

PROFOUND HUMANNESS as INTEGRITY

Global Priors Council 7/27/77

A fine line has been drawn in our time. In some ways it has been drawn in the last two years. That line has lifted a haze that has been across our eyes so we can now see exactly where we have to stick our lives. That is a global experience of man. The integrity of profound humanness can be talked about because this whole year it has been coming to you. All you have to do to get at that is to remember the reports that have been made in these last several days and the kind of work we did here. It has also become secondhand knowledge to people that integrity is not what we used to say it is not, i.e. rules, some kind of quality or merit you might have, or values or principles. People know that. They know that no one has integrity. I suspect that all you have to do is look around the room to see that that is true as well. Watergate was a global phenomena. It had to do with integrity. Nobody has integrity.

There is only one kind of integrity, and we have banged our heads on that for a long time. We called it secondary integrity at one point. It's the integrity that is not you, but you are of it. This integrity that is profound humanness is a tent. You go and live in that tent and you feel like a human being. You are a human being. If you go outside that tent, you are a man-dog or a woman-cow. I think this year most of us have met strangers that lived in the tent. You worked with them like you knew them all your life and you did miracles with them. There were other people that you woke up in a Town Meeting or a Social Demonstration, and they came over to you. They wanted to know what this was. They didn't hum and haw around it. They came right out and said, "What is your secret? How do you keep going? How do you live like this?" They wanted to know. In the past when people came to us with a question, we used to give them a long context. It covered the whole of history. You hoped that somewhere in the whole thing, they would pick something up. You don't have that kind of time anymore. You really have to give sort of an answer-unanswer. I believe this is really what we have been starting to work on here. Some time along the way we will come out with the "Sayings of Profound Humanness" that you just say and people understand.

There was a fellow named St. Augustine who tried that out. He once said, "You love God and do what you please." That's an answer-unanswer that allows you to take in a whole lot at once. We know enough about theology and temporality to know that we have got to do that job ourselves and say for our own time what that is. That leaves us with the question: "How do I be a human being? How do I be a person of integrity?" We all have to find a way to get our insides out. That is, to get inside profound humanness and know that you are also issuing a call for people to step across this line in our time. This line that has been drawn is a line that represents the cry for economic justice -- the line of 15% and 85%. It's the seven revolutions that are stumbling along.

Integrity as profound humanness is keeping your own conscience. You really can't say much more than that. That's about all there is to say. Behind that, there's a whole lot. There is an awakening when you found out that you are going to die and you are headed for death. You only have one life to live and you have decided to straighten up and live it right. You find out that there is criticism in life and some think this and some that. You began to shape your life that way, and it became a ping-pong game and you were the ball. You close that game down. Then, you decided what you wanted to do. You created a private conscience. What you found is that you'd turned your life over to your appetites or some abstract goal or principles. Then came along a moment in your life. We have been through this one over and over again. Sometimes it is not the moment; it is remembering the moment. I've been struck this year at how many people in the course of a conversation would say that this human occurrence I know when I was four, five, six, seven years old; it wasn't something that came, necessarily, late in life. It comes over and over again. Hammarskjold has a tremendous piece of writing in his book, *Markings*, about this. He says this:

You told yourself you would accept the decision of fate, but you lost your nerve when you discovered what this

world required of you. Then you realized how attached you still were to the world which has made you what you were, which you would now have to leave behind. It felt like an amputation; a little death. And you even listened to those voices which insinuated that you were deceiving yourself out of ambition. You'll have to give up everything. Why, then, weep at this little death? Take it to you quickly; with a smile die this death and become free to go further - and with your task, whole in your duty of the moment.

Whatever this is that stirs that moment in you is what you keep, what you watch over and take care of and be careful about. This is what leads you to being a human being. You start keeping it just a little and you know what happens. Everything inside you gets torn up and you fall into a perpetual state of self-criticism. While outside, the haze of life gets lifted and you begin to see things with particular specificity. This "keeping your own conscience" belongs you to humanness. It's your ticket to the task. It's the only way, finally that you have of seeing what you are doing is real. There is a story about an old man who had two sons and he told them something to do. You remember one of them said, "No, he wouldn't do it," and then he went off and did it. The other son said he would do it and then he didn't go do it. Now, the man who said no had this happen to him in the middle of his life and he took care of his conscience. When that jarring came, he knew what he had to do and he went and did it.

There is more to this. Integrity as profound humanness is hitting the moral issue of our time. This line is drawn across our moment. On one side is the big haze. The big haze is everything I ever wanted. Everything I ever wanted is so much that it is a big haze that I can't figure out. On the other side is this 15%-85%. And the way I have begun to write it is the poor. It's the poor of spirit, the poor of body, the poor of mind. It's the humankind that suffers. When you see that, you see that the issue of which side you are going to be on or which is better or which is more loved than the other is not a question any more. It's not a question anymore. That has already been dealt with. The only question that you've got is, "Where are you going to put both feet?"

We've tried it all. We've tried putting one foot on one side and one foot on the other and both in both. By doing that, you found out certain things. You found out that whenever you keep your conscience just a little, and you care about it, somewhere, somehow there's a power that comes. You've seen yourselves and you've seen others do miracles. Do one hundred Town Meetings in a single bound. Raise up seven buildings with the speed of a bullet. It's hard to get a hold of it, hard to understand it. After that, people have come up and said to you that the course of the community is changed, that this place will never be the same again. When that's occurred, you've sensed (That's not a strong enough word.) the load of history has come to you as your life. You've also known that as soon as you put aside this taking care of your conscience, you pour cold water on it. You forget it. You don't tend it. You don't care for it. It starts off something like this: you say to yourself, "Now the reason I did this . . . or the reason I'm going to do something else." You learn fast that the failure mentality, the despair, negativism, cynicism, fillyism or whatever else you want to add to that list is rooted in a refusal to keep your own conscience. When you get both feet on the other side of that line (You keep your conscience just a little.) things start getting clear. You see the human suffering of the world. It's not just seeing. It penetrates your being. You are profoundly addressed by how much there is to do. You go out into a village and you know that all around this village, the same thing exists. And beyond those villages, there's more and more. And you enter into the suffering of the world. The issue you face isn't how little or how much you can get done, how effective or ineffective in one sense, that you are. It's "There's a lot of work to do; let's get to doing it." I think you step across and call your shot and carry it through, or you join the reactionary un-society that's passing away at that point.

You've all been given answers to how we got sustained this year, or what sustained us as a body. I think mine would go something like this: We got sustained as a body because we lived out of and we lived off of the suffering of humankind. We saw through a village or Town Meeting that there was another and another and another. The preoccupation that came over us was, "Let's get this one done so we can get to the next one, so we can get to the next one." You don't notice at that time, but I believe that that's the point where integrity begins to raise its tent over your head and you don't know it. I believe where you wake up to integrity, you wake up to

integrity shadowing you. It's at the point of this business of constituting a new image of humanness. That would be another way I'd say, "Integrity as profound humanness is constituting the new image of humanness." That's sort of like this training thing we've been saying to ourselves. Somebody comes to a project and says they want to get trained. They bug you, and all you can think to say is, "Would you get that chain over there? Put it in the car. We've got to get the truck out of the ditch." And they show up again wanting to get trained and you have them going after other chains. A few weeks later they come up and you notice that they are trained. They're leading a group. They're doing things. They're building models. All this time you've been worrying about how in the world you'd get them off to an ITI and things like that. I think integrity is a little bit like that.

The locus of integrity for a moment is in constituting the new image of humanness. The key that we've all come to know about is this business of nobodies. A "nobody" is anybody who's going so fast he doesn't have time to be somebody. There is a global command. It's like the rule of the Order. It is not written, but you know for sure when you're around it. It's doing this global command . . . not your project, not your Town Meeting, but this global command, or not even your business, if you're a businessman. It's doing this global command that allows a person to be a nobody. Blame and praise don't count much for motivity at that point. It's getting this global command actuated that becomes motivating. Or a way someone else said to me, "It's really exciting now."

Winning is doing it all at once. This gradualism and doing it one at a time belongs on the other side of that line. Winning is doing it all at once, doing what you say, delivering, living out beyond the border where no one else can go. Several of you commented that you go into offices where people are supposed to be caring for places, and the one remark they make is, "I don't know how you guys go out there and live in that village and do that kind of thing." You know that that guy's got an address on his life to deal with, and things have begun to happen. It's going like a freight train, never slowing down. Then when the awards are being passed out, you beat the Lone Ranger because you're not even there to say, "Hi ho Silver." You're off doing the next one. You really don't feel much like integrity, I must confess. In fact, you don't feel like you've done very much. You certainly don't feel like you've gotten through. You feel like there's just more to be done.

You know, sometimes you hear a word that comes to you that the village drunk, who always hung around the office and caused trouble, got out of his bed the other day. He had the flu. It began to rain and through his laryngitis he cussed out the whole village and got them to finish the wall in the rain. You know something happened out of that.

Or you get one of those invitations to go to dinner from some patron who has just given you a gift. I always worry whenever somebody does that, or when I'm the one who has to go. He fattens you up, you know. Then he kills you with praises about how tremendous you are and all the things you've done. You know what's coming. Then, things get quiet and the martinis go by for a while. You see that he's hiding behind a lampshade a little bit. He says in a very quiet voice, "I've always wanted to do what you're doing." Then he asks you if you want to have another martini and you're glad to get out of there and go about your business. (You learn a little bit about development guys. They either have got to be great priests, or they get burnt up in a hurry.) You hear later about this guy. He starts sending you things you didn't ask for. And he's getting you out of trouble you didn't even know you were in. Some people say he's gone a little nuts. He's gone beyond what a businessman can do and lost his objectivity. He's getting other people to come and see. Then you hear that other businessmen are joining him in this. I get a little scared and I tremble a little bit. What kind of power is getting loose here that would create that? It's about that time you begin to look up into your colleagues and see this integrity showing all over their faces. That gets you a little scared, too.

All of this is really contained in this last one. Integrity as profound humanness is creating new community. That's really what it's all about. It comes down to this; hitting the moral issue, keeping your conscience, constituting the new image of humanness. It's all tied to making a new picture of what a village looks like, when you picture what an inner city looks like, or what a town looks like.

A long time ago we said that the center of civilization in our time is the cities. It's an urban world, and that's bothered us a little bit about going to the country. Well, you see, Bombay doesn't know how to build an urban city until the villages of Maharashtra give it a picture of what it looks like to be a human village. Finally, all of that is Bombay, Chicago, and London don't know what it is to build a human city until the inner city gives them a picture of what a human city looks like.

It doesn't work the other way in our time. It comes from the ground up. It's the arisement of local man. It's the only place you get clear about what humanness is. The new neighborliness, the stakes, the new economic functions, the guilds, this global band -- we don't really know yet what we've got on our hands there. All these pictures have got to get delivered up to where people can see them in order for anybody to begin to be human.

You step back a little bit and you look at all these faces. You see all the faces of the villagers and people in Town Meetings. You see all those picture books that "Life" and other magazines used to put out -- all those faces. They're human faces. What you know is that they live like man-dogs and like woman-cows. In those faces (They're our faces, too.) there is a beckoning to come and tell. They want to be told. They know it, but they've got to be told in order to know it, just like us. We've always got to be told what we know in order for us to know it. And that's not enough. They've got to see it. Everybody in our time knows that this is what life is about in our day. People have got to go and somebody has got to go and tell and show in order for any kind of humanness to happen. Some people say that labor is dehumanizing (or that some kind of labor is dehumanizing), or that there is something else that is dehumanizing. I want to venture to say that labor and something is never dehumanizing to anybody. When you stop to tell them and you stop to show them that, then everything that is dehumanizes you.

The integrity we've experienced is really these walls. When you look over here and over there, you know about the presence of integrity, and about this presence of integrity. I think that's why we feel like human beings. It's strange because this is really not what we've done. Though you know, we've done it. Like Oklahoma 100, somebody said that it took half the Order and the whole state of Oklahoma to do it. If you think that's bad, it's embarrassing to tell you about Kwangyung II. It took the Navy. It took two acceleration teams. It took the guardians. It took the whole village. Finally, it took all of Korea to do that. I imagine we could share some stories around the room about what it took. That tells us something.^[1] Integrity as profound humanness is finally a social reality. You don't get to participate in that save you bring the whole show within the tent. I'm looking forward to the day -- and maybe before I get to the grave, I'll see it or hear it -- people are going to say, "Now that is a community of integrity." They're going to say something like, "Now, there goes a man of integrity. He's from Maliwada." That's how you know he's a man of integrity. They'll say that because they know that they can see it. Integrity is like a fast freight train that's going by them. They know that they, too, can get on it.

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