

10029010

Symbolic Centrum
Global Council
October 25, 1973

"WHAT HAPPENED IN SUMMER '73: THE YEAR OF THE GUILD"

You see before you THE GUILD. You are now beholding the new community; Living Effectively in the New Society; the new evangelism; the Cabaret; the new transparency, the Team; the new Movement. The question we have been asking ourselves is : "What will Summer '73 be as we look back on this year twenty years from now? What was it that happened? What is that historical residue of Summer '73.

This is the summer of the Guild. This is the summer we forged out that revolutionary deed, performed in the local community which every man is allowed to perform in the midst of his own local community on behalf of all other men and all other communities. We Created that network, that design, that image of the Guild as a way or getting said to ourselves that there is no way this planet will be transformed at the grassroots level save there is a form through which every human being religious, secular, big or small, black or white, North American or Asia - can participate in a revolutionary transformation of his own geography and the geography of every piece of this planet.

I was pretty well spoofed for the first week or so of the summer into thinking that somehow the Guild was a secular thing and the Congregation was a religious thing. It was this past week that through the Team PSU's across the assembly, we began to see that where you bump into the religious is when you bump into that radical Doing - that authentic transformation of society - - namely, the Guild. The Guild is the arena where you encounter life itself at its deepest. It is when you run head-on into your death, your expended life. That is where the secular and the religious lose their distinction and you are left only with the fundamental decision of whether to try to save your life or lose it for all of creation. Well, that is what happens when you hit the universe or society at the grassroots level; you see that both of those are the same. Whoever hits the midst of history out of the context of the Guild, standing within his awakening, is a profoundly religious human being: he is about the profoundly religious task.

Now, let's look more closely at the Guild. First, there is the Guild Meeting, or that form in which you and I push to the religious deeps through such methods as the singing of Resurgence songs. There we begin to see that what we call the sentimentalism or romanticism of yesterday was simply a superficial religious insight. You take any one of those songs and you discover that authentic ontological wisdom, insight, and passion were released in them

This whole phenomenon called the Guild is the occasion or the strategy, by which we walk right through the "thicket" to the Last Fat Lady. The Ecumenical Parish, now called into being because of the Guild, is that by which you and I as the guildsmen, as the Dr. Lao's (that guru magician of The Seven Faces of Dr. Lao) stand before The Last Fat Lady, so that suddenly she sees the life she has been running away from for sixty years as a great life, right now. She can participate in an occasion in which she can articulate her own grappling with awe -in the living room, the local stake meeting, or the elders' home in which she might be residing. She can now sing those old songs which deeply addressed her and articulated her life years ago. She has had no way to appropriate the fact that she has been on an incredible journey all of her life. She has had no way to call that to consciousness and give thanks for the phenomenal life which has been hers.

Some visible sign has called her attention to the fact that somebody cares, and that somebody is her. O.K. All of the reductionism she has lived before because of her self-depreciation is recontexted. Now she can see what she was doing by caring for her nephew and Mrs. Jones down the street was authentic human activity. She has had that caring brought to consciousness, allowing her to articulate and dramatize, day after day, that her life has been, and is, phenomenal. To see that living locally as the global deed has been her participation in the creation of this whole planet, is to have her life given back to her.

Uptown 5 is that demonstration sign of what thirty local people can do. They did only ordinary things this summer. Anybody can go out and build a park. How many did it take -- twenty-five people for six to eight hours? Anyone can paint a building, put on a car-park cafe with a few acts, or slip signs saying "Uptown is the greatest place to be alive" into windows and rock that community. This is the happening of the Guild, in order to remind that community that life is here.

One of our colleagues, in talking to a stranger, discovered that he had been reconditioning the Aragon Ballroom here in Uptown. He has been in or around this community for forty to fifty years. And he said, "I don't know what's going on, but something is beginning to happen to this community. I think there is a new kind of excitement. I think Uptown is going to come back again, like the old days." He did not know why, he just sensed that something was going on, that there is a body caring, raising up the signs. When this happens, a woman comes alive, a family, a whole block, an entire community.

If the Guild is the deed, LENS is the re-educating tool. Do you recall the "alien image" of St. John of the Cross? We have seen the array of courses we pulled out of the deeps of our own wisdom about what it is going to take to hit every human being -- to be an alien image to any man or woman on this planet no matter where he is or where he comes from, or how he articulates or lives his life-style. We have that kind of tool kit now, and no one will escape! No one will avoid having an alien image come across his radar screen, be it through LENS or RS1, through the Holy Life Course, through a consult, or a PSU. No one is going to escape. You and I know that, because we ourselves have already been caught.

I do not know how to talk about sacred space. Whenever I bump into a verifiable "not-me-ness" which calls me to consciousness about my eschatological or destinal task, that place-event is sacred Space. I stand on the shoulders of twenty-thousand years of creation of humanness, marking the pathway of the next five hundred thousand years of human destiny. That is my actual situation. That is, in fact, what you and I are doing right now. We are creating the future on the shoulders of the past. Whenever you bump into something like a symbol you are called to consciousness about the fact that that is precisely who you are. You get Time and Space slammed together. In Holy Space, you see yourself naked before your destiny - before your life as it is in this moment. At that moment, you have broken through the bowels of your life. Awe begins to pour out of your ears because you are encountered the Final One in the midst of your particular place and time. That is what you do by raising up signs which call people to attention about who they are and where they are going.

The second major break-through is the incognito style. It may seem a strange one, yet, I think it is one of the key things that has happened this summer. Dr. Lao and the Scarlet Pimpernel are fantastic artforms that embody that style. We always live with two faces. We always have the face of the utterly secular and the face of the utterly religious: the same human being, but with two faces. You can walk into any situation and nobody suspects what is going to happen; all of a sudden, you put on your costume, jump out from behind a telephone pole, and something happens.

Or, you appear where nobody expects you and pull out a human being from the pit of his own death, and cast him back into his own life. He did not know where you came from, or where you are going. He just knows his life has been given back to him.

I like to think that I could be very transparent, or rather, inconspicuous, that nobody would notice me. But when you walk into a situation, when you decide, you become conspicuous. Being incognito is most difficult, because whenever you walk into a room something happens to that room, by definition. The fact is that your lucidity and stance and presence transform the room. Yet it is a transparency, an incognito. No one knows what is happening except that there is an alien image in that room.

That is what it means to be the new evangelist, to do the preaching mission. We have hardly unveiled that to ourselves in terms of a concretion. Yet, we know it is a tool by which we can rock the foundation of the Historical Church's images of what it means to be the Church in this world. And what a tool like LENS is! or the Holy Life course! to rock people loose from their old images, and give permission to live their phenomenal life -- The Deed and the Word: The Guild and LENS.

The third impact of the summer is the Cabaret. It is a dynamic. It is a happening. It is a phenomenon. This summer the Cabaret brought us to see what we refused to see before. It is an utterly secular happening -- no theological categories, no Christological categories-- just singing, dancing, jokes, and whatever else throws you over against awe, the mystery. It is the occasion for you to face your whole life in the deeps, before the past and the future, and this whole planet. You and I are beginning to sense after what it means to be Cabaret, and that putting one on is an utterly self-conscious happening.

Resurgence singing has become an occasion like that. The song which rocks me is, "I'll Be Seeing You in All the Old Familiar Places." About a month before the summer, when we began singing those, all of us were kind of "running for cover." My first scream was utter cynicism. My experience of awe was glossed over with romanticism. Now I cannot sing those songs without being rocked by their transparency to awe, to mystery, to life, to struggle, to authentic human engagement. When I sing, "I'll be seeing you in all the old familiar places," the "YOU" instantly in my mind evokes not simply my wife or my girlfriend, but my whole past. I have had a memory released in me, a consciousness, a grasp after my own life and history. I am a different human being because I have had that electrode dropped into my bowels, and the shockwave has moved through my whole system, releasing my being. The whole of my memory bank which has been sitting on a back shelf, stagnant, is given back to me. I have had thirty-eight years, not just six years of a great life! I have been on a life-long journey with God, with the Word, and now I can see what I could not see before.

You and I now seem to encounter the art form with renewed respect. Benny Goodman, for instance, takes me on an incredible journey. There is a certain transparency there that goes far beyond some simple musical trick. Perhaps it has to do with the way the man BE's Cabaret -- with his passion and discipline. Or again, look at the Daily Office and our experiments with Space. What is it that has happened to us? I have found people in the strangest places and times doing scriptural reflection. Perhaps going back to the classical expression of the art form has somehow broken us open to re-claim our own memory; to begin struggling to rearticulate the Word in the Old and New Testaments.

The fourth breakthrough is The Team. In spite of all our resistance, the team happened. I have been on a team with long-hairs, short-hairs, housewives, retirees, fat and skinny -- and I

rebelled: Unfaith told me that these people could never function as a team. And yet, right there is the revolutionary force that is going to change the destiny of this planet. That is painful! Do you understand what it is going to be like when you go back home to your Metro cell, your Religious House, your Cadre, or your Auxiliary? Just that: the long-haired, the short-haired, the big, the old, the young will be on your hands. Yet, it is there that the future is created. There it is: just ten or twelve people-local man, local women-- the team. And that is the point. Any body of people, any fifteen or eighteen human beings, all of them clearly in this outfit, are the dregs-- what is left over from those who have made it. Bring together fifteen people (I do not care who they are) with the structures, the discipline, the passion, the Gospel, and you have life, you have revolutionary creativity, you have destinal power right there. Is that not what the Gospel tells us? Every human being stands before God no further away or closer than any other human being?- No human being has any more of a reading on destiny, than you or I do. With that kind of corporate, disciplined team or unit at that level, you are ready to begin to talk about the Movement houses.

To do the Ecumenical Parish Experiment, to do the Guild, and to do what we are going to do this Fall is going to require fifty of us in each of those Religious Houses. This is just an ontological observation. It is there as an indicative, a description of what it means to be a revolutionary. If we are going to do this kind of massive job, then it is going to take more troops. My image is of a group, or a couple of people who can do the "cell" dynamic in any Metro, Polis, or whatever, who call movement colleagues together and enable them to grid to the parish, getting the story clear about who they are and where they are heading. This is moving right to Local Man's front door, into his life Here is a strategy by which in ten years any Metro on this planet can have in every Parish a Galaxy of four churches, and fifty-man Guild doing Direct Tactic day after day, so that every human life is impacted in that community.

We have a "reading" on Local Man, on The Last Fat Lady. We have our radar screen focused in that direction and we know how to get there. We did not know that the day before yesterday. It is systematic, depth penetration with RS-I, LENS, and a follow-up of Galaxy, Guild, and the Ecumenical Parish. As you move from Metro to Polis to Micro to Ecumenical Parish, there is penetration and formulation at each level.

Let me say more about the Cell. One of my colleagues has a propensity to look things up in the dictionary instead of creating a definition off the top of his head, as some of us end up doing. He happened to look up the word cell the other day. The first definition given is "a small room in a convent or a prison." The tenth definition (it is called the ecclesiastical definition) says: "A cell is a monastery or a nunnery, usually small, and dependent on a larger religious house." I could not believe that so I had to read it for myself. That is the definition of a cell.

Other dimensions of our summer include the PSU. To talk about Movement PSU's is to talk about a polity dynamic, for the PSU is polity it is care; it is motivation. The PSU is a connecting link available to local man as a part of the new Movement.

Then, there are the Logistics, which will be across the globe the way we weave our life together into one common thrust for the sake of one world.

I want to close with one other observation. In a couple of hours, when we come to the close of this plenary, we are going to have a send-out; there will be a deployment. Every human being in this room is going to be deployed in two hours. The reason that is now possible, where it was not yesterday, is that we will soon have a grid of every parish, and thereby, you will, have yourself on a timeline-- where you live. Your parish, no matter where it is, will be a signal Ecumenical Parish, in which there will be a Galaxy, Guild, and Direct Tactics.

10029010

Your job is to return to play the Cell dynamic and to see that that whole matrix of happenings, like LENS and RS-I, at the Metro, Micro, and Parish levels happens in order that within that ten-year signal timeline your Parish is transformed. It becomes a sign to the rest of the planet.

Your space, then, becomes the Resurgence swirl, the center around which all else is focusing. It becomes your Sacred Space. So, you now are not sent out to some miscellaneous space, but are rather sent out to a battle station. That is what I mean by deployment. You have a particular place where you are required. You may change that space. Obviously many of you will. Wherever you show up, you understand [yourself to be deployed there and to see that that battlefield is implemented, for the transformation of that particular space into Holy Space. It is something like the Xavier principle: one who has decided right there to see that point of the universe comes off for the sake of the rest of the globe.

YOU ARE DEPLOYED BY THE LORD OF HISTORY. THE LORD BE WITH YOU.

--Donald Cramer -

10/25/73