

December 11, 1971

MOVEMENT TACTICS FOR THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS

The Renewed Church: 2007 is here	The Local Congregation: Socio-Spiritual Renewal	The New Evangelism: move on the world	The New Social Vehicle: the style of civilized man	The New Religious Mode: the other world	The Movemental Order	Being the Style
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1. During our work on the new social vehicle last summer I was looking for a psalm, that rooted, that grounded our whole summer. Since then, I've found it:

Not to us, O Lord, not to us,  
 but to thy name ascribe the glory,  
 for thy true love and for thy constancy.

Why do the nations ask,  
 'Where then is their God?'  
 Our God is in high heaven;  
 he does whatever pleases him.  
 Their idols are silver and gold,  
 made by the hands of men.  
 They have mouths that cannot speak,  
 and eyes that cannot see;  
 they have ears that cannot hear,  
 nostrils, and cannot smell;  
 with their hands they cannot feel,  
 with their feet they cannot walk,  
 and no sound comes from their throats.  
 Their makers grow to be like them,  
 and so do all who trust in them.

But Israel trusts in the Lord;  
 he is their helper and their shield.  
 The house of Aaron trusts in the Lord;  
 he is their helper and their shield.  
 Those who fear the Lord trust in the Lord;  
 he is their helper and their shield.  
 The Lord remembers us, and he will bless us;  
 he will bless the house of Israel,  
 he will bless the house of Aaron.  
 The Lord will bless all who fear him,  
 high and low alike.

May the Lord give you increase,  
both you and your sons.  
You are blessed by the Lord,  
the Lord who made heaven and earth.  
The heavens, they are the Lord's;  
the earth he has given to all mankind.

[Oh, if he'd been a good poet, he would  
have said, "But all the earth belongs  
to all the people.]

There's more but I don't need to go on.

2. I've experienced that this movement thing has just become overly complex. Looking at the 600 of us here I was thinking that in 1966 there were about 10 or so of us in Presidium, but it seemed like a couple of hundred then. But I think, that it is not complexity, that is ever the problem. The way I have been saying the problem to myself is that time has radically accelerated beyond your capacity to anticipate that acceleration. We give ourselves this amount of work to do in the next 40 years but we have to do it in the next four years. Otherwise I do not think we would be experiencing the kind of sweat that we are. But I think that in 4 years I am going to know more about this than I know now. I think that it is no exaggeration to say that what two years ago I anticipated was going to happen in 40 years has in one sense already happened, or is going to happen in four years. I think that is my problem and I am not prepared for it.

3. The things that we said a couple years ago about the year 2007 I confess to you have no meaning to me anymore at all. It is not that I do not want that to be, and I certainly am not one of those idiots that likes to have a new timeline everytime he turns around. No revolution ever came on that basis. But that number 2007 has been taken away from me and I am beginning to think it is because what I meant by 2007 is at hand, and I missed it. Of course this is limited by the degree to which we execute our strategy. For example, can you imagine a revolutionary who was with a party that, in order to save the war, had to blow up 12 different trains, and came back to report, "I got over 40% of them." Can you imagine that? Anyway, I would judge that in 4 years from now what we laid out in 2007 is going to be, in principle, accomplished. And that's the fear no, it's not fear, it is something else that consumes us.

4. This is our 20th year and I want to look ahead 20 years. (But I think secretly down inside I really mean something like 4 years.) If we have gone rapidly in the last four years, we are now going to go at the speed of light and we are going to have to adjust, spiritwise. We are going to adjust to this increased speed. How you do that I'm not sure, except you have to have a longer vision to replace the one that has been shortened. That is not easy, but don't get ants in your britches. Twenty years ago when we started out, those 20 years ahead were nowhere near as clear to me as the next 20 years are now. At least now we have a little tiny place to stand.

5. I want to think on what I see twenty years ahead, remembering I may mean four. But between now and next July 1, you and I have got to pretty well decide whether we mean twenty or four. When you start out on a new twenty years, if it were all clear to you, you wouldn't have to do it. People come around and say, "Let's get a focus again." Oh, wouldn't it be nice if somebody'd come along everytime you needed a new focus and then all you would have to do was participate in the spray. You are not going to get this focus by magic. You are going to get it by blood, sweat, and tears. You aren't even going to get it in six months, but in six months you are going to begin to get a sniff. That is going to be frightening too, but it will take away this malaise, and give you another one.

6. Anyway, if I think about the next twenty years, my mind first of all has to come to the local congregation experiment. But I mean by that something different than I did even three or four months ago. You remember when we first started to think of 2007, we talked about the paper maché model, where we had to build a paper maché of the new sociological-spiritual form of the church. Then we'd burn it in 2007 because it wouldn't be useful anymore. Now the reason why I think 2007 is gone is that in the next four years (no, I better say in the next twenty years because that other figure frightens me) you and I have to burn the paper maché model and occasion the metamorphosis that will manifest the new socio-spiritual form of the church for the next 1000 years.

7. This could not have happened had not the marriage between the established church and the movemental church taken place. Because that marriage has taken place that tactical model for the local congregation that you are doing is an exercise in nothing. That is not the new form of the church, not by a long sight--but if you don't do it, the new form will never come. Are you big enough to handle that? And if you don't do that model down to the last comma, that new form will not come--but that is not it. Some people who have been out on those front lines of the local congregation have asked me, how much of what is already there is future program? My answer is: none. Now, I also prophesy that you already have the new sociological forms of the church which you are going to be doing for the next 1000 years. They are just underneath the surface of the water, and you are going to jack them up. They are sunken boats, and you are going to refloat them. You've been working on them 20 years or more--actually this is the 55th year of church renewal in our time.

8. I was impressed with your singing. Even this is a sociological form. I prefer socio-spiritual, because I am quite well aware that if the church isn't renewed spiritually it isn't renewed at all. And the sociological is but a means to give form to the spirituality so it will be channelled to that last fat lady. In these next four years or next twenty years, you have really only one job and that is that local congregation. But understand you are going to be doing something quite different than I anticipated even two years ago. You are also big enough now to understand that the new form of the local congregation will not look at all like that local congregation you're working with to occasion metamorphosis. You are working for the metamorphosis. If any of you are so naive as to believe that you are trying to patch up something, you are in the wrong business. This age that the Lord has given to us is a foundational age. In every aspect of life, radical change is going to take place, and to be a structural revolutionary does not mean that you are not after as radical change as a violent

disruptive revolutionary. It just means that you operate within the existing structures to occasion the transfiguration that brings in the new out of the old.

9. The second thing you are going to be doing in the next twenty years is to forge and execute the new evangelism. And mark you, that word goes dry in my mouth, for we associate it with a kind of sectarian form of protestantism. That is wrong. I tell you, evangelism was there when those early Catholic missionaries moved into the barbarian wastelands of Europe and baptized whole tribes. If any of you sectarian Protestants want to get upset at that, you just remember that if that kind of evangelism had not happened, your reduced kind of evangelism would have been impossible.

10. What I am trying to say is that all my life I have been an evangelist. And the movement has been evangelistic too, in a sense. What we have been doing is nurturing the church for the sake of evangelism--and what I mean by evangelism is that the gospel of Jesus Christ moves out into the secular world and changes lives. If you don't think those barbarian tribes were altered, you don't know much about history. And I use that as but one form of what I mean by evangelism (I wish I had a better word). In the movement, we have been preparing the church for evangelism and in that sense what we have been doing is evangelism. But we have not attacked the world. We have had brushes with it, in order to show the church that she could dare brush with it too. But we have moved on the church. Now the church has to move out.

11. Today, sectarian type evangelism, (going up to anybody on the street and saying "Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ?") is ridiculous. Both Pietists and the Great Awakening had that interior world there which could make sense out of the question, "Do you love Jesus?" A world that came out of earlier evangelism. That interior being is not there in the man of today's world, he is secular. This means evangelism is going to be secular. And hopefully, this course that you have heard about is the beginning of the basic tool of evangelism. You well know that 20 years ago we would have been sitting back in our beds if we had not forged R.S.-I. R.S.-I was not a course, it was means of nurturing the church in such a way that she could have a little bit of hope once again. R.S.-I could never be replaced, but there has to be another tool to move out into the world. I believe this course is going to be it. There is going to be a lot of work on it yet, and I am sorry that more of us haven't had more chance at it. Tomorrow, we as a whole group are going to work on it.

12. You are going to be consumed with the evangelism that reaches out beyond the church to the spirit dimension of men everywhere. The third thing you are going to be consumed with is the new social vehicle. One thing clear to me is you aren't going to have a new social vehicle if you don't renew that local church. I have gone over that enough.

13. The second thing I'm clear on is there is not going to be any new social vehicle if it is not preceded by evangelism. The new President of Boston University made a speech the other day to a group of lawyers, and he said somebody in this world has got to learn how to produce a corps of civilized men. That's evangelism. He said, "The church used to do that, but it doesn't do it anymore." He is going to eat those words. Unless across this world you can produce some civilized men, you are not going to build the new social vehicle, and the church has got to be able to produce those civilized men as he calls them. Now, all of us are quite well aware that the church does not build the new social vehicle. It works through what I call the practical inclusive vision that's pioneering. Then it pioneers by creating

civilized men. It pioneers by becoming the illustration of the civilized men that you want to produce-that is style and that is the key to it.

J4. Though nobody in the room can say what our next summer is going to look like, by this time of the year you have to begin to sense something. What I sense has me excited. We had hoped to get into the tactics more quickly, but I suppose those of you here sense the problem. Getting up on what we did last summer (and I mean we did something) has been a harder job than we anticipated. By next March you in the movement have to decide whether this is the way we go: What would you say, if we bring together the spirit people and we build a tactical model, just as we have done for the local congregation only for the new social vehicle.

J5. Oh, I have something to tell you that is real nice. You know, the Lord is sneaky. You remember that we were trying to get some other facilities for last summer? We sent people out everywhere but couldn't find anything we could afford. But in that fooling around we bumped into an insurance company called Kemper. Since that time, Kemper who has built a whole new plant, has donated to us their huge "L" shaped eight-story building at 4750 North Sheridan Road on the relatively near north side.

J6. Now, we will always stay in Fifth City, always! We will have a congregation here (and it will be larger than all of us were 2 years ago.) The Lord wanted us here last summer, and only rightly so in order that the new social vehicle should come out of the ghetto.

J7. But with that new building, next summer I think we could have 2000 people. You know, you really ought not laugh, because what we were planning on if we had to get some place else, was some kind of a capital funds drive. While I'm on that subject, we are still going to have to raise some money to get the new building in shape. We would like to have one floor of it done real nice. If we have this other course on evangelism we have to begin to move out and impact the power centers of this country. You already could give a list of politicians who ought to come there. There are two rooms about as big as a football field-I figure that you could get more than 1500 people in a floor. If you were as crowded as we are in this room, you could get in 5000.

J8. I've got an idea that the new social vehicle is going to be spearheaded by this new course on the men, women, and youth. The course deals with the new social vehicle, but existentially. It is going to be followed by the work that came out of Summer '71 plus the tactics you do next summer. And we can't do this as we did R.S.L., I don't know how, but maybe we as a movement have to have other kinds of nodes that you work out of, because every parish in this world has got to have that course. You young ones that think you have some years ahead of you, you better start thinking as to how you design a scheme of how to move. You will be very grateful, whether you call them religious houses or nodes or whatever, that you've got those kinds of stepping stones.

J9. The last one that you are going to be working with is the new religious mode. I leave that til last, but it is really first. In each one of these four you can see in the next 4 years or 20-you are going to be giving concrete form to the church in its local manifestation. You are going to be giving concrete form to the basic outreach of the church, to the fundamental outreach of the church to the world. You are going to be giving form to the new social vehicle and to the new religious mode.



20. One of these days, some of you are going to have to put it as concretely as "the 4 noble truths" or the "4 noble disciplines." We have to be representational people to the masses of humanity that operate out of the 4 things-a-majigs, or the 5, or the 8, or whatever. You have got to get that practical. I have been in no hurry in the religious mode, in no big hurry with those 144 boxes. I thought something was missing. You see, if you turn into an organization, you are finished. If you slip into a new gnosticism, you are finished. If you turn into a new dogmatism, no matter how subtle, you are finished.

21. I have felt that in this realm we weren't clear enough about what we were standing on. When anybody begins to intellectualize and wrap up this "other world," I die inside. It's not something you wrap up. It's finally not something you chart even though the mind draws things together. It has begun to break in on me that for a long time here, due to the Protestant influence, we primarily used the poetry of time. And now, to recover the Catholic substance, we have to use the poetry of space. That's why the "other world," right in the midst of this world, intrigues me so. And by the other world I mean nothing religious. I mean that man in our day has developed a capacity with his eyes to make transparent what's around him. It's been a long time since he had that capacity, but now God has given it to him again.

22. The other world in the midst of this world. What does it mean to live in this world as a citizen of the other world? This is the ground for your popular preaching, you're turning matter into spirit. I feel some way or another that this is the message we've got to get to the church. It's the message we've got to get clear on in order to bring into practical focus the new religious mode. I warn you that you need to begin, in your everyday life, to participate in the other world that's in your midst - the world of the mystery, the world of undefined freedom, the world of mega-responsibility, responsibility for the whole world. Until you move in that world, you don't even know what Satan is. Satan only exists in that world, he does not exist in this world, he only sends his imps.

23. I'm back where I started. This complexity that we experience, or this acceleration of time is only half the answer to this suffocation that we sense. The other half is that you've tasted the other world, and maybe, for the first time in your life- you've wrestled with Satan, and not just with one of his imps. Remember what I called in Summer '70 the aridity, the darkness, and the apostasy? It is only there for the man who's been in the other world. It's not until you've been to the other world that the bright light of vision turns dark, that the running overness of life becomes arid.

24. I was looking at that Psalm 13 poster over there. Whoever printed it made a mistake. They put "desire" there at the end in the plural. I was sitting there looking at it, saying to myself, "They made a mistake." You know how I knew they made a mistake? Because the Lord has not filled all my "desires." Either the psalmist was wrong, or the person made a mistake. But the Lord has fulfilled, I want to bear witness, all my desire. I went to look it up. Guess what? The psalmist was really at the center when he wrote that. The word was singular. He'd never have been to the center and put it in the plural.

25. That helped me understand part of the Psalm 23 that has always bothered me, "My cup runneth over." In the midst of all this malaise, I want to say that my cup runneth over. I never thought I'd live long enough to be able to make a

statement like that. I said a year or two ago that things were just oozing with possibility. Well, they're more than oozing now. Isn't your cup running over? Isn't it really? Not until you know what it means to have a cup that runneth over do you know anything about aridity. You see that when you're in the other world, in the world of the mystery, the mystery goes away. "Why dost thou hide thyself from me?" Only in the world do you know the clout, and sense the apostasy of that cry.

26. These next 20 years are speeding up your own experience of the other world is a part of the experience of that speed up. I think we're going to be busy in the local congregation, evangelism, the new social vehicle, and the new religious mode. We'll be busy at the speed of light, and with a new kind of spiritual malaise that's born out of a cup running over.

27. I have two final things to say. The first is that to do these things in the next 20 years, you're going to have to create a historical order. (I don't like that word), a movemental order. It's going to be a dynamic that's complex. It's going to have a symbolic aspect, it's going to have an auxiliary aspect, and then it's going to have an expansive aspect. Every one of us is going to belong to it. I don't even know what belonging to it means, because we already belong to it, and it belongs to God, not to somebody else. Without that dynamic we're not going to do any of these things.

28. The second is that what we're talking about can only be done by the being rubric, not by the knowing or the doing. This means style. I'm sixty years old--I'm in the fourth phase. I have the chance to build myself one brand new lifetime--I've had three before but this time is going to be the greatest because I'm aware that you can build a whole new lifetime. I'm going to GLOW--you watch. Already the glow is there, and I've only been 60 about 2 months. These young ones have become envious. They can hardly wait until they get to be 60. But there has to be glows from age 0-20, and glows from 20 to 40, and glows from 40 to 60. It's almost like we're going to do this and also handle the pain by living in the other world, which is what occasions the glow. We're going to glow ourselves through a revolution.

--Joseph W. Mathews