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MODEL BUILDING METHODS

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1. I went rather reluctantly two days ago to the inauguration of the president of Garret Theological Seminary. It started with a banquet and after the banquet some speeches. There was a speech by the president of the University, and then Archbishop Cody, His Eminence the Archbishop. The Master of Ceremonies got confused and said "His Immense". And then the director of the Church Federation of Chicago, the president of the bishops of the Methodist College, and then the mayor of Evanston, and about six others. Then they called on one of the students at Garret to speak and they, out of sentimentalism I suppose, chose a black man. Black student. Afro haircut, cleanly cut, finely dressed, Harvard looking type, and said something to the effect (I'm going to paraphrase it. He said it a whole lot better.) "Garret is a ghetto of white racism. It's been a ghetto of white racism and nothing's been done about it in the three years that I've been here. There is now a group of us on campus who intend to do something and we have a plan for getting that done. And if you prove to be in favour of that plan, you will find us your friend, but if not" then he sat down.

2. A quiet hush went over the whole hall, and the Master of Ceremonies stood up. He had next to introduce the man who represented the faculty, and he introduced him as the student representative. And then corrected himself. Before that he said, "Well it's good to have a bit of the prophetic note, even in a celebration."

3. It was an unusual inauguration. I still get a little excited talking about it. Actually I enjoyed it because I had just been teaching a couple of times in the Urban Academy and it was good to have some other people get a taste. I found myself with great detachment. But ever since then, that word IF NOT..., IF NOT..., has been ringing in my ear and I can't help but stand before that. We're at a point where we are going for broke. We're at a point where we either produce or we shut up. We're at a point where either we produce now or we go underground. We're at a point where either we do it or get off the pot. We're at a point...

4. And furthermore; as Charles Moore said the other day, the whole world is hesitating. It's like everyone has come to a dead stop and is waiting for someone to tell them what to do. The whole world is standing on tiptoe and waiting for the song of God to reveal what the future will be. This point is the time that the revolutionary elect choose to move with dispatch. We're in that kind of moment, I would want to reaffirm. And I believe that what will enable us to move in the midst of that is:

- (1) Whether we are able to hold the comprehensive.
- (2) Whether we are able to maintain our corporateness.
- (3) Whether we are able to take matter and turn it into spirit. Whether we are able to take every moment of our lives and transcend, go through every moment to the universal, to the transcendent.
- (4) Whether or not we are able to adequately build the models that are going to be needed in the future.
- (5) How well we are able to grasp and to articulate the Word--or how well we are able to teach RSI.

5. Now to look at model building. I want to give a very brief, a very sketchy overview and then find out where your questions are about model building. The fact of the matter is, all of us build models. You don't have any choice there-- period. You are a model builder. What it means to be a human being is to build models. The only question is whether your models are adequate, or whether your models really produce humanness, or whether your models are comprehensive, futuristic, intentional and archaic, to use our code words. That's the only question you've got on your hands.

6. I'll do four things. I'll look at the function of model building, and then want to look at the sense of flow of some of the principles anyway very broadly, and then at the process of model building, and then at the import of model building.

THE FUNCTION OF MODEL BUILDING

7. The function of model building first of all is to give you your reality. You don't have any reality outside of model building. I am my model -- period. That is to say, I don't have self consciousness save I have self consciousness in and through some sort of model. My model is reality. The picture that I have of the world is my reality -- period. And if I have a picture of the world as divided between the bad and the good people, then you can see that's who I am, that's my reality.

8. That's why you've got John Birchers. Not because they are naughty, naughty, or tish, tish. You've got John Birchers because of the reduced model that they operate out of. The reason Goldwater is a reduced human being is not because he's a naughty person, but because he operates out of the model of the nation state being the primary reality for political maneuvering. And if your basic model for political maneuvering is the nation state then you don't have any choice but to be what Goldwater is or something like him. I am my model.

9. And secondly, my model gives me my context out of which I make my decisions. I don't have any context, except the context that my models give me. My models give me the framework out of which I made my decisions. And because of that, the model is the decision below the decision, or the decision below every decision what I make. That is why I believe that to make models is to pray. Because when you are building models, you are creating a framework: you're rewriting the past and you are creating the present and you are intending the future. And that is the milieu in which you make your decisions about when you get up in the morning, about what you are going to eat, and about where you are going to spend the next five years of your life, and how you are going to live this particular day and this particular moment. It is your model that gives you your context or framework out of which you operate. And again the question is whether they are adequate.

10. It is your models, thirdly, that motivate you. If your model is not adequate, then you are not motivated. If your model is adequate, it motivates you. It is

your model that locates where the action is, that points you to what needs to be done and places on you the imperative for doing that. If my model tells me that this building will only hold a hundred people, then I have got a pretty clear imperative: "Get out!". If my model tells me that it will hold five hundred people, then I can be fairly comfortable. That's a silly example, but you can take that into your own thinking. It's your model that delivers unto you your imperative, that relates to you your life existentially rather than abstractly. A model is not an idea. An idea is an abstraction on life. A model, where it is a genuine model, relates you to life on the gut level. It relates you to what you must do in the existential dimension of your life. It makes whatever it is that you feel you have to do seem possible. If your model is not adequate it doesn't seem like it is possible for you to move. It's your model, when it is adequate, that enables you to grasp your task as being possible. And it is your model that innovates -- I'm still talking about motivation -- your model innovates and gets you out of the rut and redirects you when you've gone into some sort of a rut.

11. The fourth point is the assumption that it is your models that give you your responsibility. Or your ability to respond to any given situation is determined by the adequacy of your model. Your ability to respond is directly related to the adequacy or inadequacy of your model.

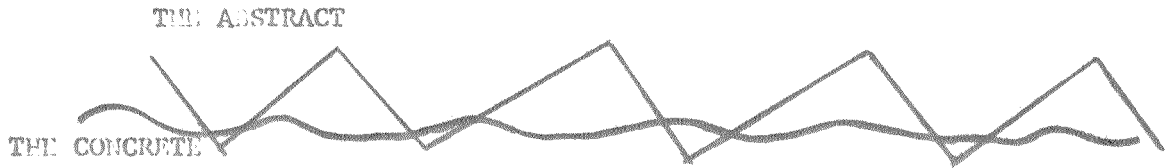
12. The old metaphors of good and evil, right and wrong, are no longer adequate for deciding what your moral decision is. But what you're to recover is that the metaphor which is replacing the great metaphors of good and evil, right and wrong, is the metaphor of responsibility. And that is directly related to your model. Or the way you are a responsible person, to put it in another way, depends on whether, or not you have an adequate model.

13. Two men walking down the street. One of them is an immoral man, and the other is a moral man. The moral man is a man who is a walking globe. The moral man has in his mind a picture of the entire globe, and then a picture of his area, and then a picture of his region, and then a picture of his metro, and then his community. That's your moral man. Not whether or not one goes into the pub or whether one goes home to his family. And it's the adequacy of your model that gives you that ability to respond.

THE PRINCIPLES OF MODEL BUILDING

14. You always begin with the most comprehensive factor, and that for me is the category AWE. Or translated, that means you always begin where you are impacted with the most comprehensive, the most intentional, the most futuristic and the most archaic. That's where awe breaks in upon your life. Or if you want to speak theologically, all model building begins finally with God, and with nothing else.

15. We've elected to work with the categories of time and space in our model building. You could work with other categories. Begin with awe and begin with that relative to time and space. And then you always begin with the given. You don't start with some abstract principle and bring it to the situation you are in. You begin with that situation and then you abstract from that situation. That's why in order to work in the inner city you've got to live in the inner city.



We came to the inner city and we lived here for a year before we finally put together the model that we would use to enter into the Fifth City project. We called it our entrance model. I could put all of it on half a page. And you entered with that model and you got involved in the situation with the model that you had. And then you abstracted from that and created a better model. And then you went back into the situation. And then you abstracted and created another model. And then you went back to check it against your data in the milieu of the situation and then you abstracted. And model building is this continuous process of being engrossed and involved in the situation and abstracting yourself from that situation in order to create your model and then thrust back into the situation. I refer you here to Sartre's paper. You don't even know, you don't even have the foggiest idea of what's going on, unless you commit yourself to change that situation. And then you build a plan how you are going to change that situation. And then that plan -- in the midst of acting that plan out -- that reveals to you what's down here in the situation. And it is only the man who has that disengagement with the plan but is also deeply involved in the situation that can have the slightest idea of what's really going on.

16. You want to know whether your community is prejudiced or not? You build yourself a plan about how to integrate that community, and then you inject that plan, and you find out whether or not your community is prejudiced. You begin, though, always with the givenness of life and never with some abstract principle, although you realize you always come to any given situation with the biases, the prejudices, the models that you show up with. That's Ortega, if you want to read it.

17. In terms of the beginning, you always are the totality of a given situation. The second basic principle is that you always begin with the comprehensive and move to the particular. If you don't begin with the comprehensive and move to the particular you start with your own particular and you move up to the comprehensive and all the way up you build in your own little petty biases, your own little petty notions. It is beginning with the comprehensive and moving to the particular that enables you to know what is really in the particular. And if what is in the particular is not directly related to the comprehensive, then you do not know what is in the particular. If the basic problems of Fifth City are not the basic problems that are facing the entire globe, then you have not found the basic problem in Fifth City.

18. Thirdly, in terms of the basic principles, your model is always dogmatic. When you have built your model, then that's the way life is. No other way, but that way. And if that is not the way life is, then you haven't built your model, you've still got some other model that you are operating with. You don't get out of bed in the morning unless you are operating upon some final reality. You don't walk in this room unless you are operating out of some final convictions about life. These people that talk about being flexible or undogmatic are just stupid. You have the choice of being dogmatic about your model or just being a pile of mud. That doesn't mean that your model is not open. It is only the man who is dogmatic that can finally be open. The man who is undogmatic is the man who is open to everything, and therefore open to nothing. He is nothing. There is nothing there for him to

respond to things, and therefore he is not open to anything.

19. The only way you can be present to anything is to have a stance about the way life is. And then if something does not fit into that stance, you change your model. But you decide that this is the way life is, then you create your model, and then you operate with that dogmatically until your model tells you that it is time to change the model. You don't just go around changing your model 'willy nilly' because some little old lady pushed you this way or because somebody didn't like you for doing this. You set your model and then you stick with your model until your model tells you -- 'Look here. We're not handling all the data adequately.' Your model stands up and waves a red flag at you, but not until then do you change your model.

20. Fourthly, how do you tell if a model is true? There are four basic questions:

(1) Is it comprehensive? Does it include every possible blade of grass, does it include every single bit of data that is available.

(2) Is it internally consistent? That doesn't mean, is it consistent with your particular views. But starting from the premise that your model begins with, is it internally consistent.

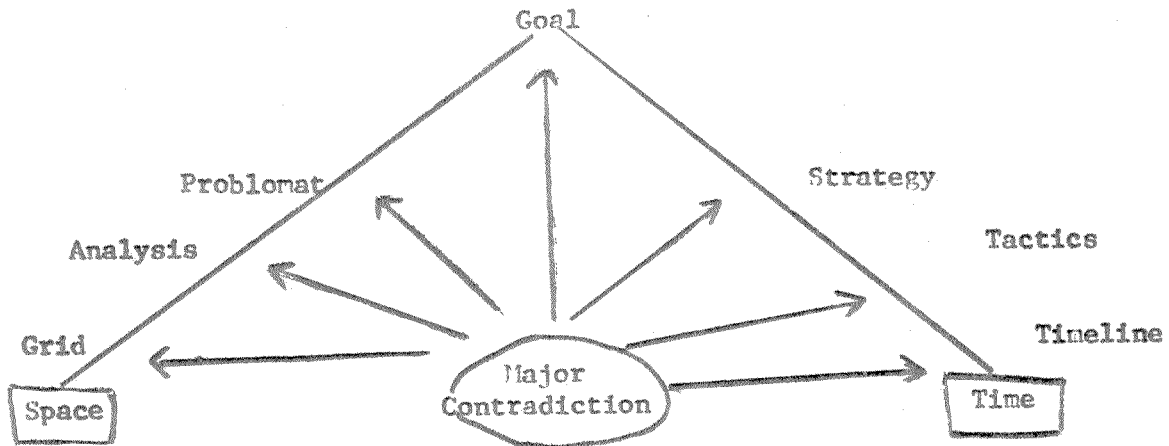
(3) Is your model intentional? And by intentional I mean are you literally willing to risk your life upon that model. If you're not willing to risk your life, that's not your model. You're unconsciously operating on some hidden model.

(4) Is it the most simple and clear model that's possible to handle the data? You have a certain amount of data. The model that is truest is the model that's simplest and clearest, but still able to handle all the data.

21. We work with space and with time in our model building. And the first job in model building is to locate yourself in space. That is you build yourself a grid. You find out what's up or where you are or what's the relationship, the geo-social-spatial relationship that you exist in.

22. Have you ever suddenly showed up in the dark. Somebody turned the lights out. You know the paralysis that you fell until you can remember where certain things were in the room or until the lights come back on and you can see your grid. You feel paralyzed until you have an adequate grid of your space. If you have ever come up out of a subway on the wrong street. You are paralyzed until you are somehow able to readjust so that you get your grid straight. Or, if you have a certain grid in your mind about your bedroom, and you go out to summer camp, sleeping on your top bunk, as one of my colleagues was recently. And you wake up in the middle of the night operating out of the grid that you have from home, you fall flat on your face and scar your nose. Your grid is the essential.

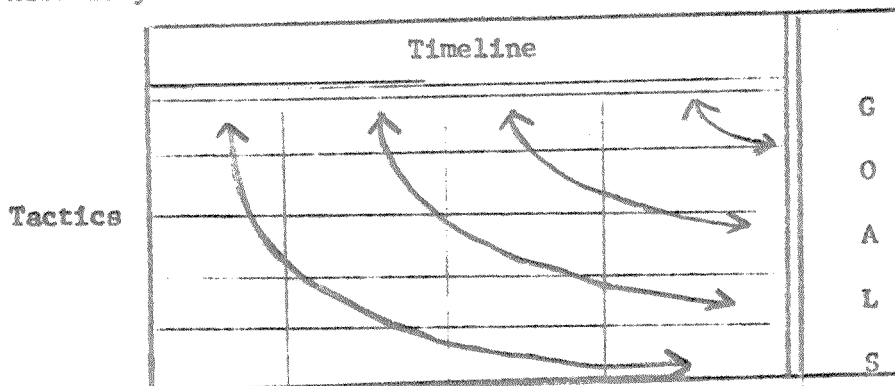
23. Then you have to have an analysis. We use another model to get this and that is the economic, the political and the cultural. A triangle. What you do with your analysis is to take whatever framework you have got to think with and you overlay your framework with the grid. What are the economic relationships, the political relationships, the cultural relationships within this geo-social unity that you are operating in. And it is that analysis that delivers you to your prob-lemat. There is no such word, by the way, that I can find in the dictionary. That's the word we made up. And your problemat is simply the gestalting of the problems that are delivered to you through your analysis.



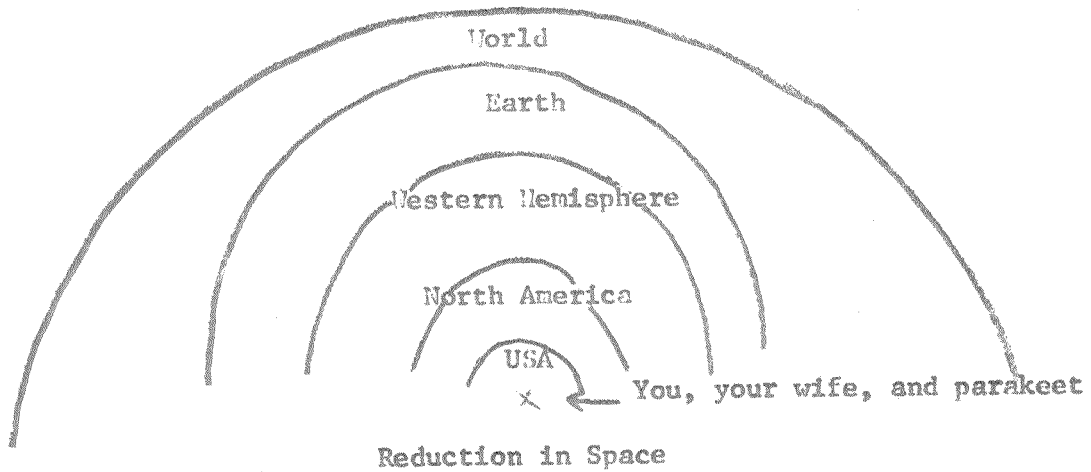
24. The point where time and space meet is in your goals. Now your goals are simply a flip of your problemat. You have your problems, and then you flip those and state them positively and you come up with your goals or whatever it is in your particular situation that you want to accomplish. And then in order to get your goals you have got to have your strategy laid out, and your strategies are the broad basic moves. Do you want to take Italy first, or do you want to attack Germany first. That is the strategic decision. Do you want to move in your airforce first or your tanks. And then you've got your tactics. Your tactics get you down to the nitty gritty. Your tactics get you down to what you put on your time line. Your tactics get you down to what you do Monday morning at 8 o'clock. Your tactics get you down to how many calls you have got to make between eight and nine o'clock Monday morning in order to arrive at your goal.

25. Your time line takes you down into your time dimension. The important thing in your time-line is that you always build your time line relative to tasks and never relative to your druthers nor to your particular life span. If you've built your grid analysis and your goals as goals that are going to take a hundred years to build, then you build a hundred year time line of what needs to happen even if you're not going to be around. Or if you're not going to be around two years later and it's a forty year job you build a forty year time line. Then you operate your two years within that forty year span and then you go on to your heavenly reward. But the important thing, your time line is always built relative to your task.

26. The thing that we've learned, and we've learned it from lots of sweat, is that the key here is your tactics.

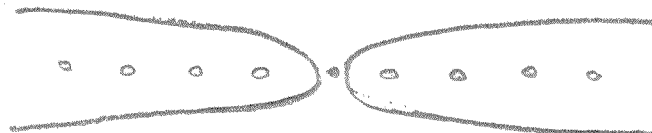


27. We've been taught to think with goals. You have the ten goals that you wanted to do. Then you lay out a time line with the six years that you've got. And then you find that you've taken these goals and put them on your time line. That's what paralyzes people. You take your ten goals and you build yourself a time line and you put these goals on your time line and you've got all those deadlines to meet and you don't have any way to meet them. And the reason you don't have any way to meet them is because you haven't done your work on your tactics. The other trap is that we have our goals and then we tell ourselves that we build tactics but what we really build are sub-goals. If your tactics do not tell you what to do Monday morning between eight and eight-fifteen, then you don't have tactics. You've got either strategy or you have got sub-goals still on your hands. Of course when you take tactics down two more levels than what was your tactic now becomes your goal.
28. Goal, strategy and tactic is not a hard and fast categorization. It is a dynamic relationship. You have a certain thing you want to get accomplished, and then you list the things you've got to do in order to accomplish that, and then you list the things you've got to do under those things you've listed that you've got to do, and then you list the things you've got to do under those things you've listed that you've got to do underneath the things you've got to do. And then that tactic becomes your goal.
29. That is still not all. Here you spend five years creating your adequate grid, doing your analysis. All the time you've been involved in the nitty gritty of formulating your community, and you've been going through this process daily if not weekly. And you've built your problemat and you've got your goals and have your 9,432 tactics all laid out on a time line as to when you are going to do them. And then what you do is you turn around, and you stand before all those tactics and you thumb your nose at them. You ask yourself --What is the major contradiction that I am facing at this particular moment. You can't do that until you've done all this other. You go around talking about contradictions before you've got yourself the most comprehensive picture possible. Until you've built your 9,432 tactics, you're just playing games about major contradictions. The major contradiction has got to relate back in every one of these points.
30. Then you decide, what is the one thing that is blocking me? And then you take all of your forces and you do that one thing. And the remarkable thing about that is that when you do that, all those tactics somehow get done. Now I don't know why that works, but I stand here to testify that it does work. The last quarter in the Urban Academy we built something like 32 pages of tactics just for that little group of four that was left here on campus. We had each other assigned to specific areas. We got them all built and they were such beautiful tactics that we were all anxious to go out and start doing our tactics. And then we had to say to ourselves "No! We are all going to work together on the same major contradiction." And we all screamed, "I want to go do my tactics. I'm assigned to Fifth City. I want to work in Fifth City." No! We're going to find the major contradiction that's facing this city, the continent, the region, and the metro (which is the way we assign ourselves). And then we all go and work on that. And the remarkable thing is that after doing that weekly and daily for four weeks we found out that we were a half a week ahead on doing our tactics in every area except one. It turned out that we'd done the grid wrong there. We didn't have enough data and our grid was inaccurate, and we were blocked. But all our tactics were done. So I just bear witness to that.



31. There are two basic reductions you have to watch in building a model. First is your space reduction. You say what I want to be responsible for is the world. Then you think about all those asteroids and, well, I'm being responsible for the earth. And then you think about all of those Chinese over there and you don't speak Chinese and, well, I want to be responsible for the Eastern Hemisphere. And you think about those crazy Frenchmen and, well, I'll be responsible for the continental United States and Canada. And then you think I'll be responsible for the United States, and then you think about Nixon. No, no, I don't want to do it. Chicago? Oh well, Fifth City. But finally it gets down to you, your wife, and your parakeet. And that's the grid then that is the fundamental operating picture for your decision. That is the first danger.

32. The second major danger has to do with the reduction in time. And this is where it protests what I call situational ethics. The danger there is that you operate out of a picture of time as though each segment of time were isolated from other segments of time. This problem is called the problem of the successiveness in contextual ethics. It's presupposition is that this moment of time and that moment of time are all separate individual units and your job in situational ethics is to decide in this particular moment of time what is the right thing to do. If you do that, you're caught in a trap. If your indigestion happens to be doing a certain particular way at this a particular moment and if your juices are turned on a certain way and if the lights are low and if the music is just the right music that hits you where you happen to get hit and the music is turned on that way then you are a victim to that particular moment of time. That's not the way life is. That's an inadequate model of the way life is.



33. This particular moment in time right now is related to every other moment in time, and the decision that you make and the action that you take at that particular moment rewrites every other moment of your life. Have you ever been married? I tell you that rewrites every other moment of your entire life. You ever lost a leg? That

rewrites your whole history of being a two legged man. Have you ever decided to take RSI? That rewrites your entire past, but not your entire past, your entire future, is rewritten in every given moment of your life. Every decision that you make is rewriting your entire past and is recreating in a new direction or a new thrust your entire future. Now when you see that, that saves you from being a victim to any particular moment in your life.

THE IMPORTANCE

34. The importance of model building is simply this: (1) That history is created. It doesn't just happen. Somebody created the situation we've got on our hands and therefore the situation can be changed. One of the major contradictions facing the church today is being able to believe that things can be different. The model builder is the one who knows that this particular situation was created by man and another situation is entirely possible. It can be different. And if not, if you decide not to do it, that's all right. Somebody's going to do it. Somebody's going to decide a model that's going to change tomorrow. If it's not going to be the Church of Jesus Christ in one manifestation or other, another Karl Marx will sit for thirty years in some old musty museum and he will create a model of what the future's going to be. The future won't be like he created it or like the envisioned it, but the future is going to be created by whatever it is he created. Do you understand that practically every single model that Marx created came true, because Marx created it. It wasn't at all like Marx thought it would be, it didn't even happen in the country he thought it would happen in. But it happened. Maybe it'll be a Hitler that will decide the future. And the man who does not have a model becomes Hitler's accomplice, in creating the future. The tragedy of the youth today is that they are so ready to move but they don't have any picture of where to go. And do they collapse. And I mean they have collapsed. They don't have any models. And all you have to do is to just ask them. "If it shouldn't be the way it is, what should it be?" And you can just see them wilt inside. I saw them on TV last night sitting in at an arboretum because they didn't want this beautiful property destroyed. The news reporter came up and said "You are protesting them building this science building in this beautiful arboretum? If they don't build it here, where should they build it?" And you could just see them wilt. I mean literally before the cameras. They just turned into putty. "We don't know. But they don't want to build it here, here." Five minutes later they came out and simply announced, "You either leave, or else you've got a \$1,000 fine." They took off.

35. The anxiety in the midst of all this is the horrible ambiguity, I mean the horrible ambiguity. There are no three good reasons for doing this rather than that. All you know is what your model tells you. And the horrifying transparency of the ambiguity that you and I live in today is that you and I know that we built the model. Back when you had things like right and wrong and good and evil you could pretend to yourself that somebody else built the model, and you just had to find out what the model is. But the ambiguity of your decision is intensified a hundred fold when you are clear that you built the model from which you have to risk your own life. And the audacity, the horrifying audacity, because this man who is a model builder knows that he has not just decided his life, he is literally deciding the life of every other human being on the globe. You build a model of what a human being ought to be, or you build a model of what a minister ought to be, you build a model of what a lawyer ought to be, you build a model of what a mathematician

ought to be, you build a model of what a student ought to be and you give your life to that, and you're deciding not just for yourself. You are creating the future of every other human being. That's part of the pain of the lucidity of our day and nobody can ever get away from that again. And then the finality. The model you build is the box you're going to lay in to go down to your six foot hole. The model you build is the cross on which you're going to be crucified. There is no way out. Either you build your model self consciously, or else you go to your six foot hole in an unconscious model. There is no stopping model building in order to get out of that. The question is, What is the most adequate model for the most adequate human? That's what is before us. And that's what we're doing when we build models.

George West