

STATE OF THE MOVEMENT

It is a deep honor to stand in this body of Guardians, which represents the countless number of People Who Care across the face of this planet. I've been asked to say a few words about the state of the Movement. I could simply ask you to look around the room and to take a good look at the faces and into the eyes of your colleagues. If you see what I am seeing, you would know what the state of the Movement is. Had I been asked to speak on the spur of the moment, I would have done that.

A 17th Century philosopher and statesman, Schuro Grotius, formulated a concept which became known as the Doctrine of the Two Swords. In succeeding years, this doctrine was used by lawyers to drive a wedge between the functions of the State and the functions of the Church. The original purpose of this man's doctrine was to describe an indicative reality in life. There are in this world, he said, two great powers, or two great swords, as it were. One is the temporal sword of the State which ruled through the person of the king in his time, and the other sword is the power of the Church as was manifest in the Pope and his minions.

A few years ago I would have used the imagery of the two swords to hold the characteristics of the body that is gathered here tonight. However, something far more can be held by such imagery of those who deal with the sword and those who deal with temporal matters, or those who function in the temporal to protect those who don't have sense enough, while they are dealing with the spirit, to know what to do in the temporal world.

I find another image of the sword helpful, and I reached way back into my mythological memories to recall the imagery of Prince Valiant. Prince Valiant was one of the knights of King Arthur of the Order of the Round Table, and he had a sword. I don't know whether you'd classify it as a long sword or a short sword, but it was a powerful sword and it was Excaliber. When that sword was grasped by its rightful owner and was wielded in battle by the one chosen, marked and appointed to use it, that sword would sing. It was a singing sword. It sang only in the hands of Prince Valiant, and the basic assumption was that it was only used for just cause and for the protection of the people. That image, for me, holds this hour in our history. An incredible gift of history has been given to this body, a gift I can only describe by using the word "unity." I'm not talking about pandering, politeness or how people can learn to get along with each other. I mean a unity that is born out of historical necessity, a unity that emerges in the midst of radical disagreement and diversity, a unity born out of a common caring, and a unity that is forged out of a disciplined corporateness that cares for the innocent suffering of this world. To symbolize the gift of history, that gift of unity, I'd use the image of Prince Valiant's Excaliber. It was a two-edged sword, remember, and when it was wielded it always won. The unity that this body, in its gathering, dramatizes, has seldom been witnessed in history. I'd point to that as one indicative about the state of the Movement.

I want to quote the words of a colleague, for in the task of describing the state of the Movement it is a necessity to use the words of colleagues. These words are from a colleague in the State of Maharashtra in India: "These words speak for the state of the Movement: OUR FEEBLEST EFFORTS HAVE BEEN ABUNDANTLY BLESSED."

What is the state of the Movement? I could invite you simply to look around at the decor in this room which creates a consciousness of who we are, and, in fact, what the state of the Movement is. The Three Campaigns, or the three aspects of our task, have been held for us symbolically. One campaign has to do with the impact of society, the awakening of individuals and local communities to rise to fulfill the potential already resident in them. We call this campaign Global Community Forum. With the Global Social Demonstration Campaign we have created a methodology which allows us to move in serving local communities. We have the methodologies which allow local people themselves to grasp their own lives and to recreate them. Third is the Global Servant Force, the emergence of a body of people across the face of this earth who, alongside their vocations, their faces to the world, know themselves to have a paravocation. It is through this paravocation that they fulfill the call of history itself.

Take a look at the Global Community Forum in 24 nations across the globe. We have moved to engage people in an event in which they can determine their own vision, their own contradictions, and propose a picture for the future of their own communities.

We have moved this year to a county coverage of the North American Continent. Approximately 150 Town Meetings or CFCs have been held in the past four months. Furthermore, in the last two months, as our colleagues across this continent have engaged in this task, they have been able to confirm, as of today, that they have held or set dates for 498 Town Meetings or CFCs this quarter. We have been saying at Chicago Nexus that, if the Areas put together 444 TMs by this date, then there would be the assurance of the 3,518 being done this year. What has been done indicates that colleagues like ourselves (and others who are not here tonight simply because they are engaged in the task across this continent) have decided to win with Community Forum. As of now, Nevada is the second state in the United States in which all of the counties have held Town Meetings.

By the first week of November, as a result of NEW DAY NEW BRUNSWICK, the Province of New Brunswick in the great nation of Canada will have covered its county territory with Community Forum Canada's. The resolve that this represents is present not only on this continent but across the globe. That's symbolized for me with one place that is holding Community Forum outside of this continent. It is a small village in Venezuela called Tapipa Grande. I had never heard of it before, but that says to me that there are men and women who are ready to move to rebuild the community that has collapsed around them. There are people who have resolved to live for the future, to claim the future and to shape it. It is your resolve that makes it possible to announce, if you didn't already know, that since the Guardians last met in April, the consults have been held and the 24 HDP's are raised now as one global sign. There are 24 HDP's, one each hour on the hour across the face of this globe.

I don't know whether history will ever know what has happened, but I would be willing to wager that it does and will know what it means to raise that kind of sign of practical sociological possibility in local communities across this globe. Some people have looked at human community from a global perspective and have seen only the problems which they have named in terms of not enough food, overpopulation, inadequate education, inadequate health services, and so on. They have been left only with the statistical analysis of what cannot be done. Now, however feeble our efforts have been in the long sweep of history, the sign has been raised. A note of possibility has been raised in the midst of seeming impossibility, simply because men and women have seen the power of local community and the possibility that is resident in a group of people who decided to take responsibility for their own turf. There is possibility because local people have seen that, in taking care of their own communities, they do it not only for themselves but literally for the sake of the world.

I hope you get a chance to cast your eyes over the 16 Global Priorities, our statement of what we are about as a Movement in history. As I scanned the list the other day those priorities began to remind me of an ancient Jewish liturgy. If we were to use that kind of litany to get said what is going on right now, it would go something like this:

Had there only been the 24 and not the PAKK expansion of an additional project in the Philippines, Australia, Korea and Kenya,
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH.

Had there only been the PAKK expansion and not the Singapore strongholds of East Malaysia, Sumatra, Sulawesi and West Samoa,
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH.

Had there only been the Singapore Strongholds and not the breakloose of four more projects in Latin America,
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH.

Had there only been the Latin American Beachheads and not 12 additional Human Development Projects in the United States,
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH

Had there only been the 12 in the U.S. and not the surging replication of Maliwada, the Mighty 250 of Maharashtra,
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH.

We could go on with that, but that brings us to Maliwada, and to replication in the State of Maharashtra. We were working with 16 villages in the State of Maharashtra when we gathered here this summer. Two years ago this December a consult was held, and the villagers of Maliwada decided to become --self-reliant, self-sustaining, and self-confident people who would rebuild their own community. Since then, colleagues have come from across India, from all over Maharashtra, from the village of Maliwada itself, and from the cities of Aurungabad and Bombay to put their lives into a movement which they are calling the Nava Gram Prayas, or the New Village Effort. This effort, in and of itself, has the promise and the potential of renewing every single village across the face of the Subcontinent. Just two months since any of us were last gathered in this room, we've received word from our colleagues that that in the State of Maharashtra there now is a project in every district. That is, we are now working with villages in all 25 districts of that State and there are, in the process of replication, some 36 villages in the State of Maharashtra.

We thought there would be 25 villages by December. What enabled that is surely the Human Development Training School. This Sunday, the fifth such school begins in Maliwada. From the four previously held schools, about 300 people have placed themselves under assignment, to go to any village and to work there for the sake of its renewal, for the sake of its local economic and social development. That school has been attended by college graduates and professional people, some businessmen, some who have interrupted their college education simply to go to school and to work far two years in the villages of India, but also by the villagers themselves. From every one of those villages there is a representative group of 8, 10, sometimes as many as 15 people from one village who have come to that school for 8 weeks, whether they have literacy ability or not, and have utilized the wisdom that's come out of their own engagement; their own struggle with life itself. They have exposed themselves to the horrendous task of grasping new methods for the sake of being effective in the communities and in the villages across the Maharashtra State.

I don't know how it is that we can keep abreast of what's going on and how we can hold, in our mind's eye, the wonder that that is. I would say, in the same breath, that the wonder that comes to me as I stand before that tells me there is more to it than what we have been doing. You can put it in whatever poetry you want. You can say we have been riding a wave of history. You can say it was the right moment, and we came along with the right tools. However you want to talk about it, I stand before that and say that in all of our feeble efforts, those are our projects. But I want to remind us that, in a very real sense, they are not our projects, they are not our villages. What is being done is finally being done by the people of those villages, who have struggled over the years with not enough food, not enough training, not enough work or employment, with the horrendous press of the inadequate health services, daily death, and who have labored hard and long hours to produce minuscule production from their farms. Those men and women have caught a vision of the future. Those are the people who are rebuilding that State of Maharashtra which we have been privileged to participate in. It may be that the world will never see that, but I would be willing to wager that history will do more than nod when that becomes known.

It may be, before that makes its imprint upon history, there will not be one of us left, but that's all right. We do have time. Had there been only the replication of Maliwada and not what we have called the "do-ment" of the 24, it would have been enough. But strangely enough, it has been given to us, and we have perceived that it is historically necessary to do more than what we have done in setting 24 Human Development Projects across the face of the Globe. We've set them in place. Now, the task this year is to move toward their maturation, their completion. To "do" them, whatever that means, and I'm not sure that anyone has clarity yet on what it means to "do" one of these projects or to "do" a village. That's why we've used that strange word "do-ment," and perhaps we have to reach for new vocabulary. For this body, the do-meet of the 24 takes the form of acceleration. Some of you participated in the World's Fair which was held last June in Kwangyung II. That occasion became a sign of the completion of that particular project but also a sign of the 24 being set in place in history. We have participated in a radical kind of acceleration. When we went into those villages to "do" HDP's, we began out of a time-line dictating that within 2 years, a village would be completed to the point where the catalytic forces of the Institute would move on. It has become apparent that by June 30, there has emerged a resolve to move toward the future, to grasp that future and to demand of ourselves that the 24 be done, that those 24 villages be brought to maturity.

This past couple of weeks we sent out teams of people on acceleration events. I don't know whether we call them treks, events, or happenings, but whatever they were, the report we have is that both the economic and the social events that occurred in Vohar, Ivy City and Inyan Wakagapi were events that, indeed, accelerated the

dynamics of each of those projects. The two people from here who joined 16 colleagues from Area San Francisco in Cannonball and in Bismarck, were participating in what was a new form of acceleration for us.

In that 2-day PSU at Inyan Wakagapi, guardians from across that area came together and focused their wisdom on the acceleration of the implementation of the tactics of that Project. What came out of that almost instantaneous acceleration was that there was a metalwork's industry, or, at least the foundations of it were set in place. The contacts were made for marketing products and for securing the equipment that would be needed there to establish a new industry. The site for a ten acre truck farm was identified and secured as a further practical vehicle of economic development within that community.

An acceleration event occurred in the small village of Vogar, 125 miles outside Winnipeg, with a mixture of Mati and Icelandic Canadians. Several people from the U.S. and from Canada enabled the people of that village and those who are seeing to it that that Project comes off, to establish a new industry there. It may seem to some of you to be a rather small beginning, but I want to claim it for the future, especially for anyone who hails from and has any of his roots in Canada. Some of the women of Vogar are now working in a quilt factory. They make quilts by hand and they have a contract to sell the first of their products to nothing less than Eaton's, the major retailing store across Canada. That's a sign!

I'm not just pointing to the increase in income that happens with people who work in that industry. I would point to a new sense of selfhood, a new confidence, a new humanness, if you will, in the people who have been broken open to possibility that they never dreamed was there within their own community, or ever dreamed was possible for their own lives. That is happening!

The Social Acceleration Team in Ivy City was operating on a 10-day model of acceleration. Not 4 weeks, but 10 days to accelerate the dynamics of a Project. I heard the word from some of the people in Ivy City. They said they weren't ready for that group to come in. They weren't ready to be accelerated. Afterwards, their reflection was, "We never would have been ready to have had that happen." What happened was, that the stake dynamic, the care structure in the neighborhood of that community, were brought into being and became stronger in a new way, and 15 people were commissioned to be health advocates in Ivy City. Those people stand now as trained, committed people who have decided to care for the health of that community by pouring out their own lives so that the upgrading of human life in that community might be a sign to all other urban communities across this nation. I sense that we stand at a day of wonder, a day of miracles.

When I think of the third campaign of the Global Servant Force, I think about people like Dick and Louise LeBlanc who are now in Termine, Shannon Welsh who is there also, and I think of some of you. I think of the Betty Dysons, Dallas Ziegenhorns, and the Ben Potts. Do any of you remember Ben from Sudtonggan? He is a man who has just decided to stand tall in the midst of his own community, and, in order to do that, has decided to break out of the parochialism of his own community to go to Maliwada. He's there in the school to participate as a responsible person in that community, then to come back into his own community to assume responsibility once again for the training and the raising up of other people. I think of the Chokababa and the Stubans, That is, I think of the villagers.

I don't know what in the world that Global Servant Force is ever going to look like. I don't know what form it is going to take, whether it will be the form of an historical order that will go down and be remembered for the next 1,000 years, or whether it will take the form simply of a group of people who meet on occasion to engage in an activity that demonstrate possibility, then moves on.

I don't know whether it is going to look like this kind of gathering, or like the gathering of four or five people who, up to the time in which they appeared in the house where they are now living, never knew each other, and there they stay for a year, then move on across the face of this globe. I don't know if it is going to be the Nava Gram Prayas that will include those who come out of the Christian Tradition; those who come out of the Hindu, Buddhist, Shintoist Traditions, or whatever the framework or the poetry or symbolism that has been there to point to the profound aspects of Life. I don't know if it will be that inclusive. I don't know if it is going to include the villagers from across the 24 and the 36 and the 48 and 250 and the rest that we have not even begun to number.

I do know that there is breaking loose, anew in our time, what I call nothing else but spirit. It calls forth men and women like those I have just named, men and women in this room, to be a servant force. Some of us in very recent days have found ourselves very sobered by Radical Contingency. Those who serve society and who serve to create the future and those who serve to defend the human dynamic in Life will be those who decide not only to seek out significant engagement for their own life, who decide not only to take responsibility for the lives of others, but who decide to take upon themselves nothing less than the innocent suffering of the whole world. I think that is going to be one of the characteristics of those who are finally known as the Global Servant Force.

Perhaps the greatest thing that's been given to us, is not simply the tasks of awakening or the task of creating some little project in a village somewhere, but to be those who, in the midst of caring, defend the deeps of Life, itself. A new grasp has been given to us, in our time, of what it means to live the Profound Life; what it means to take hold of Profound Humanness.

All kinds of poetry will emerge. I think we first touched it when we began to talk about the Other World in the midst of this world. What speaks now in this hour to men and women, no matter what the poetry of their tradition, is the qualities of Profound Humanness, as a way of getting our minds and our lives around the deeps of Life itself. I don't know whether that is going to be our lasting poetry, but I suspect that it will.

We find that Life itself presents us with those events which confront us with nothing less than mystery, itself. Sometimes, and most frequently, even against our own desires, a consciousness is thrust upon us that we cannot refuse or deny. This consciousness is a demand for action. We find ourselves in the midst of action engaged totally, called forth to give everything that there is, for the sake of other people and for innocent suffering. In the midst of that action and total engagement, there is born in us a corporateness beyond anything we could ever create ourselves, out of some kind of routine, measurement, or agreement among ourselves. We find that there is proclaimed, in the midst of Life, that which gives us Life itself, and which breaks loose the creativity within us that is beyond our own doing. This is a creativity that only comes out of the pain of birthing the New. Those who decide to give their lives over to that, find themselves, as others find them to be, a presence in history. Integrity is given to us. This is not an integrity measured by a moral principle, or some delineation of Right and Wrong, but an integrity that comes out of being given the gift of your life engaged significantly, born out of Care and in response to Care, finding that Life itself is far fuller than every could be imagined.

I don't know if that is the poetry that holds it for you, but we are the guardians of Profound Humanness. Perhaps that is what will mark us finally in history. We are given to a task and the task is becoming clearer. Teilhard de Chardin held that before us when he said, "The task before us now, if we would not perish, is to shake off our ancient prejudices and build the earth." Our task is nothing less than that. Finally, your life and mine is not worth giving for anything less than that. Our task is to awaken possibility, to demonstrate possibility, to be the Presence of possibility wherever we are.

I want to leave you with the words from one of the early saints of this century. He claimed a promise which seems to be very appropriate as we try to grasp who we are in history and what the state of this movement is. Schweitzer said, "I don't know what your destiny will be. But one thing I know: The only ones among you, who will really be happy, are those who have sought and found how to serve." From what I have seen, I have confidence that we have sought and we have found how to serve; and that task of serving, I have no doubt, will be done!