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101311

Priors Council
Chicago Nexus

December 20, 1975

FINAL ADDRESS THE VICTORY IS OURS

I did not want to come to this meeting. Unlike those people who said they didn't want to come because what they were already doing was so exciting, I felt there was something else going on in my case. I was excited, but I was not excited about the excitement. I was dreading coming in so much that we called our sister-in-law and had her take us out for dinner so that we could postpone actually arriving. And yet I do not think there is any doubt that this has been the greatest council that I've ever attended in 10 years of councils. Tonight I will talk a little bit about why that is the case.

This is the season of Advent, but it feels like Pentecost. Maybe that is what was going on at Christmas - the new birth coming into being. The area reports had to go to poetry to try to grasp what had happened and to express what the new creation is. Our area used a religious phrase I can't remember, but the thing I do recall was that we are now a marching army, a glorious marching army. Basically I want to do two things. First, I want to talk about the kind of transformation that has gone on this quarter and has been symbolized and celebrated this week. This week has been an event in which what happened during the quarter was symbolized. It was brought to consciousness this week, but it was happening all quarter. And then I want to talk about the future. That will be more practical, yet there is really nothing more to say except what we've been saying to each other all along. Finally, I want to close with a little poetry.

It seems to me that there have been four elements of transformation this quarter. The first one is the overarching one. I find that "Imaginative boldness" has settled in upon us. We were unsure of the future. We had been tempted to trust the past for images of setting up programs called Town Meetings. When we left Chicago this summer, we were convinced in our theoretical images of doing 5000, but our practical operating image was that of 1000. We would do 1000, and as for the other 4000.... This quarter we have made a new decision about our overarching task, and I'm convinced that it is because we see its relationship to Social Demonstration. Hearing the reports from a guardian on Kwangware and hearing about the 35,000 villages in Korea and just anticipating Maliwada reports has done a strange thing to us. The outer limits for us now seem to be a minimum of 35,000, and our practical operating image is now very clearly 5000 Town Meetings.

One prior made a statement that has captured the week for me. He made it on the Sunday before the council opened on Monday. He said, "The solutions to all the problems we've been experiencing are going to be given tomorrow." Incredibly enough, they were. Everything that we found impossible in our individual situations was explained by somebody who got up and said, "Now this is how you do it. It is very simple. Just do this and this and you will have it done." Without a question, that onrush of possibility, the good news that you can do it, crushed our victim Images, and we saw that.

It can be done. That doesn't mean we have the practical undergirding necessary, but we are clear that the key is motivation. As long as we have an image or a story that says "You can't do 5000," we couldn't do 5000 if they all called on the telephone like some of us thought they would. But once our story, once our images, once our symbology gets transformed, then there is no end to what is possible. I suspect not all of us are convinced of that. I think of one particular House. They have five people, four of whom are here. I'm tempted to call the other and warn him. I've been looking forward to see what we are going to do New Year's Eve. New Year's Eve is when we announce the 5000 to the world. There has been a mutation of spirit relative to what we are willing and capable of doing, and it is as if anybody who doesn't think we can do 5000 isn't in the Movement. And anybody who does, even if he doesn't know what it means, is in the Movement. I'm interested in how to go back into the Primal Community Experiment, how to go back into

the metro, how to go back into your own house and remember seven weeks from now when it isn't quite so clear that the decision was made to do 5000.

The second thing is, we have gotten practical tools this week. We came in here ready for tools. People walked in this door, and said, "By golly if we don't get those tools people say they have..." Abstractionism is completely gone. Liberalism is gone completely. There are no liberals in this room, because we are clear that we can not operate out of some idealistic world. We tried it and tried it and tried it, and I suspect that the liberals have left or have been transformed. The documents that we created couldn't even be stapled, they are so big. The shift that took place in the area meeting was the practical concern for the practical tools that we need to have if we are going to get the job done.

The third thing that has happened to us is close to the second one: we have developed sociological skill. I think we came here unsure of our methods, and now we see that they work. The time of good ideas or passionate guesses is over, because we now have a way to test whether they work or not. Now that doesn't mean that we are not going to have to continue the testing process, but we have brought an unbelievable concreteness and sociological finesse into it. I learned in the academy that you build models by creating platonic images and aristotelian groundings. You build a model and then go out and try it. That is how everybody does model building. We have now begun to build a body of sophisticated sociological skill in relation to it. We are now at a point where we are beginning to get incredibly accurate feed-back on the nature of the nation that we are involved in. The models that we use are going to be models that are tested. You hear about the big cities model. I found myself out of my newly-gained sociological skill saying, "Boy, I think I'm going to call Alton the day after that Town Meeting and find out if it worked." And then if it doesn't work, we drop it. Or call Booher and see if his model works, and if it doesn't work... We now have that kind of clarity.

The fourth thing, is that we have been forced into a far more comprehensive operation. I found myself last week saying, "This thing is too darnn complex to keep on top of, and it doesn't really matter anyway," or "Let centrum do it." That is not possible any longer. I have wondered why people would keep coming up with ideas about doing interchange two or three years ago when we didn't have much to interchange about. Now it is clear we must have an unbelievable interchange system, not because it is a good idea, but because we can't do our work without it. We are comprehensively concerned about what is happening, not only in these two nations, but across the whole world relative to GCF. Only in that way are we going to be able to do anything in our local situations that will make any sense and that will work.

Not only are we a network, but there are networks across tints country, and we need to deal with them comprehensively. And the rapid change of tactics: stop and think about some of the organizations and groups existing today that try to stay abreast of the changing times and so annually meet and make alterations, We change major tactical pushes in a matter of two or three weeks. We have to in order to get done what we have decided to do, and interchange is directly related to that. It is utterly necessary to stay comprehensive in terms of how we get our task done and how we organize ourselves. If you have four or five people in a House, it is critical that you have them doing the right thing. As you are well aware, we must do GCF across the whole continent, not Just in this nation, and not just in the big cities or in the small towns, but across the whole country. Several things are crucial here. The war boards and war rooms are critical to remaining comprehensive. The other thing I put down as crucial was systematic circuits. If we dropped dead tomorrow we would have to continue the circuits. The circuits are important. I got so excited about the networks I wanted to stop the circuits and only do the networks because that Just seemed so much more interesting and on target. We have to do the networks. It seems like immediately we have to come up with the obvious ones. I haven't talked with the people who worked on the Jaycee Network but I would be willing to bet that by the time that question is raised it will be Irrelevant. We already have 1000 Jaycee clubs involved in doing Town Meeting, The problem that we were afraid of: that they would say "Sure we will do 1000," will be solved when we have the wheels underneath that to make sure it happens. Now I

think the ones that are really emerging, like Kawanis or AAUW should be pushed across the country. All we have to do is to ask them and they will say "Yes" to Town Meeting. Then we have to look for the unknown networks. We can not get fat and satisfied on the networks too quickly but we have to discover, particularly in the urban situations, what those networks are that we don't know about yet. We stumbled into the Human Relations Councils in the state of California. and they are going to sponsor a Town Meeting with 200 people present from cities all over the state. Those kinds of networks are there. I am intrigued by the YWCA. We ran into a gal in LA who claims to be part of a group that is going to "take over the YWCA organization." It involves a lot of very frustrated cynical individuals who want to do things, and yet they are not doing a thing. It is not like the Jaycees in that regard for they are in the inner city and not out in the suburbs. Community Councils, Community Schools, and a number of others are there ready to be broken loose.

The third thing is troops, and I wrote down "movemental troops." But I was reluctant to use it because it is clear that you can't use the Movement in the same way any more. Movement is not those people who use to be in the Movement. Movement is those people who are doing 5000. I suppose that we even have to guard a little bit against becoming known as the Town Meeting Movement. Nevertheless that's not the question I'm concerned about right now, but how do we develop the troops that are needed? It starts with the sponsors, and that is our breakthrough. We have to go back and figure out how to enliven sponsors. We played around with the Image of being salesmen. I like that. I'm not quite ready to be evangelist but it is somewhere in between. To unblock a spirit contradiction in a sponsor does not necessarily mean that you go in and give him a spin, but you find practical ways of unblocking him. As he starts down the path of sponsorship, we must be there every time he comes to the point where he starts to say "but", and Just very gently move that "but" to the side. We know what all those "buts" are: finances, you can't do it here, etc., etc. Then we must figure out how to nurture a sponsor. One of the great breakthroughs this quarter is that we would go on a sponsor call and would have a tremendous twenty minute conversation where the guy would get very excited. Then we would leave and six weeks later we would think back to that visit, and we would Image our sponsor being the way he was during that twenty minutes six weeks ago. We would go back and he would say, "You look familiar. Oh, the Town Hall idea! Yea, I remember about that. Our board voted against that 5 } weeks ago." How do you nurture that sponsor in such a way that Town Meeting becomes part of his consciousness and not Just one more good idea.

I think we made a mistake earlier in the week, when we let slip by a statement about local workshop leaders. There is no question but that the workshop leaders have to be local. Right now I would want to argue that we are at the point where every Town Meeting has to come off with great power, and it is the people in this room and the people in our houses who are most likely to be able to do that. You can build an adequate story by saying that the ICA will be glad to furnish the workshop leaders because you well know that bringing in somebody who is objective and will not be interfering or trying to argue with the local people will create a more helpful atmosphere for the workshop. Let us not get trapped in romantic Ideas about how great it would be to have local workshop leaders and then have everything crush in on the Town Meeting. The next thing you know it's Friday and here comes your local workshop leaders and your orchestrators get there late and so on and the next day the local workshop leaders fly by the seat of their pants. Those workshops are just critical, and though you can go back later and cover everything up by making up all kinds of stories about what happened, poor workshops do not do the catalytic job that is needed. Where a community says that either they have local workshop leaders or else, then you train them. You spend three weeks or a weekend to get them trained. It seems to me that you need a session to get them through the shock of what this is. You need a session to explain to them what we are doing in a workshop, and then you need a session for them to get that under their belt. And without those three sessions they haven't got a prayer of doing anything that would resemble a workshop. They just have to fake their way through.

The primal community experiment and the metro cadre are part of our troops. I got very clear about this early in the quarter. Any primal community that is not doing or has not done Town Meeting will die. There is just no other way it can exist and care for its parish. That is just the way it is right now.

We have talked a lot about how we go about involving the troops in the House. We are struggling with an unbelievably exciting image, namely, two people working in in every house. Now Brother Walters helped me get very clear that the "working in" category is gone. We haven't liked "working in" and "working out" any time we've used it, but it is clear now that if you have anybody working in you are making a big mistake. The decision that we are struggling with is how to get a minimum of two people on the road out of every house as well as the four or five that are assigned to that particular metropolitan parish. Maybe we talk about "those people assigned to circuits" and "those people assigned to the parish" instead of "working in" and "working out."

Then the fourth thing is everything else. You have your circuits, your network, your troops and then everything else. And under "everything else" I would put promotion and publicity, not wanting for a minute to take anything away from those, but prioritizing what we can actually do and what has to be done and finding a way to creatively hold the necessary tension. If a group calls and insists on having a RSI, then we go ahead with it, but if it is going to require a lot of people going out and recruiting, then unless it is intimately tied to the strategy for Town Meeting, nobody is going to come around and ask you why you didn't do RSI or HRM or Lens. On the other side of these six months that won't even be a question, for we will be doing so many we won't know what hit us.

Now the last thing that I want to say is that the victory is ours. Yet in the next six months we must keep our eye on that because we all know that some places are going to go faster than others and we are going to have loses in spite of all we do. There are going to be people who decide not to do Town Meeting, and those people will throw things at you as they decide. We have a lot to learn. We will sit around up here on the beach this summer on the second floor and reflect back on how we ever created some of the stupid things we came up with back in December 1975. We will attribute it to snowblindness. But I'm no longer afraid of losing, But what I fear now is everything that is related to the winning. We sensed this week that there is more out there than any statement or poetic image has been able to hold. I suspect the winning is going to fill us with incredible dread or fear in the midst of the fascination, and it is going to be a matter of being able to keep our eye on the fact that the victory is ours. I keep going back to the book *Childhood's End*. The overlords are returning from wherever they are, and their space ships are picking up the children that were left on the planet. They are the children who were capable of mutating and making a new decision. Then at the end, as the children enter in with the overlords and take off, they decide that in order to do that they have to use the earth as fuel. The whole thing is consumed and there is no longer the old reality. There is only the new reality. That, I think, is what is experienced now by all of us, and we do not yet have poetic imagery created. We are the right people at the right time and with the right product. Town Meeting is the thing that I have been waiting for all my life. This is what I have been working for in the Movement for ten years.

It is very appropriate that it is this season of Christmas. You can think of the story something like "The circuit riders were out on the hill watching over their circuits, and the 35,000 appeared to them and they were terrified for they did not want to look at the face of God." The victory is ours. The only way we will be able to look on the face of God is through the eyes of faith, the decision to stand knowing that the victory is ours. Regardless of what finally happens in any particular, the victory is ours. God is on the Move.

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