

GUARDIANS OF THE MOVEMENT

Now for about two years I have been aware that the hour was rapidly approaching when the guardianship of the movement had to be radically spread. It was now coming to the state where it was beyond a few not too bright and not too capable people in Chicago, most of whom were clerics to begin with, to adequately guard the possibility in history that the movement has become.

I've never been much interested in organization. I think the movement has to be organized, and pay very little attention to organization. A movement has to be effective, and pay very little attention to efficiency. A movement is something quite different from a corporation within the establishment. I'm not interested and never have been in another committee. I call that sophisticated boy scoutism.

I've never been interested in another club, another organization. And I think that a part of the wonder in our group is that we have kept organization to a minimum. You are probably aware of this thing-a-ma-jig called the order, for which there is no legal basis whatsoever yet. That kind of thing has probably made us. And as I was in the room here tonight clearing things, what Joe calls fellowhood, I thank God that there wasn't any organization in this room. It isn't needed. A movement does not think necessary organization, and no organization maintains that movement that doesn't make it necessary.

The guardianship has to do with the finances. I think we probably chickened out a bit last night, when you come right down to it, on the finances. One thing that a revolutionary has to discover firmly is that there are no hidden sides, no dark sides of life. He moves head on into any arena that has to be entered into in order that his mission and his movement comes off. It's been increasingly a part of my consciousness that the financing of the movement has to rest upon a great many other shoulders than just the few that up to now have done one miracle after another in order to bring us this far. The guardianship relative to the finances has been broadened. It's on your shoulders.

Then secondly, the guardianship that I spoke of has to do with wisdom. And again, no boy scoutism. I can't stand anything that seems like a M.Y.F. society. If a person isn't given to the movement, I don't care what he knows, his wisdom is not wisdom. The wisdom we need is the wisdom that comes out of the guts and through the head. If you are not a movement person, your wisdom is of very little use. And I think that is true of any kind of a revolutionary movement. They must be willing to learn from whatever source.

I mean something like this. I just think that never again will we be going into a new four years, or never again would we take a radical turn without a series of minds participating in the forging of such a turn. At this moment in history when we're turning a twenty year curve, that burden must be spread through a much broader field of commitment.

The fourth area is where I've had great conflicts. There have got to be some elite forces in a movement who are demonstration forces. A little later on when I get to what I really want to talk about, I think I can illustrate that better. There's got to be some elite forces who use themselves as demonstration projects in crucial areas. Up to now there have been a few of us who have been these demonstration forces. Our lives have been research centers and demonstration projects. This has to be widened. And without that, the movement is not going to have adequate guardianship. And by the way, I might say, that in recent months, I've had association with certain men, men on the campus of North Side Chicago, who themselves have become a part of those demonstration forces. And the kind of new sense of relaxation I have in me is almost beyond description.

I take it, if you're movement, you are over this business that to be of service you have got to be out doing something. I hope you're over Yankee activism. Sitting in this room not doing one dammed thing is probably the most important thing you've done for a long time. I know I didn't get that said well. But if you grasp what a revolutionary movement is sooner or later, you're going to grasp the meaning of that kind of thing. In many ways, the fourth one, I say to myself, you must become the defenders of the movement. I look back, and it was almost a

dozen swordsmen who were trying to defend the movement. That can't be done any more. There must be many other blades.

I tell our first priors in the religious houses spread across the world, that those religious houses are utterly nothing. When the movement is in trouble, they throw those houses to the wolves immediately, pull out their swords, and like the Queen's Guardsmen, they back up to Chicago, fighting every step of the way. We need more blades than that if we're going to defend the movement. For the movement is going to be in trouble, you mark my words, in the next twenty years. Over and over and over again. And perhaps the day has come. I'd like to say to you doctors, you lawyers, you business men, that when that hour comes when the movement is in trouble, you throw your post, your station to the winds, you pull your sword, and back up with those priors who defend the movement. This is poetry. But for some of you it isn't poetry. When we've wanted to have some cash money for a mortgage, or we've gotten ourselves into a little legal difficulty, where we've had to call upon your swords in order to defend the movement. That's the way I've grasped this group.

Now, I want to talk about the next twenty years. Last time we mentioned this together. On July 1 we begin the next twenty years, and the vision has been given that in this building we will have something like a thousand people. I think that something like six lectures have to be given around the edges working on the tactical systems for the new social vehicle, six lectures given on the vision for the next 20 years.

I didn't know Martin was going to talk about visions in the conversation. For the last six months, nine months, we've been working on this and I've drawn together in five lectures. I have one yet to go which is a historical grounding, and I want to give you those five lectures tonight. And to have you start thinking and perhaps we can talk a little bit, and I'll try to do it very briefly.

The third lecture is on the last 55 years. This is the 55th year of church renewal in our century. And for those who are hardened old revolutionaries in that war, we owe it to the established church, and owe it to the world that the church serves, to account what's happened. It seems to me that when you peel the outer leaves of the artichoke off and get to the heart of the matter these are the five things that the renewal movement has accomplished in the twentieth century.

First was the recovery of the Christ happening as a happening. And that almost needs to be set off by itself as the crucial thing that was accomplished. And I cannot over-emphasize the fact that the recovery was a happening, an event. That is to say, lives were changed. And so far as I'm concerned, if you take RS-1 and if your life is not changed, I mean for the rest of your life, then you have not been to RS-1. That's the kind of thing that I'm talking about and in the recovery of the Christ figure as an event in human life, the radical bottom of humanness itself was blown out, in which we discovered the contentlessness of Christ, if you please. Which is another way of saying that. life has but one content, and that's Christ. Christ was not some kind of an ideology that had to do with the West, or had to do with Christianity. The Christ happening was the human happening that disclosed finally what it meant to be a human being. And in a way, I say that's all that was accomplished.

Then the second of the five things, which is rather obvious to you, the church forged an image of her task or function in the civilizing process. And probably this almost comes to your mind first. Those of you who are old enough within the struggle know that not so many years ago the church did not understand that she was mission to the civilizing process, or to the world.

Now, it seems like you are almost psychotic to say that that couldn't be. But it was. And this was one of the crucial symptoms of the deep, deep illness of the church. But the important thing that has happened in that is the radicality of that awareness in which the church discovered the categories of people of God and dynamic of history without which history is not history. That's the radicality. This has nothing to do with religion whatsoever, nothing to do with piety whatsoever. Nothing to do with theology. It's an empirical awareness about the way life is.

The third thing that has happened in these last 55 years is the recovery of the ecumenical vision. And if you know anything of the history of the church in this twentieth century you are quite well aware of the fact that the ecumenical movement, so called, is a crucial aspect of that. And what is usually meant by the ecumenical movement which is manifest in Vatican II and Protestant churches joining themselves together, and in such things being formulated as world councils. That's a part of it. But for me that's not the crucial part. -What happened in

our day was the recovery, the discovery if you please, of grass roots ecumenism. You saw this in the first instance, I suppose, in people no longer caring about being a Presbyterian or a Methodist the way their grandparents cared about being a Presbyterian and Methodist. Until finally it got to the place where it was almost impossible to tell the difference between a second rate Baptist and a second rate Presbyterian or Anglican. And then the bottom was blown out of this also when a transparency occurred in and through which was discovered for our day the essentialistic dimension of humanness itself. Now let's see if I can slow that down and say it.

In our day, you had to embrace your uniqueness to the hilt, both as an individual and as a group. A black man, if he was going to know authenticity, had to be a black man to the hilt. A white man had to be a white man to the hilt. If you were a non-westerner you had to become a non-westerner. Now, in embracing our unique finitude, a transparency occurred in which we have discovered in our time an ecumenism, and that word "ecumenical" means the whole wide world, or humanness itself. Actually, we discovered a new sense of what it meant to be a human being, so that in our day, there could not be such a thing within the people of God, as a black church, a white church, a western church, an eastern church.. This national church could only be the church because it's dealing with radical humanness.

The fourth thing that happened in the last 55 years is the recovery of disciplined community. If you know even a little bit about the history of church renewal you understand that communities, not by the scores but by the hundreds sprang up in Europe and in the United States. And the highways of our age are littered with the debris of the death of those communities. My point here - man starved for fellowship attempting to commence a fresh community. What was discovered in the church was the idea of disciplined community. Which is to say that community was not forged this way. But Lynn and I grabbed hands to do a task in history and in order to do that task had to discipline our relationship with one another and in the midst of this we discovered a new kind of radicality in our relationship which really is defined in terms of the recovery in depth of spiritual self discipline. So that a man finally lives his own life out of the deep wellsprings of his inner being and no longer crutches upon his wife and no longer crutches upon his friend and no longer crutches upon any external circumstances. He is his man. And then can recover how because he doesn't have to crutch upon another he can give himself to another. I wish I had time to spell that out. And it's simply because the glories of that awareness.

And the last, was the rediscovery of the other world. Church renewal, and this is crucial, stumbled upon this. One thing you have to be aware of here, nobody ever started out directly to discover the other world. You set out to discover the spirit dimension of life. It always avoids you. Church renewal stumbled upon this, but now you can scarcely read a decent magazine article or a book, and it's even reflected in the movies,-without coming across some term like "the other world." I'm not talking about a discovery by a few pious people. I'm talking about a discovery of concerned people within our time of that lost world, the world where one lives before the mystery that never goes away and finds it bleeding forth in every life situation and ends up knowing in its absence that we long like a frustrated lover for the presence of the absent mystery. Where he knows again the very potent sickness when the really real which the New Testament translates as the ontological dimension of life, is no longer there. In which other world the one grasps afresh his freedom in such intensity that he is aware that he is responsible only to God. In the other world in which one becomes aware that he is responsible for the whole wide world in the other world. I was sitting beside a man tonight who said that he didn't have any problems. Where in the midst of the renting and agonies of life there is a peace beyond human comprehension. Put in secular, post modern world language, there are no problems. Night is no more. There is no more death. This is your other world. Nothing religious, nothing pious. But through the veil of anybody's life, this world is there and it is discovered afresh. Before, the Lord willing, most of you in this room die you're going to know so much about this realm that what I am saying now will seem to you like kindergartenism. That is my report on the last 55 years of church renewal. Now we've got to look at the next 20.

How do you dream the impossible dream? How do you dream this? I don't know. First of all I want to talk about the paramount trends within the establishment that I see. And you'll see the fruition of them I prophesy.

First of all, the marriage of the establishment with the movement shall become full grown. It has already taken place though it is still in its early days of marriage in which the established church will face the overwhelming ironies of finally marrying its own child that it hated. And the movement will face the irony of her hopes not coming off because the future of what happens to the establishment will be out of the wedding and not out of the dream of the revolutionary.. Though without the dream, and I meant the dream in which the being of the

revolutionary is mixed up, what does happen through the wedding of the establishment and the movemental cannot come into being. That's one of the inevitable tragedies of the wonder of life itself.

The second trend will be the actualization of this new discovery of this universality, within the church, within our lifetime. Once again the universalism of the church shall be the dominant note, and manifest in practical actuality. You know, as I know, that after World War II the new birth of nationalism across this globe, the church fell into the trap of that nationalism and began to set up all kinds of nationalistic churches. I happen to be a Methodist. In my life time, I have seen a world wide Methodism be fragmented across the globe. And this is only one of the churches. But what is going to happen is that the new vision of universalism within the church is going to move toward a practical manifestation of that universalism beyond western and beyond non-western churches, beyond the black and the white churches, beyond the male and the female, and beyond the youth and the aged.

The third trend is a reappropriation within the historical church of missi-ology. That's mission. Missiology. And it's not in your lifetime that you really have seen this, but I was struck by the trip when we were working with the Eastern churches. The great strategic or the tactical thinking of the early church in the known world then which was around the Mediterranean. Somebody forged a fantastic strategic scheme in which they built five great strongholds -- one in Rome, one in Constantinople, one in Antioch, one in Jerusalem and one in Alexandria in Egypt. In the early days in Egypt those little old short Egyptians built what was the most powerful stronghold of the church. And out of that the Coptic church came. And then from these strongholds they fanned out impacting the globe. Then they created a desert monastic movement which generated the spiritual power for those strongholds to operate. One of the most shocking things we grasped on our trip was we saw 6 patriarchs or popes, in Ethiopia, in Egypt, in Antioch, in Damascas, in Constantinople. There was a kind of charisma, a compelling charisma. In Egypt the clergy can marry. But if you become a Bishop, you have to be celibate. And that means you have spent ten years disciplining yourself out in the desert. And if you wondered where that charisma came from, you know he had ten or twenty years of rigorous spiritual discipline behind him out in the midst of the desert. Those monasteries were not a retreat from life. They were the great power stations that generated the spiritual vitality that enabled those strongholds to move. And the early church as a tactical and strategic dynamic in society conquered the world.

The Methodists produced a man by the name of Taylor in India, in the last century, who built a unique strategy for India. Then they sent him to Africa. The one in Africa was a particularly interesting one. In that he saw that in the future the Islam people were going to move and take Africa. And it is interesting how they started at that two or three times. Their most successful attack, other than North Africa, is right now. He saw that if you were going to do a Christian evangelizing job there you had to build a series of Christian mission stations, fortresses if you please, right across the top of black Africa to stop that wave. Interesting, isn't it?

And then they came to Latin America. And he looked over that continent. He said the way you're going to take that continent is to take the great seaports and establish good schools there. And then move in together from all of these into the continent.

Now, I'm not asking you to subscribe to anybody's tactics. But whenever anyone has a mission, then they begin to think in terms of strategy and tactics. And as long as they don't have a mission, then they don't think this way. Just supposing the church had a mission that she could define about the world. The moment she does, then she begins to think tactically. You'll see this in your lifetime.

I suspect the fourth trend is a metamorphoses in pluriformity. By pluriformity I mean the uniquenesses or the variant dynamics within the universal church. I suppose in the middle ages they were your religious orders within Romanism. In our day, they are Protestant denominations: that's the pluriform manifestation of the church. And the church will always have pluriformity in the midst of universality. But she has again and again had to redefine these. What is happening is your denominational structure is going. But there will be that which replaces the denominational structure, only you likely won't call it denominationalism. But it will be killing or chopping off these denominations. I remember a Presbyterian man on one of their boards in New York some time ago said his task was to get the Presbyterian Church out of existence as soon as he could. He's stupid. And the church ought to rise up and shoot that man. No! Metamorphosis is going to happen and you'll see the truth of it in your lifetime. It's already started.

The last thing is that free assertion of what I call socio-symbolism. And that's terrible. Really what I mean is that there is going to be a realignment in the dynamic of the cleric. That's why I was really delighted to hear Jim Philips talk about putting on this shirt, and the kind of embarrassed and almost joy that he had in the midst of it. This is one evidence of the fact. This is why David Wood is like a breath of fresh air to me these days. He kids about being a lawyer and kids about being a clergyman. Do you not understand, whether you like it or not, you are the manifestation of the new cleric. Only you see the cleric of the future will not be shriveled up old characters like myself that are set off entirely aside. You'll still have some of that. You've got to have it. Some of you have got to pay my bread in order that you can continue in the midst of your work in the world being capable of fulfilling the cleric function. And I wish I had another word than cleric there. The Priestly, but that's as bad as cleric.

One of the burdens that's going to be on your life in the future will be a sign on you, and you're going to have to live with that responsibility. The peculiar function that a man who has beheld with his own eyes the other world has for the rest of his life in the civilizing process whether he's cutting out shriveled up lungs, or saving people's stupidities before a court of justice. If you don't mind my gloating a little bit, you put us clergymen up on the pedestal in insisting that we design for a life you wouldn't be caught dead living. And now some turkeys have come home to roost.

That's only the second lecture. The third lecture has to do with the objectives of the movement itself. The first objective is to continue awakening what I call the primal community, and that's just another word for the local congregation. And as far as I'm concerned, the only hope for a new world, a new society, rests upon primal communities as leavening forces coming into existence.

I don't know who it was, but it was their hope for the future that in every middlesex village and crossroads in this world that there'd be an awakened primal community that would pick up the task of the humanization of mankind. And I mean down to the last fat lady. That has to go on.

And then our next objective is the actualization of the global society, and the New Social Vehicle is the global society. This summer, the Lord willing, we've got to get that down the road. The job is going to be done out there in the parish. But what we have to have is a clear statement of a practical vision of a new possible web of relationships that defines the new sociality of mankind.

And then a globally constructed tactical system, whereby right where I am at any moment by doing what I can do I am affecting the total globe. That's the kind of a system you have to have. This must be done in the next 20 years.

Then the third thing. There has to be disciplined pioneering teams. Those kind of revolutionaries, the protesters, have gone. There has to be a new kind of revolutionary come into being. This is why your youth revolution is gone, is finished. The feminine revolution is gone. Your non-western revolution is gone. A new kind of a revolutionary is called for. And he's the kind of a one that takes a vision of the new society and goes out and demonstrates it with his being.

This is fundamentally what you mean by what we call a historical order. A historical order, a religious order, has got to come into being for the sake of this new world. And I'm extremely clear now that every great revolution in the past rode on the back of disciplined religious troops. In the next 20 years, this has to be created.

And there'll be different dynamics within it. But there'll be only one order. There's some people in our group who get tired having to live the way we do. So they think they'll be a part of the extended order. Let me bare witness to you. If you're capable of living the way I live, then you'll never be the extended order, not because somebody tells you can't be. You just can't be. Once you're willing and you know what it means to be a dead man then you are willing. If you don't know what it means to be a dead man, then you aren't willing. And you won't be willing until you do know what it means to be a dead man. Now you need only a few. That depends on how few you have. I guess maybe there are about 1,600 of us now. There ought to be 10,000 of us right now. And then there have to be masses of the extended order because the order has to have the troops at certain points and posts and stations in civilization to do the work. But there isn't a harder way and an easier way to do what I am talking about. If what's going in your heart is "God, not for me," that's all right, that won't upset the Lord. He'll raise them up out of the stones. Without that order you're not going to be the movement.

The next one is the penetration of the masses. And this is your popular preaching. It is a far more complex dynamic than just going out and spinning in a bar or in your office, although that's the important part about it. And each one of these has to be global. Your counterpart has got to be in every nation in Africa and in Europe and in Russia and in India, in Seapac and in Latin America. That kind of an objective with strategies and tactics at a global level has to be forged and operated. I hope I live to see the day when 200 thousand iron men go to the courthouse, into the hospital, go to the market and on that day, take triangle 283 up there and spin it into spirit.

And then the last, the intensification of this. There is a global revival in human motivity. I just ran across that word "motivity" not long ago. I like it much better than motivation. I can make it dance my tune a bit better. Human motivity. My father always hoped that a revival would come in his lifetime. He wanted my brother and myself to participate in it. The trouble was that my papa thought of a revival in terms of the tail end of the Great Awakening that was sicker than hell in the 19th century. He thought that would come. No, not even the Great Awakening will come again. And not even those fantastic surges in the Middle Ages that conquered, in the name of Christ, the whole Germanic people. Two men went to Russia, Cyril and Methodius, along about 900 and took a nation. But the Holy Spirit never operates the same way twice. In Egypt, one of the archbishops said "We're having a great revival." And being a narrow minded reductionistic Protestant, I immediately thought of some preacher, and people coming and singing "Almost Persuaded", or something like that, and having people come down the sawdust trail. So I say to him, "How long has this been going on?" And he says, "About fifty years." And then I know he is talking about something else. What he was talking about is that when Protestant missions came, those orthodox churches had been dead, and I mean dead, for about 900 years. The drive and the vitality of the Protestant thrust awakened them to begin to search after the power and voice of the early church and caused a resurgence. And that was his revival.

What I'm saying to you is that before the end of the century, you're going to experience a revival in this world in human motivity. I'll use some old words: there's going to be a new evangelism. And human hearts are going to beat again upon the drum of the other world. And the spiritual deeps are going to flow. I don't mean in pious churchmen. I mean in humanity. It's been so long since the church had any vitality and don't you ever forget, never once in your whole life, did you ever have a direct immediate relationship with God. That's how dead the church has been in your lifetime. The spirit of twenty years will flow again.

Now this will not happen automatically. It will happen when these other four objectives are done, and done with passion. What I am trying to communicate is what I hinted at when you were here before. That church renewal is now finished. I was down at Atlanta at the General Conference of the Methodist Church a week ago, and the thing that overwhelmed me was that from the platform were said things that the church had beaten people senseless, like myself and my colleagues twenty years ago, for saying. Now, that was not a moment of sorrow, but a moment of joy. For you see church renewal was out to awaken the established church. It's awake, and in this century church renewal is finished. But now there is another job to be done. Far more complex and far more important. It is as if all I've said here is that the movement runs ahead of the established church and shows it the way into Canaan land.

Last, what are the qualities of the revolutionary who guards this movement during the next twenty years? First of all, he has got to be spiritually grounded. He's got to be grounded in the literature or the spirit, in the Bible. And I do not mean in terms of an intellectual understanding of the bible. He's got to discover ways in which that literature can address his life and nurture it, that in every situation, in every moment he's a man of the spirit. He must develop a prowess in finding his way through the other world. We have now the methodology that we call visits to the other world. Fantastic what happens to people when one can see that where they start like colts out of their mother's womb with wobbly legs, some now are beginning to find their way with ease in that labyrinth. People who were not spiritually grounded: here I'd like to blast a little at you layman. I don't want anyone trying to live on my spirituality. He'll not be helpful. And if you don't, you're not going to stand. You'll come here once or twice, and somebody will step on you, or the desert will get hot, and the more you get to know people like me, you see the crummier I am. I'll not mention my other colleagues who are here. You'll not stand day after day in the desert if you've not drunk deep of the wellsprings of spirituality yourself, if you yourself don't know what it means to be a human being, at the bottom.

Then secondly, it calls for you to be missionally dedicated. But you've talked about this yourself - what it means living out of two suitcases the rest of your life. This is what it means: your worldly goods have already gone. Your kindred are already gone. That your own life is already gone. And therefore nothing can touch you.

It's having a brand new sense of vocation. I wish I had adequate language. This is what the new religious is. You've often said that within the spirit dimension there aren't such things as lawyers and doctors and businessmen. There are spirit men who have skills to heal and to defend and to see. There is a new sense of vocation. It's like, if I can use mythology, that you know as well as you know your name when you get to heaven they're going to think nothing of your having been a lawyer or a clergyman or a doctor. They are going to ask you one question, and it's not going to do with that. And then that person has to, once and for all, forge a corporate posture. I tell you, I've seen them die by the thousands who thought they could do their own little thing alone. No. A man who doesn't learn what corporateness is and is willing to march with an army of colleagues and to put his creativity into the whole guts of that army is useless in this work in the next twenty years.

And then he has to have certain kinds of highly developed skills. He has to be a trained person. It would be extremely difficult for me to grasp at this moment how anyone could even last a few months usefully if he hadn't been to our academy. And then I don't mean the academy. But if he doesn't grab and have at his fingertips and in the center of his being the skills and the methodologies that are developed there -- . The one thing that you're not going to get away with is cutting into the gizzard with a rusty knife. That'll not work. You may be able to do that as a doctor in a hospital, but in this work, no rusty knives.

And it doesn't make a whop what a fine boy you are. And how many skills you have developed in your profession. You are going to have to have these skills alone with your skills.

Then you must become a global human being. And this is hard. You have to breathe the globe.

These must be our strategies. We have got to build a world wide research and demonstration complex. We have to build a world wide penetration and training network. We have to build a world wide enablement and coordination network.

And back here at the finances again. In this country we have got to develop a network to get the finances to do it. But not only here. This has to be done in Japan, and in Hong Kong, and in the Philippines and in Singapore, and in Delhi and in Paris, in London and in Caracas. One of the exciting things is that in some ways we are away down the road in this. It is almost impossible to believe that within five months you are going to have 80 religious houses spread around this world. As a matter of fact, I don't know now of any other thing-a-ma-jig that has got such a global network that you can use to accomplish a global task such as you've got on your hands now.

The fourth strategy is to build both a civil and a religious development scheme. And by this I mean a penetration of the civil establishment and of the religious establishment on the top level. This has to do with authorization.

And lastly, we have got to build not only a global historical order, but we have got to build the concrete framework. This is the next twenty years. I end where I started and it has to do with our removal. When you think of this lying ahead, then it ought to be clearer than ever before that the guardians of the movement have to be signally extinct. And secretly down inside of me that's why I called you people to come through this as the guardians of the movement.

J. W. M.