

Q&A SESSION WITH BILL SADLER JR.

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Hello, this is David Kantor. The tape you are about to hear was given to me by Berkeley Elliott early in 1994 with a request that I not make its existence known until after she had died. It contains the voice of Bill Sadler Jr. describing some of the details of the way in which the UB came into being. It was recorded after a study group in the home of Berkeley Elliott on Feb. 18 1962. There is a great deal of background noise on the original tape which I did not attempt to remove. I hope you find this interesting and informative.

The following was transcribed by John Hilty from the tape recording made in the home of Berkeley Elliott on February 18, 1962. On this occasion, William S. Sadler Jr. was talking with the study group there assembled.

<Question: I would just like ask somebody to ... you know ... to give me a brief rundown to, I don't want to take any time just briefly ... (indiscernible)>

BSSjr: What do you want to know?

<Question: I want to know how it began and, you know, who wrote it, the authority ...>

BSSjr: Well it began a long time ago. It began, oh it has its roots back forty years ago. If you'll read this book (loan me yours will you? I need a cover) Uh, the back of this dust jacket says, "Concerning the nature, origin and organization of the Urantia Book" and if you read four out of the thirteen references here it refers to a person, a human being who was concerned in the origin of this book. If you read the book farther, you will see to it ... you will see that this person makes any claim to having written any part of this book he was involved in its origin. The book claims to be flatly a revelation. There is a statement made in the signature of the first paper which is unequivocal and this guy just doesn't straddle. The author of this paper on page 32 identifies himself as a Divine Counselor. He says, "I am commissioned to sponsor those papers portraying the nature and attributes of God because I represent the highest source of information available for such a purpose on any inhabited world. I have served as a divine counselor in all seven of the superuniverses and I have long resided at the Paradise.

Center of all things. many times have I enjoyed the supreme pleasure of a sojourn in the immediate personal presence of the universal father. I portray the reality and truth of the Father's nature and attributes with unchallengeable authority. I know whereof I speak." You can say nonsense, but at least you can't say the man's straddling.

<Question from audience ... (indiscernible)>

BSSjr: Now, many years ago, my parents who were physicians, had brought to their attention the individual who is referred to in this book. In one of the books my father wrote he made mention of this case in an appendix at the tail end of the book, **The Mind at Mischief**, which was published in the 1920's. My father, in his salad(?) days, had spook hunting as a hobby. He was an exposé of mediums. He had as running ... His two running mates were the head of the department of psychology at Northwestern University and Howard Thurston, a professional magician. When you take a psychologist, a physician and a magician and put them together, God help the medium. There is a book out of print now which my father wrote, called **The Truth About Spiritualism** ... in which he identifies so-called spiritualists as falling in one of two categories. They either are practicing fraud deliberately for gain or glory or both or they are self deceived. I think in that book he says with one possible

exception.

These two physicians [*Dr. and Mrs. Sadler*] became interested in this case. This man would go to sleep and he'd talk and what came out was intriguing and different. He was never interested in helping you find Aunt Mahoofey's watch that had been lost. He was never interested in telling you what the stock market was going to do or anything else that was particularly practical. You never had a chance to talk to your Uncle George who passed on. And uh, in other words, this was distinctly off beat, do you follow me? At about this time a Sunday afternoon group came to be organized in Chicago at our house. It came about when my father was giving a commencement address. I was in high school then. He was giving a commencement address at Aimes, Iowa at Iowa State. He wrote me a letter and he said ... "You know son, we're religious people, but we're not church members, and I think Sunday should be productive as well as a day of rest. What do you say if we invited in our friends and we had a discussion group and we talked about ... well kind of a forum ... talk about health and disease and politics and philosophy, sociology and history and what have you?" That group came into existence, I think in the year 1922. I found that letter some years ago and it's in the archives, I hope preserved because it's the original charter of the Chicago Forum. In the course of time this group became interested in spiritualism. Pop was writing his book on spiritualism and what more natural than they would discuss, uh ... "Well what did you find out?"

My dad was humorously mischievous. He went to a vaudeville show at McVickers. They had vaudeville in those days and there was a mind reading act on and Pop attended twice, held conference with his friends, and the next time he went with a set of wire clippers and he clipped the wire that was hooking up the guy in the audience with the gal on the stage at which point she fainted. "Is there a physician in the house?" He had the gall to go back and take care of her.

In their discussions ... now what I'm telling you for a little bit in through here is hearsay because at about this time I was in Nicaragua, fighting a revolution, and I kind of grew up with a queer notion that a man was not a man until he had been bloodied—and you have no idea how difficult, how difficult it was to find a war in the 1920's. I searched and searched and finally found one. It was a nice war too, the last real good one. Kind of like a quail shoot, except the quail could shoot back. From 1924 to 1928 I'll tell you hearsay. Prior to this time and subsequent to 1928 I give you direct firsthand information.

The question came up, "Are all such phenomenon fraudulent?"

Well, My father was an honest guy he said, "Well there's one case," he said, "that's very puzzling."

"Well tell us about it." So the Forum became intrigued with the shorthand notes that had been taken on things which this man would talk about. Very intriguing pages. They are all now burned.

And that was the condition of affairs when one evening while they were talking to this chap, a kind of an argument came up. Someone was talking who claimed to be a Mighty Messenger and he was challenged, "Can you prove you are a Mighty Messenger?"

"No," he says, "of course not. You can't prove I'm not either." "But," he said, "If you knew what I knew, you wouldn't ask these sort of half-baked questions. You would prepare some of the most deep far-reaching and searching questions that could ever be asked."

Well, my father is half English and half Irish and you can get a reserved reaction from him or he can get damn mad. He got damn mad on this occasion, and he said, "This is ridiculous." He said, "We're supposed to be checking out phenomenon and we're challenged." He said, "Let's take him up on it."

So the next Sunday when the Forum met the whole group came in on the deal and I think ... I'm told that approximately 5,000 questions were assembled, many of them duplicates, some of them undoubtedly silly. Who created God? How old is God? These are unanswerable questions. I haven't the foggiest notion what was expected to transpire. Maybe they thought they were going over at some time and read all these questions and take down the answers in shorthand. But what happened was this, one day the questions were gone, and where the questions had been kept was the first of the Urantia Papers, entitled The Universal Father.

Now, I'll tell you how I think this paper was written, and my theory is not 100% correct, but it's the best I can devise, so I share it with you. It's the most acceptable to me. It explains 97% of the problem, and I won't even get into the other 3%. We'll forget it. This is the theory I accept. I want you to visualize several points in space, geographic locations like the Scandlin(?) Hotel, Berk Elliott's place, where you meet on Wednesday night, and here in Oklahoma City.. We'll call them point A, point B, point C and point D. I think the papers were dictated or conceived at point A, and I think if we could have been present at point A when any one of these papers was being written we would have seen absolutely nothing. At point A was perhaps this Divine Counselor who signs Paper One. He is presenting his concepts in the language of Uversa. There is a translator there who translates Uversa into Salvington. There is another translator who translates Salvington into Satania. There is another translator who translates Satania into English. You cannot translate from Uversa into English. The languages are too far apart. And I expect 99% plus of the original concept was lost in translation. English is too primitive a language. How would you operate in, let's say Bantu, where the arithmetical system is one, two, three, many? That's the end of your numbers. How would you deal with large distances? You see the problem?

I think point A was linked by some kind of a circuit, a communication circuit; not a wire, but some circuit over which intelligence would flow to point B. Now you'd have something to see at point B, but it would be very dull. It would be a man asleep—a very ordinary looking guy just asleep doing nothing. Now if you could get to point C, this would be exciting. You remember on the day of resurrection the soldiers saw the stone roll away apparently by itself? And they took out, double time or triple time, for Jerusalem? Now that stone was being pushed. It was being pushed by some secondary midwayers who are non-corporeal beings who can deal with physical substance. At point C, I think you'd have seen a very exciting phenomenon—a pencil moving over paper with no visible means of propulsion. That's where the physical writing was consummated. And then there is one more point—D—where we found the papers. Now all during these years, this particular individual who is referred to in this book was never seen to write one of these papers. And don't think we weren't wearing gumshoes. If he wrote them, all I can say is, he was more clever than the whole lot of us. He was never observed to write one.

We tried everything we could think of to see how this was being done, but were baffled. The text was entirely written in pencil—all in the handwriting of this individual who remarked that if they ever wanted to draw on his bank account he'd be a dead duck because the bank would pay on their signature.

Who was this guy? I took an oath not to divulge who he was. That was required of all who know his identity and it was required by the commissioner who sponsored the last of the papers. We think we know why it was required. He would have asked us to maintain secrecy. One of the reasons this chap was picked is that he has a passion for anonymity—a very stable man—the exact opposite of what you think someone associated with this would be like. His head was solidly on his shoulders and his feet solidly on the ground—someone who would be ashamed to be mixed up with something spooky. He doesn't want to be known.

These papers were read to the forum. At the end of each original paper was a note

suggesting the next title on which questions should be asked. This is how they led us through the first time. The papers were read to the Forum. They generated more questions and over a period of years this book accumulated and eventually, when we had money enough, we published it.

<Question from audience ... (indiscernible)>

BSSjr: We did all the things which curious human beings would do, and we were consistently baffled.

<Question from audience ... Are they written in pencil?>

BSSjr: All written in pencil, yes.

The next question you should ask is who is this guy? I won't answer that anyway. I took an oath many years ago never to divulge who he is. Now that oath was required of me and all other persons who know his identity by the commissioners who sponsored the last of these papers. We think we know why it was required. We think we would have required it of each other had it not been required of us. We think this individual would have asked us to maintain secrecy had no one else asked US. You see, this chap ... I think was picked for this job first because of the qualifications of his thought adjuster (his was an experienced Thought Adjuster). Secondly, because he's got a passion for anonymity. He's a very stable guy. He is the exact opposite of the type of man you would think would be associated with this.

Many years ago I first met Meridith Sprunger who is a very nice guy. He teaches at a college at Fort Wayne and he's got the faculty involved in this book now. And when I met Meridith he was hot as a firecracker. He had to know who this man was. Well, I met Meridith through Judge Hammerschmidt of South Bend and Judge Hammerschmidt learned about it from Will Harrah. Will Harrah, a great guy, he died in his mid 90's about five years ago. He was like the one hoss shay. Until three months before his death he was in pretty good shape and then he just disintegrated and died quickly. Will Harrah was one of the four founders of the National Standard Company and when I knew him, its honorary chairman. A kindly guy, a tough businessman and an all around self made man of modest but not insignificant affairs. And I remember when Meridith said, "I must know who this man is." And I turned and I said, "Meridith, it's not Mr. Harrah, but it could be."

This man was poured out of the same mold, a businessman with his head pretty well screwed on his shoulders, his feet pretty solid on the ground, who has about the same attitude about this whole thing as a chap would have if he were subject to mild epileptic fits—mildly ashamed of being mixed up in a kind of a screwball spooky thing like this. You see, what a safe person was ... the exact opposite of a prophet. This, I think, was his principle human qualification. He doesn't want to be known. We think it's wise that he's not known and if any of us had any doubt an oath was required of us. We think that always in the past the prophet has messed up the teaching. Now here is a teaching which stands with no prophet. For the first time.

That is an authoritative statement, I was there for most of the time. I recall, uh ...

In 1950 we completed the preparation of our plates. As money came in, we forecast inflation. This was pretty obvious, and so we took the hard dollars we got and spent them as quickly as we could with the Donnelly company. We picked Donnelly: one, because they're in Chicago; two, they've got a good reputation for handling India paper; and, not all printers can handle India paper printing. If you went to Chicago you could search out the records of the county clerk and you would find that the Urantia Foundation was established in 1950. It was established by the anonymous donation of the plates for the Urantia Book. You see we have improved on the Mormons. Joe Smith got gold plates, we got nickel plated stereotypes

that you buckle right on a press and you print sixteen pages. These plates are much more useful. You could go to Donnelly's and you could say, "Who did you negotiate with?" "I think a chap by the name W.C. Kellog." And you would say, "Well where is he?" They would answer, "Well he's dead." So that source of information is gone. The Urantia Foundation owns the copyright to this book. There are five trustees of the Urantia Foundation. I'm one of these five. In about 1954 these five trustees selected thirty six people from this forum. These thirty six people organized the Urantia Brotherhood. This group here is one of the component Societies of the Urantia Brotherhood. The book was published in October of 1955 and has been spreading ever since.

Now we've got it Berk, naturally ... This story which I have told you is a direct first hand story except for the years 1924 to 1928 when I told you what I learned and was informed. Otherwise I am giving you firsthand information. I was there most of the time. I'm a management man, not the kind of man you would expect to see mixed up in something like this—and I was very suspicious of all this. I asked myself, "Who is making what out of this? Where's the gold Cadillac in all this?" I checked it out and found that it was going to cost money. I realized there was no commercial end. And, as the book cleared up some personal quarrels I had with religion, I felt it was pretty good merchandise. So I elected to spend my spare time selling this. I don't get paid, but I get a lot of satisfaction. And that's the first time that story has ever been recorded.

<Question from audience ... (indiscernible)>

BSSjr: Well that's true. No, I admire Paul. He earned his living making tents and then taught in the evening. This is sound and if our clergy earned a living, they would be better ministers. The best clergymen I've met are men who entered the clergy late in life after a successful business career. These men talk different. Again you never can say "Was you there Charlie?" There is a great Episcopalian up near Cleveland that was a general insurance agent and he made a pile. And he quit in his early forties and he became an Episcopal minister, a priest. This guy is for real from the top. He talks our language.

<Question from audience ... (indiscernible)>

BSSjr: Real empathy, yes.

<Question: I would like to ask ... indiscernible ... Urantia validation ... indiscernible ... for the appearance of UFO's?>

BSSjr: As far as I know they have nothing to say on the subject of flying saucers. I had a wonderful experience out in California. On my last visit out there, there is a perfectly grand guy who is a flying saucer addict and when he met me he was sure I had his instructions. And the next day when I said I had to go powder my nose, he followed me in the men's biffy because he said he was sure this was his signal to come in there and get his instructions and of course what I did there is what I always do there, no more no less. I was talking to him out at Bud Kagen's the next day and he said this was the high moment of his life. This is when he knew he was going to enter the initiate circle of flying saucers. And he said, "What do you think about them?" And I said, "Maybe so, maybe no." And he said, "You don't seem interested?" And I said, "No I'm not." I said, "I've got one normal life to live, one business to run, bills to pay, and I said when I take my spare time and put it in the blue book, I've got no time left over for anything else." I know nothing of flying saucers.

<Question about space travel>

BSSjr: I doubt it and I'll tell you why. As I read this book, it seems to me that each inhabited world is designed to go its own way with an absolute minimum of outside interference. I greatly fear that interplanetary travel is not going to be feasible, and I kind of mourn that because I've read my share of science fiction and it's very intriguing. I think they want each culture to

develop on its own in separate test tubes, so to speak. and I'll offer as my best evidence the fact that we have not been discovered by advanced people. Now if flying saucers are real perhaps this is discovery, but I never can get my fingers on flying saucers. You always know somebody who knows somebody, but you never meet the guy who saw one. You're always It's like my pal in California, he was sure I was it for him. I had come to bring him the word, and it was such a disappointment for him.

<Question from audience ... (indiscernible)>

BSSjr: Apparently we are on the verge of the conquest of space, but we may encounter barriers which may be formidable. We may be able to send mechanical devices where we are unable to send people.

<Question from audience ... (indiscernible)>

BSSjr: I don't know if my (not understandable). I have no right to any real opinion about UFO. I have an excitable friend who says he has seen one. But then of course, Peter saw Jesus walking on the water, but that was a dream. Jesus never walked on the water. But you never could sell Simon Peter off that story because when Peter woke up held gotten out of the boat and he woke up in the water. This was pretty good evidence of what had happened. I have no opinion on this. I have no right to an opinion. Are there any more questions?

<Question>

BSSjr: How is the book being propagated? How did you get your book?

<Questioner responds, " A cousin in St. Louis.">

BSSjr: A cousin in St. Louis. How did your cousin get the book?

<Questioner responds, "Harry Zolnick">

BSSjr: Harry Zolnick. Do you know how Harry Zolnick got it?

<Questioner responds ... (indiscernible)>

BSSjr: In the twenties. This is how it's going. From person to person where the two people are close enough so that the friendship will stand the strain of exposure to the Urantia Book. This sets up a little stress. You know this book looks pretty kooky the first time you look at it, lets face it. And you have to have some confidence in the person who gave it to you. Enough confidence to keep from chucking it in the waste basket right away. We've experimented sending this book out broadside. Many years ago 50 books were sent out by the domestic extension committee of the Brotherhood. That's the U.S. sales committee. You get (audience cough covers word) people in a movement like this. You don't have a general manager you have a secretary general. The money had been given for this purpose. The group said, "Let's experiment." I'm in favor of it because this happens to be the first revelation I have had any connection with, so I have no experience on how you launch these things. I was sure that this venture would be fruitless. It was. All of these very fine people from Pearl Buck to Rabbi Mann, I don't know, maybe they sent one to Queen Elizabeth, and Winston Churchill. As far as we know, they never got the books. Later on, Pearl Buck was exposed to this book, by a neighbor, and she denied ever having seen it before. So I know one book failed to reach its destination. These are the type of people who are deluged with things of this sort and who have secretaries who see to it that things of this sort go in the waste basket. Now conversely, where I have sent this book to people I know well, it's always been received, simply because I sent it and they respect me enough to take a respectful look at anything I would take the trouble to send to them, and of course the book does look formidable.

<Question from audience ... (indiscernible)>

BSSjr: Yes, this book is in every continent now. It's sprinkled all over Europe. It's in South Africa. It apparently is getting its best reception in Australia. The French translation of this book is on the press right now. That's an interesting story. One of the members of the old Chicago Forum is a gal who buys corsets. Of course, the corset (word?) is just an easy earthy touch. And she travels in Europe periodically as a buyer. She met a young lady in Paris and gave her a Urantia Book. This young lady took the book home and showed it to her father. Her father's name is Jacques Heiss. He's an Alsatian. He looks exactly like a Prussian and is French to his fingertips and has no use for Krauts. Jacques Heiss was an aviator in WWI. He was a member of the underground in WWII. He's a man of means. He has a couple of little companies, he's on the board. Jacques is not rich but he's not poor. Jacques has been interested in translating several works on metaphysics from English into French. When his daughter showed him this book, "Oh, non, non, non ... très formidable. It is too big. I have no time for this." Then his daughter began asking questions about the book. So in self defense, he began probing to see what this book was about and he became intrigued. He began telling his French friends about this book. He would try a phrase here and a phrase there and the next thing he knew, he was translating the book. The translation was completed and checked. Over half of it is in type right now. This year will see the first non English edition of the Urantia Book. It will be published in three volumes, paper back, and boxed. I've seen the first volume.

<Question from audience ... (indiscernible)>

BSSjr: Any valid refutation? Well I'll say this. Our science has already outgrown this book as the book itself warns us will happen. This book is already outdated. This book is up to snuff for about the year 1950. They've grown beyond it. The thing I have been watching for is archeological work. You see there is a gap between second Eden and our oldest cities. This gap is formidable because second Eden goes back twenty, twenty five, thirty thousand years. And yet the oldest cities that we have identified with one exception go back to about four thousand, five thousand BC Now in the last few years a major breakthrough has taken place in the excavations at Jericho and they used carbon 14 in dating which is pretty accurate. There's a gal archeologist who's done the job, and she has established that Jericho goes back to about nine thousand BC This is a major breakthrough and it's all the more major because she has also established that Jericho is not the oldest city because on the 3rd level of Jericho they suddenly find sophisticated pottery which was introduced by invaders. And they know that the pottery evolved in cities which were older than Jericho. This is the first big breakthrough and the first time that we have anything to go along with a sight that Pompoly(?) excavated up in Russian Turkistan which he dates a bronze culture at 9,000 BC This thing sort of stands out. Nobody sort of pays any attention to it because it doesn't fit in. I think the archaeologists are going to come the nearest to validating the chronology of the book. And this is the first breakthrough and its only three years old. The best account of it I have found is in volume 12 of Toynbee Studies History(?). He give a pretty good write up there and a couple pages of what's happened in Jericho. Toynbee(?) vol. 12 Reconsideration in which he admits he was wrong in some areas.

<Questioner adds comment>

BSSjr: It validates the long calendar. Question? ... There are two extreme schools of thought about this book. There are the ultra conservatives who believe that the Spirit of Truth will propagate the Urantia Book, and that all we have to do is sit on our duffs and the book will spread. This is the passive approach to the spread of the book. You can tell by my language that I view them with some contempt. They feel perhaps that since the book is for a hundred years from now there's not much we can do about it now. But of course I feel that if its going to be effective a hundred years from now ... this assumes that we'll do some

things now. Now there is another extreme. These folks want to rent a hall. Let's take a full page ad in LIFE magazine. Let's beat the drum. Let's get Baton, Barton, Dursten & Osborne on the job. Let's get some high powered Madison Avenue public relations type things going. Let's broadcast this. I don't buy that either. I don't buy that because it's been experimented with in small ways and the results have not been fruitful. The technique that seems to work is person to person. From Tinkers to Evers to Chance for Evers knows Tinkers and Chance knows Evers. This works. At least you get a hearing. I'm careful who I send this book to, but I will take a chance. It's only twelve bucks. I just want a reasonable gamble.

<Question from audience ... (indiscernible)>

BSSjr: No we haven't. We haven't applied for one. I don't know what we'd do with it if we got it.

I'll take a chance. I came down on a DC3 from Wisconsin. We were hedge hopping. You know, every haystack they stopped at, and at the first stop a lawyer got aboard and sat next to me. And I had an egghead book and he had an egghead book. I had Toynbee (?) and he had something by Huxley. We grinned at each other as fellow eggheads and started a conversation. And it developed that this guy is interested in religion, and he's had a lot of problems. Well he gets off at Milwaukee. I'm going on to Chicago and just before he was ready to go I said, "Say, there's a book I'd like to send you. Darned interesting thing, I found it most intriguing. Give me your card." So I wrote him on my fancy letterhead, you know, with four colors and all the names so he'd figure I had status, and told him the book was coming. I had Crouch Brentano(?) send it because this looks real commercial and on the up and up and I got as nice letter from him. Well there's a chemist who sells up in Wisconsin and who is a good buddy of mine and a darn solid Urantian. So I wrote Jimmy and I said, "This is in your sales territory make a call." So that's Jim's meet. He gets to Maenadic periodically and we'll see what develops. Now there's the type of long shot I'll take with the book. Here's a man that I have known for an hour, but he is interested.

TRANSCRIPT ENDS

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