

ADDRESS OF THE HISTORICAL CHURCH TO THE ORDER: ECUMENICAL

I would like to begin with a prayer. It will be evident why I chose it. It is called, *Black Elk's Prayer*:

Grandfather, Great Mysterious One, You have been always, and before You, nothing has been. There is nothing to pray to but You. The star nations all over the universe are Yours, and Yours are the grasses of the earth. Day in, day out, You are the life of things. You are older than all need, older than all pain and prayer. Grandfather, all over the world, the faces of living ones are alike, in tenderness they have come up out of the ground. Look upon Your children with children in their arms, that they may face the winds and walk the good road to the day of quiet. Teach me to walk the soft earth, a relative to all that lives. Sweeten my heart and fill me with light. Give me the strength to understand and the eyes to see, Help me, for without You, I am nothing.

I would only make this comment—that the one who uttered that prayer quite evidently had tasted of the New Reality. I say to you:

Grace is yours and peace. From God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ Amen. Amen.

I spoke at the Global Research Assembly several weeks ago about *The Kingdom Way*, and here I am again. One of my favorite stories is about the man who was sick with a mysterious disease. He went to a doctor who examined him carefully. He was mystified and said, "Have you ever had this before?" The fellow said, "Yes, I had it once before." The doctor pondered and said, "Well, you've got it again." And you have me again.

Some of you have been inquiring about what I have been doing since I was last here a few weeks ago. I want to say that I've been up to my elbows and beyond in the longest walk. I have great difficulty not calling that the Long March, but it was the longest walk. Together with many others, I attempted to be an enabler. It was the witness of the aboriginal people of this continent who walked across the country and then spent more than one week in Washington, D. C. The theme of their march was justice and survival, their survival as a people, and perhaps our survival, too, as we lay waste to nature. In my thinking, I rather equate this version of the longest walk with Gandhi's salt march. It was a great thing to walk with these brothers and sisters, with whom I had never walked closely before. So it will be a memory which I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

Others were walking, too—Bill Wapeka, Bill and Russell Means, and others. These leaders had been willing to pay a price for their people in this generation. I found myself falling into line, and next to me a person was walking who was somewhat familiar. The man on my left was one of the leaders of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who said, "Do you know that man on the right?" As I suspected, he actually was a well known comedian. So it was nice to walk with this comrade and then to engage in serious conversation with him. I said to him, "You have been a comedian, but the Lord has laid his hand on you. Is that not true?" And he said that was true. A little while later, there fell into the line another person who looked familiar. It was Marlon Brando who has found passionate concern and cause in the Native American people. He spoke that night at the Kennedy Center, and read the prayer written above from a theatre program where the movie, *Black Elk Speaks*, was presented. He has great force of personality and spoke at length in a very moving way. It was really a sermon he delivered, indicating how he had come alive as he read authentic histories of the indigenous people of the North American continent. Finally,

he said, "Because of these people and what they have shared with me, I have been completely re-made morally and spiritually." I take it that is the language used by people when they have come in touch with the New Reality.

I want to divide what I am going to say into some recollections and some reflections on the New Reality, and then some applications and anticipations. When one begins recollections around a place like this, almost anything can happen. I remember, for example, that electronic grid of the Local Church Experiment on the West Side in Fifth City. I wonder whatever happened to that; but it was a wonderful piece of machinery! Or, who can forget the whistlepoints? For a few moments, I would like to recollect about Joe. I have four recollections I want to share with you, which will not surprise you either. One of them concerns the beginning. There were many beginnings, but I want to describe this particular beginning. Then, I want to share a recollection of deepening, and then one of broadening and then one of doing.

My first recollection dates back to 1931 and 1932. Joe and I graduated from high school in the Class of 1930 in Mansfield, Ohio. We didn't have two dimes to rub together. The next year we worked in a warehouse unloading cars of sugar, coffee, salt and canned goods, earning \$22.80 a week. The next year, I entered college and Joe continued working for a few months. Just after Christmas at the end of 1931, Joe left for Hollywood, California. He wanted to enter the movies. Joe was always an actor, not in terms of any artificial role playing, but in the understanding that all of us, if Shakespeare is correct, have many roles to play along the way, and I like to think that Joe played them well. This event took place in Langtree, Texas. Langtree was the home of Judge Roy Beam who represented the law west of the Pecos River. The town was named after a British opera singer and great beauty, Lily Langtree, with whom Judge Roy Beam had a kind of love affair from afar. He was fond of her, and named the community after her, even bringing her there to sing.

The above description is to set the scene for the arrival of Joe and his friend, Eddie Norris, as hitchhikers in early February. In West Texas, you might go three days without any cars coming by in those days. On a cold February night, they lay down on the dried up bed of a stream, and slept as well as they could in the cold. Then, in the middle of the night, there came a great rainstorm up in the mountains, causing a flash flood. They barely reached the shore in time with their few belongings. They were soaked to the skin and they made their way into this little town of Langtree, Texas. They spotted a boxcar there, pried it open, went inside, and slept fitfully for the rest of the night. When they awoke the next morning, they discovered that the last occupants of that freight car had not been human beings, but rather cement. The powder had sifted through to the floor, and clothed in their wet garments, they were stiff. They spent the day by the Rio Grande River washing their clothes.

The next day, Eddie said to Joe, "Let's just stay on this freight train and go to Los Angeles this way." And then Joe said it was almost as if a voice had spoken to him and said, "Don't go, Joe! If you do, you'll be a bum." That is to say, when you ride on a freight car, you steal a ride. When you hitchhike, no one has to give you a ride, and, of course, most of them don't. But Joe recognized the distinction. The next morning, after that decision was made, they walked to the highway, and the first car that came along took them the entire distance to Los Angeles.

Joe wasn't in the movies, but he had other roles to play, I guess. All of this took place at the end of 1931. During the following summer of 1932, the Olympics came to Los Angeles. They had their Olympiad of religion, too—old Bishop Arthur J. Moore. He was a preacher, and for the first time, Joe tasted the New Reality. He came hold and told me about it, and I didn't have any better judgment than to taste it, too. And when you taste and see, you find it is good. Well, that was the beginning.

Now, what about the deepening? It is true that we lived our early years in a town called Ada, Ohio. After that, we lived in Mansfield where Joe left home to attend college. Later, he returned and we both went to a biblical seminary in New York. If you wonder where charting comes from originally, it was invented by Wilbur Webster White. He was a great scholar and analyzer, and is responsible for bringing a certain stage of perfection to the charting method of study and analysis. I have to say that Joe and yourselves, as his colleagues, have extended it greatly beyond that, but its origins ought not to be forgotten.

Dr. White had always wanted to train some itinerant Bible teachers and he thought he saw some promise in Joe and myself. He received a small grant-in-aid even though this was still right in the heart of the Great Depression. We were to travel to northern Ohio and initiate a series of Bible classes. We had an old Essex car which would be a collector's item now. At that particular time, we went to 25 different towns in seven counties. We could have almost painted those counties yellow! We could present ourselves at the door of an unsuspecting parson, and just imagine this! You think *you* have to make some difficult calls! We would say, "We would like to start a Bible class in your church." I am sure they looked at us with the same suspicion that you would look at anyone who would raise that same question anywhere in the world today. Nevertheless, without fail they let us do it.

We organized 25 of them, and every week we would drive around in our Essex to teach them. We had an easel stocked with a pad of blank newsprint. We visited the local newspaper office and asked them for the ends of their newspaper rolls. Then, we would tack the paper on the wall and proceed from there. We were so foolish that we simultaneously taught eight different books of the Bible. Some 700 people were enrolled and attended class regularly. At the end of the summer, we had our first global assembly. We invited all of the people who were part of these courses to Mansfield, Ohio. Dr. White came from New York which was for us like having Dietrich Bonhoeffer visit. We had an absolutely tremendous celebration, and some of those classes are going on to this day. Incredible! If you do that for a period of time, you learn the hard way, and you feel like taking a trip.

I am going to skip about 25 years to the broadening. In 1963, Joe, my son, Stanley, and myself made a trip around the world. We went to Africa. It was on that trip that Joe danced on the brink of Victoria Falls. I saw it with my own eyes. He wasn't exaggerating at all when he told that story. I could tell you about when we flew from Kendu (?) over trackless jungle for several hours, and then four hours more over Lake Victoria. We had a very disagreeable pilot, and all three of us detested him. He insisted on supervising our breakfast that morning. We ate on his flight, and he wouldn't allow us to drink any coffee or water. Joe's tolerance for that kind of carrying on was very small indeed. But here we were, with the pilot of this plane who was well along in years. He was also the only one who knew how to fly. There were jungles and rain forests down there, mile after weary mile of them. We developed a little maneuver, or strategy. What would we do if this elderly fellow should faint at the controls? I was sitting in the co-pilot's seat, but I knew nothing about flying it. We decided that if anything should happen to the pilot, I was supposed to try and keep the airplane flying, if I could, while Joe and Stanley lifted his lifeless body from the pilot's seat. Then, Joe would take the controls. We knew that underneath the pilot's seat, there was a book of instructions. Stanley was to sit in the back seat with this lifeless body and read the instructions of how to land the plane. I want to say to you, that although that was carefully planned, we didn't actually have to utilize our plan, but it was there in case of emergency.

In Rhodesia, we met some of the leaders of the Nationalist Movement, one of whom is in the news today. It was there that we planned our first revolution. I have in my hand a photocopy of the notes that Joe took as we tried to create a series of images and symbols that might bring about a nonviolent revolution in Rhodesia. We borrowed from Mahatma Gandhi the device of teaching with sign language, using the hands. Some of the people from India will recognize the use of hands as teachers. In the human development projects in India, we have used the same technique

to communicate some key concepts. With the hands, you can make the symbol for the word *arogya* meaning health, *shiksun*, meaning education, *uthpadan*, meaning productivity, *bmavismya*, meaning future, *ekatha*, meaning unity and *vijay* for victory. And you have the whole movement on your hands! The use of hands has a history as you can see from these Indian examples.

In Africa, we worked on the five intentions. I will not try to read the African words, but in English they were unity, health, education prosperity and freedom. The five disciplines were obedience, persistence, cooperation, self-control and sacrifice. I can remember yet how we articulated these five disciplines with those revolutionaries present. We would suggest various ones and they would say, "No, that's Western," or, "No, that's European." Finally, we were told that these five indicated authentic African disciplines. We also fashioned symbols, insignia, the sign and even an anthem and flag for the revolutionary movement. We created five deployment tactics, still using the hands, together with five organizational strategies way back in 1963. I remember working on these in a Jeep while travelling northeast from Salisbury to the mountains. At the end of the day, the African who was supplying us with the Swahili words said, "For the first time in my life, I have been treated as a human being by white men." That was our first revolution.

We continued to India and Japan, and I think as a result of that broadening experience, globality began to become a reality. I would like to add one brief word about our visit to Russia. During our visit, I think Joe saw for the first time that revolution wasn't something you just talked about, but somebody had to take the initiative and make it happen. He was no apologist for that particular approach, but the need for action was demonstrated before our very eyes during that segment of our trip.

During this talk, I also want to share my reflections on the New Reality. There was a man who appeared one time centuries ago with only this to say: "The time is ripe and the New Reality is within your reach. Turn around and put your total reliance in the One who is totally reliable." He said, "The time is ripe," and it was and it is. This reality is not remote from us, but our direction is wrong. Therefore, we should turn and put our confidence in the good news of the Kingdom of the New Reality. He spoke of this 100 times. He said it was not only within your reach, but he said it was within you. He said it was not only within you, but that the New Reality was among you, or it was both an individual and a corporate reality. How sorely his followers have neglected this truth! How weak the theologians of today are, how crippled the church is, because of this neglected truth. I find it a real sign and encouragement that not only the ICA, but also the World Council of Churches, has seized once again upon the Kingdom of God, the New Reality, for its study.

In terms of application, I would like to thank some of you for your work during this past year. Several of you were willing to come to Washington to assist us in designing and completing the construct we have been working on for the last three or four years. We now have within our grasp an instrument for proclaiming and demonstrating the New Reality at the local level. We have discovered that we can have a small consult at a local church in a three hour period. This past year, we have had fourteen initiating models. During the fall of this coming year, we will hold 140 more. In the fall of 1979, we will hold 1,400, so that every one of the 1,400 churches of the Washington area will have been confronted with the methodology through a program by which the New Reality may be both demonstrated and declared.

In speaking of anticipations, I simply want to say that I am filled with hope by what I see here in the Kemper building. I told one of you that I have never seen it look better. I noticed that even the decor has improved during the last few weeks. I have observed in your midst a maturity. The memorials that you have outlined have been primarily voiced in the present participle.

I cannot help intruding that in the New Testament, the most common verbal form is the present participle, which implies present participation. And then, I have been filled with hope by seeing through these memorials that the "going-on-ness" in history has been met by your own "ongoing-ness", and I have been encouraged and filled with hope by what I have seen elsewhere. I will not refer in detail to the visit to President Kaunda in Zambia, but I will recall that when we handed him a copy of *The Journal*, he snatched it out of my hand. I am still waiting, brothers and sisters, for the next edition, which you say I am supposed to send to President Kaunda, a thing I will gladly do.

In closing, I have a few cautionary words for you. Woe unto you when people speak well of you. The enemies are waiting in the wings, whether they are from the radical right, whether they are the "haves" in any of these villages and their environs, or whether they are from the elite of every society. I would offer this further cautionary word: Continue to hear your critics, but do not answer them except by continuing to do the job. While advising that you beware of old wineskins, I hope this—that you will not allow yourselves to be trapped into forgetting your roots, in history and in faith.

In a few days, I am going to Israel to spend the next three months. While I am there, I hope to compile some less whimsical recollections about Joe. I hope, also, to become better acquainted with that part of the world. On my way back, while passing through Europe, I plan to spend ten days with some of the brethren and sisters in the capital cities of Europe doing authorization work. I would like to share these words with you as I finish. They come from the thirteenth century. In the year 1240, it was recorded for the first time that a Master of Arts degree was awarded at Oxford University. It was awarded to Edward of Abingdon, who had this to say and I pass it on to you: "Study as if you were to live forever. Live as if you were going to die tomorrow."

