

Caracas Report

I'd like to report this morning on the Caracas foray that we've just made over the past 2 weeks and begin to try to set in context the convoy course as it is now called. Probably the first thing we need to say about it is that we need a new name ~~of~~ for the convoy course in that we are trying to bring it to more focus than it's been, understanding that that is what got us launched, to use the metaphor a bit, but that now we need to really look at what that course is. And I want to try to report on that, not so much to give you the details of what happened, that can be done easily enough, but to try to set in context where this is in our whole task of what we're about, and especially over the next 20 years to see the next 20 years, we have to first look at the last 20 years. What is it that we have been doing, what is it that we have been about, what has been going on that we are the order have been engaged in. What have we learned. The most basic thing we have been about is radical renewal of the historical church, or we have been out in the last 20 years to try to find the tools, the avenues, the ways to opening up the church to a new understanding of itself, first of all, and then the new action upon that understanding. Or what kind of educational endeavor can be done that would give the church a new image. And that has been the downbeat of what we have been about. And that has not come easily. How I would talk to myself about the dynamics that have taken place is that we early thought we could come up with some creative courses on existential grounding of the Christian faith in the 20th century and give people a new image of the church, and they would sort of automatically return to their local churches and renew them. That is we were naive about the practices of local church renewal. And so it was that we had to turn with ourselves giving more practical attention to what the renewal of the historical church meant, or what it would look like in a local church. And that came about primarily in the time in which we moved to Chicago and began to work finally with the ~~the~~ current location. But that was not all for as we began to work on the models of practical renewal we also discovered that people can not sustain themselves in local churches at all unless they have some kind of real enablement, some kind of continuous nurture as the old term. Some way in which you could continually blowtorch each other, to use a more forceful category, to stay at the job of local church renewal.

am amazed at what I see when I look at myself from that kind of posture. That is, I don't find the being that I was yesterday, there, simply because I have consciousness of being one looking at who he is. I suppose that's what it means to be in the other world, to have that kind of radical intentionality about your own life. But if we cannot find a way of saying this or doing this, laying it out in some secular fashion, we will not have engaged in the new piety what may well be the job before us in the next 20 years is to take everything we know and scatter it to the last human being which is just those masses of people across the world, daring to get into their lives the kind of dance that will enable them to respond to their own lives in their particular situation. Then thirdly, in the next 20 years, we are going to find a way of embodying and calling forth a new force or a new body of people, that are going to manifest the style of the spirit man of our time and perhaps the next thousand years. WE don't deal with this in the course, we deal with it through the ontology of the masculine, the feminine, and then of the youth role in the whole society, and we've been trying to articulate and get it said to ourselves what is that, that principle of life without which there is no other life. And perhaps you have to begin with the female, with the holding in being. What is that ontological, that aspect of life that through the past, and through the conditioning of females as they have related themselves to society and to the rest of history they have begun to embody that function - we have come up with a new term (Aimee, maybe you'll like this term better), that is that the female embodies and carries out in each situation of life a kind of enthusiasm, that is she enthusiasms, she brings into being, she brings life to bear within every situation. And of course the word enthusiasm is a word that has been used in religious thoughts across all of history, I suppose, and has been a way of seeing a way of life that probably no one can do or maybe to put it down in more understandable terms, there is nothing like a woman to make a situation really bubble, to give life to a situation. Man cannot do it, that is unless he has hold of the feminine principle of bubbling, and thereby bring it to bear in a situation. Or of course, we've been dealing with the man, and that kind of force of power in a situation as an adventurer or the one who is able to go forth, always go out beyond where people have been. There is not going to be any new history, any new

...it is though you had opened up the depths of their lives in one weekend, and then the next weekend you turned around and gave them some kind of objective way of envisioning themselves as the future, the last finally is the only way people are going to be released in our time to act out their life style of faith. This is a particularly geared course. It is geared down to the most intimate dimension of your life, or who you basically are - your role in history, the male or female, the youth and as someone was indicating last night, we need to add the elders as well. And yet we might say their role is currently within those others. But the particular generation you are part of, the particular phase of life that you are in at a particular moment is where the actualization of the life style of faith has to be acted out, and so we are engaged in that. Urban anthropology is the first thing in 20 years. The second is the new spirit dimension, or the new piety, if you will. Here it's quite clear, and it becomes quite clear as we work with the course, that if we do not come to terms with the religious mode head on and in depth in that course, we give them no means or base out of which to stand. It's simply going back to the insight we had a few years ago, that it's only in a man's solitary life is redone, when his reimagining of himself through himself, by prayer meditation and contemplation, it's only there finally that the reimagining task has gone on, or it's like when you deal with urban anthropology where you deal objectively with your sickness and your malaise as well as your possibility, if you have not also found ways of internalizing that into your own life, then you are not embodying, then you are the anthropology that you see, or the old mythological understanding. I think one reason why the myth section at the end of that course in which people write out the whole inclusive myth for our time - the reason that gets hold of people is that what is going on in that thinktank or that spinning section is a rearticulation of their solitary journey because of course any time one writes in the midst of our times, one is writing their own mythological understanding of our time, or we're beginning to learn, I suppose, what it is in the practical sense that it meant to engage and live their lives out of that other world, out of that posture of just coming at life from a totally different posture toward life than any other else would live. I don't know how you find yourself as you think about your self going around living out of another world, but I find that I continually

the first goal that we set about and the one for which we exist alone, that a new world come to be and not just a new social vehicle. And a new church come to be in order that that new world might take place. And while these are not strictly true of course, the new religious mode is primary embodiment of that. And then the last one ~~is~~ where the convoy course comes in. There is not going to be a new church or a new world, save there is also a new man. And so we're working both directly in the convoy course with being the style of the new man. Maybe that's the direction of a new kind of title or name for that course, that this is a ~~new~~ course on style, or this is a course that embodies the 20th century style. I'm not sure but something in that direction has begun to point to exactly what we're trying to do with that. In other words it's radical renewal from a man to the church to the whole world, that the next 20 years is calling upon us to do. This course, then, all of you have seen the construct of it so I won't go through the details of it, but as we have worked with it basically it seems to me there are four things you need to say about it. And the first thing is that it objectifies the whole sickness and malaise of our time. And I'm speaking of it primarily out of the men's course, but it applies directly to the others as well. That is, it releases people to the psychological guilt of thinking that they are inadequate for meeting the kind of world that we have because of some particular inadequacy they have within themselves. It's as though the people of our time have seen the bottom of the bottom of the bottom of bottom of sickness, sickness, sickness in themselves and in other people, really that they feel they do not have any possibility of being released, of being any other human beings. It's to objectify that malaise and see that it is not simply the kind of personal inadequacy that goes on in me, but it's also, we as well as that you have to say, finally a sociological objective phenomenon that therefore can be dealt with, that therefore you can see that this needs to be turned this way and that this needs to be enlarged ~~maximized~~ this way. and this thought can be hammered on and worked at by people who know where the problems are. And so in dealing then with the second part with the economic, political, and cultural structures ~~of~~ and dynamics of society, the course construct then begins to enable people to get over and work at and begin to get over that malaise. The sex ontology within that is in one sense simply your way of objectifying that interior inadequacy. That is, as you try to relate yourself to the malaise of the social constructs

and dynamics of our time, you do so out of your own particularity and therefore the ontology of the sex roles is ~~xxxx~~ crucial to understand there. Then the fourth aspect is a kind of dynamic that runs back and fourth through this. And this became clear to me the more I worked with it, with the last lecture, in which I tried to get an image of what it might mean to be engaged as a male within the malaise, the social framework of our time and I got an image of where is what it means to go to war again, here is what it means to go about it. It doesn't have anything to do here with whether we should work for peace or not, it is 4 levels deeper than that, but it has to do with the kind of ontological demand upon your life, it has to do with the ~~xxxx~~ criticalness of being able to cope with our time. And so for me the only image that holds it is being at war, that is you are about to face a battle which you damn well know you're going to be killed, I mean you know you're going to be killed and you might come out on the other side not being killed, but when you go into that battle you know you're going to be killed and therefore this is what the cultural revolution is all about. The cultural revolution is the wildest revolution, it is violent, not in the political or economic, it is violent in the cultural sense or in the images which are formed therefore you find people, the categories which hold for men especially for the youth are. You find these youth who are overseas, it is as though they are the intensification of all the youth problems. I mean they have run to the end of all of them and then they have run out because they have been faced with the demands and hostilities of another world, another culture, and therefore they are just burned out. I mean literally burned out, and will go to sleep on the table when you ask them what the demands on the youth are of our time. Well, this kind of situation calls upon us to see the kind of war that is there. Where the course might be used.....