

Harlan's copy

R·E·P·O·R·T

OF
◆
DISTRICT
REPRESENTATION

◆
AND

◆
DISTRICT
RESOURCES

◆
TO THE
UUA

◆
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

◆
APRIL 2, 1982

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

TO: BOARD OF TRUSTEES
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION
25 BEACON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02108

Dear Friends:

We trust that the enclosed will be our final report to you. The recommendations are more modest than those in our original report of October 1981.

Our original proposal called for a new way of delivering field services to member societies and a restructuring of the way intermediary organizations are represented on the UUA Board. The two systems, distribution of resources and representation on the Board, were to have been integrated in the expectation that they would reinforce each other. The report was discussed widely; we received abundant comment, favorable and unfavorable, constructive and otherwise; our thinking about the model changed in a number of ways, though we remain convinced of the soundness of the basic approach.

In the area of field services, we now recommend that the present system be continued virtually as is. The primary reason our proposal has been scaled down is the problem of funding. Our original proposal would have required significant new money for field services. It is now clear to us that no new money is likely to be available for this in the near future.

You will find here our recommendation for changes in the way Districts are represented on the UUA Board—changes to move that representation in the direction of equity, and perhaps to bring an increment of increased effectiveness to the Board's work.

You will also find our recommendation for dealing with the distribution of UUA grants to Districts, and a procedure for establishing District boundaries and enabling societies to change their District affiliations.

We have had invaluable assistance from many committed, well-informed UUs across the continent. Many of them shared our enthusiasm for the vision of a new system of expanded field services, and will be disappointed to learn of our conclusion that it is not now possible. Others will be relieved at not having to face the kinds of changes we earlier proposed. Our gratitude goes out to all of them.

And thank you, Board of Trustees, for your confidence in us, and for giving us the opportunity to serve. It has been a long road, not without its rewards.

Yours,

Robert R. Walsh, Chair
Committee on District Representation
and the Distribution of Resources

April 15, 1982

I. Introduction

A. The DR2 Committee is created, charged, and appointed.

The Committee on District Representation and Distribution of Resources was appointed by the UUA Board of Trustees at its meeting in October, 1980. The charge to the Committee was "to study and make recommendations regarding (a) the allocation of resources from the UUA to the Districts, including the incentive grant formula; (b) District representation on the UUA Board; and (c) the question of District boundaries and local societies' memberships in Districts."

The members, appointed initially for a 1 year term, and later reappointed, were:

- Drusilla Cummins
UUA Trustee representing Prairie Star and Western Canada Districts
- Robert W. Deininger, Ph. D.
President, Southwest District
- The Rev. Richard Langhinrichs
Minister, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fort Wayne, IND
President, Ohio Valley District (1979-81)
- Kathleen Montgomery
President, Mid-South District
Chair, Southeast Inter-District Council
- David L. Rickard
President, Mass Bay District (1979-81)
Chair, N. E. Interdistrict Council (1980-81)
- The Rev. Robert C. Sallies
UUA Treasurer and Vice President of Finance
UUA Trustee from Northeast District (1977-80)
Executive Secretary of Northeast District (1967-72, 1976-77)
- The Rev. Robert R. Walsh (Chair)
Minister, First Parish Church, Duxbury, MA
UUA Trustee-at-Large (1973-81)

B. Context: the presenting problems.

The Committee was created as a response to concerns about inequities in District representation on the UUA Board, inequities in District funding, inequities in UUA staffing, and the perceived (by some) unwieldy size of the UUA Board.

Some specific problem areas are (1) Trustee election areas range from one with 29 societies to one with 70 societies; (2) the same disparity exists between areas receiving an equal basic grant from the UUA; (3) Mid-South and Florida Districts share one Trustee and each gets a full District grant while Michigan and Ohio Valley Districts, also sharing a Trustee, divide one District grant between them; (4) eight of the Districts receive more than \$10,000 yearly from endowment funds, one receiving nearly \$70,000, but the endowed Districts receive grants from the UUA under the same formula as Districts without endowment income; (5) the three

Districts on the west coast employ part-time professional staff paid for by the UUA but subject to no control by the UUA; (6) the field services provided through the Interdistrict Program are spread very thin, each IDR serving an average of about 140 societies; (7) but some Districts have their own staff providing services to member societies in addition to their access to the services of an IDR.

It is clear that there are strong feelings abroad on these issues, for they have surfaced repeatedly in one form or another on General Assembly agendas. Amendments and motions introduced in recent years have included proposals to divide the Michigan-Ohio Valley District into two Districts; to grant the resultant two Districts each a full District grant; to allow the Florida and Mid-South Districts each to elect its own Trustee; and to group the Districts into 12 Trustee election areas according to numbers of UU members and thus to reduce the size of the Board. The Florida-Mid-South 2 Trustee amendment is up again this year.

C. The Committee's process.

Five meetings of the committee were held (January, June and September of 1981 and January and March of 1982). The committee consulted with District presidents at their convocation in November 1980 and June 1981, with the R. E. Futures Committee, the Inter-District Representatives, the Moderator, and with the President and key members of the UUA staff. Two separate questionnaires were sent to selected people throughout the continent soliciting opinions regarding intermediary organizations and geographic groupings (Appendix A). The response to the questionnaires was high and indicated a high degree of willingness to consider alternative structures.

In January, 1981, the DR2 chair met with the UUA Board to make a brief report regarding the general direction of the committee's work.

In October, 1981, the chair and other members of the committee met with the UUA Board to present a report which recommended:

1. The establishment of a system for defining boundaries of Districts and acting on requests for transfer from one District to another;
2. A new grant formula for distribution of UUA funds to Districts;
3. The establishment of 12 new intermediary organizations called assemblies which were to be the basic units for organizing field services, increasing professional staffing to 24 with 12 half-time support staff, and asking for increased annual funding of approximately \$300,000.00.
4. Replacing the 20 District Trustees on the UUA Board with 12 Assembly Trustees.

At that meeting, the Board asked that DR2 Committee members meet with District boards and other involved organizations to present and discuss the proposal. Between November 1981 and March 1982, committee members attended 33 meetings (including District boards, annual meetings, cluster meetings, the District presidents' convocation, UUMA board, endowment funding sources, ministers' meetings, and the UUWF board meeting).

In January, 1982, the chair and other members of the committee reported to the Board on the committee's activities and findings to that date, and requested and

received additional guidance from the Board as to its wishes for the final DR2 report.

II. An Integrated Model of Field Services and Political Representation

To the reader interested in a bold proposal to create an integrated system of expanded field services and equitable political representation, we recommend attention to the original DR2 proposal of October 1981.

That proposal would have divided the member societies of the UUA into 12 intermediary organizations to be known as Assemblies. Equity in numbers of member societies in each Assembly would be a principal criterion for making the divisions. Each Assembly would have had a set of bylaws, an annual delegate meeting, and a Board of Directors. Each Assembly would have elected one UUA Trustee, thus replacing the present 20 District Trustees with 12 Assembly Trustees. Each Assembly would have had somewhere within its boundaries a UUA office, staffed by an executive, a program consultant, and a secretary.

In our discussions of the report with concerned groups and individuals across the continent, we have received many affirmative responses and many constructive suggestions for improvements in the model. All of the suggestions were carefully considered, but it was finally decided not to publish a revised version of the original draft. The committee decided this because it does not see that the proposal can be implemented in the near future given the current budget limitations and no promise of new money.

If the committee had decided to refine the draft proposal, some of the areas which might have been revised include a realignment of Assembly boundaries with greater emphasis on existing relationships between societies, flexibility in the composition and function of the Assembly Boards, more flexibility of staffing, a revision in the implementation timetable, and a plan for more consultation with individual Districts and societies involved in funding.

A revision of the original draft would also have attempted to recast the language to express the openness and flexibility which the committee felt was an integral part of the proposal, but which some felt was not conveyed by this report.

III. Recommendations for Action

A. Transfer of Societies from one District to another District

The Committee was charged with studying and making recommendations regarding the question of District boundaries and local societies' memberships in Districts. The immediate problem was that there is no procedure for a society to follow when it wishes to move from one District to another. However, the issue of District boundaries is a much broader one.

The UUA Bylaws provide that "Districts shall be established by action of General Assemblies, which shall fix their boundaries after consultation with the member societies affected thereby." (Section C-12.2)

Our General Counsel studied the history of this question and believes that the establishment of the Districts was actually done, without GA involvement, by the Board of Trustees through the enactment of Rule 6.4.1, which divides the Districts for election purposes. This action by the Board in establishing the Districts appears to have been implicitly ratified by the GA through the passage

of Bylaw 6.3.(c), which uses some of the District designations and combinations set forth in Rule 6.4.1.

The setting of the boundaries of the Districts appears to have been accomplished by publication of a map in the Annual Directory rather than by the General Assembly, as the Bylaws require.

Counsel, in consultation with the committee, drafted a proposed new Rule G-12.2, by the passage of which the General Assembly could formally establish the Districts, set their boundaries, and provide for the occasional need for a society to change District membership. We recommend that the Board of Trustees submit this Proposed Rule to the 1982 General Assembly.

Proposed Rule G-12.2 - Establishing Districts

a. The Districts shall be twenty-three in number and named St. Lawrence, Pacific Southwest, Northeast, Connecticut Valley, Central Massachusetts, Mid-south, Florida, Northwest, Ohio Meadville, Mountain Desert, Southwest, Michigan, Ohio Valley, Thomas Jefferson, Prairie Star, Western Canada, Pacific Central, Massachusetts Bay, N.H.-Vermont, Joseph Priestly, New York Metro, Central Midwest, Ballou Channing.

b. Each District is composed of the societies that are listed as its members in the District list found in the most recently published Annual Directory;

c. The boundaries of each District encompass the areas served by its member societies;

d. Upon application to the Board of Trustees and after notice and an opportunity to be heard are afforded the affected Districts, a society may change its District membership with the approval of the Board of Trustees;

e. The District Map published in the Annual Directory contains boundaries that are an approximation only of the boundary lines determined pursuant to subparagraph c above and are intended primarily as a guide for the newly admitted society in determining its District membership.

If the new Rule is adopted, we recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following rules of implementation:

1. A society that desires to change from membership in one District to another should file a petition requesting this change with the Secretary of the UUA who should acknowledge receipt thereof.
2. The Secretary should then refer the petition to the governing boards of the two affected Districts, requesting their recommendations on the matter. The Secretary should also advise the UUA Board of Trustees at its next regular meeting of the receipt and referral of the petition.
3. Each District board will be considered to have concurred in the petition request unless it notifies the Secretary of the UUA otherwise within 180 days of receipt.
4. The Board of Trustees of the UUA will be considered to have approved the society's petition unless it acts otherwise within one year of receipt of the application by the Secretary of the UUA.

Two actions are required to adopt this recommendation:

1. To place the new Rule G 12.2 on the agenda for the 1982 General Assembly.
2. To place the proposed rules of implementation on the agenda for the October 1982 Board meeting in anticipation of favorable action on the new Rule.

B. District Grants

The October 1981 DR2 report recommended a formula for District grants with these features:

1. A Basic Grant, through which 50% of the amount budgeted by the UUA for District grants would be distributed, an equal share to each District, except that any endowment income would be offset, so that Districts with approximately \$5,000 or more of endowment income (using current numbers) would receive no Basic Grant.
2. A Participation Grant, through which the other 50% of the District grants budget would be distributed to the Districts on the basis of their participation in the previous year's Annual Program Fund.
3. An Incentive Grant, not budgeted for, through which a District would receive back up to 50% of the excess of its APF contribution over its goal, provided that the entire APF exceeds its goal sufficiently to make the distribution.
4. A District APF Goal formula, in which the total of the District goals equals the overall goal of the Church and Fellowship campaign. 50% of the goal would be distributed among the Districts on the basis of the numbers of members of UU societies; 50% would be distributed on the basis of a three-year average of APF contributions.

We understand that this formula has been recommended for interim adoption by the UUA Finance Committee with one exception. Income from endowments will not be offset against the Basic Grant as originally recommended. The Committee feels that this modification may be an appropriate interim step, but reiterates its belief that action should be taken in the near future towards assuring greater equity in funding among Districts.

The committee believes that the cause of equity in the distribution of resources could be furthered if a factor could be introduced into the grants distribution formula that would reflect the variation between Districts in operating and programming costs that arises from the differential in travel expenses. An objective basis for such a factor might be a measurement of distances between each society in a District and some central point in the District. Access to computers may make such a calculation feasible now, though it would have been extremely difficult in the past. Our committee has not invested the time and money it would require to develop this formula, but we recommend that the Finance Committee seriously explore this idea.

We recommend three actions to the Board:

1. To adopt the interim grants formula recommended by the Finance Committee.
2. To encourage the President to meet with representatives of those Districts with endowment income at the 1982 General Assembly to discuss ways in which greater equity in funding among Districts might be achieved.
3. To direct the Finance Committee to review the formula for grant distribution to see if a third factor reflecting travel distances should be added to the District grants formula.

C. District Representation on the UUA Board

The DR2 Committee was charged by the UUA Board to study and make recommendations regarding District representation on the UUA Board. It was clear from the beginning that the primary concern behind this charge was equity. This was confirmed by a motion passed at the January 1982 Board meeting.

The Committee feels that the most valid measurement by which to compare the representation on the Board of different Districts is the number of UUA member societies that are eligible to participate in the election of a District Trustee. By this measurement, the largest Trustee election areas (Central Midwest with 70 societies, Midsouth and Florida with 63, Mass Bay with 61) are twice or more the size of the smallest ones (Mountain Desert with 29 societies, Pacific Central with 31).

We approach this problem with the assumption that the basic units for designing a more equitable system of representation are the presently existing Districts. If the problem were approached without that condition there would be many more possibilities, but we have been impressed in what we have heard since October 1981, that any change in District boundaries for the sake of the present purpose would require, in the words of one Board member, a very high expenditure of psychic energy.

We recommend that the 23 Districts (for this discussion we will consider Western Canada a District) be arranged into 16 Trustee election areas instead of the present 20, each area to elect one trustee; that the arrangement be such as to approach as nearly as possible an equal number of member societies in the area; and that only reasonably contiguous Districts be grouped together.

The number 16 was chosen primarily because it resulted in a more equitable arrangement than most other possibilities (see Appendix C); secondarily because it resulted in a modest reduction in the size of the Board, as opposed to other possibilities which would have enlarged, or reduced more greatly, the number of Trustees. The Committee feels that such a reduction in Board size may result in more effective functioning of the Board, without unduly sacrificing the quality of representation (see Appendix E).

We further propose that every ten years the Board determine whether the arrangement of Districts into the Trustee election areas should be changed to adjust for inequities introduced by patterns of growth and/or decline, shifts in District boundaries, or other causes.

We believe that at present the most equitable arrangement of the 16 areas is as follows:

Group A: Elections in 1985

| <u>Districts</u> | <u>Societies</u> |
|------------------|------------------|
| STL + M | 81 |
| NHVT + NE | 81 |
| CM + CV | 75 |
| OM + OV | 74 |
| F + MS | 63 |
| SW | 56 |
| PSW | 54 |
| PNW | 53 |

Group B: Elections in 1983

| <u>Districts</u> | <u>Societies</u> |
|------------------|------------------|
| CMW | 70 |
| MB | 61 |
| MD + PC | 60 |
| PS + WCAN | 58 |
| JP | 56 |
| MNY | 51 |
| BC | 51 |
| TJ | 46 |

