A Ménage à Trois: The UUA, GAUFCC and IARF and the Birth of the ICUU

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The drive from Boston to the conference center in Essex took the bus almost an hour. Looking around, Ellen Campbell, Executive Director of the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC), considered her companions. They came from Eastern and Western Europe, Sri Lanka and South Africa, Canada, the U.S.A, Britain, Russia and the Philippines. She wondered: Is it possible for such a group to form a cohesive religious community?

It was March 1995 and Universalist, Unitarian, and UU representatives from thirteen kindred groups were, for the second time, about to discuss the formation of a worldwide association. By the end of the meeting “the group was connected by a depth of community which is rarely experienced,”¹ and the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) had been founded.

When the ICUU was founded, most of its member groups had relatively long histories of a Unitarian or Universalist tradition. They differed in form and theology, but all of them had some established governance structure, a theological perspective, and a history and tradition of religious practice. Until 1995, these national or regional bodies existed for the most part quite independent of each other, and there was no clear path for new groups of Unitarians or Unitarian Universalists to receive assistance in development. That changed with the establishment of the ICUU.

The birth of the ICUU and its first two decades of existence are the focus of this history. Arriving there, however, requires following a winding route. Institutionally, liberal religion has championed freedom, honored reason, and in the spirit of love, promoted tolerance and protested oppression—ever since its emergence in the sixteenth century. However, this part of the story begins at the turn of the nineteenth century with the creation of the International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF). The evolution of the IARF from a Unitarian-dominated organization into an interfaith body was the most important of many factors that led to the formation of the ICUU.

**International Association for Religious Freedom**
When the International Council of Unitarian and Other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers was founded in Boston on May 25, 1900, it took its inspiration from the 1893 World Parliament of Religions. In 1893, Universalists² and Unitarians played a lead role, especially Jenkin Lloyd Jones, secretary of the Parliament, who pushed for the Parliament to include non-Christian faiths. Afterward another participating Unitarian, the Rev. Dr. Charles W. Wendte, took it upon himself to nurture the connections that had been made there. With “rare enthusiasm and boundless energy” he served as the IARF secretary through its first twenty years.³ The inaugural meeting of the IARF was held in connection with the 75th anniversary of the American Unitarian Association (AUA) – which was also the anniversary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association (BFUA). ⁴ The founding of this Council marked the founding of the world’s first international interfaith organization.
The IARF’s first president was Joseph Estlin Carpenter, an English Unitarian minister and professor at Manchester College, Oxford, and the first Congress was held a year later in London at the invitation of the BFUA. It was attended by around 2000 people; of these, 770 individuals from twenty-one different religious groups and fifteen countries became members. Its original name, the International Council of Unitarians and Other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers, tells us that it was an organization of individuals. It remained so until 1932 when, at its tenth Congress, a new constitution was adopted. Subsequently, the Association consisted of “organized liberal groups” and, except for interruptions during the First and Second World Wars, the Congress met every two to three years in Europe or the United States.

Another important organizational change took place in 1969 at the twentieth Congress of the IARF. Again the meeting was held in Boston and in conjunction with the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) General Assembly. The IARF delegates witnessed a tumultuous GA dominated by the election of a new UUA president and a rebellion that became known as “The Walkout.” The Annual Report of the British General Assembly of Unitarians described it. “The UUA Meetings were, in fact, so lively and at times explosive, that the IARF gatherings faded into comparative insignificance.” Specifically, this led to cancellation of a reception which the Black UU Caucus (BUUC) was to have sponsored for the IARF. The upheaval was such that most of the IARF-sponsored gatherings were poorly attended.

That week at the IARF business meeting, the name of the organization was officially changed for the fourth time (prior changes having occurred in 1907, 1910, and 1932). The International Association for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom was renamed in 1969 as the International Association for Religious Freedom. This change was made so as not to impede the incorporation into membership of non-Christian Japanese groups: Rissho Kosei-kai (RKK), with its 3 million members, the Konko Church of Izuo, and a year later the Tsubaki Grand Shrine. The move toward greater inclusivity represented a return to the vision of Jenkin Lloyd Jones, from which, in 1893, the World Parliament of Religions had sprung. The British Unitarian Annual Report included the farsighted observation that the “significance of RKK joining does not seem to have been fully grasped.” At this same meeting, Dana Greeley, having come to the end of his term as the first president of the UUA, became president of the IARF.
Dana McLean Greeley's passion for international and interfaith activities was well known. In 1961, he had been among the initiators of what in 1970 became the World Conference of Religions for Peace. In 1962, when the Unitarian Universalist Association was just over a year old, Greeley visited Paris with George Marshall, minister of the Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF), and met with CLF members in the hope that a fellowship might be gathered in Paris. From there, he went to Great Britain to attend the British General Assembly (GA) which he did regularly. One of the recommendations in the AUA-commissioned report, *The Free Church in a Changing World*, which Greeley used as a blueprint, was the establishment of a Department of World Churches. In 1963, Greeley lobbied and won approval at GA that year for a department of Overseas and Interfaith Relations for which, he admitted, “many in the denomination did not see the need.”

That same year he arranged for the UUA and IARF to receive an invitation to the Second Vatican Council, and visited the Universalist Church of the Philippines. In April 1965, within weeks of returning from the conclusion of the voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery, he left for Europe where he spoke at the UU fellowship in Paris before making his usual appearance at the British GA. In May at the UUA GA he announced, “Yesterday we admitted the first South American fellowship to our Association. We are more dynamic and unified than ever...” In July he made his first of two trips to Vietnam. And throughout these years he was a member of the IARF Council.

In 1969, during that most chaotic of UUA General Assembly gatherings, Robert West was elected president of the Association. At that point the UUA was the largest financial contributor to the IARF, funding two-thirds of its budget. By custom the president of the UUA occupied the denomination’s seat on the council. “When I took office,” wrote West “I resolved not to travel overseas for at least two years. I was busy dealing with the crisis in our denomination....” Noting that Greeley “had been severely and widely criticized for excessive international travel,” West recommended to the UUA board that Diether Gehrmann be appointed to the IARF Council instead of himself. The UUA was functioning in crisis mode: managing a 1.4 million-dollar deficit and the institutional restructuring that was required to eliminate that deficit; responding to the intra-denominational conflict precipitated by the Black Power Movement; and defending itself from the lawsuit filed by the Nixon Administration after Beacon Press published the Pentagon Papers. West had to re-order UUA priorities. This was the context in which West recommended that the UUA Office of Overseas and Interfaith Relations be eliminated and its responsibilities shifted to the office of the executive vice president.

West lent support to the IARF in 1970 by endorsing its proposal to the Veatch Committee of the North Shore Unitarian Society (NSUS) for grant funding. Veatch declined this proposal, but in spring 1972, the Committee funded an alternate proposal for seed money to hire an Executive Director. This resulted in a two-year $20,000 grant followed in 1975 by another $15,000. Thus, Diether Gehrmann began his tenure as IARFs General Secretary in 1972, the same year that Greeley’s term as IARF President ended. At this point, West began attending IARF Council meetings.
The proposal that Veatch funded presented a new vision of the IARF as less “academic [and more] a peoples’ association which recognizes its responsibilities toward reaching the lives and realities of the rank and file of its member groups and bringing them into mutual contact.”\(^{15}\) The IARF began to “extend invitations for IARF membership to a range of groups [and] followed up massively on every lead and indication of interest in IARF.”\(^{16}\) In the seventeen years between 1972 and 1989, the IARF grew from thirty-five groups representing nineteen countries and nine traditions to fifty-four groups representing twenty countries and sixteen traditions.\(^{17}\) During the 1980s, alongside this expansion, “Lucie Meijer of the IARF Secretariat organized the IARF Social Service Network to support IARF members sponsoring community development projects in Northern Ireland, Eastern Europe, the Indian subcontinent and the Philippines.”\(^{18}\)

Paradoxically, it was the success of this new vision and the IARFs growing diversity that fueled the need for an organization like the ICUU.

Like the BFUA and AUA, the UUA identified itself as an international body of congregations, an idea fed by Greeley’s global vision of the UUA. Given this vision, together with the UUA’s existing relationships and long-standing commitments, as well as its response to overtures from an array of indigenous groups, the transition would prove difficult and lead to conflicts within and beyond the UUA.

**Canadian Unitarian Council**

From its beginning in 1961, the UUA was, and thought of itself as, an international organization. This was primarily because it included Canadian congregations. Indeed of 136 ministers settled in Canada between 1832 and 1982, half were Americans.\(^{19}\) Prior to 1961, Canadian Unitarians met informally at AUA May meetings. These meetings were the predecessor to the General Assembly gatherings that began after the consolidation of the AUA and the Universalist Church of America (UCA). In 1961 the Canadian Unitarian Council/Conseil Unitarien du Canada (CUC) was founded despite the “apprehension among American denominational leaders that a separatist plot was afoot.”\(^{20}\) Among the first steps taken by the CUC was to apply for admission to the IARF. To Canadian Unitarians it seemed “anomalous that in an organization composed of national member groups Canada should be represented simply by one member of what was generally regarded as an American delegation.”\(^{21}\) The British General Assembly granted the CUC affiliate status in 1964, but its membership in the IARF was blocked by the UUA. Greeley had the final say on the UUA’s position, and the “UUA refused to budge.”\(^{22}\)

It is difficult to know how much attention Greeley paid to Canada. He sent the representative in charge of districts but rarely himself attended a CUC board or annual meeting,\(^{23}\) and he only mentioned the CUC twice in *25 Beacon Street and Other Recollections*. In the first mention, he lamented that the CUC did not incorporate Universalist into its name and become the CUUC. This desire, in and of itself, upset some Canadian Unitarians. Charles Eddis pointed out that “at the time of merger, there were about 50 Universalists in Canada and 15,000 Unitarians and with that balance, to say Unitarian Universalist doesn’t work. [When] American ministers come to Canada and tell us we are all Unitarian Universalists .... to me it’s a kind of cultural imperialism.”\(^{24}\)
Greeley's second mention of Canada is in his chapter on "Race Relations." He wrote, “Our Canadian brethren think that we are preoccupied with national problems, and wonder what their share can be in the North American Unitarian Universalist Association.” He then went on to do exactly as Canadians had come to expect, devoting the rest of the chapter to America’s national preoccupation with race.

James Gibson, who served as AUA vice president in 1957, recalled that “[w]hen I was first at General Assembly, there was something that one wouldn't describe as indifference, but perhaps unawareness of the nature of the government in Canada, how it is different from the United States...” 25 Decades later William F. Schulz would similarly lament “that [Americans] were stupid and insensitive and parochial and justifiably angered Canadians.” This happened despite it being “drummed into UUA staff when [he] first went to the UUA in 1978 that not only [was the UUA] not an American entity... We were taught that we needed to be cautious both in our language and our cultural assumptions.” 26

In 1969, Greeley must have known Canadian Unitarians were restive, but it is unlikely he was prepared for the lead headline, “SIGNS OF UNITARIAN SEPARATISM IN CANADA,” appearing in the Spring issue of Canada Unitarian, the CUC newsletter. What triggered this revolt? One immediate cause was that the UUA, which continued to block CUC membership in the IARF, did not consult it when choosing a Canadian delegate to attend the upcoming IARF Congress in Boston. 27 Another was that the UUA budget crisis had led the Greeley administration to propose cutting back on the meager $1,800 allocated to run the CUC volunteer office in Toronto. In 1964, when the CUC total budget was $4,700, it requested $3,500 from the UUA and was allocated $3,100. Now, despite the fact that Canadian congregations contributed over $25,000 per annum to the Annual Program Fund (APF) of the UUA, there was to be an additional cut.

In May 1969, the reaction played out at the annual meeting of the CUC. A resolution to reconstitute the CUC as a national body paid for by Canadian Unitarians was submitted. It lost, with twenty-nine voting against and twenty-one voting for. However, a second resolution warning the UUA of Canadian discontent passed with overwhelming approval. 28

Subsequently, after Robert West was elected UUA President, changes were enacted. Canada was given higher priority in the already inflated UUA budget; there would be a Canadian representative on the UUA Board; and the UUA withdrew its objection to the CUC becoming a member of the IARF.

Negotiations between the UUA and CUC continued. Over the next thirty years, these resulted in more than a dozen accords. None managed to find a formula that could disentangle which services benefited Canadians and which did not (i.e., many were of general benefit but others were so focused on American needs as to have no relevance to Canada). In addition, the financial challenge was ongoing for two reasons: first, there were currency fluctuations between the U.S. and Canada, with, for example, the Canadian dollar being worth 69 cents (U.S.) in 1986, 87 cents in 1991, and 67 cents in 1998; and second, an additional expense was borne by Canadian congregations, because they had to maintain three levels of administration—regional, national and continental—
rather than two. Kathleen Hunter, the CUC’s first Executive Director, contended that this arrangement “castrated the CUC.”

Meanwhile, from the American perspective, it looked like the cost of the services Canadian congregations received were far in excess of their contribution to the APF. Apart from the accords, there was the continuing irritant of UUA resources not being designed for the Canadian context and GA resolutions nearly always being focused on U.S. concerns. When the CUC, in an effort to become more autonomous without severing ties to the UUA, proposed having the delivery of religious education and extension services shifted to Canada, the UUA refused. Instead, in 2000 it offered the CUC $1.5 million if the CUC would become independent. Having little leverage, and finally realizing that an accord resolving the many ongoing and knotty issues was not forthcoming, the Canadians accepted the offer in 2001 and became independent in 2002.

The separation of the CUC from the UUA took place seven years after the founding of the ICUU, and the ICUU played a crucial, albeit unintended, role. When the CUC became a full member of the IARF, it was for Canadians a recognition of their autonomy. Being a founding member of the ICUU had a similar effect, and both memberships bolstered a blossoming Canadian Unitarian identity. This story was told in the book, Unitarians in Canada, published in 1978. The CUC became stronger with the hiring of its first executive director in 1983. Its distinctiveness was outlined in 1985 in an essay on “...Canadian Contextual Theology.” Canadian Unitarians began seeing themselves differently. Canadian Unitarians had felt as if the CUC was a branch of the UUA, but CUC membership in the IARF and the ICUU showed it to be a peer—an autonomous national body among others. Indeed, in the ICUU, the CUC was a major player rather than a poor cousin, and this helped to turn what had been a reluctant and difficult separation into reason to rejoice.

**European Unitarian Universalists**

European Unitarian Universalists (EUU) is an organization twenty years younger than the CUC, and none of its congregations date back to the first half of the twentieth century much less to the first half of the nineteenth century, as do several in Canada. Nevertheless, there are ways in which the relationship of the EUU to the UUA parallels that of the CUC.

What the EUU is, and why it was formed, provides another strand in the story of how and why the ICUU came into being. Good intentions and creative vision led to the founding of the EUU, but its growth resulted in unforeseen frictions within the UUA. Some of these complications mirrored the problems embedded in the CUCs relationship to the UUA.

When Greeley and Marshall travelled to Paris in 1962 to meet with CLF members, their intention was to establish a fellowship. By August 1963, when John Kielty, General Secretary of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches (GAUFCC), visited Paris, the group had developed a contact list of seventy persons who were meeting midweek. In 1964, there was a fellowship of twenty-seven members in Leiden, Holland, another of fifteen in Munich, and another in Wiesbaden. The last was a result of the efforts of Joan Breen, the director of the library at the U.S. Air Force Headquarters for Europe. In March 1965, the UUA Board adopted “Policies Relating To Overseas Groups,” which set out how to be in relationship with such groups in ways
“acceptable to the overseas group and consistent with UUA principles.”

Two months later Greeley visited the group in Paris for a second time.

In the late 1960s, informal annual and semi-annual weekend retreats for Unitarian Universalists living in Europe were held, but no lasting network emerged. In 1979, O. Eugene Pickett, President of the UUA, was in Frankfurt for a meeting of the IARF Council. Steve Dick, on his own initiative, had asked Pickett to address a gathering of European members of the CLF that he would organize. Invitations were sent to those on the CLF mailing list, and the gathering took place at the Unitarian church in Frankfurt. Pickett was accompanied by Diether Gehrmann of the IARF and Roy W. Smith, General Secretary of the British GA. Indeed, the UUA rarely acted unilaterally, and at this gathering the triumvirate of UUA, GAUFC and IARF was represented. After introductory remarks, the majority of the program was spent on questions and answers. The inception of the EUU dates to a retreat held in 1980, but the gathering that marks the EUU’s emergence as a formal, ongoing organization was not held until 1982.

What stimulated the growth of American-flavored Unitarian Universalism in Europe was the arrival of Ron Diehl, Steve Dick, and Leon Spencer in 1979. At that point, the only surviving European UU fellowship, of those begun in the 1960s, was in Wiesbaden. In 1980, Spencer started a fellowship in Zweibrucken; in 1983, one began in Brussels and another in the Netherlands. Others sprang to life in Geneva, Munich, Heidelberg, Frankfurt, and Kaiserslautern. Steve Dick, while studying for the ministry at Manchester College, Oxford, was also trained as, and was designated as, a New Congregation Organizer by the UUA. In a position funded by the Association, Dick supported the EUU and worked with the Paris Fellowship and the group in the Netherlands. Gehrmann, who was among those most supportive of the fledgling EUU, attended one of its early retreats along with the IARF Secretariat. He allowed Dick to work out of the IARF office where Dick was also employed part-time by the IARF.

Sometime during the 1970s, the fellowship in Paris succumbed, although a group of women continued to meet informally. Then Bill Barraclough, an American diplomat who had helped revive the fellowship in Brussels, did the same in Paris. In 1985 when he became U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission, he brought together four other couples who attended EUU retreats and they reconstituted the UU Fellowship of Paris (UUFP). The UUFP became a member of the UUA in 1986 and was incorporated into the UUA under the UUA Board policy adopted in 1965. The policy stated: “Groups in which overseas Americans and Canadians predominate—admit to regular UUA fellowship or church status when qualified.”

In Spring 1985, the UUA Board recognized the EUU as the European Conference of the UUA. During William Schulz’s years as UUA Executive Vice President, he and Pickett paid considerable attention to the EUU as part of Pickett’s desire to grow UU membership. Like Greeley and Pickett before him, Schulz’s vision was to be of service to the global growth and reach of Unitarian Universalism. His family’s roots in Europe were very much alive. Indeed, raised in an internationally minded home, he developed what Kay Montgomery, who served as his Vice
President, described as “a voracious appetite for other cultures.”

The EUU is an organizational hybrid. Covering a membership that spans across Western Europe, with congregations in Belgium, Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, it is transnational rather than national. Its membership is made up of individuals rather than congregations; half of its membership belongs to fellowships, the others are members at-large. Its congregations—with the exception of the UU Fellowships of Paris and Brussels, who were members of the UUA—do not have the right to send voting delegates to the UUA General Assembly, nor does the EUU. Since the EUU was designated as a conference rather than a district, it also did not have a representative on the UUA Board, something the CUC attained in 1971. The intentions behind bringing the EUU into the UU fold were good. Nonetheless, it left the UUA granting membership to UUs who were not democratically represented and did not receive services in a substantial way, though they had access to some grants. Paradoxically, the EUU and its fellowships had greater access to UUA staff than some similar sized groups in North America.

Since its inception, the EUU has evolved its own distinct culture. In the beginning its membership drew largely from the “ex-pat” community, but over the years that changed. The membership, especially after the U.S. began closing its military bases in Europe, trended away from a predominance of individuals stationed abroad and toward Americans and Canadians living permanently in Europe. Among them were couples in internationally mixed marriages and European nationals, particularly those who had spent extended periods of time in North America. They tend to be cultural outliers straddling countries, cultures, and languages. They can be thought of as “in-betweeners”; “internationals” is a term that some use.

EUU congregational life also differs from the North American norm. In general, fellowships hold a monthly worship service, augmented by small group ministries and social activities. Given the size of the congregations, the absence of settled ministers, and their once-a-month worship services, the semi-annual retreats sponsored by the EUU are an essential part of the rhythm of EUU congregational and worship life. Indeed, the primary function of EUU has been organizing the semi-annual retreats. Its activities are co-ordinated by a Coordinating Council (CC) that includes a representative from each fellowship and two individuals representing the members-at-large.

The experience of being part of the UUA but not fully so, is what made the EUU and the CUC eager to participate in the 1995 meeting from which the ICUU emerged. The Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines (UUCP) was also among the organizations that founded the ICUU, and like the CUC and EUU, it was a member of the UUA, though not entirely.

**Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines**
The UUA Board “Policies Relating To Overseas Groups,” adopted in 1965, stated: “Overseas groups with indigenous people predominating admit to affiliated membership when qualified [which
means such groups would then receive the variety of written materials, some assistance in organizational matters, etc., but would not be entitled to vote in the General Assembly.”36 The move in 1987 to welcome the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines into UUA membership required changing this policy, which signaled the welcoming of indigenous people outside North America into the UUA. In choosing this direction, Schulz had two aims in mind. He was “profoundly aware of how parochial most American Unitarian Universalists were”37 and was seeking ways to ameliorate this. Second, his intention was to support the global growth of Unitarian Universalism. “It was my recognition,” he wrote, “that the Filipino church had been in some sense abandoned by the American-based denomination after the Universalists had helped initiate it [therefore] I became determined to see that the church was offered full membership in the UUA.”38

Correspondence between Rev. Toribio S. Quimada and the Universalist Church of America (UCA) began in 1952; it led to Quimada’s excommunication from Iglesia Universal de Christo. The Universalist Church of the Philippines (UCP) was founded in 1955, and in 1958 the Universalist Service Committee funded his enrollment in a local university.39 The 1959-1960 Universalist Yearbook listed the UCP as a “fraternal associate” along with six other groups. This designation, established in 1954, meant reciprocal listing of the associate; exchange of ideas, publications and personnel whenever possible; cooperation; encouragement; and complete autonomy. In 1959 the fraternal associates were: the Unitarian Church in Hungary, the Japan Free Religious Association, the UCP, the Universalist Church of Japan, the Universalist Church of Korea; and the Free Church, de Vrije Gemeete, in Amsterdam.40

These relationships were maintained through the Universalist Service Committee. There was, however, a subtle difference between them. Toshio Yoshioko, the executive director and minister of the Universalist Church of Japan, was listed as a minister on the Universalist’s roll; Quimada was not. It seems a distinction was made between Universalist missions and those with whom the Universalists were in “fraternal association.” Regardless, the consolidation of the UCA and AUA into the UUA had a disastrous effect on Universalist international outreach. Temporarily, the Universalist Service Committee became the UUA Department of World Churches. But within a couple of years, it was merged with, and in reality swallowed up by, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). The UUSC then terminated the relationship to the Universalist mission projects in the Philippines and Japan, as well as to its nearly hundred-year-old mission to the African-American community in Suffolk, Virginia.

Jory Agate, a UU working as a Peace Corps volunteer in Negros, came to know Rev. Toribio Quimada. Expanding on the impact of the UUA’s retreat from its relationship to UUCP, Agate said, “When they lost recognition after the merger, it felt like it was his life work to get it back. He had done so much to found his church and proselytize, spreading the “Good News” of UUism, and then to have the “mothership” tell him that he was no longer recognized as a member was devastating.”41 That the relationship between the UUA and the Universalist Church of the Philippines (UCP) endured was due to the persistence of Rev. Quimada. Even after 1972 when the UCP attained membership in the IARF, Quimada’s effort to seek as strong a connection to the UUA as had existed with the UCA continued.
In 1986, having learned indirectly that the UUA Board was considering changing the UUA by-laws to permit indigenous congregations to become members, the U.S. Chapter Board of the IARF became alarmed. Its president, Dianne E. Arakawa, in an effort to get more information, wrote to the UUA Board and outlined the IARF’s concerns. The major point of the letter was that it was time for the UUA to reestablish a Department of Overseas and Interfaith Relations. The letter also raised other concerns. How much would the UUCP be expected to contribute to the APF, would it receive services adequate to meet its needs, or would its status be honorific? Moving to the heart of the matter she said the IARF Board “felt that the matter had not been thought through, and ... wondered what the implications of the UUA Board’s action would be.” IARF Board member, Professor Gene Reeves recalled that the IARF was concerned with these questions: “Would the UUA become a truly international and intercultural religious movement? If so, would it displace the IARF? If not, how would it be related to the IARF? There was also...some concern about possible UUA imperialism and whether or not the Filipinos would become second class citizens in a U.S. dominated denomination.”

Responding to Arakawa’s letter, Schulz wrote that the IARF Secretariat “strongly supports Philippine membership in the UUA.” “[I]t simply cannot provide the kind of counsel and practical support to overseas Unitarian Universalist groups that the UUA will be able to provide.” We received inquiries “in Boston from indigenous individuals from overseas wishing to form a UU congregation—we have such inquiries from Malaysia, Liberia, Costa Rica, etc.” and had to refer them “to Frankfurt where they languished...”

His response described the dilemma the UUA faced and unintentionally raised another question. Was it appropriate for the IARF to render assistance to any group that identified as Unitarian Universalist to the extent of assisting it to form and grow? Yet if not to the IARF, or the UUA, or the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches (to whom those in the British Commonwealth tended to turn), where could such groups turn? The arrival of requests and the challenge of deciding how to respond wasn’t new, but rather a concern of longstanding.

In 1854, the AUA’s first foreign missionary, Rev Charles H. A. Dall, went to India and worked there until his death in 1886. In 1912, Jamaican Ethelred Brown by the BFUA through 1914, and by the AUA until 1917, was withdrawn the movement in Jamaica collapsed, which embark for Harlem in 1920. There was the Sierra Leone Church about which nothing is known except a picture of congregation sent to Charles W. Wendte, who until 1920 secretary of the IARF. In 1935 when Evaristo Hurtado of wrote to the AUA asking that a missionary be sent to church, the letter went unanswered. The reply to his said that in the aftermath of the Depression, funds were none were available for such an effort. In 1944 the Unitarian Register announced that the AUA board had accepted the application of the Fagatogo Parish of Congregational Church of Jesus, “in American Samoa, for membership in the Association ... its contribution for the current fiscal year accepted, and the church officially made a part of the fellowship.” That church still exists today, but it was not listed in the AUA year book after 1960. In 1947 a group of eight individuals in the Panama Canal Zone organized the Isthmian Fellowship. The 1964 directory shows twenty-four
members and its last listing is in 1984. In 1954, the Universalist Leader reported on a group in Haiti; a “fraternal associate... under the leadership of the Rev. Robert Mathurin... There are eight established churches, four schools, and seventeen church fellowships.” As of 1959 it was not among the groups listed as fraternal associates. There was a Unitarian Society in Guayaquil, Ecuador for 2 years in the 1950s. In 1960 the Unitarian Fellowship of Dharhan in Saudi Arabia was affiliated with 33 voting members. In a conference held with Dr. and Mrs. Gelphi (she was the superintendent of a church school with 45 children), “the Gelpi’s wondered why no one ever visits... They would like an R.E. field visit.” Expat and Indigenous congregations appeared in the Register, Leader, or Yearbook and then disappeared again.

These missions were sometimes accepted, but with the exceptions of India and Japan, none were begun by either denomination. Indeed, as the letter from Schulz pointed out, the board was not seeking indigenous congregations, nor being proactive in starting them, but rather responding to requests, of which there were many. He went on to say that the UUA would direct what resources it had available to indigenous congregations. In fact, the UUA was legally required to direct the spending of one of the ten Holdeen Trusts to work in Asia; and that someone (i.e., Melvin Hoover), had been hired to be responsible for International Relations. “It is baffling to me,” Schulz wrote, “that the very people who I would have thought most supportive of the UUA’s recognizing its global interconnectedness and the inadequacy of a parochial view of the world—i.e., the IARF U.S. Board—are the only people in the entire denomination raising objection to the proposals... Perhaps I am unduly ‘dense’ but it is not clear to me... what the basis of the objection is.”

Why was this group, and one UUA Board member, the only ones to object? The IARF US Board’s concerns need to be considered in the context of who they were. In addition to Arakawa, the Board included: Homer Jack, a founder of the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE), former director of the UUA Department of Social Responsibility, and Secretary-General of the World Conference on Religion and Peace; Gene Reeves, the president of Meadville Lombard and chair of the Planning Committee for the 1987 IARF Congress, who had taught at Wilberforce University, the first college owned and operated by African-Americans; and Sunrit Mullick, a Brahmo Samaj D.Min candidate at Meadville Lombard. Max Gaebler was another board member. As the founding director of the UUA Department of Overseas and Interfaith Relations, he met Rev. Quimada in 1963 and afterward corresponded with him. In March 1987 Gaebler elaborated upon his concerns in a sermon entitled, “The World-Wide Relevance of Our Free Faith.” Copies of the sermon were sent to both Boards after it was delivered.

[T]here is a genuine danger in all such situations of developing a patron-client relationship... It is essential that our relationship with the Universalist Church of the Philippines remains one between peers, with each respecting the autonomy and responsibility of the other...”  

“...[M]embership in the UUA seems to me to raise more problems than it solves.... The danger of becoming ‘parochial or nationalistic’ is more pervasive than we generally recognize. It is not that we deliberately exclude perspectives different from our own. But rather that we forget about them. It is the questions we fail to ask because they don’t even occur to us – it is these that reveal the extent of our entrapment in our own cultural milieu...”

Then Gaebler, like Greeley, Gibson, and Schulz, referred to the Canadian experience.
[O]ur Canadian friends find it necessary repeatedly to remind us of the specifically United States focus on many of our utterances. If this is true even now, if we Americans are prone to forget the different centers of gravity that are important for Canadians, how vastly greater would be the difficulties if we were to include member societies as different from us as those on the Philippine island of Negros!\textsuperscript{52}

Over time the members of the IARF US Board would be joined by other dissentors. Nevertheless, at the UUA Board meeting in Spring 1987, it voted to recommend to the up-coming General Assembly that the delegates begin the two-year process of changing C By-law 3.1. In this it had the full backing of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches (GAUFCC). Indeed, in response to a letter from Arakawa soliciting support, Roy Smith, the GAUFCC General Secretary and IARF President, declined and said “I welcome the UUA Board's proposal.”\textsuperscript{53}

The IARF Congress met that summer in Palo Alto, California during the first week of August. Rev. Toribio Quimada was there but became critically ill. Schulz visited him in the hospital. During their conversation, Quimada begged him “to see to it, should he die then, that his dream of membership for UUCP in the UUA [be] fulfilled…. [He] recovered from that illness but was murdered in the Philippines the following year.”\textsuperscript{54}

His request needs to be understood in context. For over two hundred years, the Philippines was a colonized country, first by Spain, then by the United States. This experience conditioned Filipinos to expect authority to be located elsewhere. Did his request suggest a quest for legitimacy that only full recognition by the UUA could bestow? Or was his request that the UUA grant the UUCP's desire to become a member in and of itself another form of imperialism? Was this a conundrum for which there was no solution?

In June 1988, a month after the murder of Rev. Quimada, the language in the UUA by-laws restricting member congregations to Canada and the U.S. and groups of ex-patriots was, for the second time, debated. “It was controversial…,” recalled Rebecca Sienes, Rev. Quimada's daughter. “There was a long line of delegates at the Opposed mic and likewise a long line at the Pro mic. I was scared. I feared that if it failed it would mean the death of the dream that my father labored so much for.”\textsuperscript{55} Finally, the UUCP and its roughly 2,500 members were welcomed into membership. In 1988 the ex-pat fellowship in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico was recognized; then Auckland, New Zealand in 1990, and South Australia in 1991, all with little debate. The admission in January 1994 of an indigenous group from Lahore, Pakistan was different. A Board member reported that the request was hotly debated and approval came only after the issue of racism was raised.\textsuperscript{56}

In hindsight, Sienes saw classism and racism at play. She said, “If my father was an influential wealthy person and his followers were well-educated ones, perhaps it wouldn’t [have] taken years to consider his application for membership.” Schulz concurred. In particular, he found the argument that the UUCP would “try to exert undue influence through its voting power... was racism, pure and simple.”\textsuperscript{57} Given that GA delegates are largely middle-class, white, liberals acculturated into an Anglo-American-centric worldview, being asked to debate whether to include
foreign, poor, people of color in the UUA, can there be any doubt that certain arguments cloaked classism and racism? Yet, given the cultural diversity, the breadth of experience and long-standing commitments to social justice of IARF US Board members, the arguments it made demand consideration. The question they raised was not whether to be in relationship with UUCP, or whether to aid it; upon that everyone agreed. The question was whether ceding to Rev. Quimada’s request for a reinstatement of the fraternal relationship, it had held with the UCA—except now with the UUA—would have the desired outcome. It was in this regard, along with its broader international implications, that the IARF US Board expressed skepticism. Furthermore, whatever near consensus the UUA board had reached, new members raised new questions. “Some members of the Board,” said Rev. Doris Hunter, who joined the board in June 1987, “felt that there was no mechanism for membership such as representation of those groups on the UUA Board and therefore there was a lack of a democratic structure. I believe it was the request for a group from Pakistan that brought that issue to a head...”  

The UUCP, like the CUC and the EUU, had a relationship to the UUA but what did it mean? Each represented a body of congregations nested within the UUA, an association of congregations in which the power resided exclusively in congregations. The congregations of the EUU and UUCP were not represented, nor was it proposed that they should be. The CUC was larger than either; its congregations were represented at GA and a Canadian sat on the UUA Board, but it still struggled to have its particular needs recognized, much less met. This situation, together with the scrambled nature of all the relationships, added to a growing sense of tension.

**General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches**

Like the UUA, the GAUFCC had relationships, in differing degrees, with the CUC and EUU. In truth, it is not possible to consider the history of Unitarianism’s worldwide mission efforts without reference of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association (BFUA). In 1928, the BFUA combined with the National Conference in a failed attempt to develop a broader group of liberal churches, the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches.

From its founding in 1825, the BFUA had among its goals the promotion of Unitarian Christianity in foreign countries and maintaining contacts by correspondence and co-operation. Its history makes clear, “the word *Foreign* was deliberately inserted, and was to be taken seriously”.  

During the nineteenth century, its Foreign and Colonial Department gave financial grants to kindred movements and worked in India, e.g., Calcutta and Madras (now Chennai). Indeed, when the AUA sent Charles Dall to India in 1854, the British Unitarians had preceded him by lending financial support to William Roberts as early as 1816, and later to Rammohan Roy, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj. Later still, the General Assembly’s focus turned to the Unitarian Union North East India (UUNEI) in the Khasi Hills. In the nineteenth century, the BFUA supported Canadians (as did the AUA), and in the 1850s it supported Australian Unitarians. Reverend David Faure, a liberal minister who broke away from the Dutch Reformed Church, founded a congregation in Cape Town, South Africa in 1867. When Faure died, Reverend Ramsden Balmforth came from England...
to succeed him, and in 1921, Balmforth brought the South African church into the Unitarian movement. When the AUA began its mission in Japan in 1890, there was an English volunteer, Mr. H. W. Hawks, who participated in the effort. The support for Ethelred Brown’s mission in Jamaica in 1912 was a collaboration with the AUA to which the BFUA contributed $500 a year. From its earliest days, the BFUA developed relationships with the Transylvanian Unitarians and supported Hungarian students at Manchester College, Oxford from 1860 on. Later students from the Khasi Hills also attended Manchester. When the first congress of the IARF took place in 1901, the BFUA was the host.

In 1987 two notable events took place that highlight the international scope of the GAUFCC. In May, at its General Assembly, a resolution to explore the possibility of establishing a world council of Unitarian churches was adopted. In December, Deputy General Secretary Christine Hayhurst, while visiting the UUNEI for its Centenary Celebrations, inaugurated the Indian Council of Unitarian Churches (ICUC) in Jowai, India. In October 1988, Geoffrey Head, the GA Treasurer, participated in the organizing meeting of the ICUC that took place in Madras. Initiated by Carleywell Lyngdoh, its intention was to bring the separate Unitarian groups in India together “for the Growth and Development of Unitarians and Universalism ...” and “to represent India at the international level.” About 120 attended, including members from Madras, UUNEI, and Brahmo Samaj among others. Head, in his report to the GAUFCC, said he found it “a most encouraging sign of potential Unitarian advance in the sub-continent [and] a testimony to the ability of the Unitarian ethos to bind together diverse elements in love and common purpose. Our Indian brothers and sisters are an example to us all.” This effort put India at the forefront of the emerging movement to bring Unitarians together.

The GAUFCC engagement in international affairs can serve as a counterpoint to the UUA’s handling of international relations. One difference is that the GAUFCC lists both the CUC and the EUU under the category, “Societies approved by the Assembly,” along with the Unitarian Union of North East India, and L’Eglise Protestante Liberale de Bruxelles. These groups have voting rights at the GAUFCC annual meeting and they enjoy a fraternal relationship. Nevertheless, like the relationship of the UUA to the EUU and UUCP, the delivery of services by the GAUFCC to each group is minimal.

For 150 years, the GAUFCC and AUA/UUA were the hubs of Unitarian mission efforts. This made it natural for the CUC and EUU to be related to both, and to their offspring the IARF. However, there was no context that fostered a relationship between the newer organizations as peers in the same way that the UUA and GAUFCC related to one another. Indeed, there were many and overlapping relationships, and, in this respect, among the important questions being posed, as the twenty-first century approached, were these: What role would these Unitarian outliers, who were becoming more assertive, play? Was it possible, given the ways in which the IARF was changing, that it could serve them as it had served the UUA and GAUFCC in the past? What role would Unitarians play in an IARF that was no longer dominated by American and European ministers and theologians talking about liberal religion? In 1987, the answers to these questions were not obvious.
The Twenty-Seventh Congress of the IARF - Hamburg, Germany

In 1986, around the time that the IARF US Board queried the UUA Board about its international intentions, Reverend David Usher found himself confronted by a friend’s incredulity. During their conversation, Usher came to the realization that there was no formal mechanism that would enable the various world-wide Unitarian groups to convene. Being an Australian serving a congregation in Britain, this was an issue to which he was attuned. At the 1987 meeting of the GAUFCC, Usher made a motion requesting that the General Assembly Council “consult with Unitarian representatives throughout the world and explore the possibility of establishing a World Unitarian Council.” During the debate there were “some uncertainties about how this differed quite from the IARF,” but nonetheless it “passed decisively.” Afterward, Usher, who was “given the job of initiating those discussions, wrote to the national organisations, and received a positive but cautious response from most.”

To promote the effort, Usher attended the CUC Annual Meeting and discovered Canadians were supportive. Usher laboured for eight years. Along the way he found a few allies, “but for the most part it was lonely and oftentimes discouraging.” UUA General Assemblies and IARF Congresses were natural opportunities to campaign, but, he knew “…that without the political and financial support of the UUA, the project was unlikely ever to come into being.”

At the 1990 IARF Congress in Hamburg, Germany, the keynote speaker was Dr. Hans Küng, a Swiss Catholic priest who had famously rejected the doctrine of papal infallibility, who spoke on the theme: “No Peace in the World Without Peace Among Religions.” During the 1970s and 1980s, the IARF had moved beyond Europe and the United States. National conferences were held in India and the Philippines. In 1980, Nikko Niwano, leader of the RKK, became the IARF’s first Asian president. In 1982 the IARF organized the IARF Social Service Network to support IARF members sponsoring community development projects in Northern Ireland, Eastern Europe, the Indian subcontinent, and the Philippines. In 1984, the IARF Congress was held in Tokyo. The transformation of the IARF was evident, not only in changes of venue and leadership, but in its program. In her 1993 acceptance speech, Natalie Gulbrandsen—who would become its second female president and felt a deep passion for the IARF—recalled her first Congress in 1958. “It was a very exclusive group of intellectuals – mostly ministers and theologians, all men in leadership roles. I believe there was one woman on the program...The speeches were very long [and] there were no circle groups, no home visits, no action, just an aura of intellectualism everywhere.” She went on to say, “I am amazed at what the IARF has become, and am looking ahead to a vision of what it can be.” It was not just that the leadership, venue, and program had changed; the people who attended had changed as well. In 1958 when the Sixteenth Congress was held in Chicago, the attendance was over 775; three registrants came from India and three from Japan. The 1990 Congress had 660 registrants and of these, nineteen were from India, 116 from Japan, three each from Bangladesh and Nigeria. The involvement of the Japanese groups in the IARF had an impact. Of course, they were non-Christian, but just as importantly, “they were energetic and growing, while almost all the European member groups, the Brahmo Samaj, and even, to a lesser extent, the UUA, were contracting, in membership, finances, and in energy.”
The Twenty-Seventh Congress marked the end of Diether Gehrmann’s tenure as general secretary and the beginning of Robert Traer’s ten-year term of service. The search that led to Traer being hired was the first with an open application process, and it was the first time a non-Unitarian would lead the IARF. Traer had written *Faith in Human Rights*, a book about the religious grounding for support of human rights in the world’s major faith traditions. During his term, the IARF Board began placing greater emphasis on religious freedom as a human rights issue, as well as interfaith involvement, while maintaining its commitment to personal sharing and friendships. This was exemplified in small group discussions (i.e. Circle Groups) that were introduced at the Congress in 1987. Bill Schulz had been on the search committee, and this new emphasis was in line with his concerns as the former UUA Director of Social Responsibility and later as executive director of Amnesty International America. He was very involved in the IARF, as was O. Eugene Pickett, UUA President (1979 – 1985) and IARF President (1987 – 1990), and Natalie Gulbrandsen, UUA Moderator (1985 – 1993) and IARF President (1993 – 1996).

A Unitarian gathering at that IARF Congress had been agreed upon by leaders from Britain, Canada, and the UUA at the 1988 meeting of the British General Assembly. Subsequently, Usher circulated a discussion paper to that group outlining five different models for how a World Unitarian Council might be organized. In response, Geoffrey Head, a prominent British Unitarian, wrote “nothing should weaken Unitarian commitment to the IARF.” It was a concern held by many others and particularly by Gulbrandsen.

The meeting in Hamburg was attended by twenty-eight people from seven national groups. Phillip Hewett, the minister of the First Unitarian Church of Vancouver, delivered a paper entitled, “A World Unitarian Council?” It was an overview of British and American Unitarian outreach from the past to the present, which offered the conclusion that such efforts had been colonialist and didn’t work.

The minutes of the meeting record that among the questions raised and concerns expressed were these: Would a World Unitarian Council provide for individual or organizational membership? How would it address the challenge of defining what a “Unitarian” is, particularly in regard to any new group that applied? How would it be funded? What would it do that existing organizations were not already doing?

For many this was an exciting meeting: UUA Board member Doris Hunter was there, as was Canadian Charles Eddis. Dianne Arakawa attended and later said “David Usher’s idea for a World Council and Phillip Hewitt’s paper, like spontaneous combustion, sparked remarkable common agreement among supporters and the IARF/US Board members.” John Eichrodt, from France, felt he was “witnessing a major turning point in Unitarian history. I remember the atmosphere of hope, of eagerness, of goodwill, and overwhelming approval and support for the initiative. The biggest fear was [that] the UUA might not go along...” There was reason for his concern. A half dozen participants recall the responses of Schulz and Gulbrandsen. “Bill Schulz looked angry during the presentation but did not speak. Natalie Gulbrandsen spoke strongly against the idea,” said Herman Boerma, president of the CUC. “I recall them being negative,” said Richard Kellaway. She “opposed a separate UU World Organization [because] she was afraid it would weaken support for the IARF,” said Richard Boeke. Phillip Hewett recalled Schulz taking exception to what he said, “regarding it as an assault on his plans, which is not what it was...
intended to be, though it had the same effect.” Schulz said he felt blindsided and embarrassed by Hewett’s talk and wondered why Hewett had not offered his critique to him in personal rather than in this international forum. Usher said, “The Administration offered no help, no encouragement, and indeed declared that the UUA had no money or resources available for such a venture... [then] a mere two months later, the UUA president launched his initiative for a Summit of World Unitarian leaders.”

The sense of the meeting was that a World Unitarian Council “not be perceived as threatening to or competitive with existing groups such as GAUFCC, UUA, IARF;” and “[t]hat a modest start could be made, as a membership of individuals, with an interim steering committee...” The interim Steering Committee included Usher, Arakawa, UUA Board members Hunter and Boerma, Homer Jack, and eight others. The gathering was over in one hour.

Schulz, in a memo to the UUA Board, described the meeting:

It was agreed that a modest beginning would be the creation of an individual membership organization which might sponsor a newsletter and meet in conjunction with future IARF Congresses. An interim steering committee was appointed and a small collection taken. There was general recognition, I think, that the development of such a Council into a major organization will be years, if not decades, in the making.

In the meantime, there is in my judgment a need for a more extended opportunity for consultation among the leadership of all Unitarian bodies about the future of world-wide Unitarianism. Such a consultation would help resolve any lingering confusion about the UUA’s role vis-à-vis other Unitarian bodies; it could coordinate assistance from the UUA, Great Britain, and others to those Unitarian bodies in need of financial and other supports; and it could at least begin to suggest a long-range plan for the movement.

It is my intention, therefore, to invite the leadership of Unitarian groups from around the world to meet (probably in Budapest) the weekend of May 3 - 5, 1991 as a "summit of world Unitarian leaders.”

World Unitarian Summit
The World Unitarian Summit took place in Budapest on March 19 – 22, 1992. The hope was that the meeting would lead to the establishment of a worldwide organization endorsed by the existing official Unitarian bodies. Participation was limited to those who held official leadership positions. For this there were several reasons. The Romanian and Hungarian Unitarian Churches of that era were very hierarchical and only wanted church leaders to be involved in the decision-making. Funds were limited so inviting representatives of the smaller groups who would need to be subsidized was not feasible. The Transylvanians were represented by Kovács Lajos, Erdö János, and Szabo Arpad. Roy W. Smith, who as general secretary of the GAUFCC and working in tandem with Schulz, represented the United Kingdom. There were leaders from Germany, Denmark, India, Australia, the Czech Republic and South Africa, but no one from the Philippines. The CUC's representative was John Slattery, its president; but he fell ill the week before, and at that late date, the Canadians couldn’t find an alternate. This was disappointing for the CUC board, especially
because it had made reservations, and for Schulz, because he knew they had made reservations. The Canadian board members, who were most involved with negotiating a new Accord with the UUA, were unhappy about the scheduling of the meeting. They were also unhappy that Usher and Hewett, who had been trying to encourage international connections, had been left out. They were further upset that all the leadership of the meeting had been assumed by UUA staff rather than being shared with other groups. To some the Summit felt like a “set-up” — not to build an international movement, but to enhance the “world leadership” of the UUA.  

On Thursday evening of the Summit, the participants were greeted by Bela Bartok, and then, before going to dinner, “Dr. William Schulz and Dr. Charles Gaines and Melvin Hoover...gave a review of the goals and agenda of the conference.” The next day the participants introduced themselves and the group each represented. That was followed by an effort to develop a mission statement. By the time the conference drew to a close on Sunday, the “leaders at the Summit unanimously agreed that they strongly supported the UUA admitting individual isolated congregations into UUA membership.” They also agreed they would meet again. On Saturday morning, on the way to this decision, Roy Smith delivered an address entitled, “Focus on Our Strategy.” He began by listing their goals: “We want our own local Unitarian churches to grow. We want our own National Unitarian organizations to grow. We want Unitarianism to spread and grow internationally. We want to join together in encouraging new groups...” He continued on to the obvious concerns and questions: “... we need to define who are members...? How do we want to organise ourselves? Do we want a small advisory committee, or executive committee...? How do we elect or choose it? ... Do we assume that most (all?) communications and meetings will be conducted in English? How do we feel about that? ... What are the financial needs of the organisation...?” And he emphasized, as others had, that “our relationship with IARF must be non-threatening, non-competitive, positive, supportive, and co-operative.”

Smith’s questions were similar to those Usher had posed a year earlier, and to those the ICUU would face three years later. Indeed, from Szabo Arpad’s perspective, the Budapest gathering was a continuation of the process that had begun with the resolution passed by the British General Assembly in 1987 and which had continued in the discussions in “the following years in the general meetings of the English, American and Canadian Unitarian churches and finally at the IARF Congress in Hamburg.” He also saw the founding of the Advocates for the Establishment of an International Organisation of Unitarians (AEIOU) as simply another part of the process. Arpad said, “Everybody supported the idea enthusiastically as the... importance of the issue was strongly felt, though some doubts emerged about the organization, the representation, and how to share its funding.” Those more closely involved in UUA politics saw it otherwise.

In a letter to the UUA Board sent soon after the Summit, David Usher described the experience of the loose coalition of individuals which, at the 1991 UUA General Assembly, had adopted the name Advocates for the Establishment of an International Organisation of Unitarians (AEIOU). AEIOU he said, “welcomed the summit as a step forward... But we also believe that as many people as possible should be engaged in the discussion process, so that all national constituencies are involved in the consultations and have a sense of ownership.”
and urged the UUA Board to work "toward a federation of Unitarians in which we can serve and encourage each other as brothers and sisters in the faith."\textsuperscript{91}

Schulz was aware there were those critical of the UUA’s approach. His report to the Board, following the 1990 IARF Congress, stated that the reason why the UUA needed to take the lead and why it was open to indigenous international congregations was that “ours is the only Unitarian body in the world with even modest resources available for support to some of these [would-be] congregations.”

Looking back, Schulz said of the criticism leveled at him:

Some argued that we ought not to admit international congregations because we run a danger of imperialism, of imposing our “First World” views and values on other cultures. But the true “colonial mentality” is to assume that, even if an indigenous congregation desires UUA membership and meets our fundamental criteria, we know what is best and what is best is to “protect” their cultures from North American influences. Such a view fails to countenance the possibility that our “First World” views and values may be emphatically broadened and reshaped by exposure to other culture.

Others suggested that we ought to avoid admitting such congregations if we cannot provide them “full services.” The danger, it is said, is that they thereby become second-class societies or, conversely, that if we do try to provide full services, we will do so to the neglect of our North American congregations. But the fact is that the UUA has had overseas congregations of expatriate Americans and Canadians which it could not serve as fully as it serves its North American. (\textit{sic}) And yet no one had suggested that we should not admit those societies simply because we might not be able to serve them fully as we serve others. [The fact is of course that even societies in North America are not served “equally.”]\textsuperscript{92}

Intentions notwithstanding, the reaction of a growing number of board members, colleagues, and Canadians was negative. “His policy was to get Unitarian groups across the world to join the UUA, and he had the national flags up the staircase at 25 Beacon Street,” recalled Hewett. Schulz says no. His intention in putting up the flags was to symbolize the UUA’s “commitment to living out in its institutional life the goal of ‘world community.’”\textsuperscript{93} That, he says, is why one was the UN flag. That is not what was seen. Board member, Art Unger, was uncomfortable with the flags on the staircase, seeing them as a symbol of what was wrong. “Some of us on the Board,” said Doris Hunter, “felt like Mother Great Britain and her colonies.” Richard Kellaway, calling it “the imperial presidency... thought that Schulz had a vision of satellite organizations under the umbrella of the UUA.” “Hadin’t we already achieved that with the Philippines?” he asked.\textsuperscript{94} Charles Eddis, the first president of the CUC, said that this “imperialist dream” brought to mind Pierre Elliot Trudeau’s “image of the mouse sleeping in bed with the elephant....”\textsuperscript{95}

Schulz insists this was not the case.

The goal was never to increase non-North American congregations for the purpose of growing the UUA... My policy was to insist that the UUA—and, since Americans constituted 95 percent of the UUA, that meant \textit{Americans}—own our privilege and share our resources
so that Unitarian [Universalism] cease to be a faith for the developed world alone. If that meant bringing some indigenous congregations into the UUA, well and good. If it meant supporting isolated congregations who didn't want to be members of the UUA, fine too. And if it meant evolving the UUA into a new world-wide entity, I would have supported that as well.96

Be that as it may, the UUA Board did not feel it was getting the answers it was seeking. In a memo written in December 1992, the issues Unger raised were administrative:

... our concern is that we are creating expectations and demands without any clear plan for how we want to respond. This was exemplified by the statement form Charles Gaines [Director of Extension] that he had spent half of his time over the summer working on international congregation issues, and the surprise with which the statement was received. Many, if not all, of the Board members are favorable to the extension of Unitarian Universalism to countries not now receiving our message. We would just like to feel that the UUA is controlling its commitments, rather than just responding to perceived opportunities.97

Two months later David Usher addressed different concerns in his submission to First Days Record. He wrote what is “important is that Unitarianism should flourish internationally.”98 About this goal there was broad consensus. What he found disturbing was “what appears to be the underlying philosophy of the UUA in promoting Unitarianism internationally.” He put forward two models: first, “a federation in which all members meet together as equals to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern”; and second, imperialism in which “one country assumes control over and responsibility for other countries. Power is centralised, and those on the periphery have contact only with the centre, but not to one another.”99 He asserted that the latter is the model the UUA seems to have chosen as a way “to increase the authority and range of the UUA,” but he conceded that “the UUA Trustees are presently wrestling with this issue, and the outcome of their deliberation remains uncertain.”

With hindsight Schulz posed this question. “What are the characteristics of colonialism or imperialism?” and went on to identify its elements as: “(1) The relationship is a coercive one in which the greater power imposes its will on the lesser; (2) The relationship is an exploitative one in which the greater power extracts dividends from the lesser; and (3) The relationship is a manipulative one in which the greater power seeks to control the lesser. Not a single one of those conditions applied…” He cited the UUCP as an example:

[T]he initiative for UUA membership came entirely and exclusively from the UUCP. What kind of condescension is it to think that we Americans know what is best for those poor, ignorant Filipinos and what is best for them is that we reject their persistent requests to be recognized as fully equal members of the Association that founded them? And what possible dividend has the UUA received from UUCP other than the privilege of having that congregation be a fully respected member of the UUA community? And in what way from the UUA and, if they did, does the UUA have the power to prevent that? ... [G]iven all this, what possible justification, other than rhetorical flourish and American stereotyping, is there for the charge of colonialism or imperialism? ... [H]ad my vision succeeded and the
UUA taken in more non-North American congregations, it would have reduced American power in the UUA, not increased it. Swell strategy for a colonialist power!100

Pointing out what was wrong with the UUA’s approach, Usher’s essay in First Days Record returned to the UUA’s relationship to the CUC. “Canadian Unitarians are constantly having to remind citizens in the United States, that they live in a foreign country, with a different culture, political and educational system. If that divide cannot easily be broached without imperial dangers, how much more tempting to trample the sensibilities, even with the best of intentions, of those who live far away.”

Calling this imperialism was problematic. First, it was blatantly pejorative. For anyone who grew up in the 1960s protesting the U.S. War in Vietnam, imperialist was a curse word. Leveling it invited a defense rather than a conversation. Second, it was an inexact comparison. What it referred to, in regard to the UUA, was not an effort to “control” or “coerce.” Third, there was nothing to extract that would benefit the UUA except, perhaps, prestige.

What the word imperialist does accurately describe is the tendency for the institutional needs of the UUA to dominate. When the 1969 General Assembly in Boston was hijacked by the confrontation over Black Empowerment, Canadians were subjected to this as were the delegates to the IARF Congress. Among the issues that were ignored during the tumult was the vote that had just taken place at the CUC annual meeting over whether to leave the UUA and reconstitute the CUC as a national body. It narrowly lost. What passed, with overwhelming support, was a motion communicating Canadian dissatisfaction to the UUA. This was barely mentioned. The IARF delegates learned a similar lesson. The IARF Congress had been “combined with the Annual Meetings of the UUA in an attempt to promote more UU interest in the IARF. After the meeting, the IARF Executive Committee resolved that this should not happen again. The UUA meetings were so lively, and at times explosive, that the IARF gatherings faded into comparative insignificance.”101

The challenge of being in relationship with the UUA, and with Americans, was an ongoing source of frustration for Canadian and other non-U.S. Unitarians. No matter how well trained the UUA staff was, Americans held an insular worldview. The energy and patience required of Canadians to educate Americans can be compared to that of African-American UUs who often find themselves in the role of educating Euro-American UUs about racial oppression. Majority needs regularly usurp the agenda and draw attention away from meeting the needs of whichever minority – Filipino, Hispanic, African American, Canadian. Similarly, the CUC found itself having to adjust to the shift in direction brought on with each new UUA administration and with UUA budget decisions over which the CUC had no significant influence. Meanwhile, the best and the brightest of the Canadian leadership was syphoned off by the glamour of filling volunteer positions in the UUA and its districts; it was a sort of seduction. The overall effect was the draining of Canadian energy in dealing with UUA concerns, a significant part of which were national and of little relevance to Canada. The effort captured human resources that might otherwise have been poured into the CUC. At almost every turn, the focus was about the UUA and its constituencies, which is to say it was imperialist in that those needs dominated other considerations. This domination was manifest in another way. The UUCP, CUC, EUU, Hungarian and Khasi Hills Unitarians were primarily in relationship to the UUA or GAUFCC and not to one another. Hewett described the situation as one in which “the spokes radiate from the hub, with relationships at a strictly bilateral
level, and no links are fostered between the non-American constituents.”¹⁰² The dominant relationship was to the UUA rather than to fraternal relationships with one another. When, in 1992, delegates gathered for the World Unitarian Summit, the meeting was facilitated by the UUA Extension Department; this, too, contributed to the appearance that the UUA was in control of the agenda and that the proceeding was part of the UUA growth strategy.

David Usher was not alone in describing the Schulz administration as *imperialist*. He also knew this was a trigger word that would provoke a “defensive mechanism.” Nonetheless, he used it. Perhaps, having given up on the possibility of collaboration, his wording was blunt rather than diplomatic. While Australians are known for their brashness and Canadians for their niceness, the latter readily supported his point of view; and when Advocates for the Establishment of an International Organisation of Unitarians (AEIOU) was founded, three of the twelve charter members were Canadian. Does the fact that both were British colonies suggest that parallel sensibilities and a wariness toward power were born of that common experience? Or did Usher choose provocation over conciliation because, as he confessed, he felt “irritated” that after working toward such a gathering for six years, he was shut out?

The irony is this: There was broad agreement that Unitarians needed a forum in which they could meet and communicate, build a common agenda, and coordinate their activities so as to promote and strengthen the faith on a world-wide basis. There needed to be an organization to which indigenous unaffiliated groups could turn for support. Financial resources were necessary, and the support of the UUA was crucial to the success of such an organization.

In the beginning the main point of difference seems to have been whether admitting nonaligned, indigenous groups to membership in the UUA was an appropriate strategy. In time this disagreement about how to approach a commonly held goal led to the breakdown in communication in which dialogue, to the degree there was any, did not lead to understanding or resolution, but rather to mutual frustration and personal distrust.

In June 1992, following the World Unitarian Summit and Usher’s missive in *First Days Record*, the UUA General Assembly met in Calgary. There was to be a meeting of those interested in AEIOU. Beforehand Usher talked with steering committee member, Dorothy Emerson, about possible opposition to the creation of a World Unitarian Council, toward which they had been working. Over twenty attended, including Dianne Arakawa and Ellen Campbell, the Executive Director of the CUC. Emerson said the “drama” began when Schulz and Natalie Gulbransen “came in the room after the meeting was underway to try to put an end to the idea.”¹⁰³ Arakawa remembered their “brooding presence,” and while there was strong consensus among the others in attendance, the UUA administration was clear that it opposed the idea.

Schulz’s assessment was that it would take years for an international body to form and develop the capacity to provide the assistance indigenous groups were already requesting. It was obvious to him, and everyone else, that nothing could move forward without UUA support. Schulz was also aware that when there is a significant power differential, there will always be those among the less powerful who question and do not trust the motives of the more powerful. Despite this he pushed forward with shaping the UUA into a more internationally oriented organization, and as he did this, resistance increased. Among the first to resist was the IARF US Board and a single UUA
Board member, next the AEIOU and Canadians, then a new generation of UUA board members. Agreeing to what the IARF US Board and the AEIOU were asking for would have slowed the implementation of the administration’s vision. Resolved to move ahead, Schulz seemed to have focused on the ends, rather than collaborating in the development of a more broadly inclusive process. To those ostensibly with less power, a group that had not felt consulted, it felt heavy handed. That feeling reflected their experience, and the flags standing at attention on the curved stairway leading from the first to second floor of 25 Beacon Street reinforced that perception. To the degree that these individuals felt unheard, and experienced their concerns being dismissed, resistance grew.

Perception was everything. Once this group of influential UUs framed the effort as an example of neo-colonialist imperialism, there was, as the administration entered its final year, no constructive way forward. How did it come to this?

Clashes are not uncommon among UUs. The clash between William Howard Taft and John Haynes Holmes over Holmes’ World War I pacifism led Holmes to resign his fellowship. In 1969, the fight over Black Empowerment involved the Black Unitarian Universalist Caucus (BUUC), Black and White Action (BAWA), and the institutionalists who saw in the controversy a threat to the UUA itself. Debate seemed to harden positions. Once again, common goals and good will were lost sight of in a disagreement over strategy and the role of the UUA in a new world-wide organization. An imbalance of power contributed to the impasse, with personalities and style also playing a role. During the five years between 1988 and 1993, it seems that no effort at reconciliation was initiated by any of the participants. The disagreement festered and so each side came to assume the worse about the motives of the other.

Reporting on the outcome of the World Conference, Szabo Arpad wrote that they “decided not to create an international Unitarian alliance because it would weaken the IARF in all ways.” Instead a regular meeting of leaders would be periodically scheduled to “synchronize with the IARF Congress and the meetings of the Head Council.” In addition, “to coordinate the activities in the time intervals between meetings a coordinating committee was created...”104 (See Appendix I for Dr. Szabo’s Report on the Summit.) A subsequent meeting of the Unitarian World Summit was scheduled for February 24 -27, 1994. The UUA Department of Extension began the planning by making recommendations for funding the 1994 meeting. Member groups were to be assessed. One recommendation was for the UUA to pay for Americans and, if Canada wished to participate, the CUC would be assessed for Canadians. The summit never convened again because neither Gulbrandsen, nor Schulz, nor Roy Smith (who retired in 1994), were there to shepherd it forward. By 1994, a new UUA administration with a different approach to international engagement was in place.

The change that lay ahead had its roots in a program initiated by the UUA in 1992. In 1992 the delegates to the Calgary General Assembly passed a resolution on Racial and Cultural Diversity in Unitarian Universalism. Subsequently, the board created the Racial and Cultural Diversity Task Force. In order to implement the resolution, the task force and UUA staff began working with Crossroads Ministry on antiracism. Its analysis, which explored the issues of white privilege, power, and institutional racism, impacted the UUA’s international relationships in ways no one could have imagined.
Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council
While the EUU was growing and the CUC was growing restive, major changes were afoot in Eastern Europe. In August 1989, the year after the UUCP became a member of the UUA, Hungary began allowing its citizens and others from Eastern Europe free access to Austria. This was the beginning of the end of the Iron Curtain. In December Ceausescu's regime in Romania collapsed. With the fall of Ceausescu, not only were Romanian borders opened but the threat of cultural genocide, which had loomed over the Hungarian minority in Romania, receded.

In 1988, the UUA General Assembly passed a resolution condemning the destruction of Hungarian villages in Romania. Schulz and Gulbrandsen organized a team to visit Romania, which would include a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and a member of the Canadian House of Parliament. Their objective was to look into the situation of Unitarian churches in Romania and protest the scheduled destruction of ethnic Hungarian villages. Visas were required and repeatedly refused. Then suddenly, after the overthrow of Ceausescu, visas became available, and in January 1990, the team went. When they arrived, they asked Bishop Lajos Kovács “What can we do to help you?” and he asked them to re-start the “sister church” program – a program that in the years after the First World War had connected 112 AUA congregations with Transylvanian counterparts. Upon returning to North America, Gulbrandsen and Schulz invited all UUA congregations to apply to be a sister church. There was an immediate response. A half year later, following the 1990 IARF Congress in Hamburg, Gulbrandsen led four bus loads of UUs to Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania.

Since the UUA Office of Overseas and Interfaith Relations had been eliminated in 1970, the UUA Extension Department became the locus of international efforts for the new “Sister Church” program and other international efforts. Its director, Charles Gaines, reported that in 1991, “President William Schulz asked me to accompany Vladimir [Strejcek] to Prague to negotiate a contract with the Czech Unitarian Association, employing Vladimir as Superintendent.” Subsequently, in March 1992, Gaines facilitated the World Unitarian Summit and toward the end of the year, issued a memo outlining the recommendation for the International Summit Fair Share UUA contribution.

Simultaneously board member Art Ungar sent a memo to the UUA Extension Working Group expressing his concerns:
There needs to be some clarity about the amount of staff time which will be devoted to international congregations. We now have volunteers serving as “quasi-staff” with their expenses being paid, but no salary. When they are no longer able or willing to serve, will we replace them with a regular staff position? We have already created a “Sister Church” program which involves about 150 of our congregations with churches in Rumania. When our present volunteers are no longer willing to administer that program, will it become a program of the UUA staff?
In January 1993, the UUA Board, upon learning how much of Gaines’ time was going to international concerns, discontinued staff support for the program and instructed him to focus on North America. In order to keep the connections from collapsing, Leon Hopper, Judit Gellérd and Richard Boeke sent about 100 letters calling for a meeting at the 1993 UUA General Assembly. At that gathering, which drew nearly thirty, the Partner Church Council (UUPCC) was created. A year later it was incorporated with Leon Hopper as its first President and Judit Gellérd as Executive Secretary. At its inception, the UUPCC was a creative response to the vagaries and vacillation of UUA politics. Since then, while the program has expanded to other countries and includes over 190 partnerships, that has remained true.

The mission of the UUPCC has been to foster and support partner relationships between UU congregations and individuals in the United States and Canada with Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist congregations, orphanages, schools, and students in countries wherever partnering is sought and welcomed.

John Buehrens wrote that “with the rise of the Partner Church Council, IARF was also no longer the major agency for interaction with the Transylvanian Unitarians.”\textsuperscript{108} Natalie Gulbrandsen feared the ICUU would undermine the IARF but an argument can be made that the impact of the UUPCC was greater. The reason why is that these partnerships offered such a powerful experience. Leon Hopper described them thus:

\begin{quote}
[T]he UUA was surprised, not that churches would be interested in being “sister churches,” but at the emotional quality and number of responses. The stated expectation was always for communication and global connection, and no one was prepared for the flood of resources, both financial and personal, which were to follow. Involvement with caring was expected, yes, but dollars no. It was like spontaneous combustion. In the months and years after the initial partnering there was an explosion of activity. Personal connections were forged between UUA churches and individuals and Transylvanian churches. There were a remarkable number of visits to Transylvania which quickly resulted in deepened involvement and personal commitments.\textsuperscript{109}
\end{quote}

The UUPCC provided a different way for American UUs and Canadian Unitarians to engage their co-religious in Eastern Europe. For decades the IARF served that function in a particular manner, i.e., as an intellectual forum dominated by lectures and panels that appealed to a very small group of individuals interested in discussing liberal religion. In addition, it provided a time and place during which Unitarian and Universalist leaders from around the world networked. On the other hand, the UUPCC provided a way for many more to participate. Ordinary UU adults and children, congregations, and religious education programs could engage in a more embodied, hands-on experience that was focused on practical concerns. The irony is that, while Gulbrandsen opposed the formation of the ICUU, it was she who jumpstarted the UUPCC.
In 1993, the same year the UUPCC was founded, Project Harvest Hope (PHH) was launched. It grew from a partnership between the congregations in Oakland, California and Oklând, Transylvania. In the post-Communist Romania of the early 1990s, these congregations dreamed of promoting self-determination, sustainable agriculture, and social renewal in the Unitarianism of their homeland, and that dream was realized in several tangible economic development projects. In the process, still more North Americans were introduced to international programs.

Both the PHH and the UUPCC faced challenges in sustaining relationships between congregations from different cultures, with access to significantly different resources and diverse needs. These disparities parallel those the ICUU would face. Transylvanian minister, Maria Pap, writes of the PCC program in “Partnerships: Belonging as Collaboration, Mutuality and Accountability:”

...there is an economic imbalance in this relationship... [It] puts the American into a position of power which is hard to deal with on both sides. The congregation that supplies the money expects sometimes to have a say in what purpose that money will be used. The collaboration on joint projects was successful so far only when we agreed in advance on the whole process. When this is missing lots of misunderstanding and bitterness ensue.\textsuperscript{110}

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The worldwide Unitarian and Universalist landscape was in flux when John Buehrens was elected President of the UUA in June 1993. William Schulz, as vice president and president, invested a significant amount of his time and denominational resources toward international engagement—early in his tenure on the IARF, UUCP, CUC and EUU, and later on the Holdeen India Fund, UUPCC, and Unitarian World Summit. In seeking to be responsive to a range of demands, Schulz had taken advantage of abundant opportunities. With hindsight, we can say that how these endeavors would evolve in time was anything but clear.

Buehrens’ vision was different. He consulted with Dianne Arakawa, Art Ungar, Doris Hunter, and Homer Jack. Whereas Schulz had been cautious regarding Usher because Roy Smith had indicated to him he would not support any international body headed by Usher,\textsuperscript{111} Buehrens, on the other hand, credited Usher with having a “weather eye [on the] difficult UUA relations with groups in places like Auckland, NZ,” which had “been admitted to the UUA.” Seeing merit in Usher’s proposal Buehrens came out “in favor of ...a Council”\textsuperscript{112} as a campaign issue.

Given the opinions of those to whom he had turned, Buehrens came to see the neo-colonialist implications of granting membership in the UUA to the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines and other indigenous groups. He asked: How was “an organization of multiple, non-English speaking congregations, emerging from a very different culture context and socio-political-economic setting” to meld into the UUA? How was it to be served? Moreover, he was aware of tensions with the EUU. Fellowships paid dues to the UUA, but were without representation at GA or on the UUA Board and received very limited services. For these reasons,
among Buehrens’ first acts as president was to tell the UUA Board he was “suspending any recommendations to admit other overseas groups.” 113

When the idea of admitting international congregations to the UUA was presented to the UUA Board, Kenneth T. MacLean, who would later become co-chair of Buehrens’ campaign, had argued that “there was no way that it could facilitate religious education and ministry and social justice to groups in Asia and Africa and South America... [He] was the only Board member to vote NO when it came to a vote.” 114 Respecting MacLean’s pastoral style and political savvy, Buehrens invited him to become Special Assistant to the President for International and Interfaith Relations and to take on the task of reshaping UUA international policy. An additional reason for choosing MacLean was that the Japanese were the UUA’s most important partners in the IARF, and he spoke Japanese.

Not only was Buehrens’ vision different, so were his priorities and his administrative style. Schulz had traveled extensively internationally and, like Greeley and Pickett, was criticized for it. Buehrens assigned the international arena to MacLean while he focused on domestic concerns. MacLean represented him on the IARF Council, attended the CUC Annual Meeting and was also his conduit to the UUPCC. 115 This left CUC Executive Director Ellen Campbell with the impression that for Buehrens, at least at the beginning of his term, international affairs was less of a priority than it had been under Schulz. In a similar vein, Jeffrey Teagle, General Secretary of the GAUFCC, found that the change of presidency “caused the UUA to focus on its internal affairs throughout 1993.” 116

It was not that Buehrens traveled less, but that his priorities had to be different. First, he had inherited “The Campaign for Unitarian Universalism,” a capital campaign on shaky ground, which required administrative changes and lots of travel to fortify relations with ministers and major donors. Second, Schulz had made it clear to him that the top international priority had to be resolving the litigation over the Holdeen Trusts. This was a problem Schulz himself had inherited, and in 1993 alone, it had cost the UUA two million dollars in legal fees. Pursuing that litigation was important because eventually the Trust would bring income from 40 million dollars in trust funds to the UUA—for the benefit of the people of India, other international work, and a significant portion of what would soon unfold.

There was just as much work to be done but out of preference, and necessity, Buehrens chose to delegate. For instance, when it came to negotiating the termination of the CUC’s relationship with the UUA, he championed it. However, at the talks, the UUA was represented by its Moderator, Denny Davidoff; finance committee chair, Gini Courter; and Director of Congregational Services, William Sinkford. For Buehrens the question was not whether the UUA’s international relationships were important, but how best to be in right relation. Therefore, Buehrens would provide resources and cheerlead, but leave the creative process to the participants; and so it was with the birth of the ICUU. 117

**Founding of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists**

Discontent with the UUA role in a rapidly shifting international scene led to the formation of the ICUU. The primary reason was that as the IARFs identity evolved, its role changed. Bob West had said that the IARF, “[e]specially for Unitarians in central Europe... was the major instrument for
communication and personal contacts among liberal churches and denominations in different nations.” That was no longer true; the IARF did not address the needs of Unitarian leadership and religious bodies to interact with and support one another. “Indeed,” wrote founding ICUU Secretary Cliff Reed, “it was because the IARF was so long seen as the international Unitarian body that the ICUU was so long in coming! Only when the IARFs nature became so thoroughly interfaith was the need felt to link Unitarians and Universalists around the world in their own international body.” This was a problem not only for Unitarians but for the IARF as well. For it to have continued to function as a Unitarian body was “not entirely compatible with its interfaith purposes.”

In 1994 Polly and Ted Guild, who had been serving as volunteer international program staff for the UUA, sent a memo to board member Doris Hunter, which she passed on to the board. It expressed the opinion that “the present policy for admitting off-shore churches to the continental UUA is fatally flawed and should be promptly reviewed and in our view changed.” The board’s position was shifting in this direction and Buehrens agreed, but not just because the status quo was flawed. Looking through an anti-racist lens, he also saw that the “efforts to teach North American UUs about unmerited privilege would be jeopardized by continuing [such] an approach to internationalism...” Therefore, he “felt that it was important and timely to have an international umbrella organization for Unitarian and Universalist groups and the establishment of such a group became MacLean’s first project on the UUA staff.”

On September 20-21, 1994, a planning meeting for the upcoming gathering took place. Unlike the Summit meeting, the planning for and leadership of the conference was self-consciously inclusive. The committee included Herman Boerma from Canada, Polly Guild and Jeffery Teagle from Great Britain, David Usher from Australia, and Kenneth MacLean from the USA. The lone non-westerner was Filipino Rebecca Sienes, who was enrolled at Meadville Lombard Theological School. In recapping for the GAUFCC Council what occurred in the planning meeting, Teagle focused on the details of who was invited and how it would be funded before turning to an ongoing concern. “The organisation must not compete with the IARF...” Sienes’ experience was different. She said “there were many obstacles... To be in a strange country with a new language, and strange food and culture was too much for me. So, I was just floating in the planning committee.” Good intentions do not eliminate misunderstandings. At one point John Buehrens asked her “What do you want?” Whatever he meant, is not what she heard. She recalled, “I couldn’t hold on emotionally when I answered ‘I want support for my programs.’ I was so emotional because the question he asked reminded me of the landlord-peasant relationship back home and I didn’t expect to hear that from a leader like him.”

After Teagle’s meeting with the GAUFCC Council, he wrote to MacLean outlining their concerns: “That Britain and the other countries with developed economies should make every effort to fund [the] ICUU to a realistic level, especially to ensure that representatives from less prosperous countries can participate actively, including as officers. [And] that the ICUU fosters greater opportunities for individual Unitarians and Universalists and for individual U&U churches/fellowships to form contacts and relationships. It does not wish the ICUU to be a privileged power-centre for a few senior people.”
As preparation for the conference continued, controversy arose over who would represent Czech Unitarians. The UUA had sent Vladimir Strejcek (who had flunked out of Meadville Lombard and failed as an intern at All Souls Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma) to become the leader of three Unitarian churches in the Czech Republic. After a clash with the existing leadership in Prague, Strejcek held a meeting and hired a guard to keep out those who disagreed with how he was administering the church. Backed by his supporters, a new constitution was adopted. This allowed him to take control of the building and finances and fire the staff. Congregation member Iva Fiserova wrote of those times: “The web of relationships within this community was ... partly destroyed by animosity and mistrust embedded [in] society by the horrors we experienced.... In addition... we experienced a minister's misconduct and were locked out of our own church.”

Strejcek wanted to represent the Czech churches at the upcoming conference, as he had at the World Summit. MacLean rejected his application and invited a Czech couple from the opposing group.

The conference took place in March 1995 at a retreat center in Essex, Massachusetts. The delegates came from thirteen Unitarian associations: the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Australia/New Zealand, Romania, South Africa, Great Britain, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Russia, and the United States; in addition, a delegate came from the EUU. These groups they represented ranged in size from Denmark with thirty members, to the United States with nearly 150,000. The German group had determined that it would never have clergy or other professional leadership; the governance of the Romanian and Hungarian churches was hierarchical under elected Bishops. The 400-year-old Transylvanian church represented the oldest organization; the Unitarian Universalist Association of Sri Lanka, founded in 1992, was the newest. (See Appendix II - Essex Meeting Summary)

Wolfgang Jantz, who represented the Deutsche Unitarier, arrived not knowing exactly what the agenda was, nor many of the people. Ellen Campbell, the Executive Director of the CUC, knew more. Sitting on the bus on the way to Essex, she wondered whether such a diverse group could form a community. She also wondered, “Could we, in four short days, find common ground, lay the foundations for a stable organization and define its purposes?”

Her account describes the task and captures the mood:

“Through discussion, we began to identify the common factors which defined us as Unitarians or Universalists.” They formed the Preamble for the constitution:

“We, the member groups of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, affirm our belief in religious community based on:

- liberty of conscience and individual thought in matters of faith,
- the inherent worth and dignity of every person,
- justice and compassion in human relations,
- responsible stewardship of the earth’s living system,
- and our commitment to democratic principles.
"We also drafted a purpose for our organization. But the first draft was to bring us face to face with our differences. Initially we set out these purposes:

- to affirm the worldwide Unitarian and Universalist faith,
- to facilitate mutual support among member organizations,
- to promote our ideals and principles around the world,
- to provide models of liberal religious response to the human condition which uphold our human values.

“The evening after this was drafted, we worked in small groups on specific tasks. One of the groups included Szabo Arpad of Transylvania and Lene Shoemaker of Denmark. The next day, before they reported on what they were assigned, they raised a different issue. Arpad said, “I can’t go back to my people with a set of purposes which does not include ‘to serve God.’” And Lene said, “I can’t go back to my humanist group with a purpose which includes ‘to serve God.’ They would want it to read ‘To serve humanity.’”

“The whole group realized that we needed to resolve this dilemma. If we couldn’t find a way to describe our purposes which included everyone, the long-term health and effectiveness of the organization was in doubt. We tried to find some alternatives that would work for all of us. There were a number of suggestions. Among them was “Infinite Spirit of Life.” Jill McAllister of the United States looked at Arpad and said, “You look more comfortable with that, Arpad. Could you accept “The Infinite Spirit of Life?” Arpad nodded. Then a small smile played around his lips. “Of course you know,” he said, “that I will translate it as ‘God.’” We all laughed, but we knew that we had come to a key understanding: that each of us brings our own “translation” to religious words and concepts. We saw that in fact “individual thought in matters of belief,” which our Preamble defined as one of the basic ideas we held in common, means that we will frame our beliefs differently. We added this sentence to the statement of purpose we had already adopted,

- To serve the Infinite Spirit of Life and the human community by strengthening the worldwide Unitarian and Universalist faith.”

Campbell added, "By the time the meeting was over, all of us felt that we had had one of those rare experiences of transcendence, in which we were able to deal with our differences and identify the things we had in common, ... to share deeply spiritual experiences and work our way through the mundane but necessary details of developing a set of ground-rules—constitution and by-laws—to enable us to establish ourselves.”
The Board elected at the end of the meeting was made up of David Usher as President; Szabo Arpad from Transylvania as Vice President; Cliff Reed as Secretary; Jill McAllister as Treasurer; and Wolfgang Jantz from Germany as Member-at-Large.

Jantz thought of the World Summit in Budapest in 1992 as “preparation”130 for the founding of the ICUU in Essex in 1995 rather than its “rejection.” Likewise, while the representative of the Unitarian Union N.E. India could not attend, UUNEI president, Rev. Carleywell Lyngdoh, viewing the Essex meeting from afar, understood it to have “revived” the 1992 Summit “objectives of bringing all Unitarians and Universalists around the world together.”131 Similarly in 1992 Szabo Arpad saw the connection between the 1987 resolution passed by the British GA, the discussions held at UUA and CUC annual meetings, and the Unitarian gathering at the Hamburg IARF Congress as leading to the Summit meeting in Budapest. It seems that those who came to the meeting from outside the clamor of UUA politics saw Essex as emerging from a consensus that had taken eight years to build.

The ICUU was on its way.

Usher, in his column in the 1996 newsletter, The Global Chalice, wrote that fourteen member groups had formally ratified the ICUU Constitution. He also noted that “the members of the Executive Committee are technophobes, so not as much progress towards computerization has been achieved as some would want. But we are getting there!”132

In 1996 the 29th Congress of the IARF was held in Iksan City, South Korea. Its hosts were the Won Buddhists, and it included participants of the Palestinian and Israeli IARF groups, as well as Muslim participants from Bangladesh and India. There was a free evening during which Polly Guild, who was by then serving as the volunteer Program Director for the ICUU, arranged for the Unitarian participants to gather for dinner. Eighty people attended and the excitement in the room was palpable. A by-product of how richly diverse the IARF had become was a recognition among Unitarians of the core values they shared. It was the widening diversity that led them to that discovery, awakening a desire to strengthen their bonds. This was not neo-parochialism but rather a broadening. It was, as Jantz said, “A chance for the Unitarians of the world… to be part of a global community that makes it possible to get to know one another and participate in a worldwide Unitarian exchange of ideas.”133

Growing Pains
At the inaugural ICUU meeting in Essex, Massachusetts, the participants first wrestled with the issues of identity and mission. Next, they built a consensus about the Czech church and passed a resolution asking Vladimir Strejcek to give up the building in Prague and cease being the voice of Unitarians in Czechoslovakia. Finally, they faced the challenge of electing officers. The Planning Committee proposed a slate of candidates, then opened it for other nominations. They had already identified a president and treasurer. Usher, who had the vision and for years had worked toward this day, was the choice for president. The treasurer had to be an American because that is where the ICUU’s bank account was located. Jill McAllister, the representative sent by the UUA Board, was to fill that role. The other positions were less fixed, and while nominations made some difference, political realities strongly influenced the outcomes. The Romanian Unitarian Church, emerging
from decades of oppression and isolation in an economically depressed country, had lent its moral support and, while it was in no position to lead, its historic significance and size was recognized. Thus, Szabo Arpad was elected vice president. Likewise, the new ICUU could hardly include the United States and Transylvania and not have the United Kingdom represented on the executive committee. With that in mind, Clifford Reed was nominated to be Secretary. The only truly open seat was that of member-at-large. German Unitarian, Wolfgang Jantz, was elected to that position. To an outsider like Gevene Hertz, an EUU member from Denmark, it seemed like the process had not been truly open. The Planning Committee, composed as it was of a Brit, Canadian, Australian, Filipino, and two Americans, represented the English-speaking Unitarian mainstream. However, the Nominating Committee that was elected at Essex included no one representing the UUA. The unavoidable dance to determine who would sit at the table was beginning. (See Appendix III - Officers and Nominating Committees)

It was inevitable that issues of power and influence would play out and be complicated by differing institutional needs, conflicting cultural styles, and inevitable miscommunication. Working on these issues was part of the ICUU’s ongoing learning process; each person and every culture brought different things to the pursuit of a common goal. Trust took time to build, as did sensitivity to difference. Mistakes were made and had to be.

While managing these internal dynamics, the ICUU had to develop relationships with the other U*U organizations working in the international arena. In June 1996, the ICUU asked the UUPCC if it would be willing to expand its partnerships beyond the nearly 200 it supported in Eastern Europe. As the PCC was considering this proposal, it received a request from the Philippines to set up a partner church program there. Soon after, the UUA International Office started fostering relationships between religious education programs in the United States and the Khasi Hills. In June 1997 the PCC president wrote to John Buehrens and proposed that the UUA, ICUU and PCC meet to discuss “potentially overlapping visions, interest, resources and boundaries.” The PCC saw the potential in this request, but as it was five years older and had board members who were well connected and well versed in the ways of the UUA, it also saw reason to be concerned. A joint working group of the ICUU, PCC and UUA was established. Three face-to-face meetings were augmented by three conference calls, and subsequently a grant proposal was submitted to the Unitarian Universalist Funding Panel (UUFP) and approved. Its immediate goal was the expansion of the partnership program with Asian U*Us, and a longer-term hope of partnerships within the whole circle of ICUU member groups. The outcome was an ICUU-PCC-UUA collaboration which led to partnerships in India and the Philippines.

The ICUU and UUPCC were more or less in continuous relationship, and sometimes the ICUU, whether or not it was aware, was part of a negotiation. While the ICUU was managing the money for the UUPCC Asian expansion, the UUPCC was funneling financial support to the Unitarian Church in Transylvania to help it build a dormitory in Kolozsvar, Romania. The UUA’s pledge of $20,000 a year for five years, for that dormitory, was delivered through the UUPCC as part of the $60,000 that the UUA allocated to the UUPCC. When the five-year support to Kolozsvar ended, the UUPCC allocation dropped to $40,000, and the UUPCC protested that the UUA should continue its allocation of $60,000 to the UUPCC to keep its funding at parity with the ICUU.
In 2011 the need to clarify roles arose again. Because of the growing number of UUA affiliated groups working internationally, the International UU Organizations (InterUU) was formed.\footnote{The issues of overlapping visions and unclear boundaries had grown as had confusion among UUS over which group to approach for what. Discussions aimed to build consensus over issues like when consultation with another group would be necessary, when collaboration might be possible, how activities at GA should be coordinated, how communication would best be handled, and how conflicts could be resolved. There was also a recognition that these groups were competing for resources. The issues of funding and fund raising were the most difficult and needed to be approached cautiously.}

Throughout these discussions, the ICUU found itself in a kind of upside-down world. The other groups were affiliates of the UUA. The ICUU, however, was not. Rather, the UUA was a member of the ICUU. Nonetheless the ICUU, for purposes of survival, had to function with the same attentiveness and savvy toward the UUA that was typical of the other groups that were not really its peers.

Issues of power and influence also played a role in the ICUU election process. In the twenty-two years of its existence, there have been six contested elections. The first was in 2001. Richard Boeke had served two terms as Secretary, and Jill McAllister had served one term as President when Richard decided to run against her. He ran in the spirit of the democratic process and because he was interested. McAllister won handily. The second was in 2005 when four people ran for three Member-at-Large positions; this was repeated in 2007, 2009, 2012, and 2016.\footnote{In 2007 David Usher, chair of the Nominating Committee, approached Will Saunders, the UUA Board liaison, and encouraged him to put some names forward. Usher also contacted Brian Kiely to ask him to consider standing for a seat on the Executive. Kiely, past CUC president, had represented the CUC at the 2005 ICCU meeting in Montserrat when the heads of the national bodies had attended. Assuming he would run for one of the at-large positions, Kiely agreed.}

Whatever was communicated to UUA President William Sinkford left him with the impression that he was to nominate the next president of the ICUU. After a diligent search, the UUA Committee on Committees (of which he was a member) put forward Gary Smith, someone who was well respected. According to ICUU practice, national groups are invited to nominate individuals from their membership, though no assurance is given that any nominee from a member group will be nominated by the ICUU Nominating Committee. Sinkford felt the ICUU needed stronger leadership of the sort that Smith could provide. Smith had been involved with the UUPCC, but lacked any
experience with the ICUU. Saunders, who had no input into the decision, was surprised by the UUA’s choice.

In light of Smith’s lack of experience, the ICUU Nominating Committee could not see how it could put forward his name for the position of president. When it declined, Sinkford felt blindsided and read it as a message saying: the ICUU is only open to insiders. Usher, meanwhile, called Kiely again and asked him to consider running for president. Kiely was surprised, asked for a few days to think it over, and then agreed. Smith withdrew his name despite the committee’s appeal to him to be on the slate as a Member-at-Large. His rebuff would mean that for the first time the UUA would be without an officer on the ICUU Executive. It should be noted that Kiely’s experience with the ICUU was limited to attending one Council meeting as a delegate and another meeting between the Council and the Unitarian Ministers of Canada (UMOC) in 1999. Further, one of the candidates for Member-at-Large was nominated and elected without any experience and did not even attend the meeting where she was elected.

At the first session of the Council, right after the report of the Nominating Committee, Bishop Szabo Arpad expressed dissatisfaction with having a slate of candidates determined before the meeting. It reminded him of the practice of communist regimes. He preferred that nominations should come from the floor, and Will Saunders supported him. President Gordon Oliver explained that nominations could still be made today, and the election would take place the next day.

At the urging of the UUA, Barbara Beach, having already served two terms as ICUU treasurer, agreed to run to be a Member-at-Large. Her name was put forward by Will Saunders and seconded by Bishop Szabo. Beach, a co-founder of the UUPCC who served as its secretary and then president, brought over a decade of international experience. As a member of the ICUU Executive Committee, she had helped initiate a strategic planning process in the hope of invigorating its vision and mission. They aimed to help the ICUU develop programs that would involve and win support from member groups. She had done the paper work to make the ICUU a 501(c)3 corporation so that it could be registered as a charitable organization. Without this designation, donations by U.S. citizens would not be tax deductible. In 2005, when a scheduling conflict led Sinkford to waiver over whether to attend a meeting of the heads of the Unitarian judicatory bodies in Montserrat, Beach convinced him of the importance of the gathering.

There were other complications. Jill McAllister’s name was one of those on the Nominating Committee slate. As a UUA Board member she had represented the ICUU at the Essex meeting when it was founded. She had served as its treasurer, then president, and continued to be involved as a volunteer, writing grant proposals. Her name was now proposed by the Czechs for one of the at-large positions, but after being deeply involved for twelve years, she was seen as an ICUU insider rather than a representative of the UUA. With Beach running as well, there were, once again, four candidates for the three at-large positions.

Another issue was the reaction of some delegates to Will Saunders, the delegate from the UUA. In 2006 he had authored a memo to the ICUU Executive committee, saying, “I believe that it is critical for the ICUU to clearly identify those areas of its work where there is coherence with the UUA’s mission and those where the two organizations diverge.” At the Council meeting in November 2007, Saunders is reported to have said that since the UUA is the most influential group, it should
always have a representative on the ICUU Executive Committee. Saunders’ position seemed to match Sinkford’s. Both believed that the ICUU needed stronger leadership and higher programmatic expectations. Saunders also feared, and he was not the only one, “that the ICUU was becoming, like the IARF, an opportunity for UU and U*U tourism rather than a service organization dedicated to the health and growth of its constituent...groups.”

There was some basis for this concern. At the 1999 meeting, attendance was 40; in 2005, when for the first time the meeting was open to all, there were 100 participants. Of the one hundred, 59 were observers or guests, 33 of whom came from North America; another 10 came from the UK and together represented 73 percent of those in attendance. The ICUU membership was beginning to mirror the makeup of the IARF. Since then, however, average attendance has plateaued at 100. (See Appendix IV – Meeting Locations and Attendance) Saunders had additional concerns, but he did not telegraph his doubts in the way that Sinkford did.

Four years earlier, in October 2003, Sinkford had sent a memo to the UUA Board of Trustees Working Group on Growth. In response to its Draft International Mission Statement, Sinkford outlined how he intended to proceed: “Though it is important to recognize and honor our longstanding institutional relationships (IARF, WCRP) and our relatively new institutional commitments (ICUU and PCC), a 20-year vision should not be tied to these institutions and relationships...” He went on to list the many international activities he believed the UUA would not support if the Holdeen Trusts did not exist, and in conclusion he wrote:

> Some may disagree with my judgments...The primary mission of the UUA is “service to our congregations,” expressed in the Vision Statement as “to strengthen and energize UU congregations.” I would add “in the US.” A rigorous [use] of that mission as a screen for decision making would I believe radically change our international work. I do not believe that the PCC or the ICUU “does the work of the UUA.” We have not yet decided that we really want to grow in the U.S., let alone support the growth of Unitarianism abroad.

The creation of this particular Mission Statement was a part of Sinkford’s effort to shift the guidance of the UUA’s international agenda from the president’s office, where it had been located in prior administrations, to the UUA Board. In this effort to get the board to take greater ownership, he had very limited success. By the time he arrived at the ICUU meeting in Montserrat in 2005, the approach of the UUA “was to focus on work with and resources for North American member congregations. The office was renamed ‘Office of International Resources,’ with congregations being the recipient of those resources.”

At the Council meeting, Sinkford was the first of a panel of leaders to speak. He noted “the enormous diversity of circumstances” among the ICUU membership and “affirmed the current direction in priorities of the Executive Committee (communication, leadership development, and youth).” In that open session he stated with unsparing American directness, which he knew would make many participants anxious, that the UUA’s financial resources were limited, regardless of any quotas set by the ICUU. He also said that “major funding for the ICUU could not come only from the U.S. and two or three partners. It had to come in some appropriate measure from all members.” His assertion did produce anxiety. Brian Kiely recalled that this “directness about contributions left many member groups nervous that the UUA was going to pull
out if they didn’t get their way.”  Kiely got Sinkford to clarify that he was simply “stating the UUA policy that they have only so much for international issues and that it will be split between the UUPCC and the ICUU and will not equal the requested dues level of the ICUU.”

Sinkford sent another message at that meeting, which was unintended. When he received notification of the ICUU Council meeting location and date, he told the ICUU leadership that the date conflicted with a significant commitment he had already made. He was going to Chad with Charlie Clements, the Executive Director of the UUSC. Their hope was to bring awareness to UU congregations of the genocide in Darfur. Subsequently, before departing the Council meeting, he explained that he had some other obligations. This was neither affirming nor reassuring to others who had traveled long distances to be there. While the leadership knew about his schedule conflict, the delegates were surprised and upset, and their reactions were directed at the remaining UUA representative, Will Saunders.

In November 2007 when the ICUU Council met in Oberwesel, the tensions that arose in 2005 were still present. The messages that had been coming from the UUA leadership left delegates feeling that Americans were domineering. This was due in part to Americans’ outspoken style, but the problem was not style alone. From their religious compatriots’ perspective, the problem was that the UUA always seemed ready to recast the ICUU to serve its own needs.

Kiely said nerves were raw. Saunders said he felt he was in a bind, tugged one way by the UUA and another by the ICUU. He was in a difficult situation. He had argued for the changes he thought necessary to strengthen the ICUU and also address UUA concerns. But if one does this in an international setting from a position of power, one is easily labeled an imperialist. On the evening prior to the election, Saunders was invited to a conversation in which a handful of delegates told him he was being a little too forceful with his comments. They further expressed concern that the UUA appeared to be demanding special treatment. He protested, saying this was not true and that he had no such intention. Yet, in the minutes, his name appears more than any other, with the exception of two members of the Executive Committee. There was silence. Then Kiely remembers the logjam broke and it came out. After this, Saunders’ contributions were more circumspect.

The next day was the election. When she arrived in Oberwesel, Beach was surprised to learn that she would be participating in a contested election. She did not actively seek support beyond her presentation, a formality each candidate was asked to make, and in the four-way race for three at-large positions, she was defeated. One must suspect, given the tenor of that Council meeting, that being the UUA candidate was not an advantage.

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The complexity of the relationship between the UUA and the ICUU demands attention. Simply describing it as imperialist telegraphs the frustration, but does not lead to a deeper understanding of the source of the tension. The tension was, in part, a by-product to the UUA’s own identity crisis and, in part, a remnant of the arrangement between the GAUFCC and UUA, when they had been the hubs of Unitarian international engagement. Seen in historical perspective, the strains are understandable.
Following the decision of the Universalist Church of America (UCA) and the American Unitarian Association (AUA) to consolidate, the Unitarian model of organization was chosen, a choice mourned by some. The UUA would be an association of congregations rather than a denomination. The Association’s reason for being – “serving its congregations” – was uttered like a mantra by the Sinkford administration, which perhaps reflected that he had been Director of Congregational Services before being elected UUA President. Was serving congregations, as the UUA’s primary organizing principle, the source of an expectation that the ICUU should adjust its work to align with the congregational purposes of the UUA? For each UUA administration, the pull to serve those who elect and fund it is always there. Indeed, the UUA became increasingly democratic as the autocratic style of Frederick May Elliot and the willfulness of Dana Greeley faded into the past. This happened at the same time that the anti-authoritarian and individualistic tendencies of fellowships came to the fore.\textsuperscript{152} A \textit{denomination} is more than an association of congregations, and its call to serve is broader. Where most far-reaching it asks: How do we proclaim our “Good News?” How do we serve God and the world? What is our mission? The UUA supplants the divine with principles. Even so, being a denomination leads to a different, more inclusive, response. It frees the association to make different choices than those made when catering to the narrowness and tyranny of congregational needs.\textsuperscript{153}

The difference between the UCA and AUA, in regard to foreign missions, is obvious. A Universalist Mission to Scotland began in 1872 and lasted twenty years; its” Mission to the Colored People” in the Tidewater region of Virginia ran from 1887 to 1983; the Mission to Japan lasted from 1890 until they were expelled prior to1942; and the outreach to Rev. Quimada in the Philippines, which started in 1955, lasted until it was dropped after merger. These mission efforts were maintained despite the reality that Universalism was in decline and its congregations were dying. This was the UCA functioning as a denomination in spreading the gospel of Universalism—God’s enduring and unbounded love for humankind.

In regard to longevity there were no equivalents in the AUA. There was a decision not to establish a mission in Cuba; support for Brown’s mission Jamaica was brief; an effort in Japan was episodic before being handed over to the Universalists. In 1911 there was a Department of New Americans which employed eight workers: three among the Icelanders, two among the Swedes, one each among the Finns, Norwegians and Italians. Its purpose was to “interpret the New England habit of mind which Unitarians primarily represent to new Americans.” In 1913 Samuel A. Eliot said that among Unitarians the “prevailing opinion [is] that foreign missionaries are more or less of an impertinence as well as a waste of effort and money.”\textsuperscript{154} His successor, Louis C. Cornish, reached out to Hungarian Unitarians during the window between the two World Wars through the “Sister Church” program, but in 1935 the AUA declined to support an effort in Mexico City. Right before, during, and after the Second World War, mission was delivered through the Unitarian Service Committee: that is, religiously-inspired aid stripped of religious language and evangelical intent.

The difference between being an association of congregations instead of a denomination would have meant little to its international partners. Following the merger of the AUA and UCA, the main storyline from a non-North American perspective was one of unpredictability. Attitudes shifted from administration to administration. Dana Greeley was an enthusiastic globetrotter, but merger and peace were his priorities, and Civil Rights the cause imposed upon him. Robert West had no
choice but to focus on a series of domestic crises and the War in Vietnam. Nonetheless, he and Greeley both contributed in different ways to strengthening the IARF. Pickett lent his support to the IARF and welcomed the EUU. Schulz reached out to indigenous congregations, but was not enthusiastic about the formation of a World Council and thought a gathering of leaders at a World Summit was the more effective route to action and financial sustainability; Buehrens initiated the ICUU; his successor, Sinkford, communicated reserve. What a fickle partner the UUA was. Did any of the leaders realize that the UUA was the elephant at the table? Its every move had significant, if unintended, consequences, and international partners would then feel forced to adjust. Did new UUA presidents grasp that from afar, each administration was not seen as something brand new but, rather, as a continuation of that which preceded it? For non-Americans, each change in UUA leadership brought a new season of the old show. The question for them was: What now? The experience reaffirmed how pervasive American exceptionalism remained, an ethos fully reflected in the UUA.

At one time, international outreach was carried out in an exclusive partnership between the GAUFCC and the AUA, and later the UUA. The first meeting of what would become the IARF was held in Boston in 1900, the second in London a year later. In 1912 both the BFUA and AUA briefly supported the mission in Jamaica. In 1921 the AUA and British GA assisted Unitarians in Budapest to purchase the property that became the Bela Bartok Unitarian Church. In 1922, when AUA president Louis Cornish visited the Transylvanian Unitarian Church, he was accompanied by a leading British Unitarian minister, Laurence Redfern. From 1927 to 1930, William Howard Taft, former U.S. President and the then Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, served as President of the IARF; from 1949 to 1952, the English Unitarian Rev. H. Stewart Carter held that position; and from 1952 to 1955, the position went to American Unitarian the Honorable Percival F. Brundage. He was followed from 1955 to 1958 by the English Unitarian Rt. Hon J. Chuter Ede; then from 1958 to 1961 came American Unitarian Rev. Ernest W. Kuebler. From this record, it can be seen that, in regard to the IARF presidency, the British and American Unitarians were akin to a tag-team: Dana Greeley from 1969 to 1972; Rev. John Kielty, the GAUFCC General Secretary, from 1972 to 1975; Roy Smith from 1984 to 1987; Eugene Pickett from 1987 to 1990; and Natalie Gulbrandsen from 1993 to 1996. In 1962 Dana Greeley visited Paris and pulled a group together with the aim of starting a fellowship. A year later it was Kielty who followed up. In the late 1960s, a Joint Anglo-American Liaison Committee of the UUA and the GAUFCC met at least annually and discussed not only internal affairs but also international cooperation. It was at one of these meetings, in December 1968, that an agreement was made that Greeley should be nominated for the presidency of the IARF, with the support of the General Assembly, and Kielty should be nominated as Executive Vice-President. Greeley regularly attended the British GA, while Kielty and Smith attended the American GA. When the work of organizing UU fellowships in Europe was beginning in 1981, and Pickett spoke to a gathering, Roy
Smith was there. In 1987 Smith endorsed the UUA proposal to accept indigenous congregations, and at the World Summit in 1992, he delivered the opening remarks.

GAUFCC was the contact organization for Unitarians across the British Empire (now the Commonwealth), with the historic churches proclaiming and maintaining a relationship with the General Assembly. Before the BFUA was founded in 1825, and an India Fund in 1896 (which still exists), British Unitarians supported growth and maintained contacts in India, Australia, Canada, and Europe. However, with the establishment of the ICUU, this role essentially passed from the GA with the exception of historic partners such as India. Now when contacted by a potential new group, a referral is made to the ICUU. In part, this reflects the ICUU filling the role that was envisioned for it and, in part, it signifies the contraction of the GAUFCC. Records show an estimated GAUFCC membership of 6,509 in 1992; 5,953 in 1995; and 3,900 in 2015. This reflects a membership decline of about one-third since the founding of the ICUU. From the beginning, British Unitarians were involved and routinely served on the ICUU Executive Committee, yet now it is a peer among peers whereas before its only peer was the UUA.

As the U*U world realigned itself in relation to new international realities, there was naturally friction, as what had been the status quo ended, and what was to be was not yet clear.

As in the United Kingdom, Canadian membership figures have fallen since the founding of the ICUU. Following a similar trend, between 1995 and 2012, CUC membership dropped 28 percent. Oddly the number of congregations increased from forty-two to forty-six, and the increase in ministers was even greater. As with the GAUFCC, a shift can be discerned. In the years leading up to and following the founding of the ICUU, the CUC, while still being one peer among many, took a lead role. Canadians were among those most strongly in favor of the founding of such a group, and since 1999, there has always been at least one Canadian on the Executive Committee. Kiely joked that “Canadians have been recruited to explain the UUA to the rest of the world and the rest of the world to the UUA.” Said in jest, this observation was nonetheless somewhat true. The first Unitarian churches in Canada received encouragement and some financial support from the BFUA and AUA. For decades Canadian congregations were so much an extension of the AUA that at its annual meeting in 1928, Louis Cornish “called the representatives of Canadian churches together to confer upon Canadian questions.” Canadian congregations were also full participants in the merger of the AUA and UCA in 1961. The intimacy of this relationship meant that Canadians were well-positioned to take on the crucial role of interpreter.
The roles of other ICUU founding members changed, as well. When the ICUU came into being, the overthrow of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu was just five years past. New freedom allowed Romanian and Hungarian congregations to develop relationships with congregations in North American. Financial assistance poured in from various sources, including a Meadville Lombard sponsored program called, “The English Teacher,” which funded an English language instructor at the seminary in Kolosvar. Unitarian seminary students flowed West to Starr King School for the Ministry (SKSM). This was made possible by the Balazs Scholarship. Gyerő Dávid served as an intern at the UUA. The generation of Communist-era church leaders was superseded and the church structure became less hierarchical and autocratic than it had been. Major geo-political change came, with Hungary joining the European Union in 2004 and Romania in 2007. Change also came with the renaming of the Unitarian church—from the Romanian Unitarian Church in 1995, to the Transylvanian Unitarian Church in 2002. Then with the merger of the Transylvanian and Hungarian churches in June 2012, the name became the Hungarian Unitarian Church. With the exception of a two-year period, there has always been a Romanian or Hungarian on the ICUU Executive Committee, and today Gyerő’s presidency is a sign of that emerging strength.

In regard to Sri Lanka, a different type of organizational issue arose. Walter Jayewardene, an attendee at the Essex meeting, had enormously exaggerated the numbers of people who claimed to be Unitarians. Eventually, prior to one of the early Council meetings, in a painful conversation with the Executive Committee, he admitted that there were only about thirty “real” members, most of whom were his relatives. This situation confronted the ICUU with the problem it had anticipated from the beginning. What should the criteria be for recognizing a member group by the ICUU?

Much has changed since the ICUU was founded in 1995. Its membership increased from fourteen to twenty-two full and provisional member groups. The number of individuals has not grown but the geographical reach has, as well as the number and kind of programs it offers. Much has changed for member groups as well. In Canada, Romania, and Hungary, the situations changed substantially. Meanwhile the growth of Unitarianism in countries like Uganda, Burundi, and Cuba—where Unitarianism did not exist at all—has demanded that the ICUU provide the support to indigenous groups that it was intended to give. One thing has not changed. For the ICUU, change in its member groups has most often prompted new interest, sometimes concern, and occasionally material aid. The UUA has been the exception. For the ICUU, changes in the UUA have tended to trigger anxiety or upheaval or both.
ICUU Today

Today the ICUU is twenty-one years old and represents about 224,220 members spread across twenty-two full and provisional member groups, from New Zealand to Burundi, and from Indonesia to Norway, with groups emerging in another ten locations, including Latin America.

In 2005, the ICUU sponsored a Latinoamerican leaders conference in San Nicolas, Argentina. That meeting included twenty individuals representing eight Latin American countries. There the Asociacion Unitaria Latinoamericana (AUULA) was founded with the objective of promoting liberal religion in Latinoamerica. The AUULA did not endure, but in 2014, the ICUU, in collaboration with CLF and the UUA International Office, established the Latino Ministries.

In 2012, Vrijzinnigen Nederland joined the ICUU. It is noteworthy that this new member group does not have Unitarian or Unitarian Universalist in its name and does not regard itself as either, but does affirm the ICUU principles. There is an ebb and flow to the make-up of the ICUU, and its identity is still taking form.

In an early newsletter column, David Usher lamented that Executive Committee members were “technophobes,” and that “not as much progress towards computerization has been achieved as some would want.” Twenty years later, the digital world and the ICUU relationship to it has been transformed. The internet has become integral to much of what the ICUU does in serving and holding these far-flung faith communities together. It has also provided an opportunity for kindred religious spirits in other parts of the world to discover Unitarianism, to make contact, and to receive practical assistance in developing their groups.

The ICUU is accountable to its member groups (i.e., those associations or churches that have agreed in writing to accept and abide by the terms of the ICUU Constitution). These groups are organized on a local, national, or multinational basis, with each association or church consisting of one or more congregations. Furthermore, membership policies of a member group must show evidence of:

- Formal organization, with appropriate records of incorporation, including some form of constitution/by-laws that state criteria for membership and criteria for leadership.
- Written record of membership, and evidence of on-going meetings for worship held at a minimum level of one per month, and evidence provided of democratic leadership.
- Membership of at least twenty.
- Participation in at least one ICUU meeting or event.
- Connection with at least one other full-member group of the ICUU and demonstrated willingness to cooperate with other regionally connected ICUU members.
- Demonstrated use of Unitarian principles and worship formats suitable to local context.
• Recommendation of the Executive Committee, based upon first-hand assessment of the aims and intent of this group, and viability of this group for membership.

Accountability to the member groups is through a biennial Council Meeting. In between the Council Meetings, the control of the organization is vested in an Executive Committee elected by the delegates of the member groups at the Council Meeting.

During the presidency of Brian Kiely (2007-2014), the main challenge was to professionalize the organization and increase service delivery. Executive Secretary John Clifford, was charged with managing and organizing correspondence, managing communication, and planning for biennial Council Meetings. He also visited a number of ICUU groups, but the delivery of programs was not among the tasks delegated to him. Programs were provided by Executive Committee members and volunteers, and offered irregularly. Program delivery was increasingly viewed as an area where professional staff should be deployed.

When Clifford announced he would retire in 2009, the Executive Committee saw an opportunity for change. An invitation went out for applicants to replace Clifford as half-time Executive Secretary but with augmented responsibilities. Candidates expressed interest. But as the process dragged on, the Executive Committee reassessed the situation and decided to hire two people rather than one. Steve Dick was appointed Executive Secretary on a half-time basis and Jill McAllister was appointed Program Coordinator on a one-third-time basis. In April 2013, staffing was increased when Dick became full-time and was re-designated as Executive Director and McAllister was re-titled Senior Program Consultant. Under their leadership, service delivery increased as did administrative and communications capacity, and the number of trainings increased dramatically.161 (See Appendix V – ICUU Staff)

Since the staff held primary responsibility for administration and programs, the Executive Committee had the opportunity to focus more on strategy, development, and policy formulation. This shift from a management to a policy body was difficult. In particular, it took time for the Executive Committee to build consensus about the ICUU mission, to begin to articulate a vision that would allow the Executive Committee to lead, and to sort out who would be responsible for fundraising. Convinced that external stimulation was needed, the staff initiated various interventions including a Leadership Summit with senior leaders from the five largest groups, as well as consultants in organizational development and fundraising to work with the Executive Committee. The challenge with which the ICUU was confronted was that while its leadership became professionalised and its program capacity expanded, its financing and governing style remained largely static.

In 2014 Gyerő Dávid became president of the ICUU. Gyerő works at the headquarters of the Unitarian Church of Transylvania as Deputy Bishop for church administration, serves as minister of the Kolozs Unitarian Church and is leading the ICUU through its first major outwardly focused fundraising campaign.
Funding the ICUU

Becoming financially more independent is an important step in freeing the ICUU from its dependency upon the UUA and the imbalance of power that confounds their relationship. To some the necessity of this change was clear from the beginning. Indeed, Bill Schulz chose the avenue of convening a World Summit for that very reason. He wanted to secure substantial financial commitments upfront.

Despite the efforts of Charles Gaines in 1992, that did not happen. Following the World Summit in that year, Gaines circulated a voluntary assessment form seeking financial commitments. There were five responses, three of which were not official. The Indian Council of Unitarian Churches indicated it would commit one Rupee per member; the Hungarian Unitarian Church one Forint; the GAUFCC three Pence and the UUA ten cents. Gaines recommended to the UUA Board that the CUC be responsible for Canadians and that the UUA contribute $14,300 to the 1993-1994 budget. He also asked that a principle be established that the UUA share come from the Annual Program Fund (APF). In addition, he requested that grants be sought from the Veatch Program.

Following its founding meeting in 1995, the ICUU was faced with these same funding issues. Initially contributions from the UUA, and grants from the UU Funding Program (UUFP), sustained an ICUU budget of about $15,000. In 2005 the ICUU revised the formula used to derive a group’s Fair Share. It had two tiers with the amount varying given the size of the group and the economy of its country. The fee was calculated at either .50 or .05 USD for each individual member. This was still the situation in 2009, but in 2012 a system of three tiers was introduced, and for 2016 that system was expanded to four categories. As a large group in a developed country, the UUA is in band one (.80) as are the GAUFCC, CUC and EUU. By comparison, the Hungarian Church is in band two (.20), the Indian Council of Unitarians Churches is in band three (.10), and an emerging group in Rwanda, a low income country, is in band four (.05). These classifications are the same as those used by the World Bank.

From 1995 until today, the ICUU’s largest source of revenue has been the UUA. Between 2005 and 2014, the UUA set its annual contribution to the ICUU at $60,000 a year, raising that amount in 2015 to $65,000. The assessed amount for the UUA in 2016 is $124,000, of which it has committed $65,000 or about 52 percent of its assessment. From the beginning, GAUFCC and CUC paid their full membership assessment. Currently the GAUFCC is paying $2,230 USD a year; the CUC contributed $3,052 USD in 2015.

Both the size of the contribution and the budget percentage distinguish the UUA contribution from those of the CUC and the British General Assembly. The CUC and GAUFCC have paid their full membership dues from their general funds. This is true for the UUA as well, however, the source of the UUA’s $65,000 payment is one of the Holdeen Trusts and thereby subject to certain restrictions. The general restrictions are that a portion of the income can only be directed to partner work in India, a portion can only be directed to partner work in Asia, a portion can be used for administrative purposes at the UUA, and a portion can be used to make grants to non-UUA organizations and not necessarily for international purposes. This last portion has typically been the source of UUA support for the ICUU. The UUA can, and has, directed the before-mentioned funds to the India Holdeen Program, IARF, UUCP, and UUPCC among others. While the source of this income comes from a trust rather than the Annual Program Fund, that practice is in
line with the UUA budget. A substantial portion of UUA programs and expenses are not supported by the Annual Fund, indeed only 45 percent of unrestricted budget comes from it.

One figure that has slowly dropped is the UUA contribution as a percentage of the total dues from all member organizations to the ICUU. In 2006 and 2007, the UUA contribution represented 88.5 percent of the membership dues contributed by all groups to the ICUU over that two-year period. In 2013, the UUA contribution accounted for 74 percent of membership dues; in 2014 it made up 71 percent; and in 2016 the UUA commitment of $65,000 will represent 70 percent of forecasted membership dues. This contribution closely mirrors the 69 percent of U*Us worldwide that are members of the UUA (i.e., 155,000 of 224,200). In other words, the UUA gives roughly the same as all other ICUU member contributions combined.

What has shown greater change has been the income derived from other sources. Its growth has lowered the percentage of the ICUU budget that is dependent upon member dues as a whole. Nearly all ICUU programs, which include major training events and conferences, are grant-supported, primarily by the UU Funding Program (UUFFP) and occasionally by GAUFCC endowment funds. The UUFFP is a denominational grant-making program of the UUA. In practice it has been a fruitful collaboration in which the UUA administers a program wholly funded by the Veatch Program of the North Shore Unitarian Society. There is an arms-length relationship between both of these bodies and the UUFFP panels and staff. Since 1994, the UUFFP has given the ICUU thirty grants totaling $268,425; that averages to $9,000 per grant or $12,800 per year. In 2006 and 2007 these grants came to $7,500 or 9 percent of the budget. From 2008 to 2011, they ranged between $5,000 and $15,000 a year. In 2013 they came to $16,000 or 11 percent; and in 2014 they amounted to $28,000 or 17 percent of the ICUU budget.

A smaller source of revenue has been “Friends of ICUU.” This started as a program idea on the list of recommendations Gaines made to the UUA Board in 1992. Friends of the ICUU was launched by the ICUU prior to 2001 when, after two terms as Secretary, Richard Boeke attempted to take it in a new direction. His idea was based on his experience with the UUPCC. What he envisioned was setting up Friends as a separate body with special benefits for its members, and then move it toward a sort of ICUU membership for individuals. Individual membership was something John Eichrodt had been seeking since 1990 at the World Unitarian Council discussion in Hamburg. However, the Friends program did not go far enough for him. He proposed something more like the Church of the Larger Fellowship. Neither happened, but Friends raised $3,000 in 2006-2007. Then in 2009 the decision was made to dissolve the Friends program; now it simply exists on the website as an invitation to contribute. These individual gifts became a budget line item used to designate contributions, instead of a vehicle through which to solicit and sustain donations and donors. Individual contributions have continued to grow, and in 2013, they amounted to over $9,200.

The overall trend is this: In 2006 and 2007, the UUA contribution represented 65 percent of the $92,292 budget per year. In 2013, the UUA contribution accounted for 54 percent of a budget totaling $112,031; in 2014, the contribution was 36 percent. The budget for 2015 was $127,238 and the UUA contribution equaled 51 percent of that amount. Given the current estimates for the 2016 budget, the UUA’s $65,000 contribution will represent 26 percent of the total. What this means is that while the ICUU budget nearly doubled since 2006, as its programs and staff grew,
the UUA contribution remained constant until 2015. Taking this into account, the UUA contribution represents an incrementally smaller portion of the dues and a significantly smaller percentage of total budget revenue. Meanwhile, the ICUU has shifted its attention to making the development of other sources of income a priority. To the extent that the current fund drive is successful in enlarging the donor base, there is hope for a path toward a less dependent, and therefore healthier, relationship with the UUA. (See Appendix VI – ICUU Budgets)

The larger budgets reflect that over the years, as the capacity of the ICUU has grown, its activities have expanded. In the early years, the major activities were the Council Meeting every other year and one major program—such as a leadership training conference or theological symposium—in the intervening year. Since 2005, when the Council Meetings have been open to non-delegates, and several groups have emerged in East Africa, program and service delivery have become as important as meetings for governance and planning. The first leadership training program was held in Sri Lanka in October 1995. Then, in 2001, through the ICUU, U*Us were connected for the first time in South/Central America when a meeting was held in Sorata, Bolivia. Called “From Awareness to Action,” it was led by Rev. Lilia Cuervo and drew thirty attendees. For the past ten years, some form of leadership training has been part of every annual program schedule. These trainings have become more topically and contextually focused, as they have been delivered several times in Europe, as well as in India, Argentina, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Canada, the United States, and the Philippines.

Through a three-year program in 2008-2011, access to ministerial education and training has been increased around the world, bringing U*U’s together in mutual support. In addition, the ICUU has sponsored three theological symposia, connecting the UU theological schools around the world, and a first gathering of UU ministers from around the world has been part of its programming, along with publication of the papers and results of these gatherings. Regular consultation on organization development, leadership, and sustainability are now constant parts of the work of the ICUU, as is maintaining its website http://www.icuu.net/ and dissemination of the monthly Global Chalice Lighting in at least five languages, including Chinese, Khasi, French, Italian, Spanish, Danish, German, and English.

The Challenge of Nurturing Right Relations
ICUU is not the first group to navigate waters that grow turbulent when it concerns money. The predicament is systemic. The relationship of the Black Affairs Council (BAC) and the CUC to the UUA, vis-à-vis money, parallels that of the ICUU. When in 1968 the UUA General Assembly voted to give BAC one million dollars over four years, it was clear that the BAC would have complete control. BAC’s accountability was not to the UUA but to the Black UU Caucus (BUUC). BAC demanded that it be free to exercise full autonomy; this was the prerequisite if Black identity and dignity were to be affirmed. For some, this was viewed as a form of reparations to the African-American community, and indeed BAC’s focus was not on UU congregations, beyond mining them so as to direct UU financial resources to the African-American community. Working with whites (i.e., 99 percent of the UUA) was seen by BUUC as the responsibility of other white people.163
The CUC’s situation was similar. The UUA was not in a position to address the issue of Canadian identity or accommodate its distinct needs. It had blocked CUC’s membership in the IARF, and in the 60s, it had cut the CUC’s already meager funding. Moreover, the UUA and its districts had repeatedly siphoned off the human resources of Canadian Unitarians, which hampered the development of the CUC. African Americans made up 1 percent of the UUA while Canadians made up closer to 3 percent of it. Nonetheless, when it came to negotiating white guilt, the black rage of African Americans gave BAC more leverage than Canadians’ legendary politeness gave the CUC. The UUA relationship with BAC ended in a way that traumatized many – black and white alike; and the UUA relationship with the CUC was difficult and fraught with bad feelings. The former relationship failed while the latter succeeded, and both were made difficult by the huge power differential. When one party has access to the available resources and is in the position to decide how they will be allocated, the relationship cannot be one of peers.

A similar dynamic is at play in the UUA’s relationship to the ICUU, a young institution with few resources, little infrastructure and no reserves. Like BAC and CUC, the ICUU turned to the UUA for funding. Like them it expected its autonomy to be respected and applauded. Imagine the outrage if the UUA thought it could nominate the chair of BAC, or assume a UUA representative should sit with BAC. Such scenarios would likewise have been inconceivable with the CUC. The ICUU has had to wrestle with defining itself, working toward a global U*U identity distinct from that of the UUA, building relationships and networks, and developing culturally appropriate training models.

Accomplishing these goals has required resources, the primary source of which has been the UUA. How does the UUA understand the contributions it has made toward the ICUU? Is the UUA simply doing its share as the largest and wealthiest body? Or is the UUA performing a role of noblesse oblige? Has the UUA considered reparations as a matter with which it should be concerned? What does it mean that some Unitarian compatriots come from people who were colonized by America (and Britain), or by American interests among whom were Unitarians? In regard to African Americans, this question has been raised repeatedly. The “Black Lives Matter” movement in the U.S. has helped to put these concerns front and center in the consciousness of American UUs. They are likely unaware of the United States’ imperial past and the role UUs played in it. Does this lay upon the UUA an obligation or, perhaps, an opportunity? If the opportunity is embraced, how does one engage it without making the situation worse or creating more dependency rather than interdependence?

To portray this solely as a challenge for the UUA would create an incomplete picture. While the money that funds the ICUU has been largely American, those who have held ICUU positions of leadership have been overwhelmingly white and non-American. Of the thirty individuals who have been ICUU officers, twenty-six have been North American, European, or part of the European diaspora; the other four (i.e., 13 percent) have come from India, the Philippines, Nigeria, and Burundi. A breakdown of the Executive Committee members further illustrates this pattern: four from Romania; four from the UK, three from Germany, three from Canada, and only two Americans who were U.S. residents. Similarly, there were no Americans elected to the Nominating Committee in 1995 and only one since 2003. Is there an explanation for this absence, or is it accidental? Could it be a way of limiting the UUA’s power and thus bolstering the ICUU’s feeling of independence? Being influenced by such an urge makes sense. However, what happens if successive Nominating Committees and Councils make similar choices? Why was this the
comfortable choice? Would the Council’s attitude toward American assertiveness have informed how they voted? The UUA aside, people could not help but be aware of an outsized American presence in the Council meetings, once they were open to visitors in 2005. Observers were welcome to participate in Council business, though they had no vote. Unfortunately, inviting people into the discussion who have no information or long-term responsibility has not contributed to good decision making. Moreover, those for whom English is a second language have experienced American cultural extraversion as wordy, opinionated, and pushy. Acting in ways that hold the UUA at arms-length is an understandable outcome. This interpretation helps to explain the tensions that have existed between the ICUU and the UUA, the wariness, the misinterpretation, and the lack of consultation. There have been consequences for the ICUU in that this dynamic has fostered a disconnect with its primary funder.

History tells us that it is difficult, if not impossible, to be in right relation in the face of a substantial imbalance of power. Within the ICUU, the reality of power and privilege needs to be honestly discussed. We must first ask how the ICUU has coped to date with this imbalance? Can patterns and stratagems be discerned? We must then ask, what needs to happen now? Does the current governance structure keep the imbalance alive? How? What can the ICUU do to address this uncomfortable reality and move toward being in right relationship with all of its international partners? (See Appendix VII - UUA/ICUU Memorandum of Understanding)

The Significance of the ICUU
Reflecting on the experience she had in attending the ICUU Council Meetings in 2015, Rebecca Sienes of the Philippines, said, “I felt I was one of them. It gave me a better sense of UUism through its context and cultures... With the ICUU connection, I understood more about cultural differences, and through this, my mind became more open and I came to a better understanding about relationships. Within the ICUU, I felt that our relationships reached a level of balance.”

What Sienes discovered is elaborated upon by Fulgence Ndagijimana: “When strangers meet, endless possibilities emerge. New experiences, new ways of understanding, and new ways of taking action. When strangers meet, each pays attention to the other. Each is called to serve something larger than the self.”

Indeed, much of the ICUU’s time in its first two decades has been spent building relationships, exploring what U*Us hold in common, being instructed by their differences, and beginning to think of themselves as a community. And, as this has happened, the Unitarian-Universalist world has changed.
The new frontier for the ICUU has been East Africa. In Burundi it began when Fulgence Ndagijimana, a Dominican brother, on the way to becoming a priest, looked up Unitarian on the internet. He said, “I didn’t convert. I discovered that day that I was a Unitarian.” He contacted the ICUU and was invited to the next Council meeting. It was in Monserrat, Spain, in 2005. There Burundi was accepted as an Emerging Group, and Ndagijimana asked the ICUU to organize a leadership training meeting in Africa. The first-ever such gathering in Africa took place in Nairobi, Kenya in 2008. Meanwhile, Ndagijimana had gathered a group in Bujumbura. Within two years, the ICUU collaborated with the Partner Church Council to run a Community Capacity Building workshop in Bujumbura. This also included people from Rwanda and Congo Brazzaville. In 2009, at the Council meeting in Kolosvar, Romania, Burundi applied for membership and was unanimously accepted. Ndagijimana went beyond the bounds of the ICUU and UUPCC; similar in style to most emerging African groups, he wanted as many connections and partners as possible.

Ndagijimana said in the beginning that the importance of ICUU to the survival of the Burundi Unitarians was huge.

What would a handful of liberal Christians have done without the mentoring of the ICUU president who later became our partner minister? Visits from other Unitarians and UUs were learning opportunities … and the ICUU was the vessel that carried all those moments. In my ministry, the ICUU taught me that relationships are everything, especially when they are right. ICUU is a framework that makes it real, and it fills me with great joy to serve on its executive committee and to share that gospel to everyone I come across.166

Currently with the violent political upheaval in Burundi, the ICUU has meant even more. It has meant life instead of death. After Ndagijimana was wrongfully and unjustly jailed, he was then released due to a massive and coordinated effort spearheaded by the ICUU to put pressure on the government to free him.

Writing from Kigali, Rwanda he said:

It means people, who fled the violence, have a safe place to stay outside of Burundi where basic needs are provided. The ICUU is a constant reminder that no group is alone. That we are part of a global family that goes beyond our local congregation, our district or national body. I can confidently say, on behalf of Burundi Unitarians, that this crisis was also an opportunity for the ICUU to show its best self. I am reminded of Paul’s words in Romans 12:15. ICUU knows to celebrate with those who celebrate and to cry with those who cry. ICUU is both a mirror and a vessel; showing UU values are not vain concepts and makes real the solidarity of the global UU family. What a beautiful concept. We are here as living witnesses.167
The ICUU was also part of the global support system that stood by Romanian Unitarians. Gretchen Thomas recalled the words of Sándor Kovács, a Transylvanian minister who spent a year at Starr King School for the Ministry (SKSM) as a Balazs Scholar. Kovács said:

As we recover and move on from the deep scars of the Communist years in Hungary and the Ceausescu years in Romania, we in Transylvania need to know and understand everything about how you do things in North America, not because your ways would work for us—they won’t—but because hearing about you, and visiting with you, jars us out of our set ways of doing things and enables us to create more innovative solutions to our problems.¹⁶⁸

Working with the Khasi Hills Unitarians, Gyerő Dávid learned something very different than his colleague in America learned. Gyerő, who has been five times to the Khasi Hills, said,

Going to Transylvania feels like going back in time for many Westerners, the same applies to the Transylvanian experiences visiting the Unitarians in India. How life used to be, and should be again in many ways, is my main recognition. Valuing women at their best, recognizing laity as a driving force of the service, living the religion over the weekdays, singing in the worship so full heartedly, and showing how the loving community is the essence of the church...¹⁶⁹

These are Transylvanian perspectives.

A Canadian perspective is different. When the UUA was structured as a North American organization, it had a neo-colonialist relationship to Canada, almost by necessity. There was no nefarious intention; it was just that Americans could not help but assume a Canadian liberal religious identity or “Contextual Theology.”¹⁷⁰ Americans were not interested in building a North American identity – after all, they might have thought, “aren’t you all just like us except for igloos, Mounties and polar bears.” The cultural predominance and centripetal force of the UUA was such that Canadians used up an inordinate amount of energy dealing with the American elephant (i.e., U.S. realities rather than their own.) That changed once the ICUU came into being. Canadian Unitarians began to see themselves differently—an equal rather than a supplicant. As one of the larger national groups, and one with a long history of dealing with the UUA, the CUC stepped into a position of leadership it could not have held within the UUA. The ICUU enabled Canadians to give up their chronic disappointment with the UUA and get on with being Canadian Unitarians, striking out on their own in 2002 as an autonomous organization and taking on a lead role among their religious compatriots.

The perspective of Gevene Hertz, the EUU representative at the first meeting, is akin to that of the CUC:

We received an invitation from the UUA to the founding meeting to be held in Essex, MA. I was EUU president at the time, and I brought it up at a [Coordinating Council] meeting. We were kind of startled... [for] we felt quite insignificant. Still, it seemed like a good idea... [And once there I found an] inspiring spirit of discovery... where most of us learned that we were not alone...Being part of ICUU from the beginning has changed and enriched EUU
dramatically.... It has helped shift our thinking from considering ourselves poor relations begging for things from the UUA to realizing that we actually have a significant role to play...\textsuperscript{171}

One role the EUU has played has been on the ICUU Executive Committee where over the years, EUU members have served as vice president, treasurer and secretary. The EUU has also been increasingly attentive to building and strengthening its European connections. Scholarships have been given to Transylvanian youth for academic study and to allow them to attend ECUU Retreats. In Fall 2000, Kovács Istvan was the keynote speaker at the EUU Retreat in Oberwesel, and in Spring 2015, Gyerő Dávid assumed that role. In 2003, the EUU and the German Unitarians held a joint retreat; both groups plan to convene again in June 2017. They are calling their effort the Assembly of Unitarians in Europe. It is too early to say how a pan-European movement might evolve, but it is evolving, and the EUU has set out on a path of creating a more European, less U.S.-centric identity.

What of an American perspective? In the context of the ICUU, the UUA is a member. In this organization of institutional peers, its voice is one of many. It gets to be in dialog with other religious liberals, and, seeing itself through their eyes, it gets to discover the commonalities and its own uniqueness. In the context of this relationship the UUA learns about itself; that is, it is liberated into its own identity and particularity. The ICUU serves as an informal, ongoing, institutional audit because when the UUA listens to its partners in this worldwide movement it sees itself more accurately. The door is open to questions like: What is essential to our message and what is cultural artifact? What are they proclaiming in Burundi, the Khasi Hills, Hungary, and the Philippines that we are also proclaiming, and what do they proclaim that we do not? Certainly, among the many things, American UUs have to learn about is the centrality of community – and community effort. As Maria Pap said of Transylvanian Unitarians “for us sometimes the community needs come before the individual ones...We could not have survived and will not survive without community.”\textsuperscript{172} Theirs is a different understanding of individualism. Others who share our beloved faith call on those who have embraced a humanistic dogma to understand what it means to be a liberal Christian rather than totally rejecting Christianity; and respect for those devoted to a higher power—a power many American UUs are more comfortable dismissing. Furthermore, the UUA must learn, as the UUPCC learned, to be diplomatic, careful, attentive to issues of privilege in these relationships and watchful for unintended consequences. The reality remains that because the UUA provides the majority of the financial resources, everyone is unusually alert to its opinion. Fearful of offending and placing their access to resources at risk, groups may be cautious and less than forthright. When any group with power, resources and influence speaks strongly or bluntly, as Americans tend to do, it is seen as throwing its weight around. Whether it is, whether that is its intention, does not matter, for it is inextricably affected by the world’s perception of America and Americans. A memo prepared in 2009 for UUA President Peter Morales by Trustee Will Saunders was a sign that the UUA was beginning to understand. He wrote:

At this time, when it is becoming clear that one very important aspect of our own goals toward ARAOMC [Anti-racism, Anti-oppression, Multiculturalism] is the fact that we live and exist within a multi-cultural global U-U community, the UUA has a unique responsibility to help our own congregations know how to engage well in international relations, without
treat the rest of the U-U world as a kind of interesting playground, or charity case, but truly as partners. To that end, we must continue to grow in our understanding of and practice of right relations in international partnership at all levels.\textsuperscript{173}

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The story of Unitarians and Universalists who, guided by love, work to foster freedom and end oppression is a courageous one. In comparison, the story of how the ICUU came into being, and why, is rather messy. The process was a creative adaptation to a changing world. The difficulties it encountered were commonplace, having to do with differences in perspective, personality, and cultural sensibilities. Aside from these factors was something most new voluntary associations face—a vision that surpassed the availability of time and resources. Members of the ICUU reached consensus about the foundational religious values that bound them together. They shared hopeful intensions as they strove to meet the needs of a growing, global faith. However, the process of birthing the ICUU lost momentum because of an intrinsic imbalance of power among members, differences in worldview, long-standing loyalties (especially to the IARF), institutional duties, and provincial needs that led to divergent perspectives. That is to be expected. From the beginning the fact that differing perspectives made understanding one another difficult may be attributed in part to personality, style, and priorities. A sense of urgency, to the degree it pressurized the situation, made it worse. Urgency is always entwined with fear, and fear with guardedness and loss of flexibility. In the moments when conversation broke down and listening ceased, good will evaporated, distrust grew, and assumptions about motives came to reflect participants’ frustration and anger. Without dialogue and relationship-building, there was no expedient way forward except through the use of authority. The response to authority, however, is resistance, making constructive outcomes less possible.

Essex was a moment of grace, and what it requires is touched upon in the meeting summary:

No one in attendance was seeking to enlarge a power base or to dominate the group. The delegates and others were there to achieve the goal of establishing a working network between the bodies they represented, not to enhance those bodies or themselves. No one came with the idea that their particular perspective on Unitarian or Universalist religion was more “true” or “authentic” than any other. The purpose of the meeting was to find what the group had in common not to identify or argue about their differences.\textsuperscript{174}

If one can stay in the conversation without holding on too tightly to one’s own position; if one can honestly share conundrums and fears (for example, the idea that I cannot return to my people with a founding document that mentions, or does not mention, God); if, when stuck, one listens harder and tries to understand more deeply; if one honors difference, prizes flexibility, and accepts the tension of living with ambiguity; and, if one can smile when an answer alights and laugh at the struggle (and oneself), then grace has been present. When one feels urgent about the pace of the work, it is time to pause rather than press on. Notice your next breath, notice what you are feeling, notice the other person, decide to be hopeful and then begin again. Spend more time, but not in debate. Spend it listening more carefully, being more vulnerable, and building stronger relationships. Doing that creates an \textit{us} that can move forward together toward an uncertain future
and unimagined solutions. Thus, the approach is always critical, because it is the soil from which solutions grow.

The central task of religious community is to unveil the bonds that bind each to all. There is a connectedness, a relationship discovered amid the particulars of one’s own life and the lives of others. Building upon these relationships is essential for alone our vision is too narrow to see all that must be seen, and our strength too limited to do all that must be done. But, together, our vision widens and our strength is renewed.
Report on the World Conference of Unitarian Leaders
Budapest, March 19-22 1992

This world conference was organized by the North-American Unitarian Universalist Church, with Budapest as the chosen location. The dates were from 19th to the 22nd of March 1992.

The participants were: Dr. William F. Schulz, Natalie W. Gulbrandsen, Dr. Charles Gaines, Melvin Hoover from the U.S.; Dr. Roy W. Smith from England, Vladimir Strejcek from Czechoslovakia, Preben Bovin from Denmark, Ernst Mohnike and Wolfgang Jantz from Germany, Sunrit Mullick and Carleywell Lyngdoh from India, Robert Steyn from South Africa, Allen Kirby from Australia, Orbokne Szent-Ivanyi Ilona from Hungary, Dr. Kovács Lajos, Dr. Erdő János and Dr. Szabo Arpad from Romania / Transylvania representing their national Unitarian churches.

From the Hungarian Unitarian Church, undertaking parts of organizing the event, Dr. Ferencz Jozsef, Bartok Bela, and Bencze Marton and several ministers and secular leaders participated in the whole program or individual events.

The idea of wider cooperation between the Unitarians of the world emerged as early as 1987 at the Annual Meeting of the British Unitarian General Assembly; in a resolution they asked the council of the church to "discuss with the representatives of other Unitarians the possibility of creating an International Unitarian Council". The discussions were soon started and continued in the following years in the general meetings of the British, American and Canadian Unitarian churches and finally on the IARF Congress in Hamburg. Everybody supported the idea enthusiastically as the reality and importance of the issue was strongly felt though some doubts emerged about how it should be organized, the make-up of the representation and how it would be funded. In the U.S. an organized movement started for the creation of a new world organization, with the goal stated as:

1. To promote cooperation between the Unitarians of the world to strengthen the existing national organizations by sharing foundations, knowledge, ideas and spiritual resources,
2. To raise worldwide awareness of the Unitarian beliefs and the fact that they fit into all cultures and national characteristics,
3. To discuss the theological, philosophical, historical, and social issues of our days from a more comprehensive Unitarian viewpoint,
4. To help sustain smaller Unitarian congregations or groups in different countries which are not capable yet to maintain themselves,
5. To create and support new congregations or groups in countries that are still without a Unitarian presence.

The Budapest World Conference, in addition to the above, had as an objective to draft a conceptual declaration of belief expressing our mission that demonstrates our unity sustained by our shared beliefs and sources. We also discussed the ethical values that we, Unitarians, share in order to articulate better our convictions in religious and ethical issues of our times and our humankind.
The Process of the World Conference

The participants were accommodated in the Hotel Taverna in Budapest, the work happened in the Nagy Ignac Street hall of the church.

The opening took place on the 19th of March, Thursday, at 6 pm. The participants were greeted by Bartok Bela, chief ward who represented the hosts of the conference. Then the president, Dr. William Schulz and Dr. Charles Gaines and Melvin Hoover, principals of the Unitarian Universalist Association, reviewed the goals and agenda of the conference. After that the hosts treated the representatives of the church organizations to a dinner. The day's program was concluded with a service by Bencze Marton vice bishop and Szent-Ivanyi Ilona minister with the participation of the students of theology.

On the 20th of March, Friday the real work started at 9 am. In the first half of the morning those present introduced themselves in some way, reviewed the short history, present life, and future prospects of the congregation or organization they represented. From our church, Dr. Erdo Janos, Chief Notary, gave an introduction and Dr. Szabo Arpad, theology teacher, also contributed shortly. The reports were complemented by questions and the answers to them. The participants greatly valued the possibility to familiarize themselves with each other's lives, the questions and difficulties they have to face these days - even if shortly. They express the necessity to get to know each other better in order to cooperate.

After the break the discussion of the first topic of the conference took place: Focusing on Our Mission. The topic, just like the other two, was introduced (shed light on) with a presentation and two so-called answers. The presenter was Vladimir Strejcek from Czechoslovakia, the answers were given by Sunrit Mullick from India and Allen Kirby from Australia. The presentations were followed by detailed discussions.

After lunch the participants worked on writing the declaration of the concept of belief to express our mission, first in smaller groups, then summarized together the opinions and suggestions. Finally, Dr. Robert Traer, IARF General Secretary, was entrusted with developing a draft declaration based on these.

In the evening, after dinner, the exchange of ideas on the ethical and religious issues in the center of interest for all, determining the face of Unitarianism, was continued in a common room of the hotel. After that the participants, with some additions, accepted the final wording of the Declaration.

This day's program ended with a service led by Dr. Robert Traer, and with the contributions of Natalie Gulbrandsen and Dr. Szabo Arpad.

In the morning of Saturday, March 21 the discussion of the second topic took place: Focusing on our Strategy. The presenter was Dr. Roy Smith from Great Britain. This time there was only one presentation; that was from Dr. Szabo Arpad because the other presenter, John Slattery, President
of the Canadian Unitarian Council, was sick and couldn't come. After a common discussion of the issue, the participants formed three groups to deal with the following sub-topics:

1. Organization: membership and meetings
2. Mission: mutual support, expansion
3. Financial foundations

After this the findings were summarized in a common discussion. The World Conference decided not to create an international Unitarian alliance because that would weaken the IARF in all ways. It will have regular World Conference of Leaders in given times, if possible, synchronized with the IARF Congress and the meetings of the Head Council. To coordinate the activities in the time intervals between meetings, a coordinating committee was created with the churches represented according to geography. The four members of the committee represent the United States, England, Countries of Central Europe, and India. Dr. Roy Smith got elected for chairing the committee; the elected members: Natalie Gulbrandsen, the head secretary of the Unitarian Church in England, Orbokne Szent-Ivanyi Ilona, Hungarian minister, and Helpme Mohrmen, Indian minister. Representatives of the churches of Central Europe, that is, the Romanian, Hungarian and Czechoslovakian Unitarian Church, agreed to participate in the work of the committee in a rotation system; the representative of each church will be a committee member only for one time interval (between two meetings).

The third question, Focus on our tasks in the World, got discussed after lunch. How do we witness? The presenter was Dr. William Schulz, answered by Robert Steyn from South Africa. Olatunji Matimoju from Nigeria, who was asked to present another answer, couldn't participate in the congress.

Again, the presentations were followed by detailed discussions.

In addition to the agenda itself, the participants had a chance to visit the House of Parliament on Friday afternoon where they were received officially. Saturday evening they listened to a concert, part of the "Budapesti Tavasz" (Budapest spring) series of events, in the Vigado.

At 6 p.m. Saturday a "love treat" took place in the meeting room of the Hogyes Endre Uti Misszio Haz (Mission House in Hogyes Endre street). The service was led by Dr. Kovacs Lajos, bishop.

On the 22nd of March, Sunday at 10 a.m. the participants of the World Conference evaluated the activities of the two days, expressed their gladness to have participated, and their hope for a future cooperation in closer unity, with greater attention to each other for strengthening the Unitarian churches and our world community.

At 11 am, on the service, the liturgy was led by Orbokne Szent-Ivanyi Ilona, with participation from Sunrit Mullick and Vladimir Strejcek and sermon by Dr. William Schulz.

From 6 p.m. the congregation of Pestlorinc, led by Dr. Jakab Jeno minister, gave a love treat, where Dr. Roy Smith delivered the sermon.
The Declaration of the World Congress

Our mission is to serve God and our community of the Earth by strengthening our Unitarian belief spread all over the world.

We gathered to share thoughts and experience; to work on conceptual and practical ideas that can help our congregations back home to seek growth through realization of spiritual and ethical values; to create a decision-making body for the issues of Unitarianism concerning all of us.

We gathered to seek each other’s respect, empathy and understanding so that we can grow together in wisdom, love, and goodwill.

Requesting the discussion and acceptance of this report and the further measures necessary.

Yours with brotherly respect,

Dr. Szabo Arpad
Kolozsvar, March 28 1992
APPENDIX II

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF UNITARIANS AND UNIVERSALISTS
Its Founding Meeting

INTRODUCTION

In December of 1994, letters went out from the office of Rev. Kenneth Torquil MacLean, the Assistant to the President of the UUA for International Relations, to all the Unitarian and Universalist groups known, to invite them to send representatives to the International Conference of Unitarians and Universalists to be convened at the Essex Conference and Retreat Centre in Massachusetts March 22-26, 1995. The letter stated:

“The purpose of the conference is to launch an International Council of Unitarians and Universalists. . . . This meeting is the culmination of a process which goes back at least to 1987, when the British General Assembly passed a resolution overwhelmingly calling for a World Unitarian Council. Meetings held in Budapest in 1992 and in Charlotte, North Carolina in 1993 carried the process forward. The present committee was formed and met in September, 1994, in Boston.”

A later letter expanded on the reasons for the development of this new organization:

“The Unitarian Universalist Association of North America and the British General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches have been deeply involved in the International Association for Religious Freedom and will continue to be, but the IARF is not an international organization of just Unitarian and Universalists. This will be the first time we have actually organized our religious faith on an international basis. . .

It is good to know that we will soon be meeting face-to-face. As our religious faith is important in the lives of each of us, giving us strength and understanding in our living in the world, so our communities are important in bearing witness to our beliefs and ideals. The world needs what we have to offer, and we will be more significant if we are joined together in common purpose.”

The members of the Planning Committee were Rev. Polly Guild, International Program Coordinator for the UUA, Rev. David Usher, who had proposed the original motion at the British General Assembly, Jeffrey Teagle, General Secretary of the British General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, Herman Boerma, Past President of the Canadian Unitarian Council, and Rebecca Sienes of the Philippines, currently studying for the ministry at Meadville Lombard Theological School.
PARTICIPANTS

In March, the group arrived at the Conference Centre. The delegates included:

John Slattery, Past President
Ellen Campbell, Executive Director
Canadian Unitarian Council

Mr. Miloslav Starosta
Central Committee Chair
Czech Unitarian Association

Rev. Perfecto Sienes
Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines

Mr. Walter Jayewardene
Director/Secretary General
Unitarian Universalist Association of Sri Lanka

Mr. John Maindonald
Australia/New Zealand Unitarian Association (ANZUA)

Szabo Arpad
Bishop's Council
The Unitarian Church in Romania

Rev. Robert C. Steyn,
Free Protestant Unitarian Church, South Africa

Christine Hayhurst
British General Assembly

Lene Lund Shoemaker
Unitarische Kirkesamfund
Denmark

Gevene Hertz
European Fellowships

Wolfgang Jantz
Deutscher Unitarier
Germany

Yvegeny Schlacter
UU Fellowship of Petersburg
Russia
The Rev. Clifford Reed  
British General Assembly

The Rev. Polly Guild  
The Rev. Jill McAllister  
Unitarian Universalist Association, USA

Four delegates were unable to attend because of visa or health problems:

Mr. Inderias Dominic Bhatti  
Pakistan

The Rev. Orbokne Szent-Ivanyi Ilona  
Unitarian Church of Hungary

The Rev. Adewale Soyombo Abowaba  
Unitarian Brotherhood Church, Nigeria

The Rev. H. Helpme Mohrmen  
Unitarian Union NE India

In addition to the delegates and the planning committee, there were several observers for all or part of the meeting:

Denise Davidoff, UUA Moderator, USA  
John Rex, USA  
Marlin Lavanhar, USA  
Mrs. J. Starostova, Czech State  
Ted Guild, USA

The Rev. John Buehrens, President of the UUA, presented the keynote address, and the Rev. Larry Peers of the UUA Extension Department facilitated part of the meeting.

OPENING OF THE MEETING

The meetings began on Wednesday night with the opportunity to learn from others’ past ties with Unitarians or Universalists in other places. Some themes recurred: the desire for connection with others with similar beliefs and values in other parts of the world, a sense of isolation as Unitarians and Universalists, the opportunity to learn from others’ past ties with Unitarians or Universalists in other places. Some of the group had been part of this religious community for their entire lives; others had come to it very recently. The group began, in this initial getting-acquainted and the worship which followed, to become a community.
The next morning began with a keynote address by the Rev. John Buehrens. He spoke of looking for a “right relationship” with Unitarians and Universalists around the world. Recognizing the differences, we brought from our various religious and cultural communities, he suggested that we should be focusing not on our creed but on our covenant with each other.

THE WORK OF THE MEETING

Larry Peers of the Extension Office of the UUA was the facilitator of the initial working session, to explore a series of questions:

What have we in common?
What are our differences?
Do we want a world organization?
To do what?
What are our goals?

It began with a brief presentation on each group represented: size; general characteristics of Unitarianism and/or Universalism different from other religious groups in the country; characteristics of membership, ministry; governance; financing. The exercise highlighted the wide divergence in some areas. In size, there was a range from Denmark, with thirty members, to the USA with 200,000. The German group, established just after World War II, had determined that it would not have clergy or other professional leadership; the Transylvanian church is organized with a fairly traditional church government under a Bishop. But it also illustrated some commonalities: commitment to freedom of conscience and the democratic process, and to free association.

In small groups participants considered their vision for a potential world body, thinking ahead a decade to 2005. Having shared their visions, the groups began to develop a set of purposes for the organization. The first formulation of the purposes was as follows:

- to affirm the worldwide Unitarian and Universalist faith to facilitate mutual support among member organisations,
- to promote our ideals and principles around the world,
- to provide models of liberal religious response to the human condition which uphold our common values.

Jeff Teagle and Herman Boerma facilitated sessions to develop a constitution. Working from a draft constitution which had been circulated in advance, the group suggested areas which needed to be added, developed further, or which might cause difficulty. Small groups worked on specific sections of the document. While much of this work was technical, three areas required more intensive discussion. The first was the need for a Preamble, more clearly affirming our common identity. The Preamble developed and adopted was as follows:
We, the member groups of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, affirming our beliefs in religious community based on:

- liberty of conscience and individual thought in matters of faith,
- the inherent worth and dignity of every person,
- justice and compassion in human relations,
- responsible stewardship of the earth’s living system, and our commitment to democratic principles.

The second area of concern was that of the numbers of delegates to which member groups would be entitled in future meetings. The draft constitution proposed that each group with more than 1000 members would have two votes, and those groups with fewer than 1000 members would have one. An alternate proposal was made that each group, of whatever size, would have one vote. After considerable discussion, agreement was reached on a proposal to give two votes to groups with more than three thousand members.

The third potential problem arose as the group developing the Preamble reviewed the Purposes, into which it leads. One member felt that his group would not accept the Constitution without some reference to God, and proposed an addition, “to serve God and the human community.” A second member of that small group proposed instead, “Service to our religious ideals.” They brought these alternatives to the larger body. The whole group recognized quickly that given the wide variation in belief within and between our religious traditions, this could be a divisive and difficult area. There was an extensive discussion of alternative wordings which might be satisfactory to the members of our various groups, and about eight were proposed. A voting formula was suggested whereby delegates indicated which of the proposals would be acceptable to their group, and identified one which was the most acceptable. To the group’s surprise and pleasure, while a number of the possibilities were acceptable to people, there was strong consensus for one, and the following purpose was added to the original list:

- To serve the Infinite Spirit of Life and the human community by strengthening the worldwide Unitarian and Universalist faith.

Having developed a Constitution which satisfied the delegates, the next step was the nomination of officers. The Planning Committee had proposed a slate, and opened this for any other nominations, some of which were received.

There was also a discussion of resources available to the body. As part of the preparation for the 1992 meeting, participating members had pledged their support to the body at a level reflecting their numbers. Delegates to this meeting reaffirmed these commitments, providing a total of $10,000. In addition, the UUA agreed to contribute the cost of the Executive Meeting in the coming year. Other resources potentially available include individual donors and donations to specific projects from individuals, trusts, and special events.
THE FOUNDING MEETING

By Saturday morning, the group was ready to set an agenda for the Founding Meeting of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists. Jeff Teagle and Herman Boerma co-chaired the initial phase of the meeting, in which the delegates adopted the provisional constitution, and elected the following officers:
President, David Usher
Vice President, Szabo Arpad
Secretary, Clifford Reed
Treasurer, Jill McAllister
Member at Large, Wolfgang Jantz

The officers then took office and carried on with the meeting.

One item on the agenda was not connected to founding the organization. The delegate from the Czech Republic reported on the schism within their church. After the “Velvet Revolution” in Czechoslovakia, the church in Prague called a minister, Vladimir Strejcek, then living in North America. The UUA and the IARF provided some financial support. Unfortunately, Rev. Strejcek had an authoritarian view of church governance, and he and the Prague congregation soon clashed over the management of the church’s property and funds. After several episodes of conflict, he called a meeting of the minority of the Central Committee of the Czech Unitarian Association in June 1993. In violation of their constitution, that group replaced the elected officers and established a new Executive Committee. They extended Rev. Strejcek’s authority to include management of administration and finances of the national general secretariat including this group. Rev. Strejcek has obtained recognition by the Czech government as the legitimate representative of Czech Unitarians.

Since that time, the stipends of several ministers in Czech churches (paid by the government) have been reduced or cancelled, the elected officers of the Prague congregation have been expelled from the CUA, and members of the congregation have been excluded from the church building. The IARF and the UUA withdrew their support. The members who were excluded have continued to meet. Cut off from their building, which was also a source of revenue, and from government recognition, they have felt isolated and discouraged, but they have survived. They have responded to overtures toward reconciliation, but they see little realistic hope for it at this time.

Jeff Teagle and Ken MacLean reported on efforts by the UUA and the British General Assembly to bring about reconciliation. These have not been successful, because Rev. Strejcek and his officers have refused to meet with the excluded group. Based on their unwillingness to cooperate, the Planning Committee chose to invite the excluded members to send a delegate, and did not invite Rev. Strejcek’s group. Delegates had all received mailings from the Strejcek group protesting this decision and maintaining that they had acted constitutionally.

The ICUU discussions began with the hope that this new group might break the impasse. A resolution calling on both sides to come together with our representatives was presented, but the group clearly did not feel comfortable with it. Support for a stronger resolution came particularly
from Perfecto and Rebecca Sienes, reflecting their own experience with religious persecution and undemocratic activity. In the end, the Council adopted the following resolution unanimously:

The International Council of Unitarians and Universalists views with dismay the present split in the Czech Unitarian Association and notes with approval the efforts of the UUA and the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches to bring about a reconciliation. The ICUU notes also that the group led by Mr. Vladimir Strejček and Mr. Otmar Dolezal has unreasonably refused to cooperate with these efforts and has acted in a manner inconsistent with the democratic and liberal religious principles of Unitarianism and Universalism.

The ICUU, therefore, recognizes the Czech Unitarian group represented at this meeting by Mr. Miloslav Starosta as constituting the legitimate leadership of the Czech Unitarian Association. The International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, hoping that Mr. Vladimir Strejček, Mr. Otmar Dolezal, and their group may yet act with the good will expected of all Unitarians and Universalists, calls upon them to relinquish all claim to the titles, offices, property and financial resources of the Czech Unitarian Association, including its headquarters building at Karlova 8, Prague, and all income derived there from, together with all claim to be the representatives of the Czech Unitarian Association in the Czech Republic or in the worldwide Unitarian and Universalist movement.

This document was to be sent to the Czech government bodies which have responsibility for religious matters as well as to the affected groups.

Once the business of the meeting was completed, it was adjourned, almost with reluctance, and with a sense of great accomplishment on the part of the participants.

OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE MEETING

There were other elements which served to strengthen the sense of community and shared purpose which infused this meeting.

The Planning Committee and the Conference Centre worked together to ensure that the participants’ physical and psychological needs for comfortable, attractive space, wonderful food, natural beauty, and peaceful surroundings were well-met. There was time for fun and good conversation, walks to the sea, a library, a hot tub for relaxation. Even the weather cooperated, staying quite moderate, but providing one morning of snow so that Walter Jayewardene of Sri Lanka could experience it for the first time.

Perhaps most important were the worship services which had been developed by the Planning Committee. Each service included elements from the various countries and groups represented: music, reflection, readings. There were many special moments: Szabo Arpad’s reading of the passage from St. Paul, “We are all one body”; singing together the South African hymn, “Grant Us the Grace to Be: United, Strong and Free”; the “sharing circle” in which each person reflected on the day gone by – all the participants will have their own memories of the most meaningful time.
Most significant was the closing service, in which the delegations pledged support on behalf of their own member groups to this fledgling body. A sermon by David Usher, who had made the original motion to establish such a body at the 1987 British General Assembly, reflected on the purposes and promise of this fledgling organization. Herman Boerma, in “The Home Planet,” a meditation based on astronauts’ reflections on seeing the earth from space, brought to the group a sense of the wonders of the universe and the unity of Earth. As the service ended, the group was connected by a depth of community which is rarely experienced.

There would seem to be some major contributing factors:

- No one in attendance was seeking to enlarge a power base or to dominate the group. The delegates and others were there to achieve the goal of establishing a working network between the bodies they represented, not to enhance those bodies or themselves.
- No one came with the idea that their particular perspective on Unitarian or Universalist religion was more “true” or “authentic” than any other. The purpose of the meeting was to find what the group had in common, not to identify or argue about their differences.
- There was a balance between vision and reality. Many of the “visioning” ideas were inspiring and challenging, but the group recognized that it needed to walk toward those goals, rather than run, if it was to make a successful start.

Perhaps the most effective way to close this chronicle of a significant moment in our religious history is with the final Preamble and Purposes from the Constitution of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists:

We, the member groups of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, affirming our belief in religious community base on:

- liberty of conscience and individual thought in matters of faith,
- the inherent worth and dignity of every person,
- justice and compassion in human relations,
- responsible stewardship of the earth’s living system,
- and our commitment to democratic principles,

declare our purposes to be:

- to serve the Infinite Spirit of Life and the human community by strengthening the worldwide Unitarian and Universalist faith,
- to affirm the variety and richness of our living traditions,
- to facilitate mutual support among member organisations,
- to promote our ideals and principles around the world,
- to provide models of liberal religious response to the human condition which uphold our common values.

Ellen K. Campbell, July 1995
APPENDIX III

ICUU OFFICERS AND NOMINATING COMMITTEES

1995 – 2016

1995 - 1997
President: David Usher (USA)
Vice President: Szabo Arpad (Romania)
Secretary: Cliff Reed (UK)
Treasurer: Jill McAllister (USA)
Member-at-Large: Wolfgang Jantz (Germany)

1997 - 1999
President: David Usher (USA)
Vice President: Gevene Hertz (EUU)
Secretary: Dick Boeke (UK)
Treasurer: Jill McAllister (USA)
Member-at-large: Rezi Elek (Romania)

1999 – 2001
President: Jill McAllister (USA)
Vice President: Gevene Hertz (EUU)
Secretary: Dick Boeke (UK)
Treasurer: John Slattery (Canada)
Member-at-large: Cliff Reed (UK), Wolfgang Jantz (Germany), Rezi Elek (Romania)

2001 - 2003
President: Jill McAllister (USA)
Vice President: Miko István (Hungary)
Secretary: Ellen Campbell (Canada)
Treasurer: John Slattery (Canada)
Member-at-large: Pearl Greene Marbaniang (India-Khasi), Antje Paul (Germany), Cliff Reed (UK)

2003 -2005
President: Gordon Oliver (South Africa)
Vice President: John Slattery (Canada)
Secretary: Pearl Greene Marbaniang (India)
Treasurer: Barbara Beach (USA)
Member-at-large: Christine Hayhurst (UK), Kovács Istvan (Romania), Antje Paul (Germany)
2005 - 2007
President: Gordon Oliver (South Africa)
Vice President: John Slattery (Canada)
Secretary: Pearl Greene Marbaniang (India)
Treasurer: Barbara Beach (USA)
Member-at-large: Christine Hayhurst (UK), Kovács Istvan (Romania), Jaume De Marcos (Spain)

2007 - 2009
President: Brian Kiely (Canada)
Vice President: Gordon Oliver (South Africa)
Secretary: Jaume De Marcos (Spain)
Treasurer: David Shaw (UK)
Member-at-large: Jill McAllister (USA), Pearl Greene Marbaniang (India), Pauline Rooney (ANZUA)

2009 - 2012
President: Brian Kiely (Canada)
Vice President: Pauline Rooney (ANZUA)
Secretary: Gyerö Dávid (Romania)
Treasurer: David Shaw (UK)
Member-at-large: Nihal Attanyake (Philippines), Olufemi Matimoju (Nigeria), Celia Midgley (UK)

2012 - 2014
President: Brian Kiely (Canada)
Vice President: Pauline Rooney (ANZUA)
Secretary: Gyerö Dávid (Romania/Hungary)
Treasurer: David Shaw (UK) - 2012 Galen Gister (EUU)
Member-at-large: Nihal Attanyake [Until 2013] (Philippines), Lara Fuchs [from 2013] (EUU), Celia Midgley (UK), Fulgence Ndagijmana (Burundi)

2014 – 2016
President: Gyerö Dávid (Romania)
Vice President: Pauline Rooney (ANZUA)
Secretary: Lara Fuchs (EUU)
Treasurer: Galen Gister (EUU)
Member-at-large: Brian Kiely (Canada) Fulgence Ndagijmana (Burundi), Inga Brandes (Germany)

2016 – 2018
President: Gyerö Dávid (Romania)
Vice President: Fulgence Ndagijmana (Burundi)
Secretary: Lara Fuchs (EUU)
Treasurer: John Mitchell (CUC)
Member-at-large: Eric Cherry (USA), Inga Brandes (Germany), Darihun Khriam (India)
ICUU NOMINATING COMMITTEE

2001-2003 Gevene Hertz [Chair] (EUU), Marlin Lavanhar (USA), Leta Sandor (Hungary)
2003-2005 Cliff Reed [Chair] (UK), Jill McAllister (USA), Mathe Sandor (Romania)
2005-2007 David Usher [Chair] (UK), Iva Fiserova (Czech Republic), Csete Arpad (Romania)
2007-2009 Richard Boeke [Chair] (UK), Wolfgang Jantz (Germany), Kovács Istvan (Romania)
2009-2012 Gevene Hertz [Chair] (EUU), Pearl Greene Marbaniang (India), Gordon Oliver (SA)
2012-2014 Ellen Campbell [Chair] (Canada), Derrick Pariat (India), Antje Paul (Germany)
2014-2016 Ellen Campbell [Chair] (Canada), Derrick Pariat (India), Celia Midgley (UK)
2016-2018 Celia Midgley [Chair] (UK), Derrick Pariat (India), Tet Gallardo (Philippines)

APPENDIX IV

ICUU COUNCIL MEETING LOCATIONS and ATTENDANCE

1997 United Kingdom (Great Hucklow)
1999 Hungary (Lake Balaton)
2001 Canada (Montreal) (40)
2003 Czech Republic (Prague) (50)
2005 Spain (Montserrat) (100)
2007 Germany (Oberwesel) (80)
2009 Romania (Kolosvar) (80)
2012 The Philippines (Dumaguete) (100)
2014 USA (New York City) (140)
2016 The Netherlands (Mennerode) (160)
2018 India (Khasi Hills)
APPENDIX

ICUU STAFF

2003-2005  Administrative Assistant: Iva Kocmanova Fiserova (Czech)
2005-2009  Executive Secretary: John Clifford (UK)
2009-2016  Executive Director: Steve Dick (UK)
            Senior Program Consultant: Jill McAllister (USA)
2016 -     Interim Executive Director: Sara Ascher (USA)

APPENDIX VI

ICUU BUDGETS *(Until 2012 budgets were for two years, split here for comparison purposes)*

1995  $20,000
1999  $88,500
2000  $79,500
2001  $56,405
2006  $83,945
2007  $83,945
2008  $86,350 (Note: Actual expenditure was $40,707.15)
2009  $86,350 (Note: Actual expenditure was $112,162.91)
2010  $104,500 (Note: Actual expenditure was $106,535.27)
2011  $104,500
2012  $210,200 (Note: Actual expenditure was $156,315.24))
2013  $234,200 (Note: Actual expenditure was $150,089.70)
2014  $192,500 (Note: Actual expenditure was $166,601.03)
2015  $165,500
2016  $248,950
APPENDIX VII

Memorandum of Understanding
between the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU)
and Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA)

I. Purpose
• To outline the areas of collaboration and cooperation between the ICUU and the UUA based upon their respective Mission and International Vision Statements.
• To foster greater understanding between the two organizations.
• To be a template for programmatic evaluation.

II. Background
The Mission of the ICUU is to:
• Build relationships through communication and collaboration;
• Develop spiritual community among member groups and their leaders;
• Identify and nurture prospective and emerging groups;
• Foster our U-U faith for mutual inspiration, development and growth.

The International Vision Statement of the UUA
The work of the UUA is to serve member congregations and support UU institutions bearing witness to our liberal religious faith and bringing our principles to life. Mindful of both the brokenness and the potential for reconciliation in our world, the Board of the UUA commits to strengthen and energize UUA member congregations by facilitating their connection to the transforming power of international engagement and partnership. In support of this commitment, we urge the UUA administration and member congregations to foster institutional partnerships that:
• Model friendship and right relations, economic fairness and responsible stewardship of resources among partners;
• Promote human rights, religious freedom, international peace and justice; and
• Increase the visibility of Unitarianism, Universalism and Unitarian Universalism as an active positive religious presence in the world.

III. Roles and Responsibilities
A. For the ICUU
1. Roles:
a. To be a voice for U-Uism in the larger world and to broaden and increase that voice.
b. To maintain and promote a network of communication between and among ICUU member and emerging groups.
c. To identify and nurture prospective and emerging groups. To encourage and manage the sharing of needs, expertise, experience, human resources, and financial resources between and among ICUU members and emerging groups.
e. To initiate and promote collaboration and cooperation in programs of mutual benefit and interest, between and among ICUU member and emerging groups.
2. Responsibilities
a. To follow ICUU by laws and to conduct all official meetings (including Council and Executive Committee meetings) with appropriate notice, open access, and timely and public reporting.
b. To seek and engage diverse and multiple U-U governing bodies in delivering programs and services in areas such as ministerial and professional development, religious education, worship arts and congregational excellence.

c. To model an understanding of right relations and economic fairness when designing, implementing and evaluating programs.

d. To develop programs within the ICUU’s organizational and financial capacity.

e. To develop and implement new programs in an open, transparent and timely manner.

f. To cooperate with other organizations on joint projects.

g. To provide an annual report to all ICUU member groups and partners on programs and services, including a budget.

h. To continue work on an ongoing basis toward "fair share" contributions to the ICUU from all member groups.

i. To conduct a biannual financial audit and share its results with ICUU member groups.

B. For the UUA

1. Roles

   a. To communicate with the ICUU with clarity, unanimity, and one voice.

   b. To collaborate with ICUU programmatic initiatives through the UUA International Office.

   c. To advocate for the ICUU in UUA member congregations.

2. Responsibilities

   a. To continue its financial support of the ICUU and increase incrementally its member group contribution to the ICUU to $70,000 by 2018 in alignment with implementation of this MOU.

   b. To participate actively in the decision-making processes of the ICUU, including the established nominating process.

   c. To provide appropriate linkage and visibility on UUA communication channels.

   d. To be mindful of its International Vision Statement in its cooperative relationship with the ICUU.

   e. To advocate for the importance of international engagement to UUA member congregations and encourage congregations to connect with ICUU programs.

   f. To participate in ICUU council meetings and other ICUU programs and gatherings.

IV. Terms

A. Institutionally, this relationship is established and monitored by the UUA Administration and the Staff of the ICUU. The UUA International Office provides programmatic support and assistance in carrying out the responsibilities of the UUA. And, the Executive Director of the ICUU provides programmatic support and assistance in carrying out the responsibilities of the ICUU.

B. This MOU comes into operation upon signing by the Executive Director of the ICUU and the President of the UUA or their designees.

C. This MOU will be considered in operation unless it is ended for cause by either party with 90 (ninety) days notice.

D. This MOU shall be reviewed every four years.
APPENDIX VIII

Unitarian and Universalist International
TIMELINE

1569 - Unitarian Church established in Transylvania.
1770 to 1790 – Universalism established in North America.
1818 – American Unitarians begin supporting Unitarian Church in Madras (Chennai).
1820 - Unitarian Fund (one of precursor bodies to BFUA) decides to include foreign work in its operations.
1821 – Calcutta Unitarian Committed formed (Rammohun Roy/William Adam). Letters in Latin exchanged between Transylvanian and British Unitarians.
1825 – British and Foreign Unitarian Association founded (coincidentally on the same day as the American Unitarian Association).
1828 – Brahma Samaj founded by Rammohun Roy.
1831 – Alexander Bölöni Farkas, a Transylvanian Unitarian visits U.S. and three years later publishes Journey in North America.
1832 – Unitarian Church founded in Montreal.
1845 – First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto founded.
1850s – Unitarian Churches founded in Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne.
1855 – AUA sends Charles Dall to India (Calcutta) and he remains until his death in 1886.
1867 - Reverend David Faure, a liberal Dutch Reform minister, founds the Free Protestant Church in Cape Town, South Africa.
1870 - Dutch Protestant Association NPB was established.
1872 – Universalist Scottish Mission begins.
1876 – Deutsche Unitarier founded as “Free Protestant” in Rheinhessen.
1890 - Universalist Japanese Mission established.
1893 – World Parliament of Religions - Jenkin Lloyd Jones is its primary organizer and secretary.
1900 – IARF, begun under the name the International Council of Unitarians and Other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers, is world's first international interfaith organization. Primary organizer is Charles Wendte.

1901 – First IARF Congress held in London.

1912 – AUA and B &FUA support mission in Jamaica.

1920 – Sister Church Program (Transylvania/US) begins and continued until 1939

1921 – AUA begins financing work of Norbert Čapek in Prague. Norbert Čapek is honored guest at AUA Annual meeting. AUA and British GA assist Budapest Unitarians to purchase property that becomes Bela Bartok Unitarian Church. Rev. Ramsden Balmforth from England brings Free Protestant Church in Cape Town into the Unitarian movement.

1922 – Rev.’s Cornish, Perkins, Speight (Americans), and Redfern (British) visit Transylvania and issue report following post-Trianon visits by Unitarian leaders in 1920 and 1921.

1930 - Universalist Near East Relief Fund [over $250,000 to aid Armenians].

1931 – Archbishop Aglipay (Independent Church of the Philippines) visits US Unitarian Churches at invitation of AUA.

1934 – Rev. Annie Margaret Barr begins serving the North Eastern India Unitarian Union in the Khasi Hills when the British General Assembly and Free Christian Churches rejected her request for support.

1936 – British General Assembly begins supporting Barr.

1940 - Unitarian Service Committee established by AUA; UCA establishes Emergency War Relief Service Committee which in 1944 becomes the Universalist Service Committee.

1943 – AUA welcomes the Fagatogo Parish of Congregational Church of Jesus in American Samoa into fellowship.

1945 – Unitarian Service Committee Canada established by Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova.

1948 – Unitarian Service Committee incorporates/separates from AUA.

1955 – UCA recognizes the Universalist Church of the Philippines as Fraternal Associate.

1961 – Consolidation of AUA and UCA into the UUA and formation of the Canadian Unitarian Council; Universalist Service Committee becomes UUA Department of World Churches.

1962 - UU-United Nations Office (UU-UNO) created by UUA.
1963 – AUA Dept. of World Churches handed over to Unitarian Service Committee to create UUSC.

1969 – At the 20th Congress of the IARF the by-laws RKK and Dana Greeley is elected president of IARF.

1970 – Establishment of World Council of Religions for Peace (Niwano/Greeley). Rev. Homer Jack first Executive Director. UUA’s connections with Japanese partners expands rapidly. UUA financial crisis leads to UU-UNO becoming an independent Associate of UUA.

1972 – IARF hires its first general secretary, Diether Gehrmann.

1974 – Australian and New Zealand Unitarian Association founded.

1980 – Nikko Niwano becomes first Asian president of IARF. IARF moves more toward a focus on religious freedom than on freedom in religion and becomes less UU focused.

1982 – EUU is founded.

1984 – UU Holdeen India Program (UUHIP).


1988 – Rev. Toribio Quimada (UUCP) martyred. UU Church of the Philippines becomes UUA member congregation.

1990 – Meeting to discuss the formation of a World Unitarian Council held at IARF Congress in Hamburg (August 1). At this Congress Robert Traer becomes its new Executive Secretary. Natalie Gulbrandsen leads four buses of UUs to visit Unitarians in Eastern Europe.

1991 - UUA provides funding for new Prague minister (Strejeck) who ultimately locks out the actual Unitarian members of the church and tries to steal the church building. Legal resolution came in 1999, returning the building to Unitarian members.

1992 – UUA anti-racism, anti-oppression, multicultural work begins with GA Resolution in Calgary. This influences thinking about how best to engage with international partners. Unitarian World Summit held in Budapest.

1993 – Partner Church Council (PCC) founded. Project Harvest Hope (PHH) founded.


1996 – First-ever ICUU leadership training workshop takes place in Sri Lanka. Joint Working Group formed between UUPCC, ICUU and UUA.

2001 – ICUUs sponsors first meeting of Latin American Unitarian Universalists (January in Bolivia) and first Theological Symposium (June in Oxford, England).
2002 – Canadian Unitarian Council becomes independent of UUA.

2003 - Unitarian Universalist Global AIDS Coalition founded.

2006 – ICUU sponsors a visit to Cuba.

2008 – ICUU organizes first leadership training workshop in Africa (Nairobi, Kenya).

2010 - International Convocation of Unitarian and Universalist Women (ICUUW) founded. Ugandan UUs engaged in struggle for LGBT Rights.

2011 – UU-UNO gives up associate status and comes under the UUA Office of International Affairs as the joint representative of the UUA and CUC.

2014 – Latino Ministries is born as a Project of the Church of the Larger Fellowship.

2015 - The Latino Ministries becomes a joint effort of the CLF, the UUA International Office, and ICUU. The Latino ministries, sponsored by the ICUU, visits Cuba with the goal of strengthening connections and exploring ways to support the local community.
Appendix IX

Historic Trends in Unitarian and Universalist International Engagement

1. During the nineteenth century the BFUA, AUA and Universalist General Convention (the name was changed in 1942 to the Universalist Church of America) were the hubs of international contact for Unitarians or Universalists. In 1893 the international interfaith dialog among religious liberals began at the World Parliament of Religions and continued through the IARF which was founded in 1900. In 1969 the IARF expanded beyond Unitarian Universalists, Unitarians, liberal Christians and Brahmo Samaj to other non-Christian faiths like RKK, thus IARF became a truly interfaith organization.

2. In 1940 work in international war relief and then human rights promotion became a concern acted upon through the Unitarian and Universalist Service Committees. To a small degree this had begun in the years between the First and Second World Wars with the Universalist Near East Relief program and the Unitarian “Sister Church Program.”

3. The 1980s saw the internationalization in the UUA and elsewhere
   a. IARF programs changed as it continued to become more interfaith.
   b. The Indian Council of Unitarian Churches (ICUC) is founded.
   c. UUCP became a membership of the UUA and was followed by other indigenous groups.
   d. William Schulz became engaged with UU Holdeen Fund as UUA VP as a vehicle for social action and community development.
   e. The Romanian dictator, Ceausescu, fell and the question of how to marshal support for Transylvanian Unitarians became urgent.
   f. The CUC, if restive, was nonetheless integral to the UUA and its self image.
   g. The EUU is founded, and it and the CUC are related to both the UUA and GAUFCC because there was no other organization to relate to besides the IARF.
   h. Given this context, with its demands and opportunities, it was natural that an international vision of the UUA emerged to supplant the historic status quo. It was also natural that after the UUA Board went through anti-racism training, and been sensitized to issues of power and privilege, that some saw the neo-colonialist implications of how the UUA had heretofore engaged internationally.
   i. The internationalization of the UUA grew and has continued to grow since the 1990s through the UUSC, UU Partner Church Council, Project Harvest Hope, Holdeen India Program, Unitarian Universalist Global AIDS Coalition, the ICUUW, UUUNO, and UU College of Social Justice.

4. In 1995, after momentum had been building since 1987, the ICUU was founded. During the following twenty-one years, it has evolved into an autonomous network of Unitarian and Universalist national and trans-national bodies strengthening the movement worldwide.
Abbreviations

Advocates for the Establishment of an International Organisation of Unitarians (AEIOU)
Annual Program Fund (APF)
American Unitarian Association (AUA)
Black Affairs Council (BAC)
Black Unitarian Universalist Caucus (BUUC)
British and Foreign Unitarian Association (BFUA)
Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC)
Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF)
European Unitarian Universalists (EUU)
General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches (GAUFCC)
Indian Council of Unitarian Churches (ICUC)
International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU)
International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF)
Project Harvest Hope (PHH)
Universalist Church of America (UCA)
Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)
Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines (UUCP)
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Paris (UUPF)
Unitarian Universalist Funding Program (UUPF)
Unitarian Union North East India (UUNEI)
Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council (UUPCC)
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)
Sources


ICUU Website: [http://www.icuu.net/](http://www.icuu.net/)


About the Author

The Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison-Reed, a life-long Unitarian Universalist raised in the First Unitarian Society of Chicago, earned his M.A. from the University of Chicago and D.Min from Meadville Lombard Theological School (1979). He served as co-minister with his wife, Donna Morrison-Reed, in Rochester, New York and Toronto, Canada. Currently he is an Affiliated Faculty at Meadville Lombard Theological School and Coordinator of its Sankofa Collection of archival materials about people of color.


His experience in international Unitarian and Universalist affairs is broad. In 1987 he and his wife were the keynote speakers at an early EUU retreat. In 1988 they moved to Toronto and he has held dual U.S. and Canadian citizenship since 1993. In 1998 they visited the Second Unitarian Church of Budapest which is the partner church of the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto. He served as President of the Canadian Unitarian Council and in that capacity attended the 2003 ICUU Council Meeting in Prague. He has helped construct a community center in Honduras, is a patron of Child Haven International which runs eight homes for impoverished children in the Indian sub-continent, and has met with members of the Brahmo Samaj in India and RKK, Konko Church and Tsubaki Grand Shire in Japan. In 2011 and 2012 he facilitated meetings for the International UU Organizations. In addition to having spoken at over 200 UU congregations in North America, he has addressed Unitarian groups in Hungary, Romania, Europe, and England and is currently the UUA Ambassador to congregations in Amsterdam, Basel, Geneva, Paris, and Wiesbaden.

In 2003 Starr King awarded him a Doctorate of Sacred Theology [S.T.D.]; in 2007 Meadville Lombard presented him with a Doctor of Divinity, and in June 2009 the school honored him with its Distinguished Alumni Award.
Acknowledgments

The opportunity to write this essay came at the invitation of Nicole C. Kirk, the Frank and Alice Schulman Chair of Unitarian Universalist History at Meadville Lombard Theological School, when she asked me to deliver several lectures for her class on UU Polity in January 2015. That lecture was developed further and delivered at Collegium, a gathering of UU scholars, in October 2015. By then Ellen Campbell and I had accepted the responsibility of being Honorary Chairs of the Canadian fundraising effort in ICUU’s One Faith, Many Flames campaign. As work on that effort began in Summer 2015, it became clear that having an understanding of the history of the ICUU would be important for everyone involved in fundraising. In addition, the participants in the Essex 2.0 ICUU Focus Group meeting held from March 8 – 11, 2016 at the Walker Centre Auburndale, MA needed a solid picture of how and why the ICUU came into being and how it has changed over the last 21 years.

I am particularly indebted to those who read the entire manuscript and gave me feedback that corrected many of my errors in fact and perception: William F. Schulz, John A. Buehrens, Will Saunders, Barbara Beach, Steve Dick, Derek MacAulay, Rebecca Sienes, David Usher, Jill McAllister, Ellen K. Campbell, Herman Boerma, Dianne E. Arakawa, Art Ungar and Donna Morrison-Reed. All of them went to extraordinary lengths to help, and many of them also sent me important additional material.

Email correspondence (some of it extensive) and conversations with William Sinkford, Fulgence Ndagijimana, Dorothy Emerson, Kenneth T. MacLean, Cathy Cortes, C. Leon Hopper, Phillip Hewett, John Eichrodt, Charles Eddis, Richard Boeke, Doris Hunter, Gene Reeves, Sue Adams, Hillary Goodridge, Richard Kellaway, Robert Traer, Bill Barradough, Fred Muir, Jory Agate, Brian Kiely, Jorge Espinel, Gyerő Dávid, David Keyes, Jay Atkinson, Derrick Pariat, Kovács Istvan, Christine Hayhurst and Gevene Hertz were invaluable in shedding light on particular aspects of this history.

For her editorial assistance, I offer my thanks to Kathleen Parker, editor of the Journal of Unitarian Universalist History and author of Sacred Service in Civic Space: Three Hundred Years of Community Ministry in Unitarian Universalism.

My thanks to Andover-Harvard Theological Library for making the papers of William F. Schulz, John A. Buehrens, Charles Gaines, and Polly Guild available to me, and to Jessica Sauve for her assistance. I accessed those papers while engaged in another research project at Andover-Harvard, paid for by a grant from the Veatch Program UU Funding Panel.


Finally, I fondly remember Bishop Szabo Arpad who was my schoolmate at Meadville Lombard Theological School during 1977; Natalie Gulbrandsen, with whom I served on the UUA Commission on Appraisal; and C. Leon Hopper, the first president of the UUPCC and one of my mentors.
2 Russell E. Miller, The Larger Hope: The Second Century of the Universalist Church in America 1870-1970 (Boston: UUA, 1985), 119-120. A.J. Canfield of St. Paul's Universalist Church was on the planning committee, and Universalist Augusta Chapin chaired the Women's Committee.
3 W.H. Drummond, Handbook of the International Association for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom, 1937 from "Short History of the I.A.R.F." by Dr. H. Faber, IARF 16th Congress August 9-13 1958 (Chicago, 1959),127
4 The AUA and the British and Foreign Unitarian Association were both founded on May 25, 1825. In 1928 the BFUA merged with a wider more ecumenical group of churches and became the General Assembly of Free and Christian Churches.
6 Drummond, 128.
7 Drummond, 131.
9 There were some who were uncomfortable with the Japanese religions. Steve Dick’s report argued that their hierarchical organizational structure proved they were not liberal. Richard Kellaway said others objected, charging that, “They're not really liberal, they're not open to new ideas, [and others]. They have strange rituals and ceremonies. [Gehrmann's] answer was that any religion that is willing to meet another and have an open conversation is a liberal group.” December 5, 2015.
10 The Free Church In A Changing World: The reports of the Commissions To The Churches and Fellowships of the Unitarian Universalist Association, The Department of Adult Program (Boston: 1963), 155.
11 The Free Church In A Changing World, 203
14 Robert Nelson West, Crisis and Change, 106.
15 Veatch Committee Minutes, February 6, 1972, North Shore Unitarian Church
19 Ian W. Riddell, “Charting a New Course for the Canadian Unitarian Council” (December 11, 2008), 3.
21 Phillip Hewett, Unitarians in Canada, 259
23 Phillip Hewett and Charles Eddis, emails to Mark Morrison-Reed, September 4 and 5, 2016.
26 William F. Schulz email to Mark Morrison-Reed, March 22, 2015.
29 Herman Boerma, email to Mark Morrison-Reed citing conversation with Kathleen Hunter in 1985.
30 Phillip Hewett, Unitarians in Canada, Revised Edition (Toronto: Canadian Unitarian Council, 1995).
31 Mark Mosher DeWolfe, “Our Corner of the Mosaic: Unitarian Universalists and Canadian Contextual Theology” (1985) and "In the Presence of Majesty" (1986) in Guarding Sacred Embers: Reflections on Canadian

32 “The oldest Nonconformist Religious Newspaper” (February 9, 1963), and “Voice of British and Irish Unitarians and Free Christians” (September 7, 1963), The Inquirer, (London).


34 Bill Barraclough, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, December 26, 2014.


36 “Policies Relating To Overseas Groups,” 1965, Minutes of the UUA Board of Trustees, 2

37 William F. Schulz, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, March 22, 2015.


40 “Working Together to Serve One Humanity – Universalist Service Committee,” Universalist Leader, LXXXVI, February 1954.

41 Jory Agate, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, November 26, 2015. Raised UU, Jory Agate served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Philippines from 1985 to 1988. She departed Negros on the day Quimada was murdered, learning of it as her boat was pulling out of port. Quimada’s son-in-law shouted the news to her from the dock, asking that she relay it to the UUA.


43 Gene Reeves, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, September 4, 2015.

44 William F. Schulz to Dianne Arakawa, February 5, 1987, AHTL, bMs 1015/12 (14).


46 Unitarian Register, Vol. 123, No. 1, January 1944, 16


48 Memorandum, Conference with Dr. and Mrs. Gelpi of the Fellowship in Saudi Arabia, July 12, 1965.

49 William F. Schulz to Dianne Arakawa, February 5, 1987, AHTL, bMs 1015/12 (14).


54 William F. Schulz, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, March 22, 2015.

55 Rebecca Sienes, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, May 4, 2015.

56 John Rex, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, April 3, 2016.

57 William F. Schulz, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, March 22, 2015.

58 Doris Hunter, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, September 15, 2015.


61 William Parker, The Unitarian Mission in Japan (Tokyo Unitarian Fellowship, June 2008), 5


The Circle Groups that became a regular part of IARF Congresses began in 1987 at Stanford. The inspiration for them came from two sources. Gene Reeves, the chair of the IARF program committee, experienced small groups at the 1983 meeting of the World Council of Churches. See Gene Reeves, “IARF at a Hundred,” *Centennial Reflections*, 89. Others had experienced the RKK Hoza: Circles of Compassion at the 1984 IARF Congress in Japan. See Richard Boeke, “Personal Memories of the IARF,” *Centennial Reflections*, 71. The circles were organized and introduced by Frank Robinson.


Dianne E. Arakawa, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, September 23, 2015.

John Eichrodt, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, March 3, 2015.

Herman Boerma, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, August 11, 2015.

Richard Boeke, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, August 22, 2015.

Phillip Hewett, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, January 24, 2015.

David Usher, email to UA Board of Trustees, April 9, 1992.

Minutes of meeting held in the Basler Hof Hotel, Hamburg, Germany, Wednesday August 1, 1990. The other steering committee members were Dick Boeke, John Eichrodt, Dorothy Emerson, Phillip Hewett, Ripnar Lyngdoh, Ilona Szent-Ivanyiorbok, Stephen Washburn and Geoff Usher.

William F. Schulz, response to UUA Board, undated, (ca. fall 1990), Founding International Congregations Possibilities, AHTL, bMs 1015.

William Schulz, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, December 13, 2015.

Zsabó Arpad to the Reverend Church Representative Council, from “Report on the World Conference of Unitarian Leaders, Budapest, March 19-22, 1992.” The other participants included: Natalie W. Gulbrandsen, Dr. Charles Gaines, Melvin Hoover from the U.S., Vladimir Strejcek from Czechoslovakia, Preben Bovin from Denmark, Ernst Monike and Wolfgang Jantz from Germany, Sunrit Mullick and Ríptar Lyngdoh from India, Robert Steyn from South Africa, Allen Kirby from Australia, Szent-Iványi Ilona from Hungary; as well as those who undertook organizing parts of the event, Dr. Ferencz József, Bartok Bela and Bencze Marton. Translated by Noemi Adorjan.

Ellen Campbell, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, September 6 and 21, 2015.


Schulz, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, March 22, 2015.


Roy Smith, “Focus on Our Strategy,” 2-3


David Usher, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, April 9, 1992.

Schulz, email to UUA Board, undated.

Schulz, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, December 13, 2015.

Richard Kellaway, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, August 12, 2015.

Charles W. Eddis, “UU minister is a Unitarian,” *Guarding Sacred Embers: Reflections on Canadian Unitarian and Universalist History*, edited by Linda Weaver Horton (Toronto: Canadian Unitarian and Universalist Historical Society, 2011), 244-245

Schulz, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, March 22, 2015.


Cathy Cordes, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, September 5, 2016.

The first meeting was held on September 19, 2011 at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock. It was attended by representatives of the International Convocation of UU Women (ICUUW), UU Partner Church Council (UUPCC), Holdeen India Program (HIP), UU Service Committee (UUSC), UU United Nations Office (UU UNO), UUA International Resources Office (IRO), UU Global Aids Coalition (GAC), Project Harvest Hope (PHH), International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) and International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF U.S. Chapter).

In 2014 the ICUU Nominating Committee could not guarantee the UUA would not, once again, be faced with a contested election for a position on the EC. Judging that it might cause more harm than good to run a contested election, it chose not to offer a nomination. The context of the ICUU election in 2016 was different. ICUU was in a time of transition as it re-examined its mission, engaged in its first substantial fund raising effort, and recognized the need to begin a conversation regarding the issues of governance and representation. This time the UUA put forward a nomination even though the election was likely to be contested. The Nominating Committee announced that whoever lost the EC election would fill a position on the new nominating committee, and that is what transpired.

Minutes of the ICUU Council Meeting, Oberwesel, Germany, November 2-5, 2007, 1.


Germany, 2007 – 80; Romania, 2009 – 80; New York, 2012 – 140; the Philippines, 2014 – 100, Holland, 2016 – 160. It should be further noted that up until, and including the 2005 meetings, most Council member participants from all countries were funded by the ICUU for travel and on-site costs. During 2007 and 2009 to a point reached in 2012, only participants from countries without the resources (personal and/or organizational) to fund their attendance at a council meeting receive grants to cover costs. From 2014 on, sponsored participants have needed to apply for such grants funded from a central budget allocation. The shift has been from 100 percent of official participants funded a decade ago to only about 20 percent of official participants being funded to attend Council Meetings and Conferences.

Bill Sinkford’s comments to the UUA Board of Trustees Working Group on Growth (also responsible for International vision statement). Bill’s response to the Vision Statement from the group: Initial Administration Response to Draft International Mission Statement, October 2003, 1.

Bill Sinkford’s comments to the UUA Board of Trustees Working Group on Growth, 4.

“The UUA and the ICUU Thoughts and Commentary prepared for Peter Morales, UUA President, by Will Saunders, UUA Trustee/Board Liaison to the ICUU in consultation with Jill McAllister, ICUU Program Co-Ordinator,” July, 2009, 1.

Minutes of the ICUU Council Meeting, November 5 – 9, 2005, Montserrat, Spain.

William Sinkford, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, January 17, 2016.

Barbara Beach, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, December 23, 2015.

Brian Kiely, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, December 6, 2015.

Brian Kiely, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, 2015.

Will Saunders, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, December 15, 2015.

In the minutes of the ICUU Council Meeting held in Oberwesel, Germany, November 2-5, 2007, John Slattery and Barbara Beach are both mentioned fifteen times, Will Saunders nine times, Gordon Oliver (President) and Szabo Arpad eight times, and Brian Kiely the president-elect seven times.


Putting congregation polity and needs at the center of UUism as an associational body has led to an array of problems beyond missional paralysis. In 1963 at the Chicago GA, the major debate was over which should take precedence, Congregational Polity or non-discrimination. Polity won out. During that era and moving forward, there was, and still is, a tension in regard to the place of community ministry within an association of congregations. Within the last ten years, the UUA wrestled with what its relationships to affiliate and associate organizations should be, and then expelled most of them. These organizations either impinge on the right of the individual congregation or function largely outside congregational needs. If the UUA had chosen to be a denomination, its approach to these issues would have been different and its purview broader.

Gyerő Dávid, email to Mark Morrison, October 28, 2015.


Gevene Hertz, email to Mark Morrison-Reed, January 15, 2015.

Maria Pap, “Partnerships: Belonging as Collaboration, Mutuality and Accountability,” 136.

The UUA and the ICUU, Thoughts and Commentary prepared for Peter Morales, UUA President, Will Saunders, UUA Trustee/Board Liaison to the ICUU in consultation with Jill McAllister, ICUU Program Coordinator, July 2009.


Picture Titles

1. 1995 - Inaugural meeting of ICUU, Essex, MA. From left David Usher, Jeffery Teagle, Herman Boerma, Polly Guild, Rebecca Seines, Kenneth T. MacLean, Yvegeny Schlacter, Walter Jayewardene, Jill McAllister and Szabo Arpad.
3. 1969 - Supporters of the UUA Black Affairs Council marching into Arlington Street Church.
4. 1963 - The Free Church in a Changing World: The reports of the Commissions to the Churches and Fellowships of the Unitarian Universalist Association, The Department of Adult Programs, Boston.
5. Canadian Unitarian Council logo.
6. Ca. 1980 - Ron Diehl, Steve Dick, Leon, and Ludwig Wehner, a German Unitarian whose vision was to build strong connections between German and American Unitarians in Germany.
7. European Unitarian Universalists logo.
8. Reverend Egbert Ethelred Brown
9. Reverend Toribio Quimada (Steve said he had found a better picture)
11. 1990 - IARF World Congress Program Guide cover, Hamburg, Germany
12. Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council logo.
13. Project Harvest Hope logo.
14. 1995 – Newsprint with the phrase “Infinite Spirit of Life” from ICUU meeting in Essex, MA.
15. 2003 - ICUU Executive Committee, Prague: Gordon Oliver, Antje Paul, John Slattery, Pearl Greene Marbanian, Christine Hayhurst and Kovác Istvan. Barbara Beach is not in photo.
17. Hungarian Unitarian Church logo.
20. Reverend Fulgence Ndagijimana
21. Flaming Chalice