

THE CLUB OF ROME - A NON-ORGANIZATION

I used to accept as gospel truth the existence of what is fondly referred to by some members of CoR as the "non-organization" philosophy.

Now I know that this has always been nonsense, and that all those who subscribed to it, for whatever reason, were fooling themselves.

The Club of Rome may have been dominated by one man - Aurelio - but even a cursory analysis of CoR would indicate that it was a highly efficient organization. It raised funds, organized meetings, and published reports. It had an agenda, a credo, a set of by-laws and regulations, and even a disciplinary mechanism - everything that an organization has. The fact that most of this structure was not written down but existed in Aurelio's head, is beside the point. The fact that the organization was dominated by one man did not change the fact that it was indeed - in many respects - an efficiently run organization.

The dictatorial approach, as we all know, is one of the most efficient ways of running any organization. One of its major drawbacks, however - and one which we are still recovering from - is the vacuum created in the organization from the death of its leader.

For whatever reasons, The Club of Rome had not accomplished anything of real substance in the year or so prior to Aurelio's death.

Even less has been accomplished by the Club since Aurelio's death.

No funds have been raised. No reports of any substance have been published that I have seen. No work of any substance is underway, nor is there a clear agenda or consensus on future activities.

When the Executive Committee of The Club of Rome met in Toronto in May 1984 we were in the midst of a crisis - Aurelio Peccei had died. Where did The Club of Rome propose going from here?

At the same time it was an opportunity. An opportunity to re-define or re-confirm the Club's raison d'être and its methods of operating.

In preparation for the May 1984 Executive Committee meeting in Toronto, I prepared three brief position papers for consideration entitled:-

- Discussion Paper on The Future Mission of The Club of Rome
- Position Paper on Club of Rome Membership Criteria
- Position Paper on Funding.

There was a great deal of agreement with these position papers - not so much because I had written them but because, I think, they stated the obvious. During the past year or so, in almost every respect, we have either ignored or strayed far from the concepts outlined in these papers.

In all three major areas - our mission statement, membership and funding - we appear to be drifting, ad-libbing, putting out fires, and living from hand to mouth. Not a formula for success. Not a formula designed to retain current members who could make a major contribution to identifying and understanding major global issues. Not a formula designed to attract new talent - which we badly need - into our organization.

At the rate we are going The Club of Rome will indeed become a non-organization.