

**TOWARD
A PRACTICAL VISION
OF
THE NEW SOCIAL VEHICLE**

written from documents prepared by
the participants in the

SUMMER '71 RESEARCH ASSEMBLY

The Ecumenical Institute: Chicago

TOWARD
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First edition, June, 1972

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3444 Congress Parkway
Chicago, Illinois 60624
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*The task before us now,
if we can shake our
ancient prejudices,
is to build the earth.*

-Teilhard de Chardin

PREFACE

Every now and then the onflow of history throws together a strange collection of human beings who sense themselves as the instruments of destiny. Such were the 700 people who gathered in Chicago on July 4, 1971 as the Summer '71 Research Assembly. They came in the conviction that society can be reconstructed, and in the confidence that grassroots man—local man—could forge the blueprint for that renewal.

These people were the twentieth century common men. Ranging through every age group and from every social background, from North America and from other continents, they were convinced that, though the experts and the academicians had valuable wisdom, it was finally the province of local man to reconstruct society and build a new social order for the world. This signified the revival of trust in local man, in mass intuition, and in every man's experience of life. It signaled a triumph of the power of corporate discipline and the birth of large-scale corporate research methodologies.

What the Summer '71 Research Assembly demonstrated was the inception of an inclusive model of the way society works and the invention of a solid methodological framework. It can be drawn on year after year, expanded in ever widening arenas and multiplied in every locale on the face of the earth. In twenty years' time it may be said that what the Research Assembly of '71 did was to invent the form of the global legislative assembly needed to tap the creative wisdom of every local man.

This book is a summary of the work of the Summer '71 Research Assembly held at the Ecumenical Institute, Chicago, Illinois.

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INTRODUCTION

THE SOCIAL VEHICLE

INCLUSIVE OPEN-ENDED MODEL

1. Social vehicles are man's creation. Beneath its institutions, a society rests upon a structural rationale that permeates it at every level, determining its dominant social forms. These social vehicles, or rationales, are altered only in the great turning points of history. A social vehicle was invented when the Aryan people migrated into the Asian subcontinent. Another was born along the Nile River at the birth of recorded history in Egypt. Several were born before and after the 6th century B. C. among the Mayas, Chinese, Indians, Africans and Europeans. Before recorded history began, there were others whose form we can only surmise from the layers of artifacts in caves and in the ruins of ancient cities. The residue from these is embedded in man's consciousness.

2. The civilizing process is the journey through the various social creations of man. Each of these inventions is an architectonic model for man's existence with his fellows. Since man is self-conscious, he operates as a reflective animal who rationally orders, or builds models of, his response to the life about him. For any society to exist, inclusiveness, interior consistency, relevancy and open-endedness of its basic models are required. They determine his style of life, and are in fact the pervading mode of the society. The social vehicle of a people is molded out of the situation of their times, and endures only so long as it meets the needs of its people.

3. In our day we are living in the vortex of transition into a new social vehicle. The social vehicle which has undergirded our society thus

**ONE SOCIAL
VEHICLE**

far has collapsed. No longer can we sustain, order, educate, discipline or ritualize our lives as we have before. This is true in all societies across the globe. Since we have entered the post-modern world together, *one* social vehicle must be created together. Unrelated proliferation of man's social inventions has come to an end. The people of planet earth now face a moment in which they must invent a social vehicle that goes beyond all previous ones. The populace which is uncared for is more numerous and more heterogeneous than any previous vehicle was concerned to encompass.

**LOCAL MAN'S
DESIGN**

4. In this situation there is no particular elite who can be assigned to design the social vehicle. No scholars steeped in the knowledge of the past alone can be relied upon to invent it. No leader, however wise, could conceive such an inclusive model. No global mandate will implement it. Only the people of the world know their needs; only they can assent to the new social vehicle. The common man, the local man, will build it and will live it.

**COMPREHEN-
SIVE SOCIAL
ANALYSIS**

5. Man has always had a picture of society, out of which he forged his operating social systems. But in the twentieth century, with the availability of more precise anthropological and other social scientific analyses, man can forge a dynamic model to hold all social processes in a rational unity. He can then analyze the society for its strengths and weaknesses. But the crucial factors in the forging of a new social vehicle will be his vision of the future, his operating value system, his ideology. Once that is constructed, he can analyze society for the contradictions, the points where the present malaise impedes positive trends. Out of this picture he constructs his practical vision, including his proposals for concrete change, and calls on all men to join in the creation of the new human future.

**STRUCTURE
OF THE
DOCUMENT**

6. This document is a major step toward one such practical vision. It both describes the analytical method used and summarizes the results. The first chapter, Dynamical Processes, describes a comprehensive model of society based on a triangular diagram of all social processes. It also includes the dynamical interrelationships. The second chapter is the Social Imbalances, which analyzes improper influence on the whole society of one particular social process. This provides an objective "map" of society, which aids in explaining the present social malaise. The third chapter, the Emerging Ideology, describes the stance from which the vision of the future comes. It is the basis of locating the Major Contradictions, which are the subject of the following chapter. The last chapter, Social Proposals, suggests the arenas where concrete steps are needed to alleviate the contradictions, thus rebalancing the social process. Only this kind of comprehensive and futuristic analysis, utilizing all available social science, is adequate for producing the authentic, concrete, and practical vision necessary for our era.

I. DYNAMICAL PROCESSES

THREE SOCIAL DYNAMICS

7. Humanness itself is possible only within the operating context of human social dynamics. Humanness grows out of what happens when men relate to other men. If the basic social dynamics of human life collapse or fail to function fully, humanness dies or deteriorates. There are three basic social dynamics of humanness, all of which must be operating simultaneously, and in relationship to the others. They are: economic, political, and cultural commonality.

**FOUNDATIONAL
COMMUNAL
RATIONAL**

**SOCIETAL
DYNAMICAL
INTER-
RELATIONS**

**ECONOMIC
PROVIDES
SUSTENANCE**

8. These three basic dynamics comprise, in graphic terms, what may be called a tri-polar dynamic. They are represented visually as the three corners of an equilateral triangle. This three-fold analysis is designed to describe any social process as an inclusive model on the basis of its foundational, communal and rational aspects. The "foundational" pole, located on the lower left, is that aspect of the particular social dynamic without which the others could not be sustained in being; it is the basic "thereness" of the process. The "communal" pole, on the lower right, is the aspect by means of which that basic thereness is given form as a part of the whole society. This is where social organization of the foundational pole occurs. The "rational" pole, on the top, is the process for the sake of which the whole dynamic is directed. This gives meaning or illuminates the whole process as a part of the totality of humanness. A similar analysis of society can be made for each of the poles of the major dynamics so that, for example, economic has a foundational pole (resources), a communal pole (production) and a rational pole (distribution). This can be repeated again and again for as many subsidiary levels as desired. This model forms the basis for clarification of problems in society because if any one pole is malfunctioning, the entire triangle is thrown askew.

9. Hence, the method of process description through triangular relationships is a helpful analytical tool in effectively grasping human and societal dynamical interactions. It has been built as a result of many attempts to describe accurately the effects and implications of various forms of social interchange. A well-functioning society has a dynamical interrelationship between the three poles. Each creates, sustains, and limits where necessary the functioning of the other poles in order to maintain a proper balance. The interrelationships can be seen most clearly when there is not a proper societal balance. For example, the effect of economic failure is all too commonly known as when labor disputes cripple industrial production, the pattern of life in an entire nation is distorted. So also with political failure, a breakdown in the means of choosing royal or presidential successors may culminate in a costly revolution that leaves no one in the society untouched. The impact of cultural failure is more subtle, more difficult to discern, and vastly more difficult to heal: individuals collapse into states of apathetic malaise, leading to functional disengagement, psychotic breakdown, or suicide. The very practical question being asked in regard to the overall social dynamic of humanness in our time is one of how the social dynamics shall be infused with fresh life, the distortions in their relations modified toward a new balance, in order that the activity of being a human being in relation to others will be sustained and enhanced.

10. Let us look in more detail at each of the three major poles. Economic Commonality is the social dynamic which is foundational to the whole. It is the social process whereby a society sustains itself. The society has nothing to exist *on* without these economic processes. It must have

certain basic resources or life itself stops. It must have a way of organizing the work of the labor force, or it is reduced to the energy each man can produce in a day. It must have a way of distributing its produce, or it is left in anarchy, each economic unit fighting to secure its own well-being. To have a society means to have the resources, production and distribution as the bedrock of that society, kept firmly and effectively operating. On this foundation, then, the political processes can order the decisions of the society, and the cultural processes have ground for their meanings.

**ECONOMIC
SERVES
THE NEEDS**

11. Karl Marx and Adam Smith were the voices behind the great economic revolution. They saw the foundational nature of economics and articulated two diverse perspectives that express the dominant economic ideals of our times. However, both men operated out of an historical determinism which must be rejected today. Men are free to decide their economic lives, and to decide what meanings they will give the social process. Therefore it is not inevitable as some have stated that a new age of economic equity will emerge if we join together in a collective body. Neither is it certain that each man pursuing his own best interests will bring the well-being of the society into existence. As the foundation of the society, the economic process cannot be allowed to determine meaning. Instead, it must serve the needs of society.

**POLITICAL
ENABLES
DECISION-
MAKING**

12. The political is the communal pole of the social process. It is the means whereby society orders its existence. Society has no way to hold itself in being without the political. It must have some cohesion and order, or there is no society. It must have processes by which decisions are made or it suffers from paralysis and dissolves into chaos. It must guarantee the fundamental rights needed for people to live humanly or it places its people in a state of uncertainty, bondage and disrelationship to each other. To have a society is to have order, justice and welfare, or the means for controlling the power in the society. From this ordering process, the goods of the society are allocated and maintained, and the values of the society are protected, so they can give direction.

**POLITICAL
RESPONDS
TO THE
PEOPLE**

13. The democratic ideal was born to return the political process to the people of society. Centuries of social development had overlaid the self-determination of the masses of the people with an hierarchical superstructure which excluded their voices and obscured their needs. With the rise to power of the economic processes, democracy as it was initially practiced and conceived became inadequate and finally impotent to handle the complexities of the post-modern social fabric. An inclusive polity is needed that will encompass both local and global decision making. The political process needs to combine the ancient wisdom found in the principles of democracy, oligarchy and monarchy. As the communal aspect of the social process, the political process must be ordered out of

CULTURAL
GIVES
DIRECTION

the total memory of man, and it must develop a responsive structure through which man can shape his own destiny.

14. The cultural is the rational pole of the social process. It is that whereby meaning is injected into life. The society has no reason for existing without the cultural process. There must be significance to work and to decisions or there is nothing that can be called a society. Also, society must have the means by which its underlying rationale can be carried into the total social flow, or it is dissipated into many directions, and will crush the individuals within it. The society must inform every other process of its relation to the whole society and structure its own internal relations. To have a society is to have the wisdom, style, and symbols to give meaning to the whole. Out of this rational dimension come the bases for every decision and the uses of the produce of the society.

CULTURAL
PROVIDES
MEANING

15. The memory of culture goes back to recall how previous cultures were born and created. Men create their symbols out of the whole of history, but today men have forgotten the meaning of their symbols. The raw encounter with the mystery of life itself is consciously ignored, and glossed over due to the degree of meaning attributed to the comforts brought about in this economic-dominated era. Guilt, insult and escape characterize the interior relationships of men in their cultures. Not knowing the historical significance of their local society, men strike out to defend themselves in their parochialism, or they succumb to images of insignificance before the power of others. A radically new educational process is needed to give men permission to be the creatures they are, and to create boldly a cosmic story to inform the global existence of mankind. As the rational dimension of the social process, a revived cultural process will deepen the economic process and guide the political process. In this way, the whole society will be balanced.

II. SOCIETAL

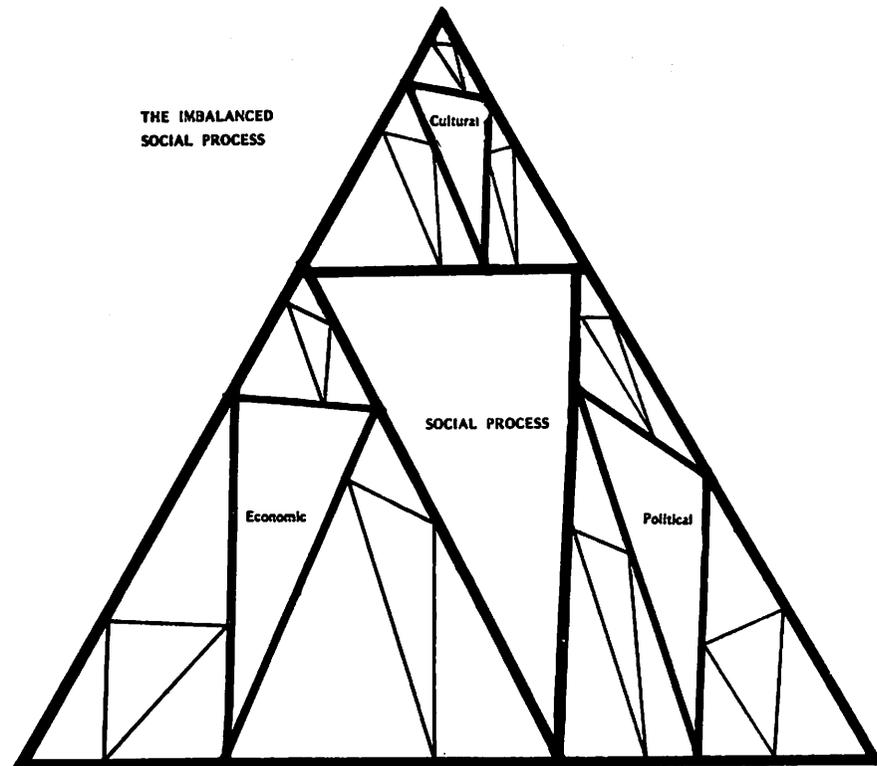
IMBALANCES

OVEREMPHASIS
PRODUCES
TYRANNY

16. At any given moment in history, one or another of the three dynamics within the social process becomes overemphasized in the life style of the people. In one age political concerns preoccupy men's attention. In another religion and culture absorb their time and interests. This overemphasis is a great gift in the first instance, because it brings out new elements of human life and extracts greater wisdom about how men are able to live among men. However, when one area of life begins to preoccupy men to the detriment of the other aspects of society, it can be described as a tyrannical process and the tri-polar dynamic is imbalanced.

**PRESENT
TYRANNY
OF ECONOMIC**

17. For example, when religion becomes tyrannical, political freedom and economic well-being tend to suffer. In fact, one of these two processes is usually collapsed entirely while the other is rendered impotent. In much of medieval Europe, relatively no political freedom was left to the serf, while religion exacted heavy tolls in financial support for its institutional existence. Culture was using economic as its ally, thereby collapsing political justice and order. On the other hand, the impotent pole is also the ally for creative change. The strengthening economy, rising middle class and desire for economic ownership of land brought about the political revolution that created the democratic nation state. But society never remains in balance. The equilibrium teeters for a moment, and then the balance shifts to another pole. In our day, society has shifted its weight to the economic dimension of life, rendering the political processes of culture in collapse. This is shown on the diagram below where the economic process has swollen to encompass most of the society. The impotent political is medium size and the collapsed cultural is driven into a small corner. The imbalance shown within each major process, will be described below.



**RELATIVE
IMPOTENCE
OF POLITICAL**

18. The economic has become the overarching concern of post-modern man across the world. The technological advances have become so momentous and offer so many benefits to the alleviation of human suffering that the total population of the globe yearns and works for a better economic existence. As a result, the vocational decisions of each individual are determined by the promise of financial benefits. The general political decisions of nations and international bodies are made upon the basis of economic limits and possibilities. These commitments often lead to disputes, conflicts and wars, which destroy notions of equity, cultural values, and human lives. It is precisely the success and social confidence of the economic processes that gives them power over the lives of people. When this power becomes tyrannical, the institutions, structures, values and purposes which freight the economic process become rigid and demanding, thus excluding other concerns and values. An educational system that decides the quality and extent of education in terms of its economic limits and possibilities is under the tyranny of economic measures of success. When the failure to achieve economic security becomes a mark of being less than human, then the symbols of the society superficial and narrow. They blind society to other gifts that people have. It is critical to the future that the economic process be put into the proper perspective through some specific, strategic decisions by the whole of society.

**COLLAPSE
OF CULTURAL**

19. The political processes have retained the image of social power but have in fact lost their ability to order the society. Social ills are cast upon the political institutions for solution. In the movement to include black people in society, legislation has been passed, courts have rendered judgments and the executives have enacted programs against poverty and injustice. But the plight of black people remains relatively unchanged. This political impotence has resulted in societies that lack a sense of direction, and in the development of internal and external factions. Where unity should be assured, there is disunity. Therefore, we find communities of people who show great potential but fail to get their energies behind the common efforts of the whole of society. This political disorder has made every political institution a battleground for the issues. Civil rights marches, peace protests, women's liberation and assassinations are all evidence that political processes are being used as a means both for enforcing the distortion and for correcting the imbalances. However, at the same time, the public has adopted a distrust, a disinterest, or simply an apathy about the structures of political machinery. They see voting to be farcical as decisions are made outside of the formal political institutions. Political leaders are trapped, unable to follow either the mandates of their constituency or the convictions they have formed themselves. A new and inclusive force needs to bring order and equity into the political processes so that the society will be able to decide its destiny anew.

NO LONGER
GIVES
DIRECTION

20. Due to economic preoccupation and political impotency, global society finds itself without the wellsprings of culture needed to inform the decisions and to rebalance its attention. The collapse of culture has removed a sense of meaning from work, family, nation, education and religion. When no meaning is found in the existing society, new meanings are sought wherever they can be invented or uncovered. Concern with physical health drives a family from one form of hygiene to another, from one home to another, from one set of friends to another. The critical problems of life are ignored. Various intellectual and artistic pursuits which once enriched the deeps of human life have now fallen heir to transient faddism which is usually little more than a spurious effort on the part of some individuals to gain acclaim for some supposed individual uniqueness. A tragic-comic example is the 8-track stereo fan who fills his residence with the latest equipment, but never listens to music.

CULTURAL
STERILITY
AND DECAY

21. Cultural collapse in the Western world is often manifest in obsolete forms which die slowly because they are held in being by maudlin sentimentality. Religious thought has died as a direction-giver for government decision-making. Yet United States legislatures continue to retain chaplains for occasional opening rites. The Christmas season has become a secular festival, but those who seek to attract consumer interest still find it useful and effective to hark back to outmoded religious pietistic values. Throughout the globe, the cultural mythologies from the past have ceased to empower present vocational or leisure pursuits with meaning. And the attempts at reform, such as the mockery of drive-in worship services or the supposedly "forward thinking" innovations that sometimes occur in "mod" worship, weddings and funerals, are often evidence of sterility and decay instead.

POSSIBILITIES
FOR IMBAL-
ANCE METHOD

22. Imbalances are also present within each of the subordinate process levels of the political, economic and cultural dynamics. The more specific the process, the more subject it is to rapid change and variation as one descends toward the level of the day to day decisions. For example, corporation production procedures make drastic alternations from week to week. There are floods of popular magazine articles telling about the frequency and radicality of "shake-ups" within the structures of the business managerial community. Social imbalance processes are useful for describing the overall effects of social malfunctioning, because the methods of determining them require that all three poles of the triangle at the level under discussion be dealt with at the same time. A decision cannot be made about the position of the economic pole without also determining the relations of the political and cultural. The imbalance analysis method itself has great possibilities for future development, especially in objectifying and quantifying social analysis.

III. EMERGING

IDEOLOGY

QUALITIES OF IDEOLOGY

23. Since every man has reflected upon himself in relation to his community and his society, no one has ever lived who has not lived out of an ideology. Whether he likes or dislikes his given social situation, he operates on the basis of a set of presuppositions which permeate his times. His operating principles, whether unconscious or fully articulated, emerge from his ideology. Every society, taken as a whole, also functions out of an ideology. The ideology of a society is the basic assumption of its being, expressed as a statement of the essential nature of man. A social ideology, then, is an inclusive statement of both the "is" and the "ought" of a social

**COMMON
IDEOLOGICAL
GROUND**

vision, built from what it means to be human. The U. S. Bill of Rights, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the Declaration of Independence have been formal statements of social ideology. Ideologies have become formal articulations usually at the moment that they are challenged as unconscious presuppositions, that is, in times of war or stress. An ideology at those times functions as a kind of guiding star or lodestone. It points up errors and disrelationships. It shows the direction into the future. And it gives permission to act in order to release the trends for change which have been blocked. An ideology is not some idea thought up and spoken by a few. It is not one set of ideas among other possible ones. It is the basic given pointed to by the consensus of the age.

**PRO-
ESTABLISHMENT
CONSERVATION**

24. Men dispute about ideology but can never disregard it. Opposing parties in a society operate under the same ideology. Disputes are over the nature of its practical manifestations and means for achieving them. For example, some would seek to bring about more equitable distribution of goods by fighting inflation through tightening governmental regulations while others would open competition by removing all tariff and trade barriers. Both live out of the same ideology of equitable distribution.

**DIS-
ESTABLISHMENT
SENSITIVITY**

25. It is clear, however, that no society has ever existed in which all the members shared a single interpretation of its social ideology except perhaps under some very special circumstances of historical crisis. Normally, there are at least two general stances toward the dominant ideology: that of the "pro-establishment" and that of the "dis-establishment." The upholders of the given social order, the pro-establishment, defend present forms. They "know" that these forms are all that separates civilization from disintegration and the men of their society from starvation, conflict and the terrors of the unknown. Suffering that exists within the existing structure is but an unavoidable deviation from a generally benevolent and adequate social paradigm.

26. On the other hand, the rebels, the opposition to the established order, are angry over the human suffering present, and are profoundly convinced that it is unnecessary, and that it is being willfully ignored by the pro-establishment. But their responses to the situation are usually characterized by immediacy and short-range planning. Further, they tend to distrust anyone else who seeks to operate out of an inclusive plan, since they feel the present order has invalidated anything less than violent upheaval. Social costs in confusion, disorder and radical error, they are inclined to count lightly.

27. A third group which seeks to transcend both these positions is called the "trans-establishment." It is capable of appreciating the gifts and

**TRANS-
ESTABLISHMENT
INCLUSIVENESS**

wisdom of the past, but it is lucid about the suffering and injustice of the present. It is marked by the decision to operate with total immersion in the world, but knows itself to be totally detached from it in the very midst of its struggle to transform civilization. It is this group which sees and articulates the ideology of the age, as did the revolutionaries of 1776 in North America, or recent African leaders seeking independence.

**PRIMARY
IDEOLOGICAL
STATEMENT**

28. In this present era, the forces of the trans-establishment have but one vision: authentic human sociality means that **ALL THE EARTH BELONGS TO ALL THE PEOPLE**. From this simplest and most comprehensive ideological statement flow all other declarations of the future thrusts in all major and minor subdivisions of the economic, political and cultural societal dynamics.

**ECONOMIC
COROLLARY**

29. **ALL THE GOODS OF NATURE BELONG TO ALL THE PEOPLE** is the ideological summary for the dimension of the economic commonality. Stated positively, it means that every human being, no matter what his social, racial or geographical heritage, has a just claim to that proportion of the wealth of the world which he needs to sustain his life and in turn give it in creative productivity. Stated negatively, it implies an attack on circumstantial claims to the control of wealth, and to claims based on the sheer drive to exploitation for personal gain. This means developing methods, systems, structures and value orientations that determine priorities for distributing the world's wealth on the basis of priorities of needs.

**POLITICAL
COROLLARY**

30. The second corollary deals with the political dimension of social existence: **ALL THE DECISIONS OF HISTORY BELONG TO ALL THE PEOPLE**. Nations or even continents, to say nothing of provinces or states, are no longer adequate contexts for making significant historical decisions. Every decision made is as a stone dropped into a pool, making ever widening circles that finally touch the decisions being made by every other man across the face of the earth. Each man's thought contributes to the total web of human consensus which ultimately determines the direction of humanity itself. What remains is to structure the process of articulating that consensus for all to see it, to hear it, to know it as their own.

**CULTURAL
COROLLARY**

31. **ALL THE GIFTS OF HUMANNESS BELONG TO ALL THE PEOPLE**. One experiences this when he comprehends himself as one with the body of mankind, as one with the historical human experiment, and that the very givenness of that reality itself is a gift which belongs to all. This ideological assertion brings forth from consciousness new symbologies that enable men to articulate unrealized consciousness, just as in the past, national banners have called forth unrecognized allegiances. It births new styles of social interrelatedness between man and man, between man and society, and between society and society. So also, it releases the reserves of wisdom and knowledge hitherto unshared releasing not only the wisdom

ALL THE
EARTH . . .

already reserved by those who have previously considered it their special possession, but also depth human wisdom beyond anything we have previously suspected.

32. All the goods of nature, all the decisions of history, and all the gifts of humanness are thus finally resolvable to one statement: **ALL THE EARTH BELONGS TO ALL THE PEOPLE.**

IV. MAJOR

CONTRADICTIONS

FUNDAMENTAL SOCIOLOGICAL BLOCKS

33. Once the common ideology has been built and clarified for its own particular era, then the contradictions stand out in bold relief. A contradiction is an underlying sociological block which is preventing the ideology from being structurally manifested. It is what allows the old social order to resist change. Contradictions have to do with the reasons why things do not work, why there are disrelations and imbalances within and between the different parts that make up human society. Contradictions have to do with why large numbers of people experience unnecessary trouble or bitter suffering as they journey through life. They

**INVISIBLE
WITHOUT
IDEOLOGY**

are contradictions precisely because they work against the ideological affirmations. A contradiction is not a moral category. It has nothing to do with something being "wrong," but simply stands in the way of the realization of the ideology.

34. Contradictions are usually invisible to those without an articulated ideology, for they stand wholly within the particularities of the given social situation. And every society, no matter how weak or insecure, has built into it its own understanding of why its special forms and systems are "right" and "proper." It may tolerate or even encourage peripheral criticism. But seemingly by instinct, it defends itself vigorously whenever it is attacked anywhere near the foundational level. Hence, contradictions first appear only when they are observed through a knothole, a chink in the social foundations.

**PARAMOUNT
CONTRADICTION
IN SYMBOLS**

35. The oppressed, the disenfranchised, the socially disaffected are the first to spot contradictions. But once they have been pointed out, others soon see the difficulties. Nor does the entire range of a society's contradictions become apparent all at once. Contradictions in the economic arenas of life have been evident to many for a long time. Contradictions within the political structures are evident to a great many people today. But those in the area of symbols, related in the model presented here to what is called the "paramount" or ultimate contradiction, have not been nearly so evident. Most people experience the symptoms in moral and structural decay, but seldom has anyone been able to isolate the source. This contradiction strikes at the heart, at the very foundations of the modern world, East and West alike.

**THE
ECONOMIC
CONTRADICTION**

36. Together, the five broad areas of contradiction which follow spell out, in comprehensive range and profound depth, the dimensions of the problems that plague the contemporary world. humble, menial service. Industrialization in the Western world made it clear that this was not necessarily so. Technology harnessed to the basic struggle for physical existence could release human life for other, creative pursuits. Yet looking back from our present position in time, it is clear that this vision has remained only a dream for all but a comparative minority of the earth's population. The rich get richer and the poor increase in numbers. But the irony is that for both rich and poor, the economic dimension of life meant to serve the interests of humanness, has become its undisputed master. Unfortunately, monetary units serve to measure men's status, rather than to serve men's needs. The scope for economic planning is immediate and local rather than long-range and global. Yet local man has no way to express his views of what ought to be done with the vast reserves of wealth of the world. The structures of government combine forces with the industrial and marketing giants of the world to guarantee, through intentionally rigidified structures of administration and management, that control will remain in the hands of the few who already have it.

**THE
POLITICAL
CONTRADICTION**

37. As the globe contracts through communications and transport technology, the implications of every decision men make about life together on earth increases. This experience of a shrinking earth comes just at the moment when more and more people are expecting, as never before in history, to participate actively in making decisions that shape the direction of the future. Increasing awareness of interdependence has produced an increasing sense of responsibility for the sufferings of the world. But even the most benign political structures of this era were never designed to handle the overwhelming numbers and diversities of opinions that long to find expression. The clogging and collapse of the structures of representational democracy play into the hands of established special interest groups and adept power seekers. Apathy, withdrawal and frustration are the results of such subtle oppression. The few existing centers of local activity reduce their fields of interest to immediate concerns. They have no way to articulate to themselves or to others their own importance. Nor have they the tools to shape an inclusive vision or make it heard. Individuals are trapped between their own frontier pioneer images of rugged individualism and the all too evident structural inadequacies. Such are the grinding wheels of political contradiction.

**THE
WISDOM
CONTRADICTION**

38. Our century brought the most powerful assault of intellectual and technical breakthroughs the world has ever experienced. Man's knowledge about the natural world has, in this century alone, multiplied itself many times. When John Kennedy decided the U.S.A. would go to the moon within the decade, the world waited in disbelief. So when President Nixon spoke with the astronauts on the moon, spectators witnessed in astonishment the results of a decade of sheer creation. Yet the radical increase of knowledge has not brought with it wisdom, in the sense of the deep awareness of the interrelatedness of life with life. The drive for dulling security characterizes the common man's experience of what once was called "vocation." The educational structures offer little in the way of practical methods for relating wildly diverse fields of wisdom into a coherent whole. Symbol systems that thrust human minds outward into broadened images of relation are nowhere incorporated into the structures. Each individual is therefore compelled to create his own package of relational images, which allows him to float without either aim or motivation through one cloud of uncertainty into the next. These are the contradictions which must be overcome if a new wisdom, appropriate to a new age, is to develop.

**THE
STYLE
CONTRADICTION**

39. Faced with numbing complexity and frightening strangeness, every man's natural response is to reduce the field of activities and decisions as rapidly as possible to a scope which feels manageable. And in fact, this has been the most readily apparent mark of the style of 20th century man. He reduces his living and working context to the smallest world that will yet provide him with the necessities for living. He denies in actions, if not in words, the existence of a world beyond his community or

THE
SYMBOL
CONTRADICTION

his action. He tries to reduce the deeps, the mystery of life itself, by forgetting his childhood and his origins and ignoring old age and the threat of his non-existence. And he ends up with a hollow monotone life that conceals ups and downs behind shallow smiles. He engages in activities, but never seriously, because he knows that in terms of his life the cost would be great. And he deliberately exposes himself only to familiar images of his familiar world, programming himself to hide from strangeness and mystery. The contradiction in style in our age is the refusal to face the depth responsibility which every man knows rightly belongs to him.

40. The primary, or paramount, contradiction in the whole social process lies in the area of symbol: foundational social mythology has collapsed so that, domino-like, all the underlying stories which encapsule human and social value and direction have, in turn, collapsed. This is the source of most of the disfunctions and disrelations that plague our world. The heritage of the world-views of the past is no longer adequate, so whole societies of men are cut off from their past. They float with no way to tell themselves stories of why the struggle of life is worthwhile. As a result, they experience themselves as victims, and live out of a "victim image." They are victims of the contemporary economic tyranny and of those who control the economic decision-making process. They are victimized by the rigidities and inadequacies of existing political processes and structures, and sense no way to participate significantly. Nor do they have any way to understand the actual situation sufficiently to devise realistic ways to alter it. The mark of a victim is that he allows his life to be determined by fear. He fears real or imagined powers within the established structures, and he fears risking himself for the future, which is experienced only as short and uncertain at best, and very likely painful. He does not understand the importance of symbols. He pays little conscious attention to the fact that they are collapsed and vanishing, and he cannot, therefore, admit openly to his fears nor see that they are rooted in the final dread of the mystery of life itself.

NAMING THE
CONTRADICTION
IS THE KEY

41. Until recognized, contradictions pose insoluble problems to the forces of change. But like the demons of old, once they are named, it becomes possible to engage them in battle and finally dispel them. That is, once the contradictions have been identified, it becomes possible to determine the aim and thrust for the proposals, strategies, tactics and whatever other methods and instruments of change need to be employed.



V. SOCIAL

PROPOSALS

CONCRETE
CALLS FOR
RESTRUCTURING

42. The authentic response to the analysis of social contradiction is a set of social proposals. A proposal is not a theoretical statement about society, but a concrete call to restructure the basic stuff of society. It demands a realizable direction that meets the current contradictions of society which are blocking the old from becoming the new. A proposal is not a simple flip of a contradiction. It is a creative, inclusive image of how the contradiction can be overcome. Thus, it has the quality of an artistic creation. It is ingenious and unexpected, and yet recognizable. Once seen, it is precisely the solution required, the seemingly inevitable choice. The process by which it is reached is therefore not an exclusively rational one, though it requires the full play of critical intelligence.

**COMPREHENSIVE
SET OF
77 PROPOSALS**

44. A set of proposals for any age needs to be comprehensive in covering all three social arenas—economic, political, and cultural. However, the cultural imbalances of our time indicate that the major emphasis must be in that arena. The Summer '71 Research Assembly devised a system whereby the rational poles of 77 social processes were selected as the arenas for which proposals were written—35 in cultural and 21 each in economic and political. One major proposal and four subproposals were thus written for each of the 77.

**FIVE
PROPOSAL
NEXUS**

45. Since society is a complex of interrelated processes, all of the proposals form a dynamically unified whole. Analysis of the 385 proposals and subproposals has exposed five primary foci, each of which forms a "nexus" of proposals. These five are key arenas of action.

**FIRST
NEXUS**

46. The first proposal nexus calls for a new mode of humanness articulated through a secular mythology which re-interprets individual and social significance in a post-modern context.

**NEW
MODE
OF
HUMANNESS**

47. A new mode, or style, or form of humanness is required for this century and the next. It must be appropriate to our new era, in its profound moral and structural uncertainty. This proposal nexus calls for the articulation, dissemination and embodiment of this new mode of humanness, and indirectly, for the structures and methods to bring it into being. In particular, the new mode of humanness is to be freighted by a new, secular mythology, through which both individual significance and the awareness of significance of society as a whole, will be articulated. For the individual, there must be fresh concepts of sexuality, and the significance of sexual roles. Phaseology, or the understanding of social roles appropriate to various age groups will be part of it. So also, for every individual, there will be a new awareness of interior discipline and interior strength. And all of this must find practical, exterior expression in a revitalization of vocational engagement. In his vocation, each individual will experience a sense of universal permission to risk his own most personal creativity, pouring himself into the civilizing process. For society taken as a whole, there must be a deep historical awareness, rooted in and sustained by the common social mythology. Society must have the kind of destinal vision that will give it underlying direction, and the capacity for futuric invention that will enable it to move in the desired direction. Finally, within the mythology, an understanding of deep foundational covenant must be the bedrock upon which the entire edifice is built. In this way, the new mythology will enable human society to serve the human adventure as it takes form in a profound destiny.

**SECOND
NEXUS**

48. The second proposal nexus calls for a global complex of educational structures for all ages with a particular emphasis on

**GLOBAL
COMPLEX OF
EDUCATIONAL
STRUCTURES**

comprehensive curriculum, methodological development, and vocational training.

48. The most distinctive characteristic of the new educational system will be its focus on the meaning of life, the meaning of human existence, rather than upon the sheer accumulation of knowledge and information in the heads of students. Also, the system will provide a general education to every human being across the globe, but instead of being a process which is terminated at the commencement of adulthood, education will be a life-long process. More particularly, the entire educational system will presuppose global commonness, which will be deliberately enhanced through educational cultural exchanges. In the curriculum itself, a major emphasis will be upon the teaching of intellectual and social methods. A secondary emphasis will be upon courses in motivational methodology, or the methodologies of building a sense of relevance and significance into the teaching process itself. Vocational training will become important in entirely new ways. Not only the skills for performance, but new concepts and images of work itself will be taught. There will be a large number of specialized programs, tailored to particular groups and specific subject matter. Finally, there will necessarily be a reorganization of the structures and content of teacher training. Here teachers will be themselves taught to employ a dynamic and corporate understanding of pedagogy, with the methods appropriate to that new understanding.

**THIRD
NEXUS**

49. The third proposal nexus calls for structuring human engagement through forming primal communities characterized by re-empowered local structures and re-created families covenanted to care for global community.

**COVENANTED
PRIMAL
COMMUNITIES**

50. A primal community is the unit of human social life and work which is next above the family in size. Primal communities will include, as one very important category, vocational guild units. These will understand, as one of their tasks, the re-interpretation of the significance of work. They will share the understanding that all time is assigned time for the performance of missional tasks, within the context of the corporate decision of the community. Through these guilds, the economic structures of society will take on missional meaning once again. Primal communities will also include community forums. These will be the most basic units in the structures of local to global decision making. The families who comprise the primal communities, will be directed toward service to humanity, anywhere on the globe it may be called for. Their structures of internal life will be shaped toward that end. On the local community level, a new form of leadership will emerge. It will likewise be corporately structured, and it will rely upon the historical wisdom of the community elders. Finally, whatever his work, his family, or his geographical community, each individual will experience himself as being cared for by

**FOURTH
NEXUS**

**GLOBAL-
LOCAL
POLITY
NETWORK**

**FIFTH
NEXUS**

**INCLUSIVE
ECONOMIC
CONTROLS**

**FRAMEWORK
FOR SOCIETAL
RECON-
STRUCTION**

his community. Since he understands that the community has assumed responsibility for his care, he will, in turn, understand himself in covenant with his local community to care for it.

51. The fourth proposal nexus calls for a global-local polity network which is based on consensus procedures and is activated by a centralized control itself accountable to local man.

52. The global-local polity network will be based on inclusive local participation in consensus-making. It will include structures and methods for research, for planning, and for problem-solving. Therefore, there are structural guarantees of access both to relevant data and to existing social structures. In order for authentic consensus to occur, it is necessary that every man's wisdom be heard.*And in addition to this, new corporate leadership will emerge at the grassroots. Furthermore, there will be means provided to honor insights from the formed loyal opposition. This whole local process will be structurally related to a comprehensive system for decision making. It will allow global consensus to inform, and to be informed by, local decisions. There will necessarily be administrative and judicial branches of this system. And these will be held accountable to the task of reviewing and executing the popular will. The entire system will be framed in the context of an articulated and consensed global covenant.

53. The fifth proposal nexus calls for the imposition of inclusive controls on the economic dynamic of society through political regulation, data dissemination, and coordinated inclusive planning relative to global needs.

54. The inclusive control of the economic covers several nexus. It involves, first of all, a comprehensive system of regulation of the economic process by various political boards and agencies. This nexus calls for the establishment, within the economic, of various planning and co-ordination structures along with a massive simplification of money and credit mechanisms. In addition, there will be structures for the rapid dissemination of technological skills and information pertinent to determining the areas of need. Also proposed is a re-organization of the structures of production and distribution to enable them to operate on a global scale while organized into managable operational units. These in turn will be complemented by certain basic redirections in advertising, sales, and the structures of assuring employment.

55. The nexus, then, are clusterings of proposals that articulate the critical areas for societal reconstruction. These form the meaningful framework within which to build the new. Now follows the massive task of building the concrete strategies and tactics through which social healing will actually take place over the coming decades.

CONCLUSION

ALTERNATIVE MODELS FOR SOCIETY

FIVE PILLARS OF THE NEW SOCIAL VEHICLE

56. No radical shift in human destiny has ever occurred unless, at the moment when the old social order was collapsing, alternative operating models for society were thrust into the social vacuum. This was as true when the monasteries preserved Western civilization after the fall of Rome as it was more than 1500 years later when the minority Bolsheviks under Lenin seized control of Russia from Kerensky's democratic government. Without an alternative model, a society's history ends.

57. Such a model begins with a practical grasp of the given order of society, of the deviations from its authentic identity and destiny, and a vision of concrete corrective actions. Further, it includes a scheme by which the vision is to be implemented, consisting of both strategic and tactical systems. And, finally, such a model includes a method of motivating all men to engage in the process of building the new civilization. As articulated in this document, the practical vision of today's new social vehicle rests on five pillars:

1. Society is and always has been a dynamically interrelated set of processes of commonness which appear in every social situation, in every culture, at every point in history.
2. These social processes have always been in relative imbalance. In our day the economic processes have become dominant, using the political processes as their ally and collapsing the cultural processes, and this imbalance is true of all groups within our society and of society as a whole.

TODAY IS
A TIME
OF CHANGE

3. Society always operates on a consensed ideological base, which informs it of its own reason for existence. The emerging agreement among all people across the globe is that "All the earth belongs to all the people."

4. Contradictions in each social process arena are preventing the structural manifestations of this emerging consensus. The chief source of these is the collapse of systems of significance in the face of the changed human context of the twentieth century.

5. An inclusive set of specific social proposals have been designed to deal with these contradictions. Paramount among them is the creation of a secularly articulated theology and a re-empowered secular religious style.

Now what is required is designing the implementing schemes and determining the motivating methods. That task cannot be accomplished, unless a group of disciplined people decide, on behalf of all men of the earth, to invent out of their life experience the means by which every man may engage his whole life in building the new earth.

58. Human society stands at the edge of fundamental change. Present forms of society no longer provide adequate human sustenance for every man. Furthermore, these forms do not enable most men to participate fully in deciding their own destiny. This is primarily because no inclusive consensus on what humanness is has been articulated and ratified. The global culture is fragmented into cultural enclaves which have widely diverse perspectives. Thus they wage war on others who have alien thought patterns and styles of life. Yet from these social givens new expressions of sociality are emerging. Men are more conscious that symbolism is basic to life. They know they are educated by their total environment. Youth and women have broken through to unprecedented social roles. Decisions are brought about by the general populace to end wars, to radicalize education, and to curb the power of economic values in making vocational choices. Advocates of peace, liberation, reform, relevant education, and practical global unity have gained prominence. The trend toward a new society has been named the global village, the great society, or the brave new world. However, it has not been actualized in all social contexts because the total myth has not permeated the consciousness of the world population and hence its existing social structures. This contradiction remains unresolved. Nevertheless, the signs of a new world are present in the works of intentional artists, in experimentation into early and continuing education, in mature youth and post-liberated women, in populist political movements and in socially responsible economic enterprises. The change has intensified. The forces are gathering.

A WORLD
OF REGIONAL
CITIES

UNITED
WITH
THE PAST

RECOVERY
OF THE
SPIRIT

LUCIDITY
ABOUT
RELIGION

59. To be man is to be social. No man has ever been a human being outside the pale of the human community. Since the creation of *homo sapiens*, man's *space* has been sustained and ordered out of the meanings men have bestowed upon the important happenings of their lives. They created the village, the city, and the nation state. Today these have been transcended by another innovation—a world of regional cities. Men have become bound together by webs of communication, business, alliances, common dreams, human knowledge, and a post-modern style.

60. The future promises more radical creations and a richer existence that includes all people. Across the globe man has known that he is *time*. The measurement of time by the orbits of the solar system has for millenia marked the eventfulness of man's history. His celebrations and rites have encompassed all ages. The elders and the youth have been united in a common journey by the great climactic moments that have opened the depths of life and energized man's future. Today the sense of the "now" has come again. Post-modern techniques have permitted instant re-enactment of the human journey which provides man with the courage to be in the future.

61. In his total experience, man has known that he is *tension*. The ebb and flow of his life is essential to its vitality. His life thrusts into new futures and it creates from the dust. Death and life are equally held as parts of life. The roles of men and women are today transformed, allowing them to be co-creators of history. The future rests in the hands of this polarity. Man has always known that he is *transparency*. Living is something more than instinctual existence. The life of man is mystery, freedom, responsibility, and peace. His spirit power comes from the creativity born of his capacity to stand at a distance from his mundanity. Today he is recovering this transparency of life and the conviction that he creates the world and rules over it out of the full resources of his own spirit. Humanness is the historical existence of man. Sociality is the invention of man.

62. Human society has always ridden on the back of its religion. Since society is invented by man, the symbols, rites, and myths of his religious life hold the consciousness of man in being. Religion is man's conscious way of grasping the basic being of all things. It is the way he knows his creaturehood. Sociality is no mere toy that man fiddles with for a time before he dies. Sociality is the expression of existence as it is fundamentally. Utopian dreams that come and go according to the whims of rebellious men finally have no power to care for the oppressed and the tyrants. The vision that all men yearn for and die for is an enduring glimpse into reality itself. As ages come and go, men are able to see things

THE NEW
HUMAN
CONSCIOUSNESS

as they are and to articulate their lucidity for their own times.

63. Man today is a new human consciousness. We see that all men are contributing to and benefiting from the new expression of sociality. This vision of what is, is simultaneously what ought to be. Therefore the vision of the future is at the same time a paradigm of the way life in fact is. The participation of every man in the givenness of life itself is a fact, and this fact must be actualized in day-by-day forms that we create, alter, destroy, and recreate. Once we became clear that the passing of civilization had raised ultimate questions about life itself, the first decision was to embrace ambiguity, absurdity, and meaningless death. Those who embraced this as life itself now stand on the threshold of seeing the essential facets of reality.

THE NEW
HUMAN
SOCIALITY

64. This vision has disclosed the sociality of man. Society is man's essence. Yet men lose sight of who they are. Man as self is a given set of relations to other men, to himself, and to the mystery of his existence. But he is also the myriad ways he relates to this givenness. He tyrannizes life. He becomes impotent before the tyranny of others and their values. He collapses in the face of the tyranny and weakness. But these relations themselves awaken a new consciousness. When acted upon, this awakening creates a new expression of sociality. In this new era, the intentional participation of men in this process is the religion which undergirds all language and art, all wisdom, all style, all political, and economic commonality.

THE NEW
HUMAN
VISION

65. THEREFORE:

Whenever a symbolic assembly enacts rituals and tells myths that preclude any of the gifts of world culture, a SOCIAL MYTHOLOGY will call for local man to contribute his historical wisdom to recreate the primal archetypes of the world.

Whenever an educational institution reduces wisdom to knowledge about life as it was yesterday, a RADICAL EDUCATION will be reoriented toward awakening the awareness of human depths.

Whenever a community presents an individualistic style that responds to immediate gratification, a PRIMAL COMMUNITY will decide anew the equitable requirements upon the society.

Whenever a political body excludes the opposing voice of minority peoples, a RESPONSIVE POLITY will be reordered to respond to the needs of the society.

Whenever an industrial power takes the goods of the world unto itself, a CONTROLLED ECONOMY will be called upon to serve the whole society and to obey the decisions of local man.

**THE NEW
HUMAN
DECISION**

66. The moment of decision is upon us. The new man has no less a responsibility than the creation of the whole society with the external power and the interior strength to bear the destiny of mankind for the next 1000 years. The vision of every self-conscious global man is needed to create the overarching image of the new earth. These times, these men, will see the birth of the new social vehicle.

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