A SPIRIT JOURNEY

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--Sarah Buss 3/10/69

When you are thrust into the midst of Australia with only two other colleagues becomes very clear right away that you are going to go on a spirit journey, like or not. There is not any way of escaping that, because I tried at every point could, but I was not very successful. That's some of the up-against-ness of the up-against-ness.

It becomes clear rather quickly that you have to find a way to mobilize other people; that is, any idea of doing-it-yourself is utterly ridiculous, and immediately you must depend on colleagues which do not even yet exist. So, to deal seriously with the question of mobilizing another means you have to go on a depth journey you've never been on before.

The image I'm going to use here is that of imaginal corporateness. That is to say, if you do not know how to participate in imaginal corporateness as well as in that which is symbolically and ritually symbolized everyday, then you cannot survive. I could not have survive, nor, I dare say, could have my two American collegues, without knowing that those of you who are here were laboring away, and we could not have survived save we imagined that spirit movement which was not yet in those spirit collegues in Australia which were not yet. We could not have survived saved we had sustained one another in the midst of our own most unworthiness. You come up against one's own unworthiness when there are only two to account to; only as you come to terms with that kind of necessity is it possible to dare to participate in the spirit movement. Out of that spirit journey, then, I want to hold five images--spirit images if you will--that burst forth in the midst of that spirit journey.

The first is the necessity to love a man's neuroses. That is to say, that is all you have; a man's passion is all you damn well have when you go to create a spirit movement or to make self-conscious that spirit movement which is there. If you kill that neuroses, you kill that passion in a man; and you are participating self-consciously in the destruction of a spirit movement and in the destruction of humanness itself! I don't care how beautiful your models may be, if they do not come out of the unique passion of those with whom you work and if they are not filled full of the reductionistic neurotic passion of human beings they are not worth a damn. I dare say that if you remember anything, don't forget that; don't forget that, because it is a man's passion which brings life into models, which gives relevance to models. Now mind you, that man's passion has to be funneled or pulled through a model with some corporateness or it's worth nothing. When you are unable to give room to human passions in building models or the implementing of them, to that degree you destroy that which the model is out to sustain and perpetuate and enable.

Therefore, no one cares whether or not you are right--to be right is utterly irrelevant. If anyone is right--that is to say, the Ecumenical Institute has drawn together the wisdom of people probably more than any other group, and therefore we can out-"right" most anyone we come up against--but to be right is utterly irrelevant, is utterly destructive if you are not sensitized to the times of the necessary right of the moment. Otherise, the "right" becomes the destructive "wrong" in the midst of the situation.

The second image is that of symbolic deprivation. I'm not talking about some kind of moralism here. I'm talking about the individual level--that which every man knows, which he does not give up, and which is different for every man. One

of the clever ways we attempt to escape coming to terms with that which we would sell our souls to is to run around coming to terms with that which other would sell their souls to. So, it would be, that some of us would sell our souls to the family and therefore we run around trying to escape that; others would sell our souls to escaping the family and therefore we must come to terms with loving the family. What is that one things you would sell your soul to? It is that, and only that, which you must give up; nothing more and nothing less.

The question of symbolical deprivation must also be considered from another perspective. As many others have said, it is the style of the people, not the wisdom or the content, that has spoken to people. One of the things about that style has been the economic deprivation, of the situation in which we have lived--the ghetto of the U.S. But I would say to you that when you go to Calcutta you need to dramatize economic deprivation. How would you participate in a kind of economic deprivation that would speak in terms of spirit style? I don't think more than nine people can get in a six-by-six room, even if they take turns at sleeping. The question then comes, what is that stylist economic deprivation which is necessary as a corporate spirit movement in the world, both as a sign to the world of the willingness to do what is necessary and as the sign to oneself that one is not a victim of that immediate situation. I don't know what looks like, but I know it is inconvenient and uncomfortable.

For me here, one of the images I use is that of seizing the moment. I mean, we can wrap up the universe with our Doing models, but save we understand that out of the blue we select the moment in time when we suspend the models to seize the particular; when we say, "to hell with the comprehensive model" and choose the person or moment, then we fail. Only as one is prepared to suspend the comprehensive model and seize the moment in the particular can he dare to be relevant with his comprehensiveness.

The third image I want to bring forward here is the suspending of time and the opening up of space--that is, to expand space. It is the Indian I think of here, though I'm not happy with that simple category of space over time. I don't know of what other one to use at the moment but I think the gift of the Indian here is a crucial one. That is, his gift is that of the expansion of space. His time is either immediate or eternal, but not intermediate; or to put it another way, he is absorbed with the moment and the expansion of space so that the relationships which he can have and the ritualization of the same are meaningful.

How do we learn in the West to expand space? Jesus Christ is the Messiah of time, but perhaps in Budda or a Hindu is the messiah of the possibility of spatial expansion. To turn that around, then, the Indian does not have the messiah of time. How to expand time for him? That is, to talk about the problems which are turned into five goals with strategies for accomplishing each is almost impossible. I think that the problem realm in India for getting the Hindu and Christian and Muslem to work together on a common ground out of which they can struggle is just that.

To push our problem, how do we come to expand space? I dare say that even in India time, which is eternal time, is not eternal time in the sense that Western man looks at it as wanting more time, but rather is an attempt to expand space--to experience the experience of all other creatures that exist. It is that experience which is imaginally embodied through talking about reincarnation. I won't spend more time in that direction, except to say a word about how this applies to us. I think that getting up at 3:00 a.m. each morning was an expansion

of space that broke loose that which you did not know existed. One of the significant things which happened to us as a family was when we began to get up at 4:00 in the morning; I don't know why that was important, except that we broke loose at that point in many ways.

In terms of the future, there are a couple of areas in which I would like to push, and one is the balance of Knowing, Doing, and Being. We must come, in our assignments through the computor, to the time when each is assigned one-third of the time to Knowing, one-third of the time to Doing and one-third to Being--one week, one month, or whatever. We must move to a balance in this arrangement. Look at our perversions in the past. You can smell a person who has been one of these too long--it is only as the three aspects inter-act that we can come up with a relevant style. Mind you, it is sometimes necessary for the sake of the mission to shove a person repeatedly into one area, and that will always be so, but we must never do that without being clear about what it is we are doing.

The other area I would join in terms of space is in the area of meals. That is to say, we must be jarred loose by re-creating when it is essential. That we eat three meals per day at the times we do, is utterly arbitrary. In terms of being world citizens, we must be jarred loose in terms of creating the number of meals, times of meals, content and kinds of meals, and styles of meals. To talk of having Chinese meals without eating with chopsticks is just utterly ridiculous; there is a style to participate in. Or to think that to eat like the brown man is to eat like a pig--it is utterly ridiculous not to see that that is a way of participating, that there is a style, a customary way of eating with your hands.

In the area of status, I would want to talk about that in terms of one's contribution. That is to say, the only contribution a spirit man has to give is the decision that he has a contribution to make. What I mean by that is that the man whose gift is art and who sees that as his contribution, is not going to be a spirit man, but is one who is saying that he is predetermined. That stance is utterly worthless to the corporate body. There is only one contribution, and that is the decision that you are significant, and when you have so decided that you are that significance then there is no need for status; there is no need ahead to decide what your contribution is, or what your contribution will be.

Lastly, I would want to talk about the arena of struggle. I want to say that this has been the most crucial insight for our family, for myself individually, and for participation in the Movement. That is to say, everyone comes up against in life that contingency, that demand, which he must come to terms with--that which is there in the midst of the situation. However, that is not what I'm talking about in terms of the necessity of selecting one's arena of struggle. In anticipation of the future which is necessary, what arena must you be struggling in in order to create the necessary future. Once one has a picture of the necessary future and lived without any answers of how to get there (even if you have the answers of how to get there then your vision had better be out beyond that), it is that, then, which tells you what the arena of struggle must be for you. Once you see, for you, for the family, for the mission, what that necessary struggle is, then you're free to love that arena of struggle; or to put it another way, all those other struggles. It's amazing just how many fights just disappeared in the Buss family--fight for what? So you've got the struggle resolved, and then what did you have? On the other hand, when we get clear on the arena of struggle, we have the greatest fights we've ever had; we're clear what the necessary arena is. The same is true for me as an individual participating in a particular corporate

body--that I must select that tension which is relevant. I suspect in the U.S., and especially in this body, that to struggle, for instance, in the arena of the man and woman pole, is just utterly irrelevant. If that's the edge of your struggle, the Lord help you. That is not to say the problems are not going to crop up from time to time; but if you spend 90 percent of your energy struggling in that arena, then I would want to call that into question.

What is that necessary edge arena of struggle you must decide on. That, finally, is the struggle--that particular human situation in which you find yourself. Never forget that wherever you are you must serve the human passions, the human necessity, and out of that create your arena of struggle.