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### PRIORSHIP IN THE TIME OF RESURGENCE

St. Augustine tells the story of a young boy who took a pail of water out of the ocean and poured it into a hole. He repeated this several times as Augustine looked on. "Young man, what are you doing?" Augustine finally asked. The little boy looked up and said, "Why, I am going to pour the ocean into this hole." "I hate to disillusion you," Augustine said, "but the ocean will not go into that hole." The young boy looked at him and said, "The ocean will go into that hole--at about the same time the Trinity will get into your feeble mind."

Being a Prior is like trying to pour the ocean into a hole. Or, it is about as easy to grasp the Trinity as it is to be a Prior. Whenever you run into someone who wears the label "Prior" who tells you he knows what it means to be one, then surely you have not met a Prior. Priorship is a dynamic, a living reality. To think we will ever fully understand what Priorship is all about is the illusion of illusions. However, I want to share with you what several feeble minds had to say from the pulpit about Priorship.

The key to Priorship is Mission. If someone asks what it means to be a Prior, the first response should probably be something like, "What it means to be a Prior is to be one who is involved with renewing the Church in order to impact the world so it will be a more human place for your children and your children's children." That is to say, what it means to be a Prior is to be clear that you are not a Prior. A Prior only exists because there is a job to be done. The difficulty or the danger in having such a Job is that you and I are capable of becoming what I call "missional moralists." To say that a Prior has a Mission also is to know that the Mission is not to renew the Church or to create a new world, it is only to love God and serve His creation. To fall short of the final Mission is to step into the dangerous waters of justifying one's existence over against the human creation called Mission. Priorship has to do with enabling other human beings to grasp that they are Mission.

We have discovered that Priorship is always defined in terms of the times; or, to be a Prior today means you are a Prior in a time of Resurgence. If you find yourself attempting to formulate and articulate Priorship in some other time than this one, you are not formulating or articulating Priorship. We must shape our revolutionary principles in relationship to these particular time.

As revolutionaries, we take seriously the fact that we operate geographically. Our conception that the world has been "ridded into Parishes is no mere notion. It is a reality. Unless we operate out of that reality, there is no way for us to grasp what it means to love God and serve His creation. In terms of the social mileau of our times, the stance of the Prior is the stance of one who has discovered himself, one who is anchored in the reality of Sanctification.

I was not here this summer, but in our ITI, we discovered that even though we did not formally touch the category of Sanctification, we all experienced it. There was no way to keep it out. There was no way to discuss the Other World in the ITI without using the categories you and I find helpful in efforts to understand Sanctification. As it happened, even though I was not here this summer, I was here.

Sociologically, we find ourselves standing in the time of Sanctification. This has to do with how we image ourselves. The best image that comes to mind is generalship. A successful general is one who understands that his generalship has to do with moving down through the fabric of the organization he is in charge of. Priorship, or generalship, is always downward. That is to say, if a general comes off, it is because of his division leaders, his colonels and his majors. They do not make him a general; he makes them division leaders. Do you see the difference? He is a successful general not because he has good division commanders, but because he enables his division leaders to be good division leaders. That is how battles are won. That is also why we remember so few generals' names. Wars are won by division commanders who were brought off by generals.

The other reality in our time is that we are in the midst of a Movement. Some of the people you find yourself on assignments with may leave you wondering whether or not there really is a Movement. So will the experience of a Metro Cadre meeting at which only the dynamic duo show up. Nevertheless, there is a Movement. Sometimes it wears blue; sometimes it would not be caught dead in blue. But it is a Movement. We did not start it and anyone who thinks we, or someone like us, started it does not understand what I mean by Movement. The Spirit decided the Movement, not us. At best, we struggle to give form to that which is already happening. When

we struggle to be on the edge--which obviously we must do--we discover ourselves over an edge that the Spirit has already crossed. In fact, the Spirit decreed the edge. How ludicrous it is for us to think we go out somewhere and find the edge. The Spirit marks the edge and we cry with every ounce of our being to put our feet where the Spirit has already said the edge is. That is what it means to be and give form to a Movement. We live in mortal fear and fascination that we might put our feet down on the wrong edge. Once someone said, "I don't think I could bear being part of something which did not know where it was going." His anxiety was understandable, but wouldn't we be deader than a dodo bird if we knew exactly where we had to go in the next forty years? If that were the case, most of us would resign--whatever that means--and I would be first in line. We live in the ambiguity, the authentic struggle and risk of planting our feet where the Spirit wants them--not finally knowing whether it was the Spirit who marked it or whether you will ever get firmly planted there.

Once a long time ago, in 1968, I asked a man a question. He was talking about carving out the future and I said, "What if I get to the end of my life and discover that I've been going down the wrong road?" He was very clear about my operating images and answered, "Well, if you have consciously decided every single step of the way and you wind up in Hell, the one thing you can be assured of is that you'll be shoveling coal for the glory of God." That is what I have been through the past ten years of my life. That is what it means to be the Movement, to risk authentically.

What is the power of Priorship? A Prior has only one power and that is corporate power. This is difficult for most of us to grasp and I imagine many of us will die wondering if there still is not the power of the individual. The richness of our colleagues around the world is that a great many of them do not have to struggle with individual corporateness the way we do. They have a different struggle. The only power we have as a Movement is the power of the corporate. In saying this, I do not mean the status of someone in relation to the corporate, I mean the power of this corporate body in relation to other corporate bodies. We are a powerful body of people. We are powerful economically, politically and culturally. If you doubt this, then stand up and take a look at this body. I did not realize our power until I stumbled into House Church after a LENS course. I looked around and the whole room was blue. That is power. It was not simply power in terms of impacting the world, but in the sense that when I encountered that blue mass, I stopped stumbling.

Sometime, we are going to have to decide to demonstrate our power to ourselves so that we always have it under control. Someday, we may have to take one of the collapsing structures of the Historical Church and restore it to health with a snap of the fingers. My personal pipedream is that one day, two weeks before a denominational seminary closes its doors, we will impose our corporate power and keep that seminary open--whatever that means. If it means underwriting the budget, then we underwrite it; if it means going down the row and saying, "You've always wanted to go to seminary, haven't you?", then we do it. We literally pick the seminary up--not so people will say how great we are, but so we can demonstrate to ourselves that we can do whatever needs to be done. That is what I mean by corporate power.

I am excited about the Troika. The cruciality of the Troika has to do with our grasping not only our power, but that power is in our control and not outside it. Power is always in the corporate. If we lost that, we will be finished. If we ever succumb to the bureaucrat who lurks inside each one of us, if we ever succumb to efficiency rather than effectiveness, if we ever succumb to compartmentalization, if we ever succumb to assignments being made on any other basis than Mission, we will be finished. The Troika will help us retain our clarity that power is in the corporate and not somewhere else.

A Prior is walking lucidity. Several years ago, I visited a group of pastors in northern Alabama who were struggling with what they called morale problems among pastors. I remember becoming somewhat irritated with them. In the midst of the meeting, I indicated that as far as I could see, morale was a decision problem and nothing more. I said morale had nothing to do with where one was assigned, or how much money he made, it had to do with his decision about the particular given. The pastors did not like my insight. In fact, I have never been back to northern Alabama. Later, I discovered that what I was stumbling around with was Motivity. For a Prior, Motivity is a given. We do not create or generate it. Motivity enables us to re-empower our old stance in relation to the concretions of our Mission. We could not talk about Motivity until it was clear that our time was one of Resurgence.

I have always felt very close to Bonhoeffer in his Community paper, especially when he talks about the difficulty in human community is the tendency to walk around taking one's spiritual pulse. Whenever I enter a

room, someone always says, "Oh, the mood is very low." My response is, "So what." "But we need to get the mood up," comes the reply. My question then is, "Maybe the mood ought to be down." Who said it is bad to have a down mood? Who says it is better to have an up mood? In about 15 minutes, I notice a change in the mood of the person I am talking with. We are people who go around with our fingers pressed against our spiritual pulses. Check yourself when that happens. In reading a corporate body, the only thing to put your finger on is Motivity.

One morning, I got up for Worship and Worship went well. We had breakfast and breakfast went well. The Collegium was one of the best I had ever done. Then came our House meeting. At that time, there were five women working along with me. I looked around the table and all five women were crying. I turned to one of them and said, "What is wrong?" Through her tears, she said, "If I could tell you what was wrong I would not be crying!" They had the Word. What life was about in that situation was five crying women and me washed out. This is not to say that we are insensitive to what is happening to human beings, or what is happening to the body. But those struggles are always handled in relation to the corporate. I was trained as a pastoral counselor and I find that every time I am tempted to do pastoral counseling I hold myself back. God help us, the education may not have been on target, but it was good enough that I have had a hard time shaking it. That is, I have to guard myself against my own propensity to fall into the psychological perversion of our time. Our task is to enable others to struggle their struggle. I have discovered that when I succumb to my psychological bent, I invariably get people to struggle my struggle~or to struggle some other struggle than the one they are in. The ministry we have to each other is the key to what it means to enable the recreation of society into a fabric of humanity. We enable our colleagues to dare be their own struggle--whatever it takes. This probably means that in our time, the prophetic role is more in line than the preacher role. Footnote: Do not get those two separated. Preaching is still an authentic dynamic. My point is, right now healing most often takes place in the prophetic. The first time someone told me he was leaving the Order, I did not have much of a response. A few years of experience in such matters, and I discovered at least I have an answer. It has to do with vision. Ten years ago, it was a different thing to leave the Order. Now, when someone decides to leave, he has already felt his life. You used to ask, "What are you going to do?" Now that question would elicit a four-hour lecture. The crucial question, I have discovered, has to do with vision. The only question any person or family has to decide is whether or not the group task is what they need to be doing. If not, then God speed and God bless. If it is, then they have no other place to go. That is what I mean by daring to minister through the prophetic.

The crucial struggle in creating corporateness has to do with the ontological Yes over against the No. The perversion is that we discover ourselves saying No at every point. The Pharisee is more of a problem than the Libertine. However, Phariseism is no solution to Libertinism. The cure for the Pharisee is the Man of Faith, not a libertine. When we lock ourselves into the role of Pharisee, we block our ability to see the necessary alternatives that will meet the reality with which we are dealing.

The struggle within the female and its manifestations is usually more dangerous to the corporate than the struggle with the male dynamic. This is not to say that every female is immediate, it is that every one I have ever met is immediate. In other words, whenever you encounter a propensity for immediacy, you have encountered the female struggle--even if it shows up in a 280-pound fullback. Immediacy has to do with always solving your own problems. When the ants in your pants are eating you up alive, it is not in relation to the Mission, but in relation to your situation-ship to the Mission. Immediacy is getting caught with your models down. Anytime you find yourself "antsy," the chances are it is because you have been blown into a situation for which you have not built a model.

Never look at the people in your House to discover where the perversions are. Look to yourself; that is where you will discover the problems and will be able to create a method and model to avoid those problems showing up in the corporate. When you discover perversions loose in corporateness, you are one step behind. - The P-rrior discovers the perversions in himself and blocks off the propensity and temptation from infecting the corporate body. A Prior is the general because he has the method for keeping his consciousness on the whole body.

This means that as Priors, you create, discover and carve out times to brood. The criterion for brooding is very simple: When someone tells me he is brooding, my question to him is, "Where are your models?" Brooding is not the process of going away to think. Brooding has to do with productivity and creativity pushed into the forms that enable Mission to happen. If you are sitting in your prayer closet forty hours a week and not producing models, then you are not brooding.

Priors also know how to bracket. When you bracket, you also decide when it is you are going to take the brackets off. Incidentally, this is crucial in relationship to your family. If you have not discovered that bracketing is necessary in families, then my guess is you are consumed with your family. Of course, never bracket the family entirely, but there are those aspects of being a family that you may decide to bracket. I know some families who have done quite well by deciding to bracket the question of divorce. This means that whenever the question of divorce comes up, the partners say, "Don't you remember? We decided to bracket that. We are not dealing with it until our twentieth wedding anniversary." It solves a lot of problems. Decide in the context of Mission what to bracket. In this way, your creativity is pushed into those areas you have decided are critical for accomplishing the Mission.

A Prior has self-doubt. I think the more responsibility one assumes, the more self-doubt he decides to live with. I found myself driven to read Paul's letter again this year and two things shocked me about it: His bold-faced audacity--always just short of sheer arrogance--and his racking self-doubt. When he said, "I am responsible for all the churches," that was a decision he made. He decided all the churches were his responsibility. If one has decided to be a Prior, then he has decided that all the Religious Houses are his responsibility. We need from Centrum all the materials from all the Houses so that we can adequately take responsibility for them all. The only way we even dare talk about responsibility for all the people is through responsibility for the Kuala Lumpur House and the Anchorage House and the Chicago House and so on.

A Prior has one place to stand: On the Gospel. That is where he starts and where he ends. He stands on no human word. The crucial think about a send-out in the morning is not the witness or the insight, the crucial thing is "In the Name of." Think what would happen if you said, "In the name of the David Wayne Scott family, or In the name of General Motors, or in the name of the Order." No one would leave the room' Only one thing claims your whole life: Not your family, or G.E., or the Order. The only thing that unabashedly claims your whole life is the Word in Jesus Christ. If you find yourself saying some other party is required, then run as fast as you can to the nearest sacred s<sup>Space</sup> and do the Daily Office.

In a little book called "The Defense Never Rests," F. Lee Bailey describes a situation in which an Air Force pilot takes his first solo flight. He starts to approach the landing field when all of a sudden his instrument panel starts lighting up, signaling danger. The indication was he was about to flame out. In the course of six seconds, the pilot remembered the advice of his instructor: "The only time a pilot ever has any difficulty flying is when his aircraft comes in contact with the earth. As long as you are airborne, you are in great shape." In a fire, your whole being is going to tell you to get that plane on the ground. Yet what may be needed is to get more space between you and the ground. The pilot recalled the advice and began to nose the plane upward, gaining two thousand feet of altitude before the flame-out. The altitude was enough to get him to the landing field.

Our instrument panel indicates a flame-out and our propensity is to get away from that about which we are flaming out. An old instructor told me once that the clue to staying in the battle was staying in the battle. This next year we are going to experience the sensation of flame-out and our whole being is going to tell us to get distance from that about which we are flaming-out. It will not be the Mission, or your family, or your crummy colleagues. It will be God. When it happens, remember that the secret is to hold to the struggle, get closer to it, embrace it, be it and if you do that, you may discover a small, small part of what it means to be a Prior. We will discover that we not only have the Word, we have a Movement. We will discover the Church awakening to new life. A new fabric of society will emerge in which your children, and Mao's children, and Indira's children all will have the possibility of grasping what it means to be a human being, from birth until death.

David Scott  
June 21, 1974

THE POLITICAL PROCESSES AND INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

(Aimee Hilliard)

Every dimension of life--and it's different--seems to make all the other elements in the tapestry more radical, more intense, and more lively. I suppose, though, that you and I live in a time when the tapestry is very turbulent, and is in motion, a time when the molecules come from static rest behind a glass to active violence right there before your eyes, as everything ~~is~~ tries to decide what is the relationship of it to everything else.

You and I have been people who have been raising the question for years. What does it mean to be a woman, what does it mean to live in the twentieth century. What does it mean to be white. Up until this time all that was about necessary was to raise the question and then the chaos would be ~~annihilated~~, and that was all that was about necessary.

But you read the Daily News, a Chicago newspaper, and you are very clear that everyone has raised the question, and now the time comes to begin to formulate some kind of responsible answer as to what it means to be a woman, what does it mean to be 20th century, what does it mean to be white.

That is where we began last night, with the four pillars. The four dimensions of what it means to be a human being, basic to ~~humanity~~ all cultures throughout all times, to which then a whirlwind of particularities of the social situation adds a different color.

It's like you and I show up first of all sociality. What I mean is that you and I ~~show up~~ show up always encountering other people. It doesn't have to be like in China or India, where you are always in the gaze of someone else, ~~no~~ no matter what you are doing. It's that every when you and I are in the closet, we remember other people. You and I do not live without encountering other people. But the strange thing about that is that there is always a historical situation, always been so many ~~years~~ years that add to that relationship, that form that relationship, that make me notice one particular dimension of your relationship and not another. That is what we have talked about sort of as the social process. You and I live in particular times, when the social processes enable you to ~~see~~ see the relationship to society in particular ways, where the social process, or history, if you will, has pushed ~~that~~ a dimension of life into the corner, has pulled the shades on a dimension of life. That is what we are ~~now~~ talking about as sociality. We have held it with the symbol of the triangle, of the kinds of dimensions of life that have always been present, and then trying to put the overlay of our time on it also, through the economic, political and cultural, a particular kind of overlay which the 20th century ~~has~~ or the third quarter of the 20th century, has placed on the relationships.

THE  
FOUR  
PILLARS

Then you and I show up in the midst of sexuality, that is, we show up male and female. That has always been true. There may have been different customs related to it, different metaphors related to one or the other, but so far that has always showed up in history as if there are some kinds of differences. ~~xxxxxxxx~~

Then you and I show up as--I am going to coin a word-- phaseality. You and I show up as people who move through time, that tick off the hours. Some people say that from x 30 you are headed in just one direction. George Bernard Shaw says that from the moment you are born, you go in just one direction. But he's a piker. It's almost as though from the moment you were conceived, you are headed through life in one direction, and that is expenditure. How is it that you and I deal with the different social demands that are required of a person as he moves through his life and the expenditure of life.

Then finally, there is the other dimension of what it means to be a human being, the ability to reflect, the ability to see that in standing before life you always stand before something entirely other than what you understand ~~human~~ life to be, that you are always standing before that which pulls whole social processes out of being, gets rid of you as a sexual creature, finally maybe eliminates your living to one phase or the other. There always that other, or there is always mystery in the midst of life. Because that is there, a human being shows as being a spurts of freedom in the midst of history, because things have not been finally defined. Surprise always shows up and a human being always has to create a new response to the surprise that happens in the midst of life.

That is sort of our basic thinking of where you began to push to begin to talk about what it means to be a human being in a new world.

Then the kind of overlay we put over this or the kind of ~~xxxxxxxx~~ questions we raise in the ~~midst~~ midst of this have to do with, What is the question of vocation in the midst of this social situation. What is the question of vocation in the midst of my particularity in being a woman, and my being a woman in a particular time. We have pulled that through the basic contradiction in society today, and that the gift, which is also the ~~human~~ problem, x I guess that has always been true-- the economic dimension of life, the great gift of Western man, which now must be turned to a new kind of use.

Then the question of what is the responsible arena for my action, for my response in life. What is that-- we have pulled it through the political dimension of life. What is the necessary style that is required. What is it that we push when we push sheer femininity. We will relate that to the cultural dimension of life. Then ~~xxxxxxxx~~ where is this whole thing going, what is the destiny of my, or human destiny. That is what we will look at tomorrow.

Hopefully tonight instead of a movie, we will have some type of social exchange, with the other two groups, to see if we are on the right track, as a matter of fact, we may need to telephone the other room. -All is known.-

The old familiar friend that I would like to read to you today, I think it is particular appropos to the struggle of women in grasping hold of the arena that you and I respond to life in today. -For you are not only a slave.-

THE  
POLITICAL  
ELEMENTS

The dimension of sociality that begins to pull this world thereness of life into some kind of order and make it useful is what we have symbolically named the political process. The political process is you could say, the communal. It deals with the social, the economic is the foundational, the cultural is the rational, or the reflective. You could really say that the ~~zmk~~ top does not exist, it is sheer reflection on life. The left hand side exists as you and I put what we call the economic dimension together and harness it and begin to use it. The political dimension is that which organizes power. ~~for~~ The economic dimension. ~~It~~ is sheer power. The political takes that and shoves it into some social use, it shoves it into useful service for society. The political does that by ordering the power. What you want to say here is that there is a dimension of society that is sheer organization of power, sheer force, that holds the whole thing together that keeps the lid on and keeps it from exploding. The the dimension of justice exists ~~a~~ also. It is the decision-making, that which in the community decides when ~~power~~ power will be used and when power will not be used, when it can blow freely, and when it must be pulled together. Then there is the dimension that is symbolically called Welfare. ~~These~~ These are all quite familiar categories, because we in the Western tradition, and particularly in the United States have pioneered in articulating in this dimension of life, the welfare of society, or throughout history men have said that there are certain aspects of being a human being that are always operating- honored, secured existence is provided, that people would have a meaningful engagement in life, that they would have ~~a~~ certain kinds of decision-making power in the midst of that society. Of course, the thing is, each society has defined ~~what~~ what secure existence is and relative to whom, what political freedoms are and relative to whom, and what kind of arena significant engagement might be pointing to. In every society this changes. Maybe suddenly you begin to see more people in society, maybe a whole new dimension of life begins to open up that was not there before, so these things always change, but every society ~~seet-~~ has provided for the welfare of its people, in one way or another.

THE  
DYNAMIC  
RELATIONS

What happens in this process is that order is a stabilizing force, in history, justice is that deciding configurating of

energy, and welfare is that which validates the whole process, it is that which tells the values in deciding, it tells you who it is that gets defended, and when it is that you decide to use that.

THE  
PRESENT  
IMBACANCE

As we observe society today we have said that when you and I encounter our neighbor we encounter a whole universe, primarily taken up by the economic dimension, what has happened is that it has begun to eat up the political process, or the social dimension of life, in such a way that the political power is rendered impotent. We have said that the political is an ally of the tyrant which is the economic. What this means is that the economic has taken over the political, though there is some power left to take over, which gives a clue as to what we can begin to use to put the economic back in line. And the cultural has totally collapsed in our time. ~~Where~~ Where I begin to see this kind of thing take hold are like the situation in England, where the labor--I guess it is sort of like the dock-workers here--totally--it was miners wasn't it-- The miners have totally paralyzed the whole society in trying to get higher wages. Yet the political dimension has not been able to honor that request, in such a way that the society can continue to function, so that that push by the coal miners has totally collapsed that society. One of my colleagues was watching TV last night and they showed a random sample of people who were interviewed on the streets of London and ~~asked~~ asked if they thought the coal miners could get a raise. This particular interview 5 out of 6 said that yes, they ~~should~~ should get ~~and~~ a raise, and that they were willing to put up with this in order for them to get a raise. There was just one that said that they ought to be put in prison. But the newscast said that that was pretty much the mood of England as they had encountered it. yet, with that much popular support behind the miners, they had not been able to get their political, or decision-making power, to honor the basic needs of a particular dimension of a culture and therefore had problems. ~~for~~

Or the question raised in our workshop today. Why is it that we have not been able to deal with the ~~economic~~ ecology problem when everyone is agreed ~~with~~ with scientific fact that it is a problem. Why is it that rational, futuristic, thinking people have not been able to get that in tow, and again, somehow, political processes have not been able to put that in line, because they are being controlled by a particular dimension, probably production, in the economic dimension. Therefore we cannot break free.

What there is in the midst of the political process, in its illness, is something like where order, has totally taken over that process. My illustration is the Chicago 7 trial, where you began to see our decision-making process, our legislative process, our judicial process totally collapse, and what we had to do was to move in with sheer force, to keep the lid on that situation. What you knew was that if we didn't move in with sheer force, the whole thing would just go to pot. While the Chicago 7 trial was going on,

the Weathermen were in the city, and the Panthers were beginning to get a new burst of energy, and so we just were with no decisional way to begin to deal with all ~~that~~ those differences. We had to move in with just sheer power as a way of dealing with those differences. Again, the whole question of the welfare of the people ~~is~~ is the question that is raised. What does it mean to honor society with the people that you have on your hands, a whole new concept of welfare was coming into being.

That is the context, or another dimension of the context that you and I find ourselves in the midst of. When we encounter our neighbors, as being those ~~is~~ people with one of the struggles on ~~our~~ our hands ~~is~~ is just how do we make sheer decisions in sort of a boat that is grappling to stay together. At the same time, you and I are on the brink of brand new kind of vessel to carry society, which redefines what it means to be a human being, and therefore to be protected by your society, what it means to have an actual significant engagement in the midst of life. ~~I~~ I suppose it is there that you and ~~I~~ I have particularly grappled with the female revolution. Before we even talk about that, you and I have to take the stand that, for me, is the only possible stand if we are to be able to meet the demands of the future, and that is to decide that any role that woman has played in the past was a necessary role for her society, that you and I decide to affirm the past which has been woman's history, as a great and glorious past, that you and I do not have to fight old battles, but that we have great heritage to draw on to create a new future.

THE CURRENT  
CHAOS

THE  
ENFLAMING  
LIBERATION

I don't know where you find the shift in women to have occurred. I'd like to say that woman, to keep the fire, to skin the animals, to bear children, to nurse them every 3 night for two years at a time, or however long they do, --that was utterly crucial for a society. She was not a second class citizen. She was that upon which society depended.

The present society has shifted. Maybe it came at the end of the Civil War. Maybe it came with the industrial revolution, where the ~~functions~~ functions that women had served in the past were taken out of being, and ~~when~~ when any role in history has been taken out of being, a new one has had to be forged. When you and I became aware of the fact that we had a new situation on ~~our~~ our hands, the struggle with what it means to actually assume responsibility was a brand new question, because you and I began to see that we did not have political power, that we did not have economic power, that we saw it ~~is~~ was necessary for a brand new age that ~~was~~ was coming into being. Therefore began our long hard fight ~~for~~ for political rights and economic rights, and you want to say, maybe you don't like to say--I don't like to say--but we won we won our political power. You and I control the rope in the nation today, ~~and you add~~ this nation today, and you add

I control the stock market in this nation today, at least, you and I have our names on the controlling interest of the stock on the stock exchange. You and I may have given up our freedom to decide about that to someone else, but you and I at least have our names legally signed to those stocks and bonds that control Wall Street. That battle is over. What does it mean to create a new image of woman who is the liberated female.

THE  
VACUOUS  
POWER

My experience of the situation is ~~this~~ this. Woman is free. First of all, you and I are in a new age, because we know that that is existentially true, that you and I are free. Do you remember Sartre's play, No Exit-- where he got stated that what it means to be a human being is just to be totally free. There is no way out. You have to decide in the face of sheer ambiguity that there are no answers that come, and therefore to be a human being is to be totally free. You can decide to give that freedom up in one way or another, but to be a human being is to decide about one's own life, and therefore you and I are free, but that is also sociologically true. My experience of that is that you and I have been on a long fight to the top, and I mean that it has been a bloody battle. We have walked the streets, we have given up a lot of the comforts, we have lost some bloody battles. We have had some pretty painful moments. But you and I have got ourselves to the place where the power lies. Symbolically, we have come to the top. And it's like you rush to the top of the steps and you have fought and climbed ~~it~~ all the way to the top, and you throw open the door, and you rush in to assume ~~that~~ your role, and to fight whoever is there, and it's like no one is there. It is as if you and I have a kind of empty power, because we got to the top and threw open the door, and there was no one there to fight. It is as though you don't wonder why we women have gone around waving our bras. We were trying to attract some kind of attention, get some sign of life. You just--

ALL  
THE  
POWER

My experience of this, in a description, is square dancing. When I was in fifth grade in our town which was in Southwest Missouri in the Ozarks, near where the Ozark Jubilee used to be, square dancing was a big fad--big skirts, pet down to the ankles, and all that sort of thing-- But for me it was a very painful time because I had practically my full height and weight by the time I was in the sixth grade. In the fifth grade I had just about made it. My ~~weight~~ height wasn't quite there, but my weight was there. When you went to square dances, the girls went and the boys went. But you always had to have a boy ask you to dance. And I sat out many a night on the ~~right~~ side of the American Legion Hall, tapping my toe and smiling stupidly. But I remember the times I did get to square dance, and I loved music and loved to dance. I remember that the boys were very short in our town, I was always astonished that there wasn't any opportunity for anything very tall. And I remember being asked to dance by this short one. The caller said -Grab your partner- ~~and~~ swing around, and go on to the next. Well, I reached the top of the steps and

there wasn't too much there, and you swing and you let go, and the poor thing goes flying. That is sort of my experience of the way you and I find ourselves today. We have won the battle and there we are, wanting to do the last final victory that shows our power, and suddenly we are holding our power with nothing to prove we are powerful over against. You almost feel like that \_\_\_\_\_ the monster \_\_\_\_\_ who walks in kind of like this, in a situation. Nothing over against which to push and therefore to define your validity in being the powerful ~~pk~~ person ~~tkn~~ you are, and so it is like pushing on through.

We have talked about the universities. I have friends that are student at the university. They protested and have given speeches out ~~1~~ on the quadrangle, and they go into class, and there is the teacher, ~~saying~~ just sitting there saying, -O.K. you do it.- I understand in many universities today the students just take over. They just do one favorite thing after another, no particular construct-- that is O.K. What do you want to do-- I have an aunt who has been a public school teacher ~~for~~ since she was 18. She is now 60. She never married. Her experience lately of her power, is that she and the other ladies that teach in the school--this particular school has never had very many young men-~~EXAM~~ assigned to it--and she said that every time they get a new ~~pk~~ principal, the ladies look him over pretty well, and then he says, O.K. what do you ~~w~~ want to do.- And they run the school. It is like any battle you fight that ~~w~~ seems like a vast marble wall, you ~~pk~~ push, and it falls, and the question is, O.K. what do you want to do. Pick it up. Assume responsibility for it.

We have just withdrawn to defend our communities.

THE  
SHRINKING  
ARENA By family I don't mean necessarily mean<sup>a</sup> mother and kids or a mother and father and kids, ~~all in all~~, this is the smallest community that you live out of, ~~pk~~. If you are someone with children you have all sorts of good reasons why you should pull into this fortress. -I have some responsibilities in the group that I operate with, and some of those responsibilities require a kind of leadership that I began to see the load the pastor's family used to carry, being sort of a symbolic family in the community. Now that got totally destroyed, but you begin to see how there have to be symbolic families. But how can you be symbolic if your children interrupts worship every single morning. Now you have to have your family taken care of, at least, before you can dare go out and assume responsibility for that community. Otherwise,--- I find myself secretly pleased some mornings when Li Lin wakes up sick and-- No really, but sometimes you think, If I could only get rid of those demands on my life for one day. If I could stay in this house and just concentrate on just one problem. My husband accuses me of making my daughter sick all the time. He says supposedly she is not a sick child. She is a very healthy child. He says, You want her to be sick. And he is not a very sympathetic person at that point. And he is right, because

she is a very healthy child, and probably because he has insisted that she not be a sick child, and she is a very energetic well person. But anyway, then you find yourself pulling back and ~~making~~ maybe you just decide, maybe your family is just your grandchildren. You just decide, I'll just take care of my grandchildren. I'll send them packages, I'll wait for them to come to visit, You spend your whole time anticipating your grand-children coming. Or maybe it's just those two closest friends that you have, and you get through everything fast, so you can be with those two close friends, that you live with and enjoy doing things with. And you just cut off everything else. Or maybe you decide to be the protector and defender of your husband. Now there is a noble occupation. I have a friend who was talking with my husband, he's not a friend, the other day, and he said, --I was ~~not~~ not paying very much attention to him because I was doing an activity which was very seldom in my house, and that was I was sewing on buttons. He was talking to my husband, and I heard him say although I wasn't concentrating. --You know, Frank, your basic problem is that you have to learn to handle Aimee, he said. Any time you get in a situation where questions start being raised to you challenging your stance, she jumps in with both feet to defend you, revealing that she does not think you are the great person that you actually are. Well, ~~she~~ crunch. In that you have decided to spend your whole life defending and protecting that man as the center of your being. You and I then tend to pull in our arena of engagement and just ~~deal~~ deal with that one situation that you can get your hands around, that you can get your mind around, that you can see responding to in one way or another.

THE NON-BEING  
AMBIGUITY

THE  
FEAR-FILLED  
GUILT

The situation is not that women are insensitive. It is not that you and I are basically evil. It is that you and I are so sensitive to the basic beat of life that you and I know the complexity is to decide to respond to life. What you and I know is that even if you and I decide ~~that~~ that we are going to get that one family on its feet, --you begin to raise a question what it means to get your family on its feet-- why you have a community, you have schools that have collapsed that your children have to go to--Now how are your children going to get on their feet if they have to go to schools that ~~don't~~ don't give them an education relative to their lives.-- And you have a husband that goes to a job that is crushing him. It does not seem to ~~give~~ give him any creative vision of society. Now how are you going to take care of that man who has his business on his hands. And you have a city, which has no power, and seems to just be dying out, total anarchy. How are you going to get your family on its feet when you have that situation. You have a world that seems to be--all sorts of new kinds of humanness are popping up in society. I read the other day that there is going to be one Chinese and one something else and one Chinese and one something else, and one Chinese and one ~~and~~ ... How are you going to get your family on its feet when you have that fantastic culture that is beginning to move, and how are they going to understand what it means to stand before that without a society that begins to honor

vast differences and give everyone a way of participating. You and I live in a society that is so interwoven that you cannot begin to deal with one small part unless you have a large picture, a large screen which holds all those pieces together. When you touch one problem, you are touching it in order to deal with the basic problems in society.

You and I say, -I don't want to do it. I'd have to give up my family. Well, yes, you have to give up your family. You know what else you have to give up-- your ideal picture of a community. You have to give up your picture of what an ideal city really should be. And your ideal picture of what the globe ought to look like. -Because you and I have to risk building an image of what a new family is going to look like in the midst of a live community which is in the midst of a brand new complex of cities, which is in the midst of a brand new society, a brand new world, with many cultures deciding to get their gifts into history. That is the kind of risk, yes, we have to give up. But you and I have to risk creating the new. It is only when you and I decide that the family is gone, there is nothing to give up. The family of the 20th century is gone. The community of the 20th century is gone. The cities, they are dead. A world society--it is not there. It is only when you see that that you see that you and I have total freedom to create a family. There is no family except the right, and how do you decide whether your family is the right family, the appropriate family--. You must just have to decide what it ~~must~~ needs to look like. There is no community unless you decide to look and respond to what society is demanding for a community to be, and on to create a new global society. It is in the midst of that that you and I can pick up our situation. That is all very nice to say, but the [ambiguity-- it is just numbing]

THE  
HELPLESS  
FLIGHT

And where am I going to decide to push. O.K. supposing I did decide to work in the community. Then look at all the other things that are going to go, and you become numb, and you decide, again, that maybe you should just not deal with it. The way you and I refuse to deal with ~~that~~ the kind of ambiguity that we have to stand over and build our models over is to begin to face. Our [excuses] are like: I'm too old. Or I see that I am getting old and that I have not lived yet. And the trauma of becoming 40 breaks in. I have noticed that there is a trauma of being 40 that maybe there is not with any other phase. I have some female colleagues that just begin to flip out, and start having affairs, or they just go on one buying spree after another. I think a lot of divorces happen at 40 because you begin to see the clock ticking. and you think, -I haven't lived yet--. And you just ~~must~~ buy your time. Now I am not 40, but my experience of that kind of care is in standing ~~in~~ before it and assuming responsibility for it, ~~it~~ ~~in~~ and feeling the years ticking by, was in the birth of my child. I had not realized that I was living out of the image of being a youth. One reason I guess is that my husband is a little bit older than me, which always ~~gives~~ gives me a kind of        face. I have always seen myself as fairly, and when the nurse brought Lilin to me in the hospital,

I found out I was just howling inside, and I ~~wasn't~~ wanted to cry, and I remembered my mother had said that she didn't remember the first two years of my life because she had ~~something~~ <sup>something</sup> a post-natal depression. So I thought, -oh, oh, it is inherited.- Then I ~~thought~~ realized what I was thinking in the midst of that, that this wasn't a psychological problem that I was experiencing. ~~I~~ What I was experiencing was just the dread of getting old. What I began to realize was that I wasn't the youngest any more. I am now the older generation. Breaking into a brand new phase of life was a rock kind of thing. I took a flight from that. I refused to deal with my husband in any sort of way because he had sort of made me go over the hill, and I was sort of more of a radical bitch than normal, for at least a year, struggling with what it meant to decide to assume my responsibilities in the midst of knowing that I was another unique being, that I was getting older.

Or maybe what we ~~might~~ decide to do is to take the liberal float, and just intentionally keep busy. My mother became a widow a year ago. In the midst of that kind of thing, she is also going to be 60 this year, which puts her in a brand new phase of life, she has decided to take the liberal float and just go from one thing to another. I don't mean that there isn't horror in facing the things that ~~she~~ she has had to face. But my problem is, how do you say to your mother, you have a brand new life on your ~~own~~ hands--. You have a whole other life time to live, and the responsibility is on you, the demands on your wisdom are just as great now as they were when you were first married and were raising your children. You have a fantastic life to live still. How do you begin to overcome that.

Or maybe you and I take the lib. route, and decide to fight it out and pretend that we are really victimized. And destroy anything that says no to us, and reduce ourselves down to that kind of arena.

THE  
BETTER  
RESIGNATION

to it all  
Maybe we decide to be resigned and pick up the role of the little woman again. Or maybe you find that you are just burned out. Maybe you feel that you just can't do anything any more, and that you will just sort of gombie it up, ~~maxim~~ Or just sort of disappear, thinking that you will be better off and that society will be better off if you just don't show up in it, any more. The thing about that is that life is so involved with life that ~~you~~ if you decide to do that, you decide to destroy all your relationships, and all those people you encounter in the midst of that because you are deciding to live off those kinds of situations.

Do you remember that movie The Damned--. Theoretically it is a movie about pre-war Germany and an industrial family, who had lost all vibrancy. All the women were just straight, strange, pasty white, and and no figures at all. I went to that movie and when I came out of the theater, every woman I saw looked like ~~that~~ those women. Every sexual perversion around was in that movie,

and every social perversion was there. They had decided no to live and were therefore sucking their life off any kind of little tintillation that would come in.

THE  
PATIENT  
STEP

The healing part of our society today is that the world will not let us play any of these games. The world has said no. The world ~~is~~ has required that you and I assume the kind of responsibility that it requires to participate in society.

When I was ~~shocked~~ rocked the other night in a newscast. I didn't get the woman's name, but a woman in Britain had made a statement to the press. She said, the women in America have got to stop fighting on behalf of themselves and start to assume responsibility for a larger group of people than their own good. I was rocked that someone would say that. But you can see ~~that~~ the death ~~of~~ the Black revolution when the Blacks decided they would only take responsibility for themselves. You begin to see how they stale. The same thing with the female revolution, it has become more clear to me. Once you and I forget about the injustices of society and go about defending ~~ourselves~~ and protecting ourselves, we are dead. The world is not going to allow us to do that. For you and I are probably the most privileged people on the face of the earth today, and therefore probably have the most to give society. You ~~and~~ I have an education which few women in other parts of the world have. You and I have the kind of economic power which few other people in civilization have. The world is demanding that we parti--cipate. The thing is, you and I feel that it is an either/or situation. that maybe we can do this or maybe we can do something else. But that isn't so. You and I forget we ~~live~~ live in a war for humanness. People literally die every day. I don't know about you, but I have colleagues who are dropping out of society because there is no meaning there for them. There is nothing there that seems to give them a way to participate in society. You and I are in the midst of a war, where the time has ~~to~~ come to build new kinds of structures for humanness.

The thing that is so great about Western women is that you and I don't necessarily have to go to work, you know, Maybe it is true. Maybe we shouldn't replace a family earner ~~in~~ in the job market. Maybe you and I don't have to do that. I am not saying that we don't, but we can do other things, just assume responsibility, pick up the kind of trials that are being required today.

THE NEW POLITY

THE  
HISTORIC  
DEMAND

A woman in being free can begin to be the fashioner in the midst of society. I would suggest, the fashioner of a new polity, or a new kind of decision-making in society. For you and I are people who have preserved the integrity of all life. For me, woman takes the most common thing and honors it in a way that she is able to see new life, new possibilities. Therefore it is probably you and I who have to build a new polity which enables all sorts of differences to get out, to get molded into a new kind of net. You and I have to begin to recreate that tension.

I don't mean that you and I are not all liberal. We are, but I mean what you and I know is that men are just to be distrusted. That is to say, they are other than you and I are, they will never figure us out, and we can't count on them to figure us out and fight our battles for us. One thing I am very clear about is that men are not going to fight the battle for women's liberation. That liberal period in their lives is gone. They are fighting for their own masculinity. That means that you and I have to do the battle ourselves. Therefore, have to take some pretty radical stands from time to time. But it is in the midst of getting that man on his feet ~~xxxx~~ so that he can take his stand, so that you can take your stand over against that.

What does it mean to fashion the integrity of all people--. Maybe you and I have to fashion different kinds of roles. Maybe we have to be a Joan of Arc. One thing about Joan of Arc, though she went to war, there was never any question in history but what she was a woman. She had played, picked up a kind of responsibility, but yet never ~~affirmed~~ denied the fact that she was a woman with a particular kind of responsibility, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ in a particular time. Now for you and me, maybe our voices say other kinds of things, but what is the necessary form.

THE  
CORPORATE  
POWER

For sure it has to deal with corporate power. It has to do with using a total fabric of society. It has to do with weaving ~~xxxxxxxx~~ all the differences together. It has to do with building a new consensus in the midst of society. For me, one of the things that is involved that is particularly female is creating form for power to take place in the midst of, creating form that releases decision and participation. I think of the Asian here, and his understanding that if you build the context for a situation you are in control of the situation. Remember the Vietnam Peace talks, when they ~~argue~~ haggled so long over the arrangement of the tables, and you and I in the West screamed, ~~xxxx~~ -Let's get down to business. Who cares the way the tables are. Let's stop this war.- What the Asian knew was that whoever controlled the arrangement of the tables and the seating of the ~~xxxxxxxx~~ different delegations, controlled the negotiation, and that has proved to be so. But what would it mean for you and I ~~xx~~ in every form that a group shows up in to arrange it in such a way that life just flows through it and ~~it~~ vibrates in the midst of it.

That also has to do with the form you and I show up in, whether we decide to enable life ~~and~~ vibrate or whether we decide just to destroy it, and pour cold milk on it.

THE  
GLOBAL  
COMMUNITY

You and I have to decide to have the global trusteeship and create the new global community. I have a colleague, my husband, who says that women are basically reduced. Now, I would agree with a lot of the situations he has to deal with--women are very reduced. And I say, -Tish, Tish on us women when we show up that way.- But I would

say that women are basically very comprehensive. We deal with the roots of time, from the beginning to the end, from birth to death. You and I should never let ourselves be caught in a reduced situation, where we ~~cannot~~ have not thought of the total care of that situation, both in time relative to the future, and relative to the vital needs of the people involved.

I have a friend who--I don't know if you have ever worked in a Union kind of situation; I worked in the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles last year, and my first job was not too high paying, and therefore I was union in the auditing department, and you have to take a break if you are a woman in the auditing department. Now the thing about breaks in business is that people just sort of bitch for 15 minutes, and then they go back and kind of roll through their adding machine. I tried to get ~~xxx~~ away and not take any breaks, ~~xxxxxxx~~ and said I'd go home early with no breaks, but they said, No, the union requires you have to take breaks. This one woman I rode with to work on the bus every day always got on with a newspaper, and got off at the Veterans Administration Building. And I was telling her one day that I was feeling up to my teeth with this kind of bitching and having to take coffee breaks, and she said, Well, you know why I take a paper every day--I have found that ~~xxxx~~ same thing to be true, that coffee breaks are dehumanizing, so I take my newspaper, everyday, and I have a different article prepared for conversation. She said, when we come down and sit down, I start the conversation, and I talk about one of those articles. And she said, a whole new kind of universe has grown up with those women who have coffee. They have forgotten about their own petty problems. ~~W~~ She said, we even find it fun to go back to work, at the end of the coffee break. Well, I was rocked that that woman on the bus, and I never knew her name, would dare to respond in that kind of situation. You and I can never be caught operating ~~xx~~ out of a reduced context, out of our own subjectivity, which is also our gift, but always ~~xxxxx~~ on behalf of all. I don't know how you begin to break people ~~x~~ loose, so that your community never acts out of a reduced context, so that your congregation always ~~g~~ has a global mind that they operate out of. Maybe you decide to take your family on a global odyssey. Maybe you decide to take your congregation on a global odyssey. Or maybe you decide to have a global odyssey pass through your town all the time. Just one different group all the time, it doesn't have to be international, it can be different kinds of thinking people; that just keep coming through with another universe that they have to assume responsibility for. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~

You and I have to become fashioners of the world. That might mean something like lady Justice, where you and I decide that to build the ~~model~~ of society, and decide what is just; no longer do we just let the balance tip, with blind eyes. But you and I look at that society, and decide when that balance tips, and you and I decide, in

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order to keep life bubbling up in order to keep people  
strong, participating in the radical tension that is life.