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 Social Methods School
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Corporate Action

In the last 2 days we have been building the 21-point vision, or the Operating Vision. We have emphasized the last component of tactical thinking, systematic implementation, in this school. We have used the terminology of miracles, framing and structural catalyst. We have focused upon the methodology of contradiction analysis or the designing of pressure proposals (I call them pressure proposals simply because they attack pressure points and contradictions at the same time.) The indicative tactics, or tactical system, are the common format for the organizing of indirect actions, which are the miracles.

Miracles are the most indirect actions you can think of. Miracles are the signs, the catalytic events, which are not out to care for the world, but to enable people to care for the world. Miracles illustrate the effectivity of indirection--over and over again. Tactical thinking is built upon the philosophy of indirection. Corporate action and motivity are also built on indirection. All of these have to do with the effectiveness of indirection.

In creating the practical vision and moving through the analyses, proposals and tactical steps, you arrive at a plan for miracle implementation. This miracle implementation becomes your common model. Going through the process of practicalizing that miracle system gives a group a common model. Model-building is a separate process as well. Although transformation of the miracle timeline, or the tactical system into an operational format is a model-building process, it is a different type of process; a separate endeavor. It is done to practically implement the model in your situation. But the key to that model-building process is corporate action.

If a corporate group does not stand behind your timeline, it becomes just another set of good ideas. If the practical who, where, when is not a part of your plan, you will have another abstract plan for community development at best. Therefore, the models of working together, the methods of acting together, and the methods of thinking together all become important. In other words, we do not make all the plans look alike, but we do want the plans to have a common impact.

The RS1 teaching system is an example of corporateness and impact. RS1 has a common curriculum around the world. It has a common format, common methodology and common faculty training. It has a common setup design. That is its power. We are here today because of the impact of that global teaching net, and the teaching of corporateness.

We decided to put another torpedo into this fantastic teaching network about three years ago. We called it LENS. Within 2 years, we had another course with a common curriculum, taught by the same faculty in the same cities around the world, in every continent except China and Russia. The impact of corporateness is a revolutionary tool. We must not forget this fact.

This corporateness is not achieved through a hierarchical organization of regimentation from the top down. It is not accomplished through an authoritarian corporate image. It has been achieved by a rational horizontal polity. Our corporateness is built on standing shoulder to shoulder and on balanced participation. In other words, we teach RS1 on every continent or we do not teach it anywhere at all. This policy allows corporateness to create a horizontal impact. Your corporateness is your glue.

A simple word like that may seem pedantic to old revolutionaries like yourselves. However, the rational ordering of the corporate structure is the glue that holds us together. We are the RS-I format, commonly. We are the LENS methods, internally. Our glue is not different from our corporate structures, and this gives us unbelievable flexibility. It gives us unbelievable adaptability. We can assign teachers from different parts of the globe to teach the same course together as if they had been doing it for years. It gives us mobility. It gives us hit and run ability as well as stability in the midst of that. And the basis of that is our corporateness.

There is corporateness in tactical thinking; it builds corporateness, obviously. We also isolate it and call it corporate action. We also have corporate motivity which has to do with motivation of the group. These are criteria for our corporateness.

We can talk about this corporateness in many ways. It has to do with the social process and the methods we use. It has to do with knowledge access and enabling each of us to put our wisdom into the total corporate effort at any time. It is how we structure ourselves and how we enable individuals to have access to the body of corporate wisdom.

Our bureaucratic system is a gift of the 20th Century. The problems and the pitfalls attached to bureaucracy exist for us too. As we expand, these pitfalls will become more treacherous. You destroy the evils of bureaucracy by making it global. In relating any bureaucratic system to the globe, you destroy the blocks to and the impediments within that bureaucracy.

What would happen to the bureaucratic system of a library, for instance, if you distributed check in and check out systems for it all over the world? You would have to revolutionize the entire check out system from the ground up. We cannot do without bureaucratic systems. But we must keep them global in intent. Corporateness allows us to make decisions together. Corporateness is directly related to polity. Therefore, knowledge access and the bureaucratic structures must be open to every man, so that decisions are informed

Our way of organizing ourselves also relate to corporateness. Corporate action and tactical thinking are related as two sides of the same coin. The integrity of corporate action turns on and is intimately tied to tactical actualization. Do you see what I am saying? I put my life and blood into deciding what is wrong, write down exactly what needs to be done, and then file it. This is not integrity. Integrity means doing the plan. Integrity of corporate action is based upon doing. Corporate action must synchronize with tactical thinking and planning. Therefore, corporate decision-making is a continual process.

After you do tactical thinking, your deep decisions are made. It is then a matter of implementing those destinal decisions. Corporate style-- what you have to be, to do and to know-- depends upon what is necessary to pull off your tactics. Finally, corporateness is the only thing that allows completion of your tactical system. Even if you tried to pull off the tactics yourself, you would end up being corporate. The only doing that is possible is corporate doing. We are not discussing something removed from life. We are talking about the way society operates, the way people interact, and methods of systematizing that reality.

We come at life sociologically, not psychologically. You are your relationships to other people. You are your relationships to the structures of society. What you do with those relationships and in those structures, determines who you are. That is your integrity. You are what you do. What you do is corporate. Your integrity, therefore, depends upon intentional doing.

Corporateness, however, carries with it much broader implications. You never criticize your colleagues in corporate action, although it is sometimes necessary to call them into question. In corporate

action, you never criticize the administration although it is sometimes necessary to call that administration into question. Furthermore, in corporate action you do not criticize history, although it is necessary to ask why certain things have happened.

The actions of your colleagues and the administration and the action of history is your action. This is what corporateness means. That was my administration that flubbed last time, even though I voted Democratic. This is the only action I know about, and I am responsible for it. Corporateness is like the air we breathe. Our only question is how to deal with it, how to order it and how we organize it in a powerful way, We are dealing with deep resolutions which people have made, but are only now beginning to be articulated. Corporate action will empower these resolves.

We must be ready to organize in the deepest sense of that word. There have been too many highly motivated groups of people in history who have not participated in resurgence. World War II is a powerful example of this. The genius of Hitler was in depth motivity. The man was a genius with symbols. He used them to motivate a whole nation. He motivated and corporately organized the entire nation. I would submit that while he was a good tactician, he had not done his tactical thinking within this process. If you let tactical thinking loose, it is like Pandora's box. You have to be ready with the instruments of corporate action. You have to be masters of the tools of corporate manipulation, with the techniques and the instruments of corporate style.

Many corporate groups in history are not known by their action but by their style. Coming at style, the instruments of corporateness have to do, of course, with corporate brain picking, corporate writing, corporate conversations, and corporate decor. You have heard all this before.

Corporateness, finally, is motivated by care. Structures and instruments of corporateness are utilized only in order to care. Accountability is in the context of corporate care. Enablement, when you work in the kitchen, is in the context of corporate care. Corporate celebrations occur when they are missionally necessary and corporately wise, not because it is the 4th of July. The first criteria for celebration is always mission. That means we can have more fun than anybody, because we have so much mission. The spontaneity that we have could not operate effectively without the missional corporateness that we have as well.

Corporateness has nothing to do with meetings. Meetings exist for the sake of checking with task forces and problem-solving units. Every meeting is either a collegium or a plenary. Now, for some people, corporateness has to do with meetings. You have to keep meeting all the time so that you can sustain corporateness. Meetings are only for the sake of enabling the corporate task. The agenda is designed to use corporate methods and allow corporate decisions and corporate style to bring off the implementaries.

We are probably more gifted in the arena of corporate intellectual methods because that was the first arena of our work. But knowing is only for the sake of doing. In corporate action, your methods are only for the sake of bringing off that tactical system. Your methods of corporate action, though, are indirect. What do I mean by indirect, corporate methods? Just as tactical thinking is interspersed with intuitive gaps, the corporate methods all have techniques to release intuitive thinking as well as analytical thinking. Intuitive thinking has been dormant for at least 300 years in Western civilization. We are trying to discover new alternatives. But we are not going to logically reach those. Logic would bring us into doing the same solutions to the same problems again.

Contradiction analysis is designed to come up with new problems. Why come up with new ones? Don't we have enough old ones? We intend to find the underlying contradictions to the old problems. This is a new articulation, and therefore a challenge. Also, it is motivational, and therefore corporate. Each of those is designed in some way to release the imagination. We are talking about releasing intuitional thinking, imaginal thinking and contemplative thinking. The genius of our planning is that contemplation is at its base.

The same is true of corporate action. The dormant ideas, the latent ideas, and the unconscious ideas are the base upon which consensus has to be built. When you create a group to study a problem, they come back with a hundred recommendations. Then you bring in various groups and see what they can agree upon. You find that all agree on 10% of the recommendations. Therefore, 90% of that study is tabled as old business. These intuitive processes are designed to get that hidden business on the table as soon as possible. And what you are consenting on is "beyond our ancient prejudices".

The corporate decision has already been made. The corporate decision process is build ways for us to trust our intuitions. There is a process built into logical thinking which calls itself into question. A corporate decision is made by objectifying these intuitions and trusting them. You cannot do that by yourself. It has to be done corporately.

You know that the total power of the corporate group is far beyond the sum total of its parts. This is right in the sense that it is the power you rely upon to trust the intuitions of the group. By yourself, you would not trust anyone in the room. You wouldn't even trust a segment of the group. Thinking of new people, who have just been recruited. Unless they participate in this corporate action, they have no way to give themselves. There is no way for them to allow their intuitions to be their guides. Therefore, there is no way for them to decide to participate.

The next step is to symbolize that. We have many ways to do that: celebration, singing, pictures, decor. That consensus then is what moves you on. Symbolizing that consensus to act corporately forms not an ideal, but the real story of the group. The revolution marches on its story; nothing else. The story is the primary symbol of intensified global engagement. You do not say "Let's all get involved in the globe." You come at this through consensus held in your story, and put into action in your parish. Global engagement is what we are after. We intend to create involvement.

We are after the directed engagement which throws us back against the practical vision. The practical vision is clarified through the posture of intensified engagement. There is no idealism, Pollyannaism, or useful "hope-ism". The practical vision comes out of tactical actualization. The practical vision can only be seen when you are in over your head in tactical actualization. Everything else is good ideas.

Tactical thinking cannot go on without corporateness. Without corporateness you cannot do the tactics. They work with one another. A human being's journey happens in the midst of corporate decisions and in the midst of the corporate style which cares for individuals, as well as a group. This process is built on the corporate methods that are the stated procedures and common approaches which you introduce to a group before they can become corporate.

As you use these methods together, you can see that a human being starts a journey in corporate action, and only in the midst of corporate action. Nurture for the soul happens only in a corporate body. Genuine, authentic selfhood explodes only in the midst of the corporate. There are some geniuses who have made great, individual contributions. But we are after the corporate genius, made up of the individuals, which is far greater than any individual genius. Authentic acceptance only happens when you mix your own creativity with others in corporate action. We have discovered the happening of acceptance occurs only in

corporateness. I think Tillich would understand that, based upon paragraphs 13, 14 and 15. Acceptance occurs when you are working with someone else.

Acceptance is not experienced when you are like a log in the midst of a great forest. If you grasp yourself as a stump in the road, you only create a log jam. It happens when you are mixing your creativity with other creativity, which you cannot sort out on the other side of mixing, then saying "Look what we did!"

Authentic reconciliation takes place only in corporate action. Have you ever been part of a group with conservatives on one side, liberals on the other, which actually consensed on a proposal. Everyone wonders how it happened. The answer is through corporate action.

The genuine human journey takes place within a corporate body and within corporate action. All our methods create a tension-filled process in which depth creativity can come forth. In this school, we are systematizing those creative, tensional situations so that we can use the methods, use the decision-making and so that we can be the ones who use style in some intentional way.

There is a relationship between corporate action and this model-building process. Without a common model, you won't have corporate action. You have to have corporate action, or finally, you do not come up with a model. This is the strange nature of a consensus. A consensus is always invisible. A consensus is like a surprise; it is never what you thought it was going to be. A consensus, especially as consensus-taking, is sheer symbolism. This is what I mean by symbolize consensus.

Clearly, it took more than one person, or even several of us, to build the social process model. We had to have a corporate body to do this. In other words, you and I are training ourselves in such a way that we do not do anything until a thousand minds have looked at it. This is not procrastination. This is the nature of the movement. Unless task forces have experimented, and unless there is a consensus from every continent, we do not move. And that is our gift. That is our power. When we do throw the switch, the fulcrum of the planet turns just a little bit.

Before we get too heady, I am reminded that we are beginning to recover a Hebrew posture in life. I use theological categories only in passing here, because I believe they are helpful. The posture of the Hebrew was to obey the power of God, not his own power. The posture of the Hebrew was to obey the waves of history, as opposed to, but not negating the Greek posture of realizing a vision. We are not interested in realizing any vision. We are interested in obeying the deep currents in history. We are not interested in realizing some great virtue for ourselves or for the corporate body. We are interested in obeying the spirit of God. We are interested in responding and moving. We are interested in the linear concept of doing. We are interested in the doing which is obedient to the eventfulness of history. We are interested in doing to the degree that it is obedient to God and his action in the world. We are interested in the action of the People of God.

--Rick Loudermilk