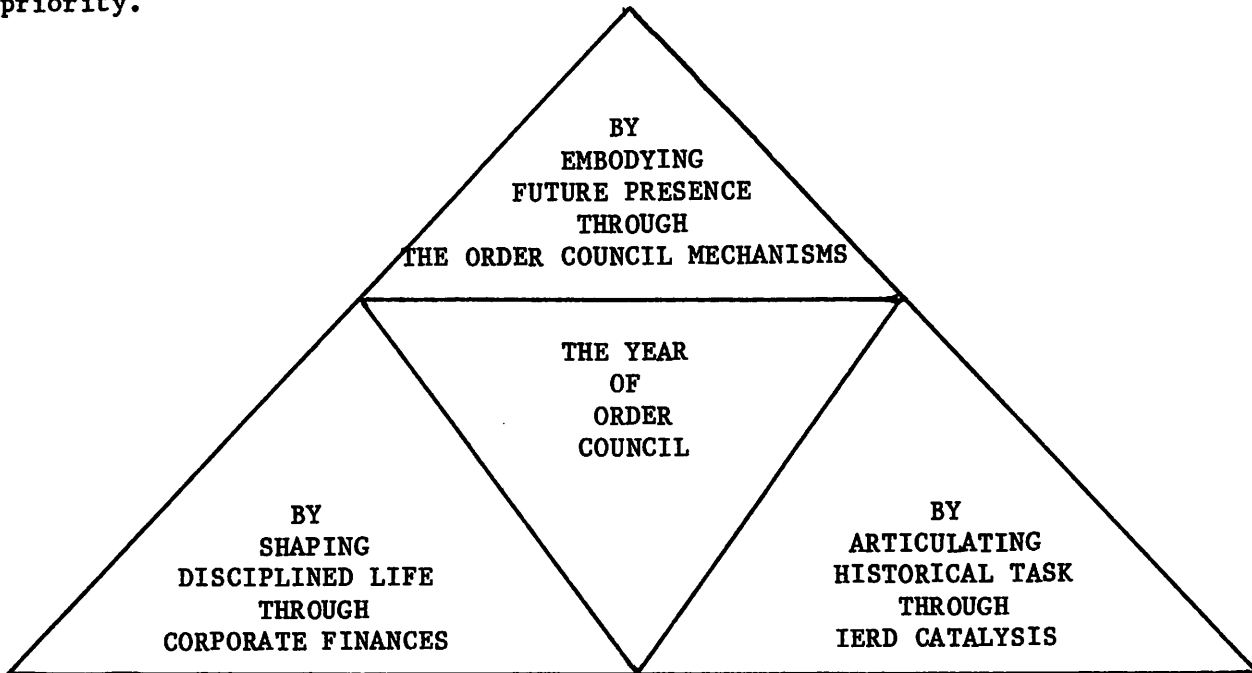


PRIORTIES - 1983 - 1984

The global Panchayat offers to the Order after reflection on the Global Priors Council and its work, the one priority for the Year 1983-1984: THE YEAR OF ORDER COUNCIL - to be activated by three polar tensional dynamics of the one priority.



It is with some fear and trepidation that we draw your attention to the fact that these dynamics are not listed in numerical order, and are few in number. However, if one weighed the stacks of paper the IERD Task Force threw in our direction as the criteria for naming them then the outcome would have been vastly different.

Be that as it may, the Panchayat makes bold to offer the one priority in this form of a polar tensional reality as we have come to regard them. I wish to return later to flesh out this dynamic of tensional dynamics because I am sure that you are experiencing as much unease as we are as we face our still to be created corporate future. And yet as I stand here, I sense there is a strange quiet confidence to create the future which has been born out of a courage in our midst the likes of which I have never plumbed the depth of before. Audacious as it might sound the courage necessary to do the next 16 months is already ours.

This statement of faith rests on a foundation of what each and everyone in this room has committed with their lives. The foundation of this courage let me repeat is what each and everyone in this Order has committed with their lives. To do this next 16 months for the sake of the next 16 years is to be the

commitment we are. Very practically each of us heard the cry that awakened consciousness and called us to service for humanity. It was a cry that had your name on it. It was a particular moment and situation--and you said, 'Yes'--never fully understanding the implications and where it would lead you.

For me that happened in Perth, Western Australia, in January, 1971, at a summer program. We had traveled 2,000 miles across the continent of Australia by bus, 1,000 of them across the desert called the Nullabor, which is an Aboriginal word meaning, 'No Trees'. And there are no trees for 1,000 miles! For me it was the first time in my 20 years of life that I had encountered the original inhabitants of Australia. In all my 20 years in Melbourne I had never encountered the Aboriginal people of Australia.

And I met a crazy group of people who were working in a place called Mowanjum. Somehow God had conspired to bring a number of things together at that moment. I had been conscripted into the Australian army, to fight in Vietnam and I was beginning to prepare a legal battle in conscientious objection. I had a deep sense as I had come to the close of my studies in accountancy of the possibility of entering a monastic religious order. And it was on the steps of the bus as I began to board it at the end of the summer program that one of you sideled up to me and put the question. It was a long ride back. By April I was in Mowanjum.

Well, you and I said 'yes' to being on that journey in this covenantal relationship of being the Order. This is a self-conscious journey in which you are faced with constantly redeciding and rearticulating what you have committed. It is not some new bright idea, but issues forth out of our living and dying every moment of the Long March and the Dark Night. Finally, what we have committed is unto death and nothing less.

This courage rests on the foundation of our peoplehood. It is our peoplehood, not someone else's mold. But it is our peoplehood--born out of the journey of our knowing and doing and embodied in our being--embodied in being corporate with common time, space, monies and assignments, and being at a collegium table. It is embodied in being pluriform engaging everyone--youth, elders, male, female, different cultures. It is radical openness and creative tensions. It is open-ended futures that we have decided to be. And it is embodied in being ecumenical--all faiths, engaged in a profound quest of the spirit.

This courage rests on faith in God's economy. This world and this time is what we have. The revolutions and new paradigm are radically reshaping the globe. This is not a mistake. The global village we have been so rudely pushed and pulled into, by the hand of that mysterious power, which we so desperately try to run from, has shattered once and for all the old, crippling, adversarial contexts and forced us into a new globally enfolded context of a global home, global relatedness, and global humanness. Within this context brand new forms of dialogue are unfolding to give form and shape to our common destiny, which is beyond ideologies, cultural isolation, religious bigotry. And then, finally, only in the indicative of our forgiveness which was mentioned at the opening of this council could we have the courage to do this 16 months.

Now, I want to come back to these polar tensional priorities. For me this has to do with standing with the courage that is already ours. It means living

unbearable tensions in this next 16 months. First, you have to get it said to yourself that none of these could exist without the other. To be a little trinitarian, they are one in three and three in one. This all has to do with a new sense of ourselves as being mission. I have always had trouble grounding that statement--that we do not have a mission, we are mission. Well, the dynamic I have found helpful here is to say that we are mission which is being the Order's presence in the world, being the Order's task to serve the world, being the Order's life for the sake of the world.

Now, before I go on to relate these to the Priority, I want to say that I find the moment of history we are in is akin to Gandhi's having just toured India by train and being thrown into his first major public appearance. You know that scene in the movie where he talks about needing to stand in the villages. Well, we have come through a time where we have toured the realm of the "Turn to the World". And suddenly we find ourselves on stage, and being more than just a half-naked fakir.

We find ourselves naked of a common strategy, in a moment which is calling for formulating a longterm, cohesive, global thrust to address the major contradictions of our times. You would suppose by now everyone would have rushed to the wings to cover their nakedness or at least have used one of the many IERD documents; but strangely in the midst of the overwhelming inadequacy, I sense a mystic euphoria. This sense of quiet confidence again, the confidence to stand with our nakedness and create the future.

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Now, there are myriad forms to this dynamic which call for the engagement of every Order member and every house to give shape to our future. But for me the centre of this new creation is going to be the collegium table. The collegium table is where the hard issues are going to be worked through.

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I am sure each of us has stories we can recount about the power of the collegium table. For me there will be no way to move into the future as a revolutionary force without this reality being at the centre of our lives.

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The third polar tensional dynamic is Shaping Disciplined Life through Corporate Finances. Our finances have always been for the purpose of releasing us for radical service. This is out to see that we ensure our future and not dribble out of history. This means going through the wrenching and crunch of the world's economic crisis. Anyone who is so naive to believe we will be spared that "final blow" because of some pious notion of "we are those who care" or our "service to humanity" should take cover quickly. We are not immune to the viscidities of history, and our old economic forms are being radically called into question.

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For me, the poetry is something like "occasioning the new epoch". Under that there are three things: 1) the Order's presence as heralds of the New Religious Mode and the New Social Vehicle, 2) the Order's task of reconciling

practices, and 3) the Order's life as service to humanity. You will see that these relate very closely to The Strategy Leap wave of the year of Order Council. But the secret that you and I know is that it has to do with repentance or being the Mystery's agents of reconciliation standing as those who manifest to the world the gap in the world. It has to do with the poorest of the poor, the entrenched positions, and the adversarial mode, calling the world to repent, to acknowledge the aspirations and the oppression of the local, to call the world to turn its back on approaches which exclude local participation, to call the world to abolish dehumanizing old operating presuppositions, and to call the world to lead the world in enabling local self-reliance, self-sufficiency, and self-sustenance. And it is to call the world to believe in local people, in inclusive participation, in anticipatory methods and in the possibility of effective structures of care.

The Order's presence as the heralds of the New Religious Mode and the New Social Vehicle is about the religious house. The religious house shows up as sheer presence in geo-social reality. It is an abode of common wisdom, a powerhouse of strategic corporate action, and a temple of depth spirit journeying and nurture.

The Order's task of reconciling practices has to do with illuminating zones of societal unity through structures in geography and with communities. It has to do with engaging forms of societal healing through forces networks, local guilds, and human development associations. It has to do with impacting modes of societal reconstruction, methods delivery, vocational engagement forms, worship and rituals, and spirit exercises.

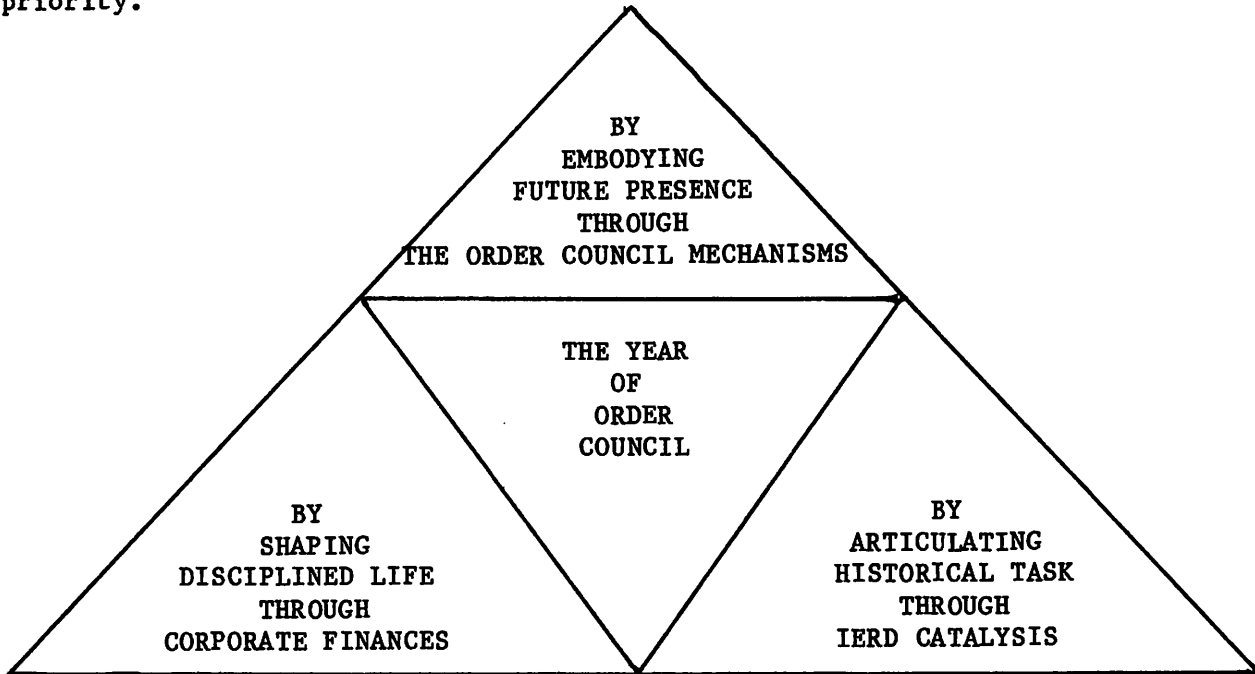
Third is the Order's life as service to humanity. We are guinea pigs, intentionally being the experiment for and on behalf of the globe in the style of service required for the 21st century. This is particularized and taking shape as radical globality with the emphasis on radical, radically to live our global humanity; as journey guides, training ourselves to be master guides of the interior journey; and the team, the practical sign of committed collegiality.

Some of this may not be on target, but we have been struggling with what is the new poetry that will catapult us into the future. What is important is the poetry we can all live and act out our lives before. I can think of no other time in history I would rather choose. I can think of no other priority at this moment that calls forth my life to radical service, for the sake of creating the future. The same radical, total, unconditional demand came to me back in January, 1971, in Perth. I can think of no other body of people with whom I would commit the totality of my life in radical covenant before the Mystery.

The Panchayat offers to the Order this priority for the Year 1983-1984: **THE YEAR OF ORDER COUNCIL.**

PRIORTIES - 1983 - 1984

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The Order's task of reconciling practices has to do with illuminating zones of societal unity through structures in geography and with communities. It has to do with engaging forms of societal healing through forces networks, local guilds, and human development associations. It has to do with impacting modes of societal reconstruction, methods delivery, vocational engagement forms, worship and rituals, and spirit exercises.

Third is the Order's life as service to humanity. We are guinea pigs, intentionally being the experiment for and on behalf of the globe in the style of service required for the 21st century. This is particularized and taking shape as radical globality with the emphasis on radical, radically to live our global humanity; as journey guides, training ourselves to be master guides of the interior journey; and the team, the practical sign of committed collegiality.

Some of this may not be on target, but we have been struggling with what is the new poetry that will catapult us into the future. What is important is the poetry we can all live and act out our lives before. I can think of no other time in history I would rather choose. I can think of no other priority at this moment that calls forth my life to radical service, for the sake of creating the future. The same radical, total, unconditional demand came to me back in January, 1971, in Perth. I can think of no other body of people with whom I would commit the totality of my life in radical covenant before the Mystery.

The Panchayat offers to the Order this priority for the Year 1983-1984: **THE YEAR OF ORDER COUNCIL.**