

GLOBAL COMMUNITY FORUM:  
DYNAMICS OF AWAKENMENT

This morning I want to talk a little bit about Global Community Forum. But first, I need to rehearse for myself all three Campaigns. I hope that you have found a way to rehearse these Campaigns for yourself. I need a way of grasping the authentic ambiguity that we are experiencing so that I don't fall into the obvious collapse of the structures and forms that we live in or wandering into the abstract of the uncreated. I have to find a way to say to myself who I am and who we are in terms of the three Great Campaigns. Global Social Demonstration, for me, is the radical dramatization of social absolution which releases every community to be the Globe. Global Community Forum is the awakening of local man and therefore the laying of the foundation for the emergence of primal community, or authentic localis, in which life giving forms can be created. Intra-Global Movement is bringing to tactical form the mass of Those Who Care in order that the passion of their deep humanity can be released regardless of what their cultural position happens to be. Whether or not you agree with that isn't important, but it is the way I say to myself who I am and who we are in the midst of the Great Campaigns.

I want to talk about Global Community Forum. I want to talk about that dynamic of awakening that you and I have decided to give ourselves to in order that all the Campaigns can be brought about. I had the opportunity this past year to work in the Global Community post in Operations Centrum in this particular location here in Chicago Nexus. I want to share with you some of my reflections.

I guess one of the most painful aspects of this whole thing is that I could probably just talk about things that I have learned this past year. The humiliation for me comes at the point of grasping that I learned them, probably, in the last seven weeks. But that is the bad news. The good news is that I think that I did learn some things. I will try to refrain from spending too much time telling you about these last seven weeks, but try to point to some arenas. There are some things that I have observed. I want to talk about some of the places that I would point to as where this particular Campaign is experiencing headlong encounter with the enemy. And then talk a little about what it looks like in the future.

Did any of you be so immoral as to watch the Democratic Convention? The thing that struck me was Barbara Jordon's image of national community in her keynote address. I found myself straining with every bit of my interior every time she said national community. I wanted her to take one more step and talk about local community. You know she knows it. But I wasn't making her speech for her.

What have I seen this year? In North America, where the emphasis on the Community Forum Campaign is, there is no question that we have established a beachhead across this nation. We have done it out of several arenas. We have covered the geography of North America. I won't burden you with statistics about how many communities, how many miles, how many thousands of centimeters of rubber have been expended, but simply say that the continent has been covered. And that is a beachhead like unto which we have never experienced before. We have discovered that the methods you and I have hammered

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out over the last twenty-five years not only sound good when we talk about them, they actually work. That has been a painful discovery. We have also discovered that no matter what we tell ourselves about where we are in this campaign, the mood of this continent has been shifted. I sat down with a businessman to talk with him about his company's participation in a Global Community Forum, and he said, "Oh, yes, I am a little bit familiar with this program. I called my son and daughter-in-law last week and invited them over for the weekend and they said, 'We can't come we are involved in a Town Meeting.' I must know what is going on because they were very excited." That is what I mean by mood shift.

Across this continent one of the most debilitating aspects of our current situation, the cynicism out of which we are all tempted to live, is literally being addressed. And it is being addressed in the only way in which you could address cynicism: with radical visible demonstration. You can never talk a cynic out of his cynicism. Everything you say is proof positive that the world is going to hell in a basket. Until he has the opportunity of seeing the dream beginning to emerge, there is no possibility. That is happening across this continent. The tool that is doing it is Global Community Forum. We have established a beachhead.

Where are we experiencing the battle at this particular point? If you haven't guessed, I am trying to avoid using the word contradiction. I have a tendency to call everything that I don't agree with a contradiction and I have a sneaking suspicion that that is not what a contradiction is. I find every situation in which I have to make a decision a contradiction. I have a sneaking suspicion that that is not what a contradiction is. A contradiction has something to do with objective reality against which I am pushing. I am pushing at that particular point because that contradiction has invited me into the future.

Now, I want to pinpoint about five places where, in terms of this campaign, the future is inviting us to give our attention. One of the things that I had a lot of fun with as I travelled this last seven weeks was discovering something that I had suspected for a long time. We have not only spent a lot of rubber, a lot of money, burned a lot of gas, spent a lot of nights on the road, but we learned what this continent is about - community by community by community. One place that the future is beckoning us has to do with translating what we have learned about local community into tools that will enable us to allow that community to know itself.

I have run into some of our troops out on the road who are extremely fatigued. Tired is not adequate, they were fatigued, they were exhausted. I asked them: what is it that has drained your energy? And they began to tell me about the communities that they have been in, about the local situations they had encountered. And the more they talked, the more excited they got, and all of a sudden their exhaustion became exhilaration. They had seen that community in a way that they suspected no one else had ever seen it. The Old Testament says something like this: God knew Adam and Eve. That is, He saw them as they really were. He saw them stripped of any pretense and therefore they were known. That is the way our troops are experiencing these

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communities. They go into a community and the first thing you know, they have seen that community naked. The burden of what they have seen gets translated into exhaustion. How do you take what you see and what you experience and use that to enable that community to come alive? That is a place that is beckoning us.

We are learning, through our experience about the roots of primal community. The shape of the life giving context for human beings is in terms of their grasping who they are in relation to others grasping who they are, that is primal community. The roots of that are being exposed by Global Community Forum. Our troops are exhausted. I caught about 10 minutes of a movie the other night about Winston Churchill. Churchill, as a young man, as a young member of parliament, had taken into himself the unbelievable struggle of his nation: its wrestling with whether or not to go to war. Against the pressure of his own party and many very influential people he went into Parliament and made a blistering speech against the waste of British resources, of men, women and goods in a war in Europe. He comes home and his mother asks, "Well, how are you?" And he says, "I am exhausted, but I am free." And that is where the exhilaration comes. That arena is calling us to deal with it.

There are three arenas that I find so much related that I don't know whether they are one or three. They have to do with the future focus of Global Community Forum. You and I discovered a long time ago, in terms of our theological struggle, that we are two-story people. That is not because we wanted to be, it is because of the time in which we live. We were educated by people who were born in a two-story universe and much of the symbolism out of which my world lives is based on a two-story universe. Translated in sociological terms, that informs how you and I must operate tactically. Maybe we should have been a bit more clever when we put out the image of 5000, for what we discovered quickly was that we were falling back into a two-story static picture of what it means to get a job done; that we had abstracted the number 5000 as some goal on the other side of which we could sit down and rest. What we discovered was, we were not only getting there so we could rest, but that the image of 5000 was burying us under in two-story weight. How can we get ourselves focused towards the future? Our task is to turn on a continent; awaken a continent. Is that going to take 1000? 1500? 2000? 3000? All of a sudden I arrive at something like 5000, not because somebody stuck it out there like a carrot in front of a mule, but because I decided that that was necessary to get the job done. That is what I mean by a future focus. Now we're thinking (We don't talk about it too loudly), we're afraid it is going to take 10,000. That will not be a burden on my day-to-day tactical operations unless I fall back into the second story where it is out there for me to grab and be rewarded or not grab and be guilty. What if after 3500 we look around and the continent is turned on? Well, we have other jobs to do. But wouldn't that be interesting? "We can't quit now, we have only done 3500. We've got to do 5000." How do we get that in front of us, the indicative of awakening?

Closely related to that, is holding a continental thrust at the same time that we create very very specific local tactics. A colleague that I had

a chance to work with for about a week, really had the circuits going. He had visited more communities than you could shake a stick at, but didn't have any sponsorship committees, no dates set, no Town Meetings held. I said "Now, why? What is the block?" He said, "Well, you remember that in December we said we were going to do X, and I keep trying to get the communities to do X and they don't want to do X. And I keep trying to get the communities to do X anyway." "What do they hint they want to do?" "Well, they have given indications that they would do Y." "Why aren't you doing Y?" And he said, "We decided in December to do X." How do we hold ourselves as one continental thrust of a campaign and at the same time know that in that local situation tactically, we do what is necessary?

By the way, we spent some days that week doing Y and guess what? Things have popped. Well, you could say that that colleague is just stupid. I don't choose to say that. I choose to say that we have got a job to do in terms of creating a method of modifying continental strategies into appropriate local tactics. Maybe this is the time we go to the area in order to better facilitate this tactical thrust. The "divide and conquer" imagery is appealing to me. Not in terms of some liberal image that every area has its uniqueness and therefore must have its personal plan. How do we enable that uniqueness to produce what we want to produce across the continent: awakening? Someone suggested that maybe those mountains out on the western edge of this continent are a barrier in terms of our keeping ourselves as a total thrust. Maybe we ought to decide that we are going to have a thrust in terms of the eastern slope of the Rockies and one on the western slope of the Rockies. Maybe we have to decide that Los Angeles has got some troops they don't really need to keep the momentum going and we leave two people in L.A. and send the rest up to do Oregon which has not have any Community Forums. We must find a way to see where the weaknesses are in our beachhead, and how to accelerate places where we have discovered an advantage. We are not interested in every metro moving in step with every other metro. We are interested in awakening this continent by systematically and effectively covering the geography with Global Community Forums.

All of our troops are front line troops, which means that those of us who happen to get assigned to the Nexus are a reserve force. I admit that for a long time this year my image was that the Nexus was a command post. During this year I got a new image. We're not a command post; we are reserve troops. You have a weakness over here? Send us over and shore it up. You have a place that is short over here? Take 25 of us and shoot us into that breach. Shut off the top four floors, don't worry about mopping floors. We are all front line troops. There is no command post somewhere--we are all front line.

That is not just true in terms of Nexus. In your own forces, if there is one human being with whom you have any influence who is sitting around not involved in Community Forum, it is your job to get him moving. There are some places where I went--I could tell there was at least one person who was not engaged. There was a sense about it. Where they were all engaged, you could go in and you could tell. There wasn't anybody home. "Hello, I'm at the airport." "That's good, but I'm leaving." Well, how do I get to the house." "Well, I don't know, but I'll be back Wednesday." Something like that. Or you could call up the house to get instructions. A voice answers, "Institute of Cultural Affairs, may I help you?" "Yeh, I'm at the airport.

I was hoping somebody could pick me up." "Oh, this is the answering service." That was one clue. A sense of being engaged.

The fourth has to do with be the beachhead. Let's say we do move to areas. If we try to do national strategy in every area, I have news for you. We have hit the beach; the landing craft has gone up the beach and the troops have moved out establishing a beachhead. Now the question is--What is going to get us up over the next set of objectives? Someone suggests, "Well, load back into your landing craft, back off about six miles, go like hell and when you hit the beach you may make it another eight inches." We do not need landing craft. We have to have some other implementation to drive on, to explode and awaken the continent. What is that? I'm not sure but my clue is that the seeds of whatever that newness is are right here in this room. That does not mean we find somebody in this room who has been turning it on and say, "Okay, we are going to take your model and do it over here." We have to find out what these people know, how to address the particular communities found across the continent. We have to pull that together, mesh it, work it into the practical systems that will enable our troops to accelerate, accelerate, accelerate. Obviously some of our colleagues have had duplication in their plans from the first moment. That is revolutionary. It is not only good sense, it is revolutionary.

We told ourselves many years ago that we were out to awaken 1000 people in order to find 100 that would lean in the right direction in order to get ten to say "yes," in order to find one that would stand there for the rest of his life. Now translate that into sociology. We impact 1000 communities to find 100 that begin to rise in order to find ten that will give themselves to the future in order to find one in which there can be a Social Demonstration around which we can do ten social demonstrations in order to do 100 social demonstrations in order to do 1000. That is revolutionary. The moment that you and I forget that revolutionary is our primary category of operating, we are dead. Someone said to me one day, "Isn't it great that we have turned to the world! We don't have to worry about being revolutionaries." Turning to the world means that you and I have to sharpen our revolutionary tactics in a way we have not known before. That same colleague was bemoaning the 5000, "May be have bitten off more than we can chew." A revolutionary has decided to live in, renew and awaken the whole globe. How could you take a bite that is too big? He also said, "Why isn't it like the way it used to be, when we used to sit around and enjoy the revolutionary fervor of what we were doing." (I died again.) The reason he missed the revolutionary fervor was because it had moved out of the armchair, out of our brain into our gut, and onto the road. He wasn't experiencing any revolutionary fervor because he had tied himself to that chair. Being revolutionary for him was sitting at home thinking up a war, while the communities around him were obviously yearning to be released.

He said, "I don't think we ought to do these Community Forums unless we have a follow-up." (I didn't just die, I almost hit him.) I thought we had gotten over that ten years ago in RS-I. We have not yet found a way to tell ourselves that what we know about individuals applies to sociology. Here is a community committing suicide, about to commit suicide relative to its destiny and its future. We say, "Well, I'm not going to get that gun away from his head because I don't know what to do with him if we save him. Just go ahead and let him blow his brains out." Do you see the ridiculousness? There are communities across this continent, yes, across this globe, that have a 45 pointed at their corporate head. If you are telling yourself, "I'm not going to get their finger off the trigger because I don't know what to do with them once they put the gun down," you have just assigned them to suicide. You know exactly what to do with them in terms of following through with every individual that is turned on in Global Community Forum. Get them on the road with you or with somebody else, or by themselves. You have a community that has begun to awaken--well, five more years of Town Meeting would not hurt them at all. If we are letting that image block us from turning on a continent, then we have to find a way to get said to ourselves that all we ever need to do in a community is one Global Community Forum. We need to ride with that until we have this continent turned on. Then, we will talk about follow through.

The last thing I want to talk about is the presence of the ordering dynamic in Global Community Forum. We told ourselves a long time ago that the only ones who alter society are the religious. I want to witness to you that for the last eighteen months, I not only found myself knowing that intellectually, I saw it happening. Where there is a community, where there is a Community Forum, and where there is in the midst of that the dynamic of the Order, that community comes off. Whether he is wearing this blue suit or some other, whether he goes to Daily office or whatever, if that dynamic is there, that community comes off. If you are worried about allegiance, then again, get your vision out in terms of turning on this continent. If you know one of those people who is moving toward becoming that dynamic and you are hesitant about telling him to get a blue suit, you cut a piece of material off your suit or dress, hand it to the guy or the woman, and say, "Now, go to that community and be what you are." That dynamic has to be there. What I'm after is transparency, and what I mean by transparency is for the human beings involved in that community seeing through to the possibility of their own creative destiny in terms of their future. If that happens, the ordering dynamic has been there. Period. What that demands of us is probably going to shift but that dynamic has to be there or awakening will not happen. It is the move from a great day to a profound day. It is the move from interesting proposals about the future to destiny. It is the shift from a few people gathered sensing themselves engaged to a community grasping its participation in creating its own destiny. It is the shift from a good experience to changed lives. That is the shift I am talking about. If that happens the ordering dynamic was there. Period.

These arenas to me are the places where we have to push and push and push hard, in order that we awaken this continent--in order to awaken the globe. I want to witness to you that these day I am exhausted but I am free.