

READINESS OF THE WORLD

We want to talk a little bit this morning about what we have been doing in the consults which is not really much different from what has been going on here. That has become very clear. That is what has shocked me more than anything else in the couple of days that I have been back. Like you, we are only halfway through, so, it is not really the time to wrap anything up. I am going to talk about the readiness of the world first, then the situation of the church and third what I call the weight on us.

The world has thrown a tennis ball into our court. The world is ready. We have discovered that there is an objective awareness in governments, in the establishment and local people of the world. After we left Australia we read a book called The War of the Flea. It was an analysis of the emergence of guerilla warfare, and I think that spread of terrorist activities would point to the same conclusions. The author pointed out that the whole movement in guerilla warfare had hit upon the fact that there are certain problems that governments cannot solve, no matter what they do. When they try to deal with those problems they intensify the situation rather than calming it down. He talks about Viet Nam where that is true. Fundamentally, he says, the guerilla movement has to do with the needs and aspirations of local man which the governments of this world cannot meet. Isn't that a tremendous insight? We found this to be true, more than anything else we discovered. The world realizes, in a way that we never did, that this wave of history called local man is present around the world. It has to be dealt with. The central issue in almost any government has to do with how that government can stay on top of the issues of care for local man. This is true in South Korea, and Australia. Kenya certainly is anxious about what they are going to do when Jomo Kenyatta dies. At the same time governments realize that there are just things that they cannot do. There are things that the disestablishment cannot do. That would be the first aspect of the world's readiness.

Secondly, the rise and readiness of local man is everywhere in the world. We stumbled on places like Maliwada, Kawangware, and Kwang Yung Il. And yet when we went to those villages, we found an army of people who were colleagues from the very first moment. They could not speak English. We couldn't speak Korean or Swahili or whatever. They didn't have an education. We had an education. They did not even know what RS-I, or LENS or anything else was. But in the midst of each consult there was a deep affirmation and a deep collegiality because local men around the world are ready. They are ready to pick themselves up and deal with the situation that is on their hands. They are looking for a way. They are looking for permission to go ahead and do what is needed. That is what the consults have done, given permission. It has been shocking the way the waves of history have been a tool in every consult. We have a little conversation on "What are the deep currents of history?" before we do the contradictions. It is shocking! People who have never been out of Maliwada down to Arangabad start talking, "This is the wave of history. There is a new wave of courage that is sweeping the people across the world. There's this, and this,

and this,"without a pause like we always do and take five minutes answering. Local man just answers one after another. This consciousness of being part of the globe and responding to these waves is there in every local man.

Third, in terms of the world, we have stumbled on an applied, workable social philosophy. We have been trying to spell this out. We are just beginning, but it is very clear that what goes on in a consult is beyond methods. There is something far more objective in peoples' response to community reformulation, which we worked out on the West Side so many years ago. Now the peoples' immediate response is "Yes, of course."

Then fourth, in terms of readiness of the world, the question is replication. After the Maliwada consult we went to visit the governor, the appointed head of Maharashtra, the state in India which governs Bombay, Arangabad and Maliwada. We handed him a copy of the Jeju Document and said, "We are doing the same thing in Maliwada. We'll send you the document next week." He said, "Oh, that is very interesting, there are 600,000 villages in India." Now the great thing was, he wasn't mean when he said that. He could have said that and been mean. But he didn't. He said, with great warmth and great sympathy, that this is a problem, 600,000 villages. In Korea, before we started the consult, we didn't even realize that there are 30,000 villages. Kwang Yung is only significant in the face of 30,000 or 600,000. I was addressed by that. I caught a colleague one time and said somebody could really take us apart if they wanted to do so. We have these eight little things around the world in the face of 600,000. We really have to work on replication. He said "Yes, ten years ago they said it could only happen on the West Side of Chicago. At least now, we have eight places around the world." We are moving but we are nowhere near the place where faith the size of a mustard seed isn't required in terms of making what we are doing in social demonstration something other than a nifty thing for the ICA to do. That is to say, it is only out of profound passion, saying that we are going to reach everybody, that we are at this. That fact allows these eight to be what they are, that is a promotional piece for the sake of the whole world, and not just a liberal fantasy.

Then the situation in the Church. The first thing that has come clear to us is that we are in a moment when the only issue relative to the Church is its capacity to serve the world. I would say that about any religion. The future of the Muslims, the Buddhists or the Hindus is only related to their capacity to serve the world. Nobody is interested in ideology. Nobody is interested in creedal positions. The world is interested in service, in seeing that things get done. Therefore the question of the renewal of the Church has got to do with its capacity to move and serve the world. In the next five or ten years the degree to which the Church is capable of picking up and moving as a force to serve the world is the degree to which the Church will be renewed. It was very clear that this was true at the World Council of Churches. All of the issues which I

thought would be really explosive issues, those hashed around since the sixties: women, the third world, and others, were not issues whatsoever. People got up and made fantastic statements about the importance of worrying about the third world. The statements went out over the crowd and just dropped onto the floor. I was shocked. The only time I went to the World Council was the plenary session on women. Eight or ten women from around the world stood up and spoke on the subject of the Womens' Movement. Their whole point was women are a crucial force relative to the development of the world. And as soon as we find out how to deal with the problems of the world, women are ready to plug in as a force to do that. The question of how, of how, is before the Church in a deep, deep, way.

Now the world is on us. I have been shocked since I came back here. I knew one thing all the time we were doing these consults. Right now Town Meeting is far more important in terms of our practical future, because town meeting has to do with every man, not just a few. Social Demonstration, the band of Social Demonstration is little more than an eight color brochure advertising Town Meeting and giving us an opportunity to serve. I have been struck even more by the fact that Town Meeting and Social Demonstration are only two sides of a coin. One colleague said that the Social Demonstration Consult is a five day Town Meeting. That is true. I was struck with nostalgia when another colleague talked about a Town Meeting in Cincinnati. The struggle there was getting the document produced. You can ask anyone who has been to one of these consults what are their strongest images of the consult. It probably is getting the document produced, getting the list of sponsors who are really going to be sponsors and not dryout at the last minute. You want to make sure that the people who come to the closing meal are going to say something nice. You don't know until the end. People come and have a great time. They don't know quite why they had a great time. Now I see the relationship the other way too, Town Meeting is working out the machinery for the replication of Social Demonstration. A year or two from now when we go back to the Governor of Maharastra, or the Governor of Jeju Do to deal with the question of replication, our textbook is going to be that which has been worked out in Town Meeting. It will have worked out how you do this many, in many different places at the same time.

In terms of our role the second thing that has become really clear is this thing of Social Demonstration can only be done by the religious. As we moved around and started to build these social demonstration projects it began to become clear, very quietly interiorly, that you only need to walk around being the presence of RS-I. That is true. When you walk into a village and be the presence of RS-I that village comes alive. You live out of the Word in Jesus Christ, that this whole situation is approved and exactly what history demands, that the whole future of civilization depends on what happens here, and the people come alive, not just as individuals, but socially. At the same time it has been very clear that nobody cares that I know how

to teach RS-I or that I understand about RS-I. Nobody cares! When we went to see the Chief Minister of the state of Maharashtra to get initial permission to do Maliwada we were very clear that if we had gone in and said "Now we are Christians and want to go in and do a project in Maliwada," the Chief Minister would have said "NO." to us. When we went in we were also very clear that the Chief Minister knew that we were Christians and the Church. Yet we were received warmly and graciously. This relates to what I said about the time of service. The world right now does not care who you are, where you come from if you are able to go and meet the need. After you have met that need, then maybe they are going to be interested in how you were able to do that. But not in the first instance.

Then the third thing in terms of the weight on us which isn't at all clear is that we are developing a new discipline. It is related to this, "Move it, move it." I was shocked and pleased last Friday morning to hear the accountability. Every team gave a list of people who were on other assignments and then another list of people who had not gotten up that morning. It is true about our future that we don't have time right now relative to history to do other than to just move it, move it, move it. This is a moment in history where the things we have stumbled upon, the things we have developed can be of service to the world. The ball is in our court in terms of our capacity to go, to care, to serve and to get what we have to do done in history for the sake of the world. This requires a new capacity on our part to just move, move, move. Around the world this has been very obvious. When we got to Oombulgurri and began to do the consult, we thought it would be great because all of our staff would be sitting in experiencing these tremendous consult methods. Well, during the whole consult Bob Lingafelter was walking the six-mile water pipeline up to their source of water and fixing the pump because it kept going out. Other people were out rounding up cattle the whole time the consult was in session. You thought there must be something wrong with these people because we are having this tremendous consult and they ought to be sitting there and not doing all these practical things.

When we got to Korea, of course we were planning to have a great training session when we got to Jeju on Sunday morning before the consult. After the consult there was to be a long reflection and debriefing and so forth, but Kang Byoung Hoon had to leave Saturday night to get back to his Church. The next week he had a preaching mission. He had set up a series of lectures for Joe to do and so the rest of us went ahead and wrote the document. Finally, the last day before leaving we decided we were going to have this important meeting, go over all the assignments and decide exactly which village in Jeju we were going to work in. Both Kang Byoung and others had to leave early because they had other things... It was just like that all the time. There is no way that our interior workings can stop the pace. There is a new discipline. Somebody said while we were in Maliwada that it didn't bother them anymore whether this person or that person slept in or if this person wasn't at a meeting but doing something else. That kind of discipline is too simple for us. The kind of discipline that we had to have was the discipline of being willing to go and knock twice on somebody's door to make sure that they had the possibility of getting to whatever was going on. That

them?"

The second thing that is required is masses of funds. There has to be a way that the priorities that the structures of the establishment are putting on arms right now that that amount of investment goes into the development of local communities, both from the private and the public sectors. Then of course, this has to happen in masses of places. The machinery of training, research, and manuals bothers me least of all.

The fourth thing has got to be a way to anchor this. There has to be a way to ground what is going on in humanness at every point. I'd say it like this: the job of development now is no longer simply to raise money to support Social Demonstration and Town Meeting, but the job of development in raising that money is to turn the priorities of the established structures of the world toward releasing massive amounts of funds.

The houses of course, have to do all these projects. They are responsible for releasing that mass of troops. I have new respect and anticipation for the Human Resurgence Mission. It will tell the story and ask people to give 2 years, just two years of their lives, to go and help in one of the human development projects. Those HRM's could be on universtiy campuses, in local churches or factories. Then the job of the PCE is to demonstrate that this can be done anywhere and to get ready to go and do it. Then somewhere in terms of our interior we have to find a way to have this be anchored, to develop the spirit, the discipline, the prowess so that this strange thing we are about can be kept on the right tract.

It is so clear what we fool with in a consult is what we used to talk about in the language of the Church as the social forgiveness of sins. That is what contradictions are all about. That is what produces the motivity in a Town Meeting and in these consults. The waves of history, which are the mercy of God sweeping across the world, come to local people as a negation. That is always the way. Then in a consult, in a Town Meeting you let them see that embracing that negation in their lives, then anchoring themselves in that negation and deciding to move into the future turns into affirmation of God. Then there is motivity. Then there is rebirth. What happens to people in consults is just what happens in RS-I. New people are born. Someway or another we have to find the stamina, and the serpentine wisdom and the dovelike gentleness to go do this, to allow this to happen. At the same time we have to spell out how you do this for the sake of the many other people who will have to be involved.