

NUMEROUS QUESTIONS

Regarding the Constitutional Review Process and Status
compiled by Ken Keyser

- 1) The teachings in *The Urantia Book* itself speak to the importance of a three-branch, representative government. The organizational structure in the replacement Constitution that is being proposed is an almost complete shift from our current Constitution's representative model to a model comparable to a corporate NGO. Isn't retention of a representative model the prudent choice?
- 2) The General Council's Motion of 7/18/2021 that created SCICR noted that the TDA 2021 Resolution requested a debate on "the merits of holding a Constitutional Convention." The General Council's Motion added a request for the presentation of "models" (plural) of organizational structures. The SCICR team spent years painstakingly drafting Constitutional language for only one model and presented only that one model. Even though the alternate models were never presented, isn't this weighty decision still worthy of putting forth and debating the merits of holding a Constitutional Convention?
- 3) Some SCICR members requested the development of a "Problem Statement" with measurable metrics. Even now, isn't developing an actionable Problem Statement a worthwhile endeavor?
- 4) Some SCICR members requested a review by independent legal counsel. Doesn't this proactive and informative step continue to be advisable?
- 5) Some SCICR members desired to present a "Minority Report," which purportedly the SCICR leadership would not allow. Wouldn't the publication of that Minority Report now prove to be helpful?
- 6) Years ago, internal legal counsel recommended the creation of a "Unified Board" to address the General Council's legal-liability risks. It was reported, at that time, that the necessary Constitutional language had been written to amend the current Constitution to end those known risks. After a years-long delay, isn't the immediate implementation the logical step to preclude any of those avoidable, legal risks?
- 7) TDA Resolutions are basically the current legislative voice of Societies; however, they frequently get drastically modified or even rejected. The proposed Constitution sidelines Societies even further, from a representative model to the role of an "Advisory Board" that meets more often but has even less of an enforceable voice. Rather than legislating a virtually-silenced voice, wouldn't developing a strengthened voice be a more productive path?
- 8) Robert's Rules of Order recommend that certain basic Standing Committees be written into any Constitution, for multiple, valid reasons. Isn't it logical to retain the Fellowship's basic Standing Committees in the provisions of any proposed Constitutional document?
- 9) It is known that cultural challenges don't get resolved by legislation, yet these cultural challenges have been frequently included on so-called "Problem Statements" and presented as reasons to replace the entire current Fellowship Constitution. Aren't there more creative ways available to make improvements in those important areas?

Society-Wide Open Meeting – Numerous Questions – compiled by Ken Keyser (continued)

- 10) To foster a successful endeavor, a comprehensive and clear understanding of the “big picture” must precede any development of its minute ,implementation details. The only graphic model of the original SCICR proposal was created after-the-fact. Multiple changes to the structure of the proposal continue to occur and the creation of an updated graphic model to visually reflect the evolving design is vital. Isn’t it necessary to create such a graphic model for clear understanding before taking any vote on a radically-modified document?
- 11) A shortened version of a “Purpose Statement” was proposed by SCICR, then found to be inadequate by the TDA. A TDA 2024 Resolution to retain the original Purpose Statement was passed and submitted to the General Council. Is the Fellowship’s original Purpose Statement still secure in any proposed Constitutional amendment?
- 12) We do not know how many Members-at-Large the Fellowship can verify. A claim was recently made that a survey of Members-at-Large is “almost complete.” How can that be when known Members-at-Large say they haven’t been contacted at all?
- 13) Enforceable “checks-and-balances” are vital to a properly functioning organization. Wouldn’t the straight-forward addition of unambiguous checks and balances to the current Constitution address many of our current shortcomings?
- 14) Consensus-building and mutually-acceptable compromises are typically unifying and considered a “win-win.” While definitely having its place, in this situation, relying solely on “majority rule” holds the likely potential to be divisive; where some are very happy with the outcome and some are very disillusioned. Is intentional and wholehearted consensus-building being practiced here?
- 16) It has been suggested that, if the current word-smithing is completed at the next meeting on July 30, 2026, there may be a General Council vote taken on the proposed Constitutional document that same day.

The procedure delineated in the Fellowship’s current Constitution is clear regarding amending the Constitution itself. In the Constitution , Article 15.1 “Procedure for Amendment,” among other verbiage, includes the provision that:

“To be considered, amendments must be submitted at least sixty (60) days before the meeting of the General Council and posted on a membership discussion forum for at least forty-five (45) days during the sixty (60) days.”

(as amended on July 29, 2023)

To me that means that the final version of any serially-edited, proposed document must be submitted as just that, “the final version,” for at least 60 days prior to any vote being taken on it. And that must include 45 days for the Fellowship’s membership to discuss it, all prior to any vote by the General Council. Is Article 15 of the current Constitution going to be followed for this proposed Amendment?

- 17) As I see it, the proposed structure turns away from The Urantia Book’s own recommendations. While the major efforts that have been put in thus far have value, the convoluted process that has brought us to this point, and the radical shift it could produce, may not be viewed favorably when examined by history. And, we have a sacred duty to be of loyal service to the revelation. Before taking this major, long-term step, do we have the collective will to invest the time necessary to develop a better plan?