

On Priorities... III

by Center for Urantia Book Synergy

In response to the question of priorities for the Urantia Movement, we feel the way in which large donations given to official organizations, are used to spread The URANTIA Book is the main priority at this time. In the midst of a large fundraising campaign for the Spanish translation and sundry other activities, it seems appropriate to pay attention to some large earnings recently accrued by the URANTIA Foundation.

During recent months, the Foundation has come into the possession of unearned windfall profits. Among other

amounts, Mr. Sek Seklemian bequested in excess of \$120,000 to the Foundation, while a gift of stock from the former owners of Celestial Seasonings some years ago recently earned them a record gain of \$700,000.

As Sek was in the process of selling his estate during the last months of his earth life, we can only ponder on how he would have applied his funds for the spread of the URANTIA Revelation for public benefit. Presently, many students are inundated by unconfirmed reports that the 'accidental riches' have been earmarked for the production of translations of The URANTIA Book.

Whether Seklemian's bequest can be considered accidental wealth, derived from his generosity, and to be used for the benefit of the URANTIA organizations, or

whether it is to be considered a trust fund designed for the furtherance and completion of long-thought-out aspirations and projects of the benefactor, the Foundation now has the major voice to decide.

However, since we have had the unique and privileged opportunity to work and serve with Sek for the last years of his life, we may be called upon to contribute in shedding light on which projects of The URANTIA Book dissemination and promulgation this life-long communicator and public relations expert was focusing his attention on.

Undisputedly, Sek's major interest was his desire to see The URANTIA Book made available at a cheaper price. He had developed several interesting strategies on how to influence this process. Believing strongly that The URANTIA Book students and activists should subsidize the cost of the book, so that new readers would not be penalized by having to first overcome the hardship price barrier before they can find the good news and superb teachings of our epochal revelation. Sek saw that every major religious movement in the world makes their books available reasonably, and that the people who are actively involved in these movements and teachings are basically the ones who subsidize their literature for reasonable and widespread distribution.

He believed that the URANTIA Foundation would also eventually gain prevalent and unified financial grass roots support, if they were to demonstrate to the movement at large sound and effective strategic plans for the dissemination of the Book and the promulgation of its teachings, as laid down in their Declaration of Trust as principle objectives.

Sek's last sentences concerned the production and distribution of lapel pins with the three concentric circles emblem of Christ Michael to all URANTIA activists. This emblem he was denied because he was not a member of URANTIA Brotherhood. Nevertheless, he wore his lapel pin proudly which was an early prototype given by a friend long ago. Over the years, Sek shared with us case after case of how his little pin opened so many conversations with strangers; most of whom would consequently find The URANTIA Book and become avid readers.

Sek wanted to have such pins available during the "Art of Living" URANTIA Book Conference in Santa Barbara,

August 19-21, 1983. Sek's body died on August 23 and his last words actually were, "We should have done those pins. Do them."

Another major endeavor of Sek's was an outreach project to interest well-known writers of philosophy, religion and (science) fiction in the Book. He had planned to visit with a variety of respected and highly visible media personalities with whom he was acquainted during his long life time, so he could introduce the Book to them. Sek sought to win them so they would write articles and reviews about The URANTIA Book in the major media. These famous multipliers would restate concepts and teachings of The URANTIA Book finding their way into today's thought expressions in the arts and sciences. After the work on the conference was concluded the implementation of this project was to have begun.

Over the years, Sek had contributed funds to further dissemination of the Book. He particularly believed that translations of the Book were both critical and imperative, and would be delighted to find out that the Spanish translation is now scheduled and financially secured. In travelling far and wide, he knew firsthand of the readiness of many spiritual truth-seekers in many lands.

At the same time, he also foresaw some potential problems when translations are done by professional translators. He held that only a team of long-term students, fully acquainted with their language, could find faithful equivalents of the high and complex passages of the Book in the new language. In any case, he felt that a reader team must always check the accuracy and fidelity of the new translation, and that we may certainly learn from the mistakes caused in the editions of the French translation.

Sek was a creative and prolific person, and there are many other projects and ideas that could be cited. But above all we may be inspired by Sek's superb and loving service always wholeheartedly and fearlessly willing to seek and do the will of our heavenly Father. •

If you should receive this publication from a friend, and there is no questionnaire and return self addressed envelope still in the publication, please contact the Planetary Prints for additional questionnaires.