

### THE "YES" TO THE TRANSPARENCY HAPPENING

What I would share with you is the awareness in myself that all men are being forced to see through to the transparency. It is not just happening to some people; it is happening to everybody. I look into myself at the kind of response, if not conscious, then unconscious reaction that comes out of that kind of thing. I believe what we are calling Resurgence is a "Yes" to transparency, and the power of the consciousness that comes out as saying "Yes," I believe, however, that what most of us find ourselves doing much of the time is saying "No" to transparency; or trying to find some way to harness it, or mask it, or avoid it, which negates that power and negates that possibility. The "No" then stands on the other side and comes in many kinds of collapses. Those collapses are sort of a montage of my own experiences in the last year.

The first collapse I call interior, which I believe is a moral collapse. It is the collapse in which I simply say to myself, "I am wrong," that the transparency is wrong, or this that has happened to me should not have happened. It comes in several ways: One, I have selected from one of our favorite authors, Ortega Y Gasset, which he calls the "loss of horizon." Externally you might call it the "loss of vision," the or the loss of the capacity to see the long sweep of the comprehensive which allows you to keep going in the immediate. Internally, it is something like masking the mystery. It is not from that long sweep I am really hiding, running, or fearing; it is the Mystery or awe that creeps into my being whenever I dare to look at that long sweep. People have no problem today of having no vision. What they have a problem with is maintaining a "Yes" relationship to that vision. Some of the movies that have come out recently, like Soylent Green and some of the others, know that the vision is there; the collapse is not because I do not have one. It is because I wish to hell I did not.

The second dimension of that moral collapse is the "I am wrong," or "I don't want this," or "It must be wrong, because I don't want this." It is not being able to grasp how my pain is relevant to that vision I have of that future. Or my pain is that when I fall off on the 'efficiency' pole the pain is not worth it. It does not have enough value for me to endure it for the sake of that world that long vision I have.

The next step, when you lose that, is that therefore, I dare not require this kind of pain from other people. Why should wazzu I put my wife through this? Why should I put my children through this? Why should I nail my interns to the wall and require of them this pain? If it is not worth my pain; it is not worth their pain. It is that kind of moral collapse.

That all gets re-enforced by the disillusionment that comes when I see other people about me responding the same way. I would characterize that response as a rational "Yes" to the vision. I look at the new day, the new man, the new church, and I say "Yes" rationally. That needs to be done, but a spiritual "No" always comes in the form of "There must be something else I can do rather than that!" I have other things to do. Some immediate demand is more important at the moment than continually pursuing that kind of vision, that kind of promise.

Then the second collapse that comes is the collapse of inadequacy. This I think, is a spiritual collapse, a bit different from moral, and is basically "I am inadequate." I cannot do that. The Lord has not blessed me with all that is required for that task. I have not been chosen for that. It results in a return to the old securities. One of those is the family. You look around and see people today and their emphasis on the family it is not so much parochialism because they do not see the comprehensive. They do see the comprehensive. It is that they do not feel adequate for the comprehensive, and so get engaged in something for which they might feel adequate or sufficient. It comes as "Why don't I just raise three global children? I can't manage that whole congregation. Who in the world could ever possibly dream of doing the parish as a globally related community? But I can sure raise three global children. You walk into some of those homes and its staggering -- the decor in every room you walk through that just socks you. They are raising their global children, but you can not get them outside the door. And your impulse is to go home and do the same thing, even if its only in one room on the third floor of the religious house. Your experience of that religious house in trying to get down from the third floor to the first floor to get out the

door is like the guy trying to get from the top of the ship out to the bottom in the Poseidon Adventure. All the traffic is going the other way.

My job or my practical vocational engagement is another return to an old security. It is no longer because I think my life does not have comprehensive engagement, or that that is not possible or required of me. It is no longer because I am so damn stupid that I cannot see that what I do affects all of creation. I know that very well. But I can try to gather everything up and channel it into one desk and one file cabinet to get it into something that I feel adequate to manage. And that is sort of spiritual collapse.

The third way out is health. How many of you who are just creeping over thirty have gone back to your bookshelf lately and looked at one of those exercise books? Or find yourself drooling longingly out the window at the joggers, or every camper that goes by. You wonder if perhaps the religious house shouldn't buy one -- they hold more children! You think about the weekend, and you want to sneak off and go mountain climbing and get back in shape. The least I can do is maybe create some kind of physical stamina so I can endure all this. If I was not in such bad physical shape, I would not have such a hard time getting up for Daily Office in the morning. We need a little more protein in the diet to be more capable.

Then the third collapse is what I would call just a practical collapse, and it comes when I feel insecure. These days, that is the first line of conversation between a prior and his wife after midnight. When she asks him what about collegium in the morning, no longer does he complain that she does not have a model, nor does he say I am going to brood on it, and then go to sleep. He says something like, "I know exactly what ought to be done tomorrow and I feel insecure. I am not sure if this is the time, or if I should get up there, or if maybe someone else ought to do it. Perhaps my second prior ought to do it tomorrow morning. So I wake him up at 12:15 with the return to the microcosmic as the locus of process, or the emphasis on the local community, the local school, or the family, or local politics, I am looking, therefore, for that which I might be able -- to hammer out enough practice in order to keep going out of my great fear, the insecurity relative to the comprehensive.

These things, as they reflect a montage of my own life, are why I am here this summer. For the first time, when that phone rang and some sweet voice on the other end said, "Your American Airline ticket is arriving by mail," it occurred to me that I did not have to come. Finances were down, I could get a job; or I could just collapse and say, "Sorry, I can't make it this summer; I have not seen my family in four years and my father is dying." It simply occurred to me that I did not have to come. Nobody could make me come; and if I did not, somebody would be so stupid as to forgive me. But I kept reading that brochure we mailed out about the Ecumenical Parish and the Logistical Systems and the Spirit Resurgence, and I realized that that is a montage of my life, too. We're here this summer in order that we can live through our moral collapse and awareness that we are wrong. We can decide that moral integrity belongs to us and every man in the midst of the inadequacy we experience, thanking God it was not just our lives. For all men are engaged. Our job is dealing with the logistics of "How?"

Every man stands over the abyss whether he sees it or not. But with a strange kind of smile I can make friends with the abyss, and with others who have decided that the abyss is indeed their friend. The only mask history needs is my own face. Amen.

-- George Walters