

GROWING PRIORSHIP

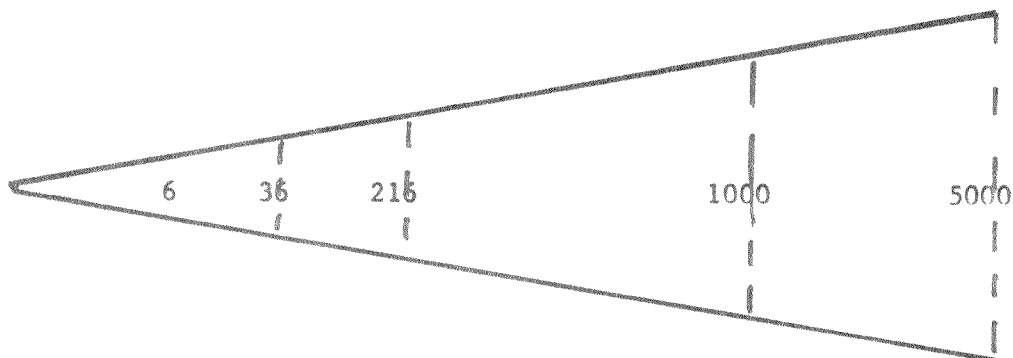
Now there are five things we are out to do... and one of those is Functional Eptitude...

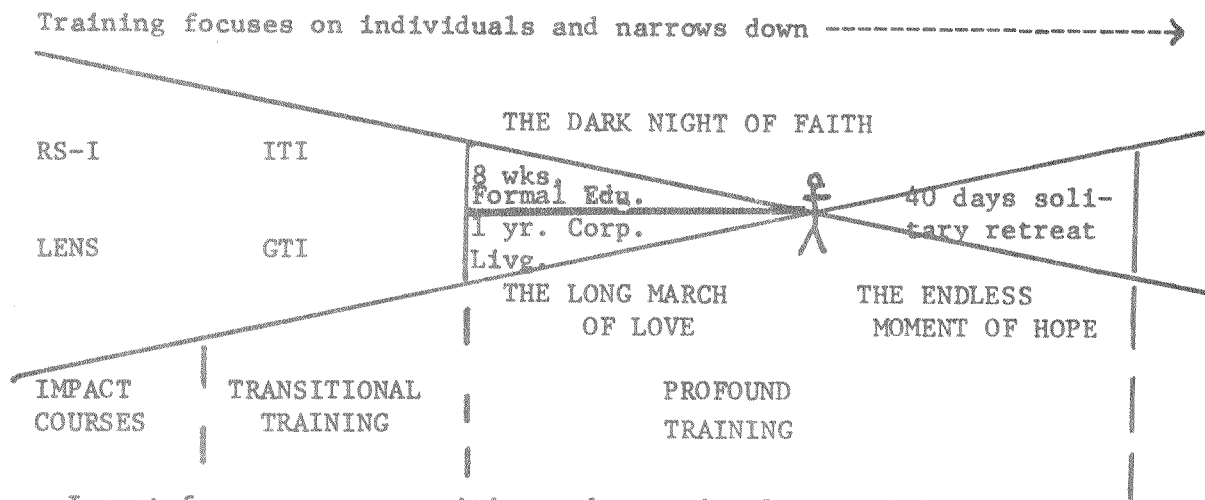
This lecture is about the education of and by the Movement. In this arena, these days, we are struggling with several questions: What is training, really? What will it look like in ten years? And, most crucial of all, How do we grow up priorship faster?

We used to be an Educational Movement. We used to be a Teaching Order. In the criticism of the old society, education is a pioneer function. In the forties and fifties colleges and seminaries were places where the edge was happening. In the building of the old society, education becomes a vehicle with which you give criticism to the old society and bring consciousness to bear upon what is happening. But in the building of a new society, education brings up the rear. Since 1971 our life as an Educational Movement and Order has been passing away. It is now gone. We are a Service outfit.

Education is one of the five services with which we serve the world. We not only train, we demonstrate what training can do. The first thing we started after 1971, that great summer of the turn toward the world, was to work on a course that later came to be called LENS. Now LENS has evolved into a Town Meeting, which is not a course at all. Town Meetings are not education at all. They are a meeting. The masses of the world would never have been reached in a classroom. The meeting of a whole town on Saturday afternoon right off Main Street in Wallabalooa, Indiana, is not education. Now, these community meetings are going to turn loose and multiply like rabbits. The classroom, however, has the opposite effect. In a classroom you tend to take something and refine it like gold. You drag in a lot of people by the next if need be and turn a few of them into revolutionaries. In the sixties we moved on awakening the Church with courses. And out of it we refined a Movement. A renewed movemental Christianity was distilled through the use of courses and that job was just done, period. Now Town Meeting goes forth to wake up the last sleepy-headed fat lady in the world. The classroom will follow and refine out a league of guildsmen who care unto death.

Impact focuses on communities and expands ----->





Impact focuses on communities and expands almost unbelievably. Training focuses on individuals and narrows down. "Narrowing down" does not mean that more and more training is not done over the years. It narrows down in the sense that people are refined by one level of training into the next level of training. That's you grow a few great trees out of many acorns. Now, RSI and LENS are impact in most of our thinking, but they are education. I don't know if that necessarily makes them training. You see a kind of mingled ambiguity there. So I have held that ambiguity by using the word, "impact courses." At any rate, RSI and LENS are grade school, so to speak. Many people will get to heaven who have only gone to grade school. But, we need to get a few people through university levels in the aptitudes of the revolutionary life. That is what that chart means as it narrows down to the right. A prior is a "university grad in revolutionary prowess." (As represented by that little stick figure there on the chart.) Now, ITI and GTI (Global Training Institute), the secular form of the ITI, have training in their names. Some of us have wanted to call them impact and you can see why. A part of their function is to reach out into the levels of the world that have not been really reached in many ways before. But, I suppose "transitional training" would distinguish them from profound training. Eight weeks of formal education when our methods are taught in depth is training of a different type, training that occasions priorship. "One year of corporate living" can mean many things on this chart. It can mean a galaxy, certainly. It could mean a really good cadre. It certainly means a religious house. One year in a good religious house is TRAINING in all capital letters. Training that occasions priorship. In a religious house where everything that makes a religious house a religious house has gone to pot, training does not happen.

The "Forty Days of Solitary Retreat" is a balloon there. It is not training, but some form of nurture. It is spiritual prowess rather than functional aptitude. We need to keep spiritual prowess separate from functional aptitude in our thinking and planning. Forty days may be too long. Jesus had a forty day retreat. Ignatian retreats were about that long, but maybe we can spin through the endless life in nine days. Things move faster today. Anyhow, the retreat has nothing to do with this subject. It is sort of a boundary for our imagination here. We have experimented with retreats in our Odyssey, in our experiments in fasting and vigils. The study of Ignatius is a very important part of our memory in this area. Perhaps many of us are on

retreat now while we are in the midst of missional work. It seems to me there is something like a retreat going on in it. Maybe the Staretz' prayer is a symbol of being in permanent retreat while you go on with your work. At any rate, in full proximity to this there is profound training where a person has time to anchor his life in profound Faith, profound Love and profound Hope. Now, you can take "eight weeks of formal education" more than once and you can take a year of "corporate living" more than once. I have been in "eight weeks of training" many times and am still being trained every quarter. Many of you have also been in "one year of corporate living" many years and are still being trained. If anyone knows what else really trains a prior, please speak up soon.

Now, what are priors made of? Priors are made entirely out of consciousness of profound consciousness. They are made entirely out of Faith and Hope and Love. Profound consciousness just is. It smokes down there underneath everyone's life, but consciousness of profound consciousness is a journey to being conscious of the profound consciousness that is just there. Priors have made the journey. An iron man is iron because he has dropped an iron rod down into profound belief. It is as if a prior is made out of iron rod driven into the bedrock of reality, belief, care, trust, power, assurance, peace, election, presence and joy. Those are all iron rods sunk into the bedrock of reality. Consciousness of profound consciousness is key to priorship training and is underneath all training. Secondly, a prior has to have methodological know-how. Profound consciousness is almost a category that goes off the chart and then when you get back onto the chart you see methodological know-how. He is ept, socially, intellectually and spiritually. Thirdly, a prior has to have horse-sense to relate profound consciousness and the methodologies to real people with whom he has to work. That is called horse-sense for short. Fourthly, a prior is a servant of servants. The prior is the first servant among equal servants. It is a strange polity principle we are working with here when he who served best is made the leader. Better put, in a revolutionary outfit the best embodiment of the crucifixion is put on the throne. This does not mean that the prior excels all the others in gifts. It just means he is likely to be first in laying down his life.

Now this business of priorship grows in a garden called profound training. All I am trying to lead up to is that word "profound training." And whatever else profound training is, it is the garden in which the little plants grow into profound priors. Now, you never know which plants will grow, so you water them all. You water thousands and only 10 make it to giant trees that can bear the weight of the world. Training programs have to reach out to the whole earth and "water" methods so they seep through every fabric of global civilization. It is as if you have to train the whole world to get one prior. Training the world is in itself a value. That one prior you get from all that training is strangely enough of even more value because you can send him back to do all five things, including training the world. A prior is really trained by God. This is another mystery in this whole thing. Our big old training system, even when it is good, simply occasions the presence of God. Priors are trained by God. We water little plants with training

and God grows them. If you don't believe that, you just try to predict who is going to grow. There is utter mystery involved in this whole dimension.

Priors could also be said to be trained by man. Methodological prowess is shared from one person to another. I, myself, am most interested in the methods of spirit prowess. Methodologies for spirit prowess that give human beings the facility to live on the edge of this journey. But there are also methodologies of Social Demonstration, Methodologies for Awakening, methodologies for Primal Community, and methodologies for education, itself. Five methodologies that go with the five things we do -- you can reduce those to three if you want to, and you have spirit methodologies, social methodologies and intellectual methodologies. Methodologies are shared one person to another, yet it is only methodology that is tied into the presence of God that really interests a revolutionary. Methodologies of tire-changing, sheep-herding, and brain surgery do not interest me too much. I am interested in methodologies that tie into the ontological deeps of social change--battleplanning, framing, workshopping, consensus building. I am also interested in the educational process when it is in accord with the way the mind of man actually functions as it was made to function by its Creator, methodologies that bubble up through the structure of being itself. This is the methodology that interests the revolutionary and the revolutionary training system. A revolutionary person may have to change tires, herd sheep and do brain surgery, for all I know, but there is nothing particularly revolutionary about those methods.

To pull together all that a prior needs to know, you have four categories. Profound consciousness, which is finally taught by God alone, revolutionary methods, which we have some hope of sharing with one another (although the profound deeps of being are a big assist there, too), human insight would be the third category, and social models. This is the subject matter of training. Profound Consciousness, revolutionary methodology, human insight, and social models. Then, maybe you can discern two types of training--two ways in which this kind of subject matter becomes deeply grounded in human beings. One might be called formal training and the other might be called indirect training, a very important distinction. Formal training means time set aside for the express purpose of advances in methodological aptitude, time set aside for deep probing into the arenas of profound consciousness, human insight, and social models. Indirect training points to the entire round of missional life and missional work as these occasion training. Just working alongside somebody that knows what they are doing occasions training, and being thrown out into the abyss and having to do something you don't know how to do occasions training--or drowning, as pointed out before. Training goes on indirectly in the midst of all our activity. In the midst of a research assembly, training is going on, even though our direct focus is research. In a council, training goes on, even though our direct focus is building a consensus. In the midst of our work with task teams training goes on even though that is not our direct focus, and even in our celebration life training goes on even though that is not our direct focus.

Three rhythms also help clear the air in my mind for thinking about training. It is like you have a little wheel called the weekly rhythm, and a bigger wheel called the quarterly rhythm, and yet a bigger wheel called the annual rhythm. And training goes round and round and round to all three of these rhythms. Every week you have an Ecclesiola, Metro Cadre meeting, a guild meeting, post-work and all kinds of things. And then on a quarterly rhythm you have things like Priors Meetings, Academys, Global Odysseys, ITP programs, ITI's, and Global Research Assemblies. Round and round in three separate circles, go three separate rhythms. Perhaps we even need to invent a four-year rhythm that will deal with higher levels of competence. At any rate, everyone participates in education as a part of his life. Not alongside life, but as a regular rhythm in the midst of his life. You don't go to four years of education anymore and say, "Now, I am educated." Education is round and round and round the rest of your life. Industry and everybody else is clear about this. And so as long as you live every week round and round you go to Collegiums, Ecclesiolas and other kinds of things that are training. And round and round for the rest of your life you do things on a Week II rhythm that is training. Then round and round for the rest of your life every year occasions come up for extended sessions of depth formal training and other kinds of extended sessions in which indirect training goes on.

Now the next three points are long-range issues of training. That's point two. Point three is short-range issues in training. And point four is some crucial proposals for the next year.

First, let's reflect a bit on these long-range issues of training. The training of non-Christian leadership might symbolize one of these long-range issues. An entire task force worked on the secular ITI, called GTI, this summer. The point of their work is that we are actually going to do a three week training program with Buddhists, Hindus, Moslems and other non-Christian groups in Japan and maybe even China. By far the majority of mankind do not grasp themselves as Christians and we are out to train the world. Building on top of University 13 work and other previous work the GTI task force got a long way down the road in putting together a format that can just be gone and done. I am convinced that there is no problem in actuating the GTI. Lectures are no problem at all. We could do them now. Seminars are no problem if we want to use Western authors. If we decide we must have Sub Asian authors, Japanese authors and novelists and essayists that have grown out of those parts of the world included in the curriculum, then we have got some research left to do. Symbolic life is another edge there. A song book, meal rituals, and so on, needs further thinking, but we could use it experimentally. Workshop details and so on require a few afternoons of difficult labor. But the biggest problem with the GTI is just simply deciding when and where you want to start experimenting with the program. That is shocking to me. I do not think we ought to be in too big a hurry. What hurry and not hurry means is one of the issues. Experimentally we could use it this year. I would suggest that the easiest place would be with English-speaking Sub-Asians like the Buddhists in Ceylon. This program is going to be a contribution to the lives of millions who would not otherwise have been able to encounter the insights and methodologies and models contained here. I predict that someday we will be called upon to do eight and thirteen-week profound consciousness programming, new forms of the Academy--like University 13 for non-Christian groups. We will be able to handle a symbol

system directly without any difficulty in the course work if that is advisable. Instead of Church History, New Testament and Old Testament, we will have a course on Western religion, the second on Sub-Asian religion and the third on Oriental religion, and do the same thing as we do with the Old Testament. That is blow the bottom out of it through the model of Profound Faith, Profound Hope, Profound Love. There is not any real trouble in going and doing that with a little scholarship and some determination.

The symbolic life of an eight or thirteen-week program does seem to me to be an unsolved problem. Symbols are not neutral and shallow symbols communicate shallow something. How do you communicate profundity in our symbols, rituals, openings, closings, and songs? How do we communicate the profundity that we can, through the benefits of the Christian memory? We have a lot of work to do on the adequate transposition of profound worship into equally profound secular modes. But we might as well begin thinking about it. We have got a lot of thinking to do. Maybe there is no hurry, but time does seem to have a way of moving in on us fairly fast. Most of the other long-range issues of training center around needs for greater and greater competence in social methods. We need to walk with kings. We need to work with local people of all types. This requires sophistication of various new types. It requires precision of various new types with things like framing, battleplanning, and community reformulation. It requires updating all of our formal training methods in an Academy to the more practical details. The accumulated wisdom gathered on how you really do reformulate a community is in the day-by-day business of doing it. Anyhow five years from now or ten years from now the entire training system will have a new look. I am sure we will be building on the wisdom that we have been piling up for twenty years.

Let's look at the short-range issues of training. The basic issue here is more trained priorship in Metro Cadres and in the Order over the next two years in every area of the world. With eight new Social Demonstrations to be done each of these years, plus strengthening Houses and Centrums, plus demands for new Houses, and Metro Cadres that need to come into being and have trained priorship to stabilize them, one is overwhelmed in looking at the problem directly because the solution is so mysterious. I am convinced that Xavier did not go to Japan until after some kind of effective siege of training had taken place with the help of Ignatius and the men back in Spain, Portugal, wherever they did it. Anyhow those Xaviers, in order to be the Xaviers that have to be out over nothing, need some kind of formal beginning points that are nailed into the center of the earth.

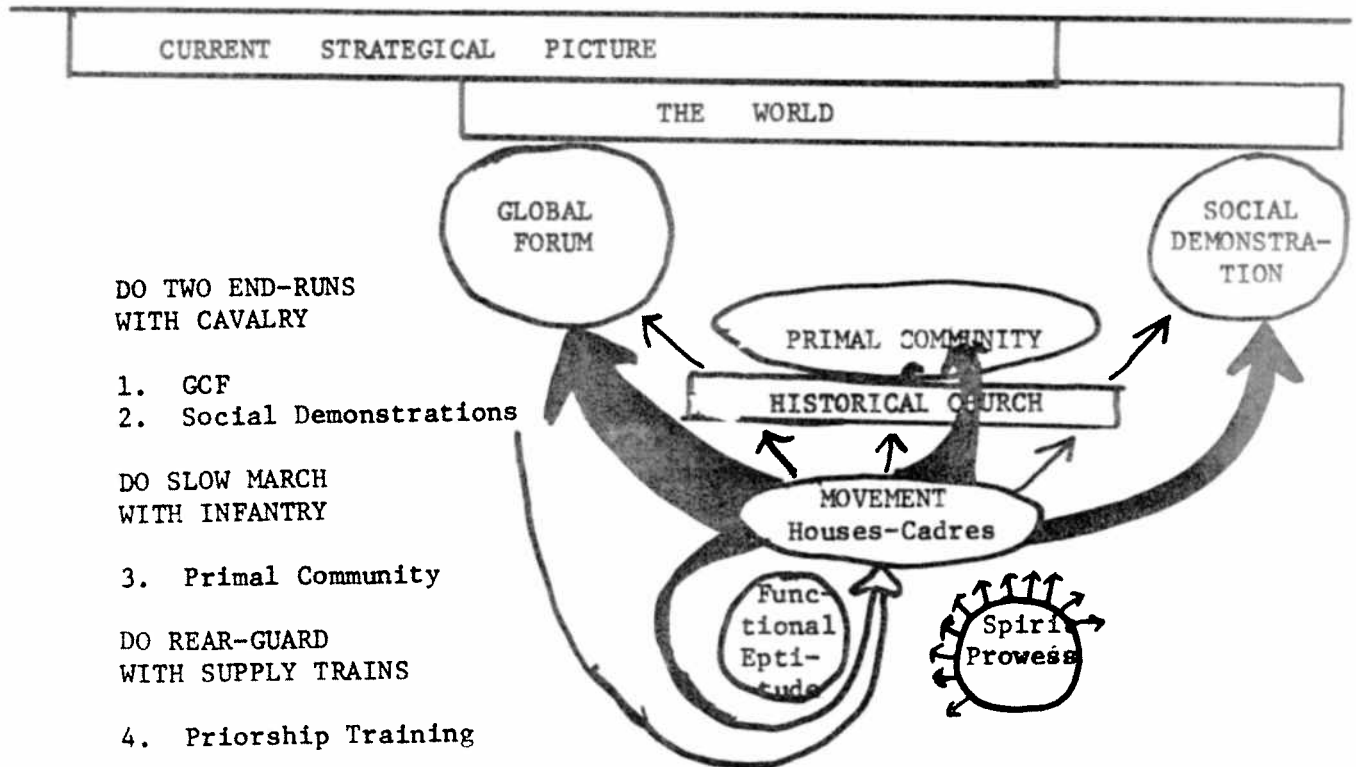
Two hundred additional priors is an interesting figure. In order to occasion 200 additional priors in the next two years, 3,000 people need to experience profound training beginning right now. The question is how these thousands of potential giants can be watered with the adequate experiences to occasion God's action in growing them up. That is the mission. The flaw in our present operating system is that no one seems to grasp himself as being in the right place to handle the problem. Centrums are remote from knowing the individual people across the world. The local troikas and cadres know the people and who is ready for profound journeying in their training, but often the local priorship is without inclusive models for training. They are without accountability for their efforts. They are under intense accountability for other efforts that consume most of their time, and there is some unclarity as to what really is crucial in priorship training. Therefore the entire task of priorship training suffers from quantitative and qualitative neglect.

So what do we propose to do? The proposals are spelled out in some of our documents and we have talked about them in various ways around the edges. But it seems that we are on to something that could be critical in moving ahead practically over the next couple of years. An Area-wide perspective on the care of potential future priorship is a very helpful image. The Area priorship can, through their collegiality as Regional and Metro priors, get on top of who it really is that needs to be selected for the next levels of training--and see to it that training experiences are intensified. Imagine something like training task teams of old hands in each Area who sit down and compile a list of 756 names, that is 21 per Metro. That is--756 people in each Area who are being screened very carefully as to what needs to happen next, relative to their experiences in training. In order to do this each Metro would have to come up with 21 names per polis. That would be 756 per Region as the brainstorm for the 756 names per Area. We have got to get that responsibility located in the Area and down to the local in such a way that people see very concretely what it is they can and should do. Time is needed at the Area meetings to get this planning done, and to set up a system that will work in that Area for the caring and training of these 756 people. It means thousands of people trained all over the world.

The second proposal is to intensify the local happenings in that weekly rhythm of Collegiums and Ecclesiolas. And upgrading of our training happening across the world can take place, if those become excellently done. House troikas need to rehearse the importance of these occasions and find the time to do quality work. Meetings of priors at Area levels could discuss their training work and share what worked and what did not work in their concrete conditions and then do some corporate preparation. These ideas might be experimented with in order to focus our minds that every time any group gathers, profound training goes on.

Another proposal is to put more responsibility on the Global Centurms for producing the kind of materials that can save time and increase quality of training in the local arena. The materials would include common memory Collegium constructs for a year, Week II conversations, updated archives materials and various materials for Ecclesiola, Metro Cadre, and Primal Community. This is already being done. But a new flashlight is put on how important these materials are in the light of the local busy prior who needs materials so he can very quickly discern whether or not they will be good in his situation; therefore, get good materials and good happenings down the road more quickly.

Now the last proposal has to do with imaging training more clearly, especially the imaging of its short-range priority. The emphasis on priorship training discerned in the setting-up of the research summer is a key insight in the whole training system. Priorship training needs to be seen as an underlying push in these next two years. But in these next two years, Town Meetings and Social Demonstrations have to have first energy.



This current and strategical picture shows two end-runs with the armored cavalry of the Global Community Forum and the Social Demonstration, end-runs on the historical Church, involving the historical Church as much as possible. Then there is a slow march with the infantry. That is the Primal Community. One trench at a time into the future. We have discussed how critical that is. The point I am leading up to is to also do a rear-guard action with the supply train. When I was in the army as a chaplain I was assigned to division trains of a division. Division trains included training systems and the quarter-master corps. Their job was to keep fighting elements moving with whatever they needed. That has stuck in my mind that supply trains are part of the military machine. Priorship training might be thought of as part of the supply train. You take some energy that you really need for combat and you assign it to trains. You do a rear-guard action in which all the many people that are being awakened, that are concerned what to do now, are seen and put into the training funnel and accelerated around functional eptitude back into priorship of the Houses and the Cadres. Now the difficulty in pulling off this strategy is that it takes precious energy and applies it backwards in order to go forwards. It takes a bit of long-range perspective and careful thinking to see that is what is needed in a concrete situation. Human energy is expended on getting more human energy. But you do not get that human energy back immediately. It is like spending your oil for drilling oil wells. You are burning up oil in drilling an oil well. It is that kind of a feeling that comes to you on the local front-line. But the return on that expenditure is good over

the long haul. The lack of pouring our money into the rear-guard action is the long-range extreme problem. How to think that through is the problem of the short-range priority. We do not need to panic over 5,000 Town Meetings plus replication plus eight Social Demonstrations. We need to maintain our "cool" and assign a select portion of our valuable energy to the rear-guard action, even though that is going to seem absurd under certain circumstances. To keep straight that indirect training is doing the crucial job is not going to be enough. The kinds of training pointed to under profound training are an essential part of the garden that grows up the priorship that we need. All dimensions of our training have to be kept in motion to get our job done.

-----Gene Marshall

7/28/75