

Carlos Allison

December 14, 1979
TS# 7628,

DESTINAL ELECTION

"In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

I have a trivia article here about watermelon. How many of you have ever had watermelon? At one time I quit eating watermelons because of the kind of images I used to get. I always felt like somebody was looking whenever I ate one; that they would take my picture or something, eating that thing. My mother still won't eat one though she won't admit it. This trivia comes under the heading Shape of the Future to come. Watermelons are hard to pack, they are impossible to stack, they take up too much room in the refrigerator. So, it was inevitable that someone should decide to invent a better watermelon. A starving and bankrupt graphic designer in Tokyo has done just that. He's got a cubic watermelon. It's seven inches square, stacks easily, doesn't take up much room in your refrigerator, and you can eat it with a fork, and it costs \$19.95.

I want to talk this morning about the destinal election of the religious, or the shape of the church to come, or how you recognize "the religious" when you see one. I've been amazed at the emergence of some people this year: Andrew Young, Pope John Paul and his trip around the world, Khohmeini, Jessie Jackson. I suppose I've been wondering where these guys were in the seventies. They all of a sudden showed up again. I get concerned when these kind of guys start getting concerned, because it means something is happening in history that is so radical it's shaken one of the most hard of hearing people on the face of the planet. I'm sure none of these characters knew what they were getting into when they touched the pain of local people across the world.

This has given me a way to get a hold of who we are, and what we represent in history as a people: I'm going to call us "a group" for a while. This group was invented to say one thing - just one thing. This group was invented to articulate The Word of Possibility. This group was invented to say that "to die is to live". To die to your illusions about the way you think life ought to be and to live the life you have on your hands, is still the truth about life. Now some twenty-five years ago we were given that assignment: Go out there to the whole world and articulate this Word, "To die is to live." And you articulated that word in every language and every style for everybody. It was to be your twenty-year task, or forty-year task, or whatever. But that is it. And don't do anything else. Just do that! Don't go out there and try to do economic development; don't go out there and try to do social development; don't go and try to do cultural development; don't go out there and try to be an agency, or a foundation. We are

about one thing, and that is delivering to every human creature, wherever that human creature lives, the possibility to live his life, her life, its life. And to do that so profoundly that, somehow, in the midst of articulating that your situation is not your problem, the way life is, is to die is to live. That is what gets broken loose in human economics, human social development and human culture development. The only one thing we are assigned in history to be about is delivering the word of possibility. Not going back and dusting off your engineering degree, but delivering the word of possibility in the midst of an incredible time in which to live.

Last night, I picked up the book The Secular City, I don't know whether you've read this book by Harvey Cox, who was one of those people like Andrew Young and the rest. He says: "the rise of urban civilization and the collapse of traditional religion are the two main hallmarks of our era and of closely related movements. Urbanization constitutes a massive change in the way men live together and became possible in the contemporary form only when the scientific and technological advances which sprang from the wreckage of religious world views. Secularization, an equally epochical movement marks a change in the way men grasp and understand their life together. And it occurred only when the cosmopolitan confrontation of city living exposed the relativity of the myth and the tradition men once thought were unquestionable. The way men lived their common life affects mightily the way they understand the meaning of their life. "

We are one big public address system. It's like our mouth has a grill on it and behind that is a speaker and our body is an amplifier and whenever somebody sees us coming down the street they know that we've got something to say.

I want to talk about the destinal election of the religious. What I really want to talk about is us. It occurred to me this year that Jesus was everybody's hero. That doesn't seem to shock many of you, Jesus was everybody's hero: not just ours, not just Christians, not just Black folks and White folks. Jesus was everybody's hero. It occurred to me, when I read that many of the religions around the world, including the Chinese, have incorporated Jesus. Since I don't read their languages I don't know how they did it, but I think that when the Hindu needed a hero for discipline and they looked around and they said "Well, this guy is the best we can find;" so they stuck him in their books. The Chinese probably said that he was Yellow. Now, that does something to my hot-line number. When I was a kid, my Dad was a clergyman; so, I painted a large stained-glass mural in the back of one of his churches. And I painted a colored Jesus. There wasn't any Black Jesus then; it was "coloured". He was kind of light-coloured, but he was obviously coloured,

because I was convinced that the only reason Jesus was White is because everybody who painted him was White. So I painted a coloured Jesus, because I was convinced that Jesus was colored. But, this changes my whole mind about my hero, if I've got to share him with everybody - An Everybody Hero.

The Church started out secular. The church started out as an everyday thing. It was so secular it didn't fit in with the institution of its time. I think that was because Jesus had but One W.rd: To die is to live - To die to your illusions about the way you think life ought to be and live the one profound life that you've been given. His assignment was to deal with the moral issue of his time, which was the law. People were in bondage to the law. People were not living their lives. Some law was living their lives. What it means to be the religious has to do with being secular. It is to be "everyday". That's what secularity means. What it means to be the religious is to have one message. It means that you are the judge. The way life is coming to me is not the way I experience life. Life is coming to me as a weight, as a burden, as un-life; and therefore, I refuse what I am receiving as images of my life. And, refusing life as it is constantly being programed to me, forces me to re-create life in the midst of that situation.

Somehow, I'm not out to recreate life just for me, but on behalf of all people. It is not just for the next thirty or forty years that I'm going to live, but for the next two hundred, three hundred, four hundred years. What it means to be the religious (and this is historical) is to be structural. It means that what you and I are about is creating structures creating systems, that allow The Word to get in history. The last few years we've been talking about dynamics. A revolutionary is not a dynamic, a revolutionary is structured. You can't kill a dynamic. You can kill a revolutionary. The new religious is structured. It is through structure that you take the word of possibility and you get it into history.

One thing that I would not want to be is a used-car salesman. You get these old clunkers in and you wax them up and put hundred-watt light bulbs on top of them so they shine; you put bananas in the differential, STP in the crank case and about a half a cup of gas in it so people who come in for a test ride can't go far. Someone comes in, needs some transportation, and you sell it; and All warrantees are voids as soon as it gets off the lot. Well, I decided that I was not a used-car salesman when I got sent to Ivy City. And human development is not something that's going to fall apart the second we leave. What we are about is creating a structure to get The Word in history - that is, a demonstration so that people can see it is possible to live in the situation they find themselves in. I have an alternative to "no life". I have an alternative to inhumanness. Choices! Now I'm not talking about integrity. We've misused the word "integrity" ever since Vietnam. I am talking about The W.rd; I am talking about possibility; I am talking about hope, not integrity. The Religious have no integrity because they have Hope - Profound Hope. They have Profound Care. Our mission in history is to care, to create a structure out of which to care. It's as simple as that. To care profoundly for two million villages - no to care for seven

revolutions, times two million villages - and to do that structurally. I think we misunderstood "charisma". I think we misunderstood "catalytic action". Somehow we thought that catalytic action somehow depended on the agent being submersed in the solution. Well, catalysis when its really catalysis, is a structural change. Our mission is somehow to get into history the saving Word, the healing Word: to die is to live.

The moral issue of our time is not responded to by some new kind of Robinhoodism. The moral issue of our time is not "take from the 15% and give to the 85%". The moral issue of our time is not economic, is not cultural, is not social. The moral issue of our time needs The Word. Everybody needs to be able to live a life, whether they're rich or poor - that the way of life comes to each human being is not what that human being experiences as life. Once you get a hold of that, then you see there is no moralism in having money and not having money, because, you see, we all "sucking air". It doesn't matter whether you live on Madison Avenue or in the South Bronx, you're sucking air. The Word of Possibility, that we've been given as a group, releases humanness. People keep telling me that we've got to find another situation like Ivy City so we can do another urban project. We can go to the suburbs to do one; we can go to Dearborn down here and do one, because all that we have is The Word. And everybody needs that Word - not just poor people. We're not problem solvers, we just live with The Word, The Word of Hope, of Possibility.

The root of our issue, the root of our inability to care in the Twentieth Century is guilt. I told the human development school that I was so tired of being a "nigger". I'm so tired of being a nigger I could die. And I'll bet you those guys over there in Iran are so tired of being White-racist men they could just die. Just so tired of being a wlaiking symbol of the guilt, the failure of the Twentieth Century. Tired. Guilt is the root issue of our time that we are to address. We keep living before the illusion that we should be able to solve the problems of this world; that with all our technology, we should be able to feed all of the poor. Guilt! The only solution to this problem is The Word of Possibility that says "pick up your bed and walk. You can live as a guilty human being. You are loved". Once that crashes in on you; you find that your guilt does not eliminate you from caring, does not eliminate you from creating one more structure of Hope; does not relegate you to some sideline responsibility, but that your guilt is your credential to move into the future. Once I get a hold of the fuilt of still being a nigger, then I can take my Negrotude and I can get it into history, structurally. No problem! You see, that's a solitary kind of decision that's a solitary struggle. It means that that happens to me. Somehow, my life is transformed. And, because of that, every life has the possibility of being changed and of being transformed. What I've got on my hands is a new mission, a new forty years. This means that for the next forty years in this outfit I'm not going to be concerned about proving anything except that I can be The Word. And, and then I'm going to try to figure out how to get my family to make that decision; and then I'm going to try to get my colleagues to make that decision - to be the Word.

There's a new movement on our hands coming out of the Human Development Training School. That offends me, a new movement! We have a new context out of which to be the religious, to be the deliverers of The Word. What the Human Development Training School produced was a new elite. And you say, "how can this be? These local people with the funny accents, - the new movement?" The new elite is here. Because what we're talking about is talking about the next forty years. You thought you'd gotten your covational thing together. You'd already made your decision. Now you've got another one.

What we discovered in the school, is that there aren't anymore minorities. This means that any "special-case" category you have been holding some of your colleagues in is gone. We've got a new movement, new colleagues. We met this "alien thing" in the training school; and I was so grateful for being there. We met this new alien called Local People; we met this New Movement, this New Elite. There was a man there from Minto and another from Cannonball; and to you know that if I have to march into the machine gun next I've got a new list of people I want to go with.

This has to do with the New Movement, the new decision to be The Word in history. Do you remember the story about Samuel, where God wanted him to anoint David. Well, Samuel had a human development project going, remember? And, I mean, he was having trouble with it: he was having trouble with the press, he was having trouble with his funding, his people weren't acting right and they were dropping out. "Throw some lightening bolts down, Lord: straighten them back up!". "Samuel, I want you to go over to the Human Development Training School". "I don't want to Go anoint David". "No, that's not my kind of colleague. Doesn't speak good English. Doesn't have a blue suit. Won't do it. It's not my choice." But, he finally got the decision made. He was going to get his guilt dealt with - his guilt about failing his assignment. So he went and he anointed David, as King - the new symbol of The Word, of The Hope, The Possibility in history.

It's not your choice - you just showed up being The Word in history, and anything else that shows up being The Word is colleague. I went to see the movie, Star Trek. It's an incredible movie about this little satellite that got sent up in the sixties or early seventies. It was shot through a black hole into another universe. In this other universe, everybody was a machine and this machine universe adopted the satellite probe. It adopted it as one of "it" as a colleague. It wondered why the satellite was so primitive, but it took it in anyway. Now, this primitive colleague had a profound message in its memory bank. And that message was to seek information, and deliver it back to the creator. Well this machine universe created an incredible delivery system around this little probe so that the probe could do its job. And for a thousand years it went from universe to universe to universe to universe seeking knowledge. Finally, it made a bee-line back to earth so they could bring back the information. The only problem was that every place it sent the information to, if it didn't get a response, it would wipe the place out. The Probe used an old radio wave system and the U.S., by then, didn't even know what radio waves were. So since earth didn't respond, it was going to wipe them out, because they

were getting in the way of the creator. There's a new, new movement - the elite. And its like a space probe. This new movement has a profound message we've not had before. The old message won't freight the new mission.

There's a vulnerability - we don't know what it means to become this new thing. Some of us are looking for a time when we could really deal with this question of being the Order, and get ourselves legal, and get our economics in shape. What does it involve - this new movement? Well, it means that we've been given a new life. It means that anyone who is talking about the end of the movement, is just their personal testimony, it's just their vocational struggle. I know one thing about everybody I see: that they are in a vocational crisis - all over again. I find that what I'm left with is responsibility. One man who left the HDTs said "I've got to go home, and register; I've got to run for council. What I've gotten out of this school is I know what responsibility is. And I need to go back and run for council". A new responsibility is here: a responsibility for everyone not just for the poor people; not just for a few Black folks.

We've got a movement on our hands that is an Everybody Movement for the first time. It is pluriform down to its toenails for the first time. I know that scares you. What that means is the same thing it meant for Samuel: we are called upon to die our deaths. We are called upon to be the craftsman, to be the masters of our own cruciformity. We are called upon to build our own crosses. That Awakening Phasing Chart passed out last night was a cross, you climb up on your own cross. My image of getting nailed to the cross has always been kind of grotesque: one guy who hammer the nails in my hand is left-handed, and keeps missing the nail. The guy who was nailing my feet, is kind of like Larry Ware - he keeps breaking his glasses, and banging my ankle with the hammer. That's the way I experience that chart-as my cross. I'm going to be doing HDP's, I'm going to be doing awakening, I'm going to be doing HDTs's for the rest of my life, can you imagine? Can you imagine somebody saying, Carlos, you've gotta do the HDP's for all of these reasons - I'd say bullshit! I don't have time to take eight weeks out of my life, out of the important stuff I'm doing.

Well, incredible absolution happened to my life and the absolution is that I rediscovered that to die is to live. To die to the illusion that you are doing something important. And, you just get your tail out there and deliver The Word, that's all: The Word of Hope, The Word of Possibility, The Word that says that every human being can live the situation they've been given. What does that look like? Well, it looks like being chosen. It looks like being the religious. It looks like what being chosen has always looked like in history. And it means earning my death. It means that I don't have to sit around and hope that this revolution is going to last until I die, like Mao Tse Tung did. It means that I've got a new lease on life. That's what it means. It means that I've got permission to go out and do what I've been too guilty and too afraid to do in my whole life. I'm responsible for every human creature. Somehow that's the new task of the new religious in our time.