

OPENING ADDRESS

I'd like to welcome all of us to the 11th Research Assembly. It was in 1965 that the first group gathered for a summer program on the West Side of Chicago and every summer since then, this being the 11th, a group of people like yourselves have gathered to devote a period of weeks and their lives during that period of time to a process that we choose to call research. And now, the Global Research Assembly, Chicago, 1975, is hereby called into being.

It's been a great march these 11 years. In 1965 there were students working in 5th City; 1966 was also in 5th City; 1967 research focused on the suburban parish. In 1968 research focused on the New Religious Mode; 1969 focused on the Academy as it came to be; 1970 research focused on the Local Church Experiment birthed out of that summer; 1971 research focused on the Social Process; 1972 research focused on the contradictions and pressure points of the social process. In 1973 research focused on the Global Guild; 1974 research focused on implementing experimental action throughout the world under the banner of love. And now, in 1975 research is focusing on Social Demonstration, the Global Community Forum, and the Intra-Global Movement.

It's been a great march these 11 years. And, as we start our second decade of summer research assemblies, we reach a unique point in the history of the world for all of us perceive that the world is ready for the kind of thing that the spirit movement has represented for the last decade as never before. And that readiness in the world comes at precisely the time when the spirit movement is ready as never before to move into the world and to meet the need for a new world that every local person knows across the whole globe. We're in for a great summer, but we're not only in for a great summer, we're in for a great year. And a great second decade. Today as I remembered what it was like back in the sixties, I wondered what it would be like 10 years from now in 1985, when you and I and others meet for Global Research Assembly in North America or some other part of the world. I suspect the changes in the next ten years are going to be far more unimaginable than the changes of the last 10 years relative to what it is that the spirit movement is offering to the world.

I want to say a personal word. I look back in my own life as a human being, as a churchman, and I see that my personal history would have to be written as yours would, or you would not be here in this room. It's a personal history of being in anguish over the suffering of human beings for more years than I can remember. It's a history of a deep passion for finding ways of engaging and caring for human beings, of meeting the innocent suffering and giving my life in response to innocent suffering. It's a history of looking here and there for an effective way in which my one life can be engaged in something that's going to make a difference for the march of mankind. It's a history of experimenting in various forms of participation that would allow that passion to be expressed. And that history is your history or you wouldn't be here in this room tonight. And I welcome you to this room as a part of that great army across the world that we are now calling, "Those Who Care."

This summer we have reached a crucial turning point in the life of the movement. We're going to be working during the course of the next three weeks on creating models that will allow human beings as never before to hear the permission that is

embodied in life itself to live their lives as unique and unrepeatable human beings, in communities across the globe. And they are not abstract models; they are models that will be used as of August 1 or September 1. They will not be put in any kind of file or on any kind of shelf. They will be models that touch human lives across this globe as of immediately, when this research assembly ends. This summer we will be finding ourselves touching more deeply than ever before the hunger that every one of us in this room has had for a body of colleagues with whom we can join with the depths of our being, a body that allows me to take the one small existence that is mine and and put it together with other existences in such a way that history is changed. This summer we'll be probing the authentic depths of human life as never before. We call it the Spirit and it is there. It is the authentic human life of everyone who is born and we will be probing again into those depths, and we will be looking again at what it means to engage ourselves sociologically in expending our lives to care for the world. That's the summer that's before us.

Now in this room tonight is a totally unique body of people. Most of you know that the world grid out of which the movement has operated for these ten years divides the world into nine geo-social continents. For the first time in the life of the movement gathered in one room are representatives of seven of those nine geo-social continents. And that is a first. It is an amazing day. We have people here tonight from Seapac, from Australia, from Singapore, from Korea, from Japan, from Hong Kong, from the Phillipines and other nations in that area of the world. We have people here tonight from India, the sub-continent. We have people from Africa. We have a representative from the Middle East. We have people here from Europe, many of them. We have representatives here from Latin America and we have people here from North America. The world is present in this room. One of the other things that has happened over the last several years is that no longer is there only one research assembly held each year in one location called Chicago. Now the Global Research Assembly, global in every place in which it occurs, is a phenomenon that takes place in cities around the world. Just yesterday we received a telegram from the GRA that has been meeting for the last several weeks in Manila. They ended yesterday and we pick up exactly where they ended and start ours today. The telegram that we received from Manila reads as follows: "The GRA in Manila -- Sends Greetings to the GRA in Chicago, Summer '75. Anticipating breakloose of mass awakenment through Town Meeting." Also, we received on the Telex yesterday another greeting which I'd like to read to you. This comes from Korea and is signed by Kang Byoung Hoon, who is the prior of the Seoul House, Seoul Korea, and it reads as follows: "Greetings to the Global Research Assembly in Chicago from all of the colleagues in the Republic of Korea. We wish you meaningful engagement in your work with Town Meetings and social demonstration projects on behalf of all the planet Earth. 1975 is a great time to be alive." Signed by Mr. Kang. This is a Global Research Assembly located in one particular city.

This afternoon I went back and pulled out of the file a document which some of us in this room participated in writing back in 1966. It was the first major document that the Movement wrote, almost 10 years ago. It was the product, really, of our first assembly as a continental body across North America. There are some words in here that I'd like to read to you on the occasion of our 10th anniversary, the beginning of the 11th research assembly. I read them only to indicate that the march that we've been on for these 10 years is one march and that what we'll be

doing these next two weeks in particular is a continuation of what was started then. It reads like this, and this is the prologue to this document: "Massive upheavals rack our world. The whole globe is in revolution heretofore unknown in the history of man. It is a violent disturbance in the depths of consciousness itself. Only its radicalness matches the vastness of its scope. The race at large is hurled into a great struggle to invent, as if from the beginning, what it means to be human. This beyond all else defines our time. Nothing remains untouched. All dimensions of our personal and social existence are affected and every individual, every people, and every institution is involved. This is a universal crisis in human identity and religion. Every person in every clime and in every state of life reaches with passion after fresh, significant images, life styles and intellectual models. In brief, the total fabric of humanness is challenged. The accompanying possibilities and consequent demands are overwhelming to the point of collective trauma. Many individuals and social bodies and indeed, whole peoples have suffered failure of nerve. Hoping to stem the futuristic tide, some frantically cling to outdated models and anachronistic structures. Others expend themselves in frantic activism preferring the relative security of remedial busyness to the anxious dread of giving wholly new form to the future. The malaise of our age is not the revolution itself, but the fearfilled refusal to embrace it. Yet, finally, there is no escape for man or for mankind. Time finally takes its due. Soon or late we must forge new patterns of social relations, create new symbols of personal meaning. Only then will the deeper levels of consciousness be harnessed releasing new tides of creativity into the total human process. Herein is the key to the future." It is that last line which is what we're all about tonight, "releasing new tides of creativity into the total human process."

We're going to be working on three things during the next two weeks. First of all on something called "Global Community Forum." If you don't recognize that name, it's been masquerading under two other titles. It's been called "Town Meeting '76" in the United States and it has been called "Community Forum Canada" north of the border, but those are two manifestations of one global project called "Global Community Forum." As far as Town Meeting '76 is concerned, these next two weeks we will be recreating the equipment that is necessary for that project, and then building the models that will actualize 5,000, maybe 10,000 meetings across the United States and Canada. And then we will be talking about beginning this project in other countries around the world. Most specifically, this summer, in Great Britain and in Australia. But then there are other countries. There's Korea and there is India and there is West Germany and the list goes on, perhaps eight more already are anticipating the arrival of something called the Global Community Forum. For Global Community Forum, as we will see in the next two weeks, is a universal tool. Wherever human beings yearn to expend their own passion for their neighbor in community, Global Community Forums are exactly what the world in this moment is waiting for. You and I have the privilege this two weeks of working on that universal tool.

We'll be, some of us, spending our time in the next two weeks on things called "Global Social Demonstrations." Now that is not new to us. Fifth City was the first global social demonstration. That goes back over ten years now. And from the very beginning the people in 5th City and those who worked there understood that what was going on there was a global demonstration of the possibility of

reformulating local community. That was the story above all other stories that has kept 5th City in being and allowed it to expand and become the demonstration of possibility to people around the world that it literally is. There is no place in this world that you can go these days where 5th City is not known, and pointed to, and held up as a sign that human life is possible in the midst of the 20th Century. Nor should global social demonstration be strange to us for, for several years now, we have heard about Oombulgurri and the work with the aboriginal peoples of northwest Australia. That was the second one. And the third one is no stranger to us, either: The Marshall Islands in the South Pacific in a place that the world called Majuro. But what has been discovered in the course of this project is that the real name of those islands is not the Marshall Islands, but Lowelaplap, and you will see on the grid over on the other wall that that is the name of that social project -- Lowelaplap -- the third great social demonstration. Now, five more. Five more, not somewhere in the future, but five more now that have been identified and the grids line the wall of the great hall. You can look at them and see Africa, you can see Australia, you can see Korea, you can see the Pacific, you can see North America, you can see India, you can see Rome, and you can see London. Five more great social demonstrations. And this week, this next two weeks, we will be building the models that allow those five more demonstrations to begin immediately as signs to the world of possibility in the future.

The third thing that we will be working on is what is called "Intra-Global Movement." We already have a global movement. We already are a global movement. Now, what does it mean to take that globality so much inside ourselves that the globe becomes our home? It is not that you have a movement strung around a fairly unknown globe. It is that the globe is our home. And within that globe -- intra -- the movement. We will be working these next two weeks on things like the Primal Community Experiment, which now goes on in well over 100 cities around the world and were it not for the primal community experiment, then community forums and social demonstrations would mean nothing, finally. It is the primal community, the primal community, the primal community, 500,000 primal communities across the world which is where local people live. And we will be working on the primal community experiment as that basic tool of the movement for reformulating human community. We will be working on the metro cadre. What does it mean for a network of people across the world to be living out of the same symbols and models and timelines. The circuit, the circuit of consciousness, the circuit of action, the circuit of depth human spirit . . . we will be working on that. We will be working on the Global Order. In short, we will be working on bringing into new definition and focus Those Who Care -- the people who care.

Well, who are we in this room that are going to be doing that kind of job? I would want to say that first of all, we are the sensitive and responsive ones. Now, there is no credit in being sensitive and responsive, it is not something that you get a merit badge for. It is something that you either show up being or you do not show up being. And if you did not show up being sensitive and responsive you would not be here tonight. I start with that indicative. We are those who somewhere down deep inside of us for whatever reason we will never know, were touched and awakened and made sensitive and called forth. That is who we are. I was thinking this afternoon of a man in Amarillo, Texas that I met, who is chairman of the Town Meeting Sponsorship Committee for the Town Meeting that was held in Amarillo this month. He made a remark after the Town Meeting, we were having our

celebration, and he said, "You know, all my life I have been different. I have never really fit in. I have always been different." He said, "This is the first time when I have had permission to go ahead and be the different one I am." Well, that is who we are, we are the different ones, and we have permission to take that kind of strangeness, that kind of what the world might call kookiness and use it as the gift that it is.

Inside of every single person in this room, there is a wildness of the spirit. If there was not you would not be here. Now some of us have more and more layers that we put over the wildness, but down deep inside there is a wildness. It is a product of our age. It is a product of the Mystery, but it is there and we are those who live with that kind of wildness. We are a wild bunch. Now, in the midst of that wildness, we get scared. Did you ever wake up just finding yourself frightened by who you are? -- and by those currents that keep pushing you and keep forcing you and keeping you in turmoil and uneasy? Did you ever wake up being scared? How is it that you and I develop the courage to stand and to stand and to stand in that kind of wildness and to stay on the march? Not only the courage but finally the power to be in the midst of this world the presence of hope for other human beings. To embody within ourselves that possibility of life in such a way that when someone looks at us they do not see us, they see the presence of hope in this world.

Well, this next two weeks we are going to hear a lot of words used, We are going to hear "hope" used a whole lot. It is a time of hope. But it is not hope we are talking about, it is hope beyond hope. It is the hope that defies human reason and that goes beyond anything that we ever defined as hope. Yet, finally it is not hope that we are talking about, because hope does not exist in itself. We are talking about love, but it is that kind of love that is beyond love. It is the love that is sheer transparent passion for caring for other human beings. These social demonstrations and these global community forums, they are done as a way of acting out the care, the love for the world that we all embody within ourselves. And, then it is not just love that we are going to be talking about, it will be faith as well. For the touch of possibility, of intensifying your decision to love the world, throws you back into the question of "why? What is my life all about? This is absurd." The questions that are there eternally are brought to the surface. And in the middle of that, when love is intensified and faith is intensified, then there appears hope. We will be talking about that and in the midst of that, what does it mean to be those who trust the Mystery, finally, with their lives, simply trust the Mystery that brings all to be. We will be using some other words. You will hear words like "humiliation", "weakness", "resentment", "suffering", "the dark night of the soul." You will hear words like "dislocation" and "ineffectivity" and "depletion" and "unfulfillment" and "long march of the soul", and you will be hearing words about living endlessness with the fulfillment that is there. You will be hearing all of those, but do not let those words bother you. The question about those words is "How is that as a sensitive human being alive in the 20th Century those things have happened to me that are pointed to by those words?" That is the question. If we do not know what it is that has happened to us, then we are in danger.

Another one of the things that these summer assemblies do is to give us a chance to care for ourselves. To learn what it means to care for ourselves. Not for the sake of yourself, mind you, but how is it that you care for yourself in order that you may care for the world? It does no good to care for the world,

and then to lose your ability to care for the world so that your care for the world cannot be exercised. The question is how do we, on this strange journey that we are on, care for ourselves in such a way that we can care for the world. Well, there are things like reflection. We will be doing some of that. The ability to stand back and to understand what is going on inside of us so that we can articulate it, understand it, never fully understand it, but begin to get some glimpse as to what it is that is happening to us. There will be solitude. Not much of it, but it will be there. There will be solitude in this summer program. As a matter of fact it will probably be somewhat less structured than those of you who have been to summer assemblies before are accustomed to, but that is the way it is these days. It is very hard to be corporate. It gets more and more difficult every single day to be corporate. To march in step. The world is too complex to march in step anymore. We find ourselves more and more on our own, making decisions, bearing the responsibility of caring for ourselves. That will be there in the midst of this summer.

Well, the assembly is for research and as never before what we do this summer is going to bring forth documents which are the products of our research. Probably, finally, that is the number one value of what goes on here -- what we produce. This is a working assembly and we will be producing, producing, producing. And, what we produce will be implemented. We will get out products. But in the process of doing that, the process itself will be of value for we stand as a body of people out on the edge of where things are. So much so, that it is never possible to sit down and lay out in advance, carefully, the procedures that you are going to go through in order to produce "X" kind of documents. You can anticipate that, but you will find that if you are doing your work well, that is authentically, that is deeply, that there is no process that you can lay out in advance that is capable of holding the passion that you will experience in the course of the work that we will be doing together. The process itself is a great journey. So, in the midst of all that, training goes on in these summer assemblies. You will be learning what it means to use methods like you have never learned before. I mean the kind of practical methods that one man here is using in the city government in a major city and another here is using in industry and another person here is using as a teacher and another person here is . . . on down the line. We will be learning by doing those methods. We will be on a great journey and singing will be an important part of that journey. You heard just a foretaste tonight of great songs. Everybody is writing songs these days, have you noticed? A couple of weeks ago we had a whole file full of new songs that people have written in the last couple of months. It is incredible, to say nothing about the kind of songs that are being written in Town Meetings and Community Forums all over the place. It is a time in which poetry is breaking loose and we will find ourselves singing. Singing will be different than in the past.

You may have noticed on some of the literature you have on your placemats and over there on the wall, a new symbol. It is the symbol of the summer. It is a triangle inside the pentagon inside the circle and I am not going to talk about that tonight except to say that the circle represents the three great tasks of the summer. The pentagon represents the five things that you and I will be doing for the rest of our lives . . . the five expressions of our care. The triangle represents the three things that life is all about - faith, hope and love. That symbol will be the center of our program during these next few weeks and we will be talking about it again tomorrow.

Then, you may have noticed in the literature you received tonight a strange looking thing that laid out the next 15 days. Now, by the way in which the world reckons time, that period of time is called two weeks. The way in which the summer research assembly is going to reckon time, that is three weeks. You will see that we have three weeks of four days and so we will work hard, I mean 12 hours a day for three days and then there will be a day of discontinuity. The first one will be a Town Meeting on July 4. And, as American citizens (those of us who are), we're delighted to invite people from around the world on this July 4 to participate in forging the future of this particular nation by participation in a Town Meeting. That is one of the things that makes Town Meetings what they are. They are global happenings. In the first instance they have nothing whatsoever to do with the American Bicentennial, but then, of course, obviously they do. But their meaning is about the future of human community. That will be our first discontinuity. Then we will have another day later on focused on social demonstration and finally the closing plenary on the last day of the first two weeks. So, we will have three weeks in the course of two, and it will be a fine time.

Tomorrow morning you will have a design, some of you already do have the circular design that shows the day, how the day is laid out and I will not say anything about it. It is pretty apparent. The day is punctuated by visits to the new creation in the Kemper building, or, as we called it back in the Town Meeting in March, Kemper City. The new creation in Kemper City is the Mall. And, your materials talk about what the functions are that go on in the mall and we suspect that this summer the mall or the whole of the second floor except for this room, is going to be the center of the activity of this particular community during the time that we are together, and perhaps we will find ourselves spending more time visiting our own main street rather than going out into the community. Who knows what will happen there.

Well, there is a promise in all this. There is a promise that is almost beyond our imaginations in what is going on this summer. Take Town Meeting '76 alone, the promise of 5,000 Town Meetings, we are beginning to think the promise is 10,000 Town Meetings. If there were 10,000 Town Meetings in the United States of America with 200 people in them, you know how many that would be. That would be two million human beings through Town Meetings. That will make a difference in this world. And then there is the promise of eight other countries where Town Meetings are going to happen. 35 million people. Can you imagine that? 35 million people awake to a new possibility for their community? And, then social demonstration. If 5th City is any kind of an indication of the power that social demonstration has on the human imagination, eight social demonstrations around the world, eight more next year, eight more the year after that . . . will there be any human beings in the world that do not have their mind, their consciousness, their spirit impacted by all of that? That is the promise of this research assembly. We are here as those who have decided to give our lives in creating ripples of hope across the world that will change the world and will, perhaps, bring in the new day.

