They relied on the pure assumption that conservative control would remain in the hands of reliable and mature individuals. They did not perceive the possible ramifications if an autocratic body should degenerate into the hands of unstable or psychic personalities. Had control remained in the hands of mature persons, the dissemination may have been according to Sadler's vision. But the autocratic structure was ripe for plucking by personalities who did not have the same conservative background as Sadler and his senior cohorts. Psychic elements entered, by devious means, to create fragmentation of the body of Urantia believers.

But Sadler created an even greater blunder. That blunder introduced corruptions into the text of the Revelation.

I shall show how this unfolded. Emma Christensen, Sadler's adopted daughter, became the instrument by which control unraveled.

I shall also show why this has been according to the plans of our planetary supervisors — toward a more crucial purpose.

End Notes

1. This remark implies that the details of the organizational structure were already well formalized. At that time the planning was for seven members, rather than the five in the later actual Board of Trustees.

2. Since there was no outside accountability the Board could wander off into a private interpretation of the best course for the dissemination of the Revelation. Here Bedell put his thumb on the deadly fault of the organization that later was created. Such closed structure could, and later did, put a tight lid on the religious fervor of individuals by limiting their ability to disseminate copies of the Revelation. The policies of the Urantia Foundation created a psychological environment which suppressed dynamic evangelism.

3. Bedell's keen insight into human nature is evident. This prophetic warning actually became fulfilled by Martin Myers, later Foundation President.

4. Again Bedell put his finger on the deadly fault of a closed group. They forever foreclosed many eminent minds and highly religious souls by perpetrating an oligarchic group which, by inherent human nature, inevitably came to believe they had the sole advantage of correct wisdom and insight. Furthermore, the election of successors would be determined by their private limitations of understanding. A closed group inevitably promulgates a limited class of personalities. Members always seek those who have the same world view as theirs. An elite "wisdom" will not suffer possible balancing influences.

5. Jesus well knew the vagaries of human nature, and that his teachings would be perverted and interpreted by the limited understanding of his apostles and disciples. He did not attempt to control such natural outworking. Here Bedell is indicating the major fault of any human organization attempting to control how mankind will use a new Revelation. He pointed out the deadly contradiction in reality.

6. Bedell here misplaced the importance of "old men in their dotage." From his youthful position this seemed a threat but natural sense tends to correct errant paths, although perhaps after the damage is done. This certainly has been the history of the Urantia Foundation.

7. In these last statements Bedell suggested that the Board have a systematic method of rotation of members that would avoid "old men in the dotage" or permit the removal of individuals who may become detrimental to the Revelation.

8. Bedell clearly recognized the dangers of closed ideas, and expresses the real need to have counterbalance on decisions through "fresh blood."

9. Bedell was concerned that time will bring an evolution that will dramatically alter the purpose of the organization entrusted with the care of the Revelation. As a vivid example, consider that copyright was used not only as a mechanism to protect the text, but also to control dissemination. Copyright owners can elect what they wish in terms of publication quantities or paths of dissemination. Sooner or later that legal right would be lost. How would an organization expect to control publication and dissemination after that point, when others could reproduce the text with impunity? How strange that none of the personalities involved at this stage of the Revelation, including Bedell, recognized this transient limitation of human law.

10. It would have been helpful for Bedell, and all the other members of the Forum, to have educated themselves on the vagaries of religious institutions. Sadler had personal experience with the Seventh Day Adventists, but his emotional proximity prevented him from using that experience as a base for evaluating the evolution of all religious groups. Furthermore, there seems to have been no acute discernment of the difference between a secular legal organization, and the dynamic processes of a fervent religious group. There is no record that Sadler or anyone else really worked out the thinking along these lines.

11. Here Bedell again touched on the problem of the difference between dynamic religious evangelism, and control by a secular legal entity.

12. Bedell had first-hand experience. If he contributed financially to the printing of the Revelation why should he be closed out from his voice and vote. This exclusion has been maintained rigorously to the present day. Care of the Revelation never had a democratic voice, nor were believers given an opportunity to enter their vote for dissemination or promulgation of the Revelation.

13. Amen.

14. This is a thorn in the flesh to those who would attempt to understand the miracle of a new Revelation, controlled by a secular institution. It smacks of just another sordid "channeling" production."

5. Jesus well knew the vagaries of human nature, and that his teachings would be perverted and interpreted by the limited understanding of his apostles and disciples. He did not attempt to control such natural outworking. Here Bedell is indicating the major fault of any human organization attempting to control how mankind will use a new Revelation. He pointed out the deadly contradiction in reality.

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