

Base Centrum

TRANSFORMING THE MOOD

Spring Quarter

Area Prior Spin

June 20, 1973

This has been the most humiliating quarter in my life, filled with more self-doubt than any other time, without question. I have had many conversations with myself like, "somebody who has made it on a trip all the way around the world, can walk across the floor, can't he? Well, pick yourself up and keep going." I have experienced humiliation. I remember one day I went to see some people off at the airport. Everything went well until I jumped out of the car quickly and took off to the gate, and then realized that I had locked my keys in the car. I had to stand there while Larry Ward used some of his cultural past and carefully broke into the car. **What I found out is that you think if you look good enough outside, you will forget about what is going on inside.** My family gave me money and I bought that new suit I had on the other day. Then somebody told me afterwards, "I don't mean to embarrass you, but you have a big rip in the seat of the pants." It has been like that all quarter.

I have been looking for absolution all quarter because of that Ugly American speech I made when we got back from the global trip. I finally listened to it on tape. When you listen to your own talks on tape, you can be assured that you are worried about them. It was a great experience. The fellow who was sitting next to the tape recorder had the worst cough I have ever heard. Just as I would be making an important point, there was a loud cough. I found out, of course, that you can never absolve yourself. I did not get absolved until Jim Bishop came over and addressed our Regional Council, and said with great objectivity, "North America must lead the world." I had been saying that but it is different when you hear it from somebody from outside North America. Anybody from outside of North America that cannot say that has not discovered what it means to be global. Jim Bishop said it and I believe it: North America will lead the globe.

It is clear that God has prepared North America to lead the world because He has done three shocking things in the last six months that you and I could never imagine could be done. I will not take them in their chronological order. God has radically changed the mood of this nation so that it will be prepared to lead the world.

First of all, God has run this great nation out of gas. It has prided itself, justifiably, in being the economic leader of the world, the technological genius of all of history—and it has run out of gas. We have never in our history been this embarrassed. What would it mean if this embarrassment would be transformed into humility. With all of our greatness, we are with all the rest of God's children, limited, contingent people and, therefore, can take a brand new look at ourselves. Wouldn't that be something.

Then, to top it all, there is Watergate. You and I have looked at the situation at the top level of our government not just since President Nixon came in, but for a long time, and it was an impenetrable wall. We knew what was going on. Everybody knew. But how in the world could you crack it. The FBI, the CIA and the Executive Branch of government seemed untouchable. All of a sudden, a little character named McCord decided to confess. Watching him on T.V., you say, "If there is somebody who is going to be a prophet in this country, he ought to be

better looking than that. He ought to have a lower voice." He just gets up there and begins to squeak out his testimony, and everything breaks loose. And the whole nation is so relieved. Have you noticed that? Everybody is so relieved to have Watergate out in the open. Now what if that relief would turn into gratitude? This is the way life is and we receive it as such. We do not justify this, that or the other on any basis. You have to do what you have to do. And moralism would be gone forever if the mood were to be transformed into gratitude for the way life is.

Now back up to the earliest incident that happened. This one we could never have imagined back in the 60's. We were defeated in Indo-China. People seem more disturbed about our bombing of Cambodia than they ever were about Vietnam. We stand in utter remorse. My God, we were finally defeated. Now what if that remorse were transformed into compassion. If we could say, "Yes, we have done a terrible thing, but we can expend ourselves for the rebuilding of the earth." And I tell you there is nobody, no group of people, except us to do it. By us, I mean the Order, the Movement, and the Church of Jesus Christ. There is nobody to transform that embarrassment into humility, and that relief into gratitude and that remorse into compassion. Nobody else except us.

We did not bring about defeat in Indo-China; we did not run ourselves out of gas; we did not expose the Watergate. The Lord of History did all of it. This is where my brooding has been over the quarter. I've ended up saying, "Now on behalf of all mankind, America, North America, 'God shed his grace on thee.'"

-Charles Moore-