

Chicago Centrum
Sixth Guardians' Consult

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PORTENTS FROM THE TURN TO THE WORLD

A happening took place yesterday which indicated our turn to the world. The Chicago Tribune (April 18, 1974) has two articles on one page that focus attention on the West Side of Chicago.

One article that takes up two-thirds of the page analyzes what happened after the riots in 1968 and the mindset of many people when they see that none of the promises that were made by certain officials were carried out. "I consider it (the West Side) a dying community. To revitalize it, government agencies or other sources of money would have to pour not millions but billions of dollars into it.... The signs of approaching death are everywhere."

The other one-third of the paper has an article entitled "Fifth City Assumes Responsibility for Rebirth of Area," which shows, through listing one accomplishment after another, that rebirth is taking place. Listen to this statement: "By and large we haven't used professionals," said Mrs. Mosley whose formal education ended at high school. "We're trying to show that local people can solve their own problems."

Look at the two articles. One mindset implies: "Something has to come in and clean up this mess. Therefore, nothing can happen because no one is coming." The 5th City article states: "We're going to do it ourselves. Therefore, something has happened, is happening, and will happen."

That is where I would like to focus today -- where are we on this side of the turn to the world? You and I know that turning to the world is not an easy thing. Life forces you to do it; you have no choice. But, once it happens, it happens, and, therefore, you enter into it. Then, in turning to the world, the world is never the world you thought it ought to be. It is a global world. Everything you touch, including yourself and every other relationship you have, is finally related to the globe and everything else. Therefore, whatever happens in the world happens to you, and whatever happens to you happens to the rest of the world.

It is an utterly secular world. That is, if you are going to be radically engaged with this world, then it is the world you are in, the secular world, in which you have to operate. Therefore, you see, also, that you have the responsibility of welding out an adequate practical vision to which every person can respond. Then you have to give them the practical tools and methods by which they can respond, by which they can make concrete thrusts in the midst of that world they actually have on their hands.

Do you remember the image Joe Mathews used the last time we were together, of the Boeing 747: as it turns around it banks so steeply it begins to shake and rattle before it gets all the way around? I think we have been through the first rattles, and now the second series of rattles is coming. The first was the anticipation of what might happen. The second comes out of direct engagement.

It is as if our turn to the world has led to the impacting of it, making contact: radical engagement. That has been by experiments and demonstrations and courses, etc. That kind of impactment is just like guerilla warfare. You go out up against an enemy much larger than you, and you get killed. But something happens out there, both to you and to the enemy. What are the explosions taking place in the midst of that type of warfare? What are the portents which show up as brand new possibilities? I would submit that over the past six months, since your last meeting with us here, it seems like there have been a million leaps or explosions going on. I think that is what may happen whenever you make that initial contact with the world. Suddenly, that which you anticipated as possibility explodes in your midst.

The first one is the Ecumenical Parish Experiment; but more directly, the Guild Experiment. When you took LENS, you probably found yourself asking after you left on Sunday, "Now what next?" You had just been told about the Guild, and you asked, "Where's the Guild?" Obviously, something had to take place in order to satisfy that propensity. So the Local Guild Experiment came into operation.

At the first of the year, 51 of these were launched in North America. This grew out of the kind of work you have done over the past years: the ten years of work in 5th City from whence you drew that kind of work into focus; the four great Research Assemblies, in which you labored away to develop the models; Summer '73, when we hammered out the practical vision of what the Guild would be; and the experimental work Uptown 5 has been doing pioneering in the form of a Guild in action. These 51 Guilds have been launched. They might be called the Parish Guilds or the Community Guilds.

A 26-week timeline for that launching has been prepared. The first phase was the experimental phase. The second phase now actuates these Guilds: 51 in North America. This can take place now in concrete, practical form--practical demonstration. You will notice how this timeline is divided into 2, 2, and 2. The first 2 have to do with penetration of the community, PSU's (Problem Solving Units), etc. The second grouping begins with the eighth week and has to do with the formulation of the Guild. On the second line of formulation, the triangles, those with dots in them and those colored full, represent the development of the Guild. Each one of the 51 Houses now has a Guild in the preparatory or formulative stage. During the twelfth week, the community PSU and the Task Forces came into being. The strange thing about it is that already the excitement as to the possibilities of what can happen has burst loose in an overwhelming way; not just excitement of those who are participating in it, but of everyone they have touched.

The miracle stories out of this are just overwhelming. One which particularly struck me was when a group of colleagues decided to clean up an eyesore right in the heart of their community one Saturday from midnight to six in the morning. It happened to be an old, broken-down, abandoned filling station with weeds growing up around it, trash everywhere, and grease and dirt and grime covering it. They set out to sweep it, paint it, collect all the brush, and everything. At about four o'clock in the morning a man drove by in a dump truck, and stopped to ask what they were doing. They told him, and he said, "Hey, I'll haul it away for you." So he hauled it away. Then he came back and said, "Who are you guys? I've been looking for people like you all my life. How can I get going with this?" You can see the kind of things that happen and the catalytic action coming out of that.

During Priors Council the Social Methods School was held, which shows up on Week Eleven of the timeline. This was a five-day school where everything we have done up to the present time--5th City, Research Councils, Uptown 5, etc--was pulled into focus

and ground into people through five days. And really it was like a grind -- meals, conversations, lectures, and workshops following one after another. I think our staff was just amazed. For instead of the morale going down because of the heavy work, they witnessed, instead, the rising of that morale. This is the kind of thing that is taking place today.

You will notice that the Local Community Convocation was scheduled for two weeks following the school; but that is postponed to the twenty-second week, or Week 9 of this quarter. At that time will be one-day convocations held throughout the continent in 51 local communities to train those local guilders who then will be operating in that situation.

Well, this is one of the portents, one of the explosions, which has taken place. It is hard to estimate the kind of adrenalin that has been shot into the Movement.

Now, the second type of Guild -- the Trade Guild or Institutional Guild -- is just over the horizon. The interest is certainly there! Corporations, companies, LENS grads, and other various types of people say "This has got to happen now! It's got to happen soon! When can we move in this direction?" Maybe we will have a chance this weekend to talk about an SMS, a Social Methods School, for businessmen. It is overwhelming to think of what can happen with that.

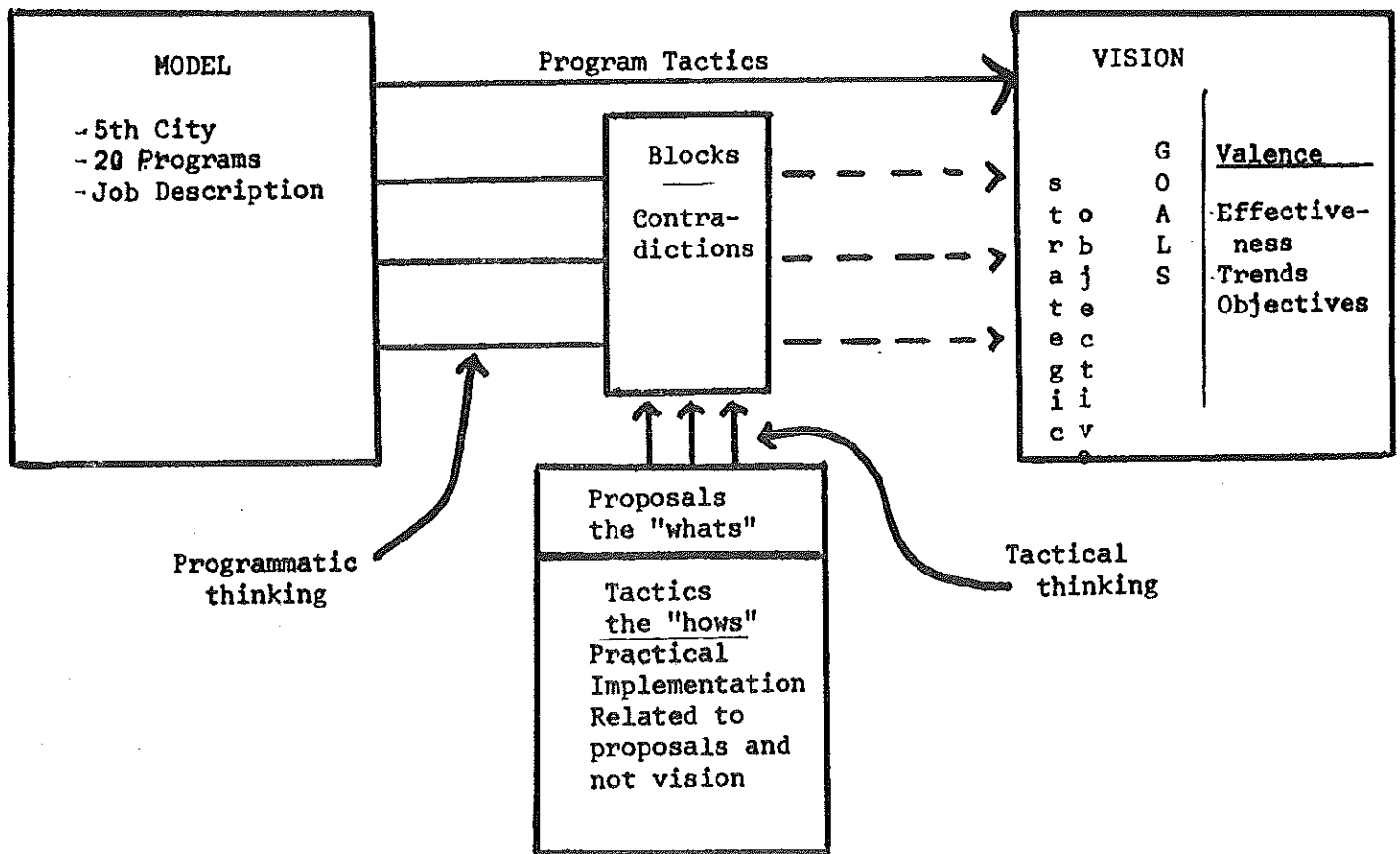
Paralleling interest is revealed in something new happening in the Local Church Experiment. Since last summer, when the turn to the world took a brand new direction, there have been more field visits with new churches wanting to become part of the Local Church Experiment, than have taken place in all the previous years. It is that kind of portent which is taking place. Over 1,500 people in small groups from various churches have gathered together in over sixty-six field visits.

The turn to the world is forcing the Local Church Experiment to mutate. It is undergoing that mutation right now; and, I am sure, it is more rapid because of the Guild Experiment. It has had to take upon itself a kind of urgency because the sociological form of the church is dying, especially in places like Europe where it is almost gone completely. This is especially true in the non-Western part of the world where the Christian churches have a Western sociological form. Therefore, when the sociological form goes out in the West, you can pretty well suppose it will go out in the other parts of the world. There has to be mutation. That does not mean the church is going out of existence. It cannot, for it is a human dynamic, but the mutations have to take place. That is what is before us now in the radicalness of the explosions taking place in the turn to the world.

Another thing happening is Indicative Battleplanning. By indicative, this just means that in the battleplanning you take things the way they are. You then begin to strategize and operate as to how, in the midst of the way things really are, you get bodies into history for effective change. It means that you take your model -- such as 5th City's community reformulation model, the 20 Programs of the Movement, or perhaps just a job description within a post or sector of your corporation, or the kind of operation you are in. Everybody has a model of some kind, even if it is a hidden job description up his sleeve.

Next is the vision. Everybody has a vision of what has to take place. In other words, there is no such thing as a static model. It is always in the midst of a situation where something is happening. The way the vision is made dynamic is to set up priorities given by your vision. For example, you might ask yourself, "what now is being demanded? What is the most effective thing needed in the midst of our model here? What are the trends? What are the goals that lead to strategic objectives which would give you a kind of tactical relationship to the whole model?"

You begin to plan and work through those kinds of things to get your overall goals and strategic objectives. Then you lay out your program tactics in order to realize these objectives. There is a direct one-to-one relationship here. And then as your program progresses something begins to bog down a little bit. There are "glitches" or blocks. Things slow down. You try harder, but it doesn't do too much good. Your program slows down, your sales go off, clients leave you, things do not operate properly, people quit or leave your houses, or a hundred of other kinds of things go on you don't want. It is now no longer a one-to-one relationship to your vision. You begin to see that you have to take care of these blocks. Our word for those is "contradictions."



You then work through the kind of proposals necessary to unblock the situation. In other words, you decide what has to happen so that these blocks can be transcended, or can be taken into your program so they now become gifts or thrusts in the midst of

that situation. Out of that work you are ready to think through your tactics. How is it these proposals will be brought off? Who is going to do it? Where are they going to be done? When? These tactical actions relate to your forces, instruments, and timeline. Many people say, "This is impractical. I'm interested only in bringing off those goals." So they go ahead and try harder, and become more frustrated and less effective. They have not learned yet that you have to work against those blocks. The What's and the How's don't give a "hoot" about the goals. They are after unblocking the contradiction. In the midst of that, then, you lay out your timelines for tactical action. This is, of course, combined with your program timeline so your weekly actions are laid out before you in one picture.

That kind of battleplanning has released us to use the wisdom which has grown out of 5th City: both the methods we have used in past workshops, plus those gleaned out of the Assemblies. It is like being given brand new set of eyes to see how you can very practically deal with the actual situation you have. Since this is laid over the way life goes on, you can apply it not only to 5th City but to all other areas. The Houses used it when the priors were here in December planning for the tactics they would use in the next quarter. In the Centruns we used the same kind of thing for our planning for these six months. So this has been at the heart of our work.

It is, however, not just something nice for some peculiar situation. As I have already mentioned, it is there to be used by anybody who would like to use it. Some of the Guardians have already begun to use this methodology. I was recently talking with one of the Guardians who used it with his sales personnel, against the advice of his managers, who were afraid the salesmen would not like workshopping. They had a two-day sales meeting, one day of which was a long, hard workshopping along this line. Their critique at the end of the two-day meeting was, "This was by far the most exciting and beneficial day we have ever had." The Guardian then turned around and did the same kind of thing with the managers. When they finished, the managers— those hard-nosed guys who are only interested in seeing one thing come off— saw that this is a way that gave them a brand new possibility of operating.

This is the kind of thing, I think, that has provided a radical release for us. Although it is simple in its overall parts, the kinds of things you do when you get in your contradiction analysis and proposal preparation are just utterly crucial for unblocking a situation. Again, this all came out of our work at 5th City, and then out of the Research Councils, and was then finalized in 5th City last September, in January, and again this month in 5th City, and in March at the SMS. The methodology is being refined along with the ongoing dialogue between the Houses and Centrum.

What this means for the Local Church Experiment is that it can simplify and modify the tactical system for use now in the global expansion, for simplification will be necessary to some extent, once the Local Church Experiment is put on a global basis. It can be used, as well in preparing new models for the parish tactical systems.

The next thing I think that has exploded on us, or where we have had quantum leaps, is the whole area of polity. Because you will be dealing with this issue more thoroughly in our time here together, I will only pick up one aspect of that— the Centrum part of the polity dynamic. This is because it is where our edge is; it is where explosions have been taking place. I suspect we will have a radical expansion before we meet again. By next September we are going to have to have fifty new families in here in order to send out new families in four places around the world to establish these Centruns.

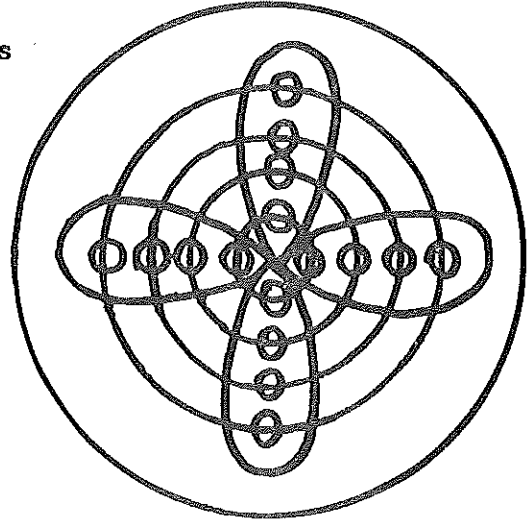
Now, first of all, a Centrum is a dynamic. It is something that goes on. It is not a sociological form in the beginning. It is a happening which takes place in the midst of the going-on-ness of society. To give you an illustration: I just came back from an ITI (International Training Institute) in London which had people from all over the Continent of Europe. The British made a radical turn in the ITI. They were broken open from provincialism into a brand new relationship to the global. By just having the Germans, the Benelux and the French people come over and sit with them and in that situation, that breakopen easily happened. The presence of someone beyond the local gave a whole new realm in which to operate. That same global dynamic has to go on with our program. There must be something like a continental teaching team, continental pedagogy, continental advance courses, a continental council, and so on. The reason you have to have them is that there is no other way for the global to be mediated to those people in that local situation. Otherwise, they are going around with their blinders on, their nose deeper in the rut, and never get out but just get shoved deeper and deeper. Only when the global is mediated to them do they have a brand new possibility. Well, this is what the Centrum dynamic does.

In our polity structure the Area Houses represent the local. They represent local polity and local autonomy. This is a brand new happening and release for our whole polity structure. But the local only exists in relationship to the global context, and that's what we mean by Xavier principle. Each local is related to the global and is responsible for the total mission of the Order. But now something has to take hold of the global dynamic, and that is the Centrum. The Centruns are non-geographical. They are not geographically grounded like the Area Houses and the other Houses. Otherwise the Centruns would be another form of the medieval hierarchical or architectonic system.

But they have to exist somewhere. Will there be one in a sphere, one on a continent in another place, one in an area in another part of the world, or one in a region? I guess you would have them wherever they were needed missionally. These Centruns make fundamental decisions about the task and mission of the total body and enable the total activity of the Order. They are servants to the local, yet they are in constant tension with the Houses. Our polity is built on tension.

The Centrum dynamic is one. In other words, you really only have one Centrum, and that is a global Centrum that goes on around the world. That is all there is. But there are four manifestations of the Centrum dynamic: research, operation, management, and development. In other words, these four dynamics are going on constantly in the midst of the global dynamic. So each location we will be setting up will have one Centrum with four dynamics or four Centruns in that one Centrum activity. Yet, to be over against geography, they will only be one dynamic

around the world. Maybe I can put it this way. You have one research dynamic that is going on around the world; one management net around the world; one development net, and one operations net. All four of these centrum activities show up wherever a centrum is located. Next fall, as we have already mentioned, we plan to locate those in four places. There will still be one here in Chicago, with the four centrum dynamics within it. There will also be one in London, one in Bombay, and one in Hong Kong, each with four centrum dynamics within the one dynamic. Now each Centrum dynamic stands by itself. The Development Centrum is responsible to no other centrum, certainly not to the Management Centrum, or Research, or Operations. Each one of these has its own autonomy. And the Houses have their own autonomy; they are not run by Centruns or anybody else.



As we have mentioned, the global dynamic goes on and specific centrum sociological form has to be built. For example, the Centrum dynamic is represented by the Don Cramers going on to Shb-Asia and SEAPAC to hold ITI's. The Management dynamic is going on all the time, with decisions about financial reports, housing and legal matters across the globe. The Research dynamic is going on with such activities as a 5th City in Oombulgurri.

Our first self-conscious sociological manifestation of the Centrum dynamic is taking place in the Development Centrum where Joe Thomas and John Patterson self-consciously as a Centrum left here to be located, first of all, in Bombay for a few weeks, and then in Hong Kong for a few more weeks. Joe was also located in London long enough to get \$80,000 from Germany which he will take to Bombay and Hong Kong. Yet that Development Centrum is one. Whatever money comes in is ready to be used in the global mission. While we were in London, Cramer was given \$2,000 by the development centrum to take to India. That kind of self-conscious form is immediately producing the kind of fruits you would hope for. It is as if September is not going to be any too soon to put the form to all the dynamics in the various four parts.

Now with the centruns comes a brand new happening, and this is probably the biggest explosion we have had. Although it may not be so manifest yet to us, it is something overwhelming. That is the dimension of the Commissions. The Commissions are related to the particular Centruns in an advisory capacity to them. You, as Guardians, are of course related to the external mission as guilders wherever you find yourself, and wherever you sit down and plan with all aspects of the Movement, whether it is with a prior in a local house or a committee or a Centrum happening. One of the House priors told me just recently that a Guardian's move into his city had made all the difference in the world in the way that House operates and lives. He says, "We have a brand new feel after ourselves as a Religious House in history just because of that Guardian being in our town." In other words, not only are you part of the external thrust, but with the creation of the

Commissions you are a part of the internal life of whatever goes on in the life of the Order, and, therefore, in the life of the Movement. For you are directly related through the Commissions now on the Centrum level.

It is a communication dynamic you are performing here. By communications dynamic I don't mean a dynamic with each other or with other cities where your company or the centruns may be located, although, thank God, that will take place. It is a communication dynamic which goes to every part of the globe just by virtue of who you are. It is as if, through you, we have a pipeline, a direct communication, to creation. It is like having all creation advise you, through the Guardians' expertise, multiplicity, plurality, and globality. It is like having every aspect of creation telling you what should happen. For provincial, limited people, what a difference that makes to your mission and to your whole grasp after yourself as a being in the midst of history.

Yet, at the same time, you can see that these Commissions, although they are tied to a global dynamic, they are also local, because they live in New York and Chicago and Hong Kong and London and everywhere else and, therefore, reflect the background and the situation and the cultures and the other dimensions that are there. Therefore, it is a global network of decision-making.

The Commissions directly guard and review. They bring order out of chaos. They watch over the decisions being made. They keep the decisions coordinated. They keep the context comprehensive. And through their expertise they keep the particular relevant and grounded in the comprehensive context. They do not make decisions. That is up to Centrum. They are there to advise the decisions, to give the decisions the possibility to expand, to be comprehensive, and to be grounded in the best wisdom of our time.

There are presently four commissions. First, there is the Assignment Commission; how in the world do you take one thousand people here and decide where they go around the globe. Everybody has their two suitcases packed, ready to go every weekend to teach anywhere - like Fred Hess. He was asked to go to the ITI in Hyderabad. "Can you go by tomorrow morning" was the question. And Fred replied, "Yes, if I can get my visa in time." He got his visa eight hours late, so it took sixteen hours instead of ten to get away. You know that is the kind of thing your Commission dynamic participates in. There is also the Fiscal Commission, the Internal Life Commission - that is personnel's relationship to the task, and the Legal Commission. I will not, at this time, spell these out. You already can get a quick feel by their names.

Now it is clear the decision-making process is being participated in by the Guardian in every dynamic of the Order and in every dynamic of the Movement. Specific examples of the self-conscious, sociological form of this is, first, the Assignment Commission. Those of you who were here last summer probably saw the Assignment Commission working on where to put those thousand names. I remember there was a guardian present who made recommendations and talked things through. Now, mind you, the Area Priors had to consense on those assignments, so you might say they made the decisions. But, that Guardian, along with the rest of the people there, was giving context, analyzing the relationships, needs and

gifts. As such he was participating fully in the decision making dynamic.

The Fiscal Commission's activity and advice have caused the most radical step to be taken in the finances of this Order since its inception. Again, it is out of the Area Priors and the Centrum Dynamic you have the decision, but they wouldn't have had a chance to make that kind of decision without the Commission's work and advice. The meeting of the Legal Commission in March began a process which will be the same kind of radical mutation in our global inter-relations.

Again, decision making is outside or beyond what we have called, at times, the Symbolic Order. It is beyond us. We are wedded to you like we never even dreamed was possible a few years ago. And that is for better or worse. That is just the way it is from now on. Now, for this weekend we are going to continue to spell out possibilities for the future but the kind of wisdom that is here is not a one-way street. You, in giving us your expertise in all the ways in which we have pointed to, obviously blast loose anew any kind of way in which we could possibly make a decision. At the same time, the kind of models being developed here, like Global Order polity, gives a brand new way to begin to get clarity on the dynamic of any corporation across the globe. In addition the commission dynamic is dealing with the patterns of the new society. So these three days as we deal with the concrete issues before us we will at the same time be dealing with the depth issue of new sociological forms of our time. May it be a great weekend.

-- Joseph A. Slicker

4/20/74