**Order Of The Black Rose
 Advanced Lessons : III**

GOVERNMENTAL PROBLEMS

The problem with most governments is simply that there is too great a gulf between the common people and the elected or appointed officials. One representative for several hundreds of thousands of individuals is ridiculous. Such governments are out of touch with their people and visa versa. We hear of polls where a sampling of public opinion is brought before the lawmakers. This doesn't work because the pollsters are statisticians and statistics can be weighted to look like anything but the truth. For example, let's say that a poll was taken of a thousand people to see what they thought about a certain issue. Would it reveal the opinions of several millions of people? No, it would only reveal the thoughts of that particular thousand. Other questions arise: where were the thousand people located? Suppose they were city people, who were on a welfare program. Would their opinion be the same as hard-working farmers located two thousand miles away who were stripped of a third of their income to feed those welfare people? Of course not. It has also come to light that the manner in which questions are phrased and presented can confuse and then affect the answer of a given individual. Answer this question quickly: would you not like to be taxed 50 percent of your income?

The officials hear much more from lobbyists who represent special interest groups than they do from the common people who really have no one to hear their desires and needs. Not only is there no matrix in place for the common man to speak his mind, but most of the mail sent to representatives is never read. Some representatives even turn a deaf ear to the people and follow their own agenda, disregarding what little public opinion they actually hear. They can do this because they have no accountability to the people. They do not have to answer to their constituents, and this is wrong. There is a vast sea of people, separated from their government who are milked like cattle, though their complaints remain unheard. History reveals that such governments fail after a short period of time, a few hundred years more or less, no matter how well intentioned. How do we know? Well, we keep records, that's how. One common flaw we find in all of them is that they forgot the Force that holds the onion together.

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS:
THE COOPERATIVE

The Family of Father Adonis has it own form of government known as a cooperative. It is built in concert with the Force which is Father Adonis, His creations which are His helpers, and the Brotherhood of man which is His offspring. It is the oldest existing form of government on Earth. It is a form of extended family cooperative that is built right side up instead of upside down. Of course, it has yet to be used in modern society, because there is no way for the leaders to lie, cheat, and steal. In other words, the leaders can't get rich by cheating their own families. There it is again, the family. The family unit reigns supreme to our way of thinking, and much of our effort is devoted to maintaining it. Well, we've already discussed the wrong way to govern, now let's look at the right way to live. Let us start off with one new adept. He or she finds the Family or it finds him. They sense the rightness of it and so take the time to learn the way. In time, he or she becomes proficient and begins to share the wisdom and knowledge with other potential members he or she finds along the path, advising them of the Family way and the existence of the Family of Father Adonis. Eventually, they will have raised up several members and each will become a member of their family. Later in their turn, those members will carry the torch to others, and they will start extended families of their own. Remember the lesson on strength in numbers? Can you now see how those numbers tend to accumulate?

Let us see how a Family Cooperative works. Most problems can be easily sorted out among a small family of people, however, they must work together. No rigid governmental system is needed because the true Family Brotherhood government, as far as the individual member is concerned is from within. It is not from an outside source. There is also the Family law to consider. Therefore, true family members are as concerned for the welfare of others as they are for themselves. The only time when the extended Family Co-op government might be needed is when there are many Black Roses families residing in one place. In this case, there is a strong likelihood that not everyone will have fully embraced the teachings, and some dissension might occur. For this reason, a council is formed, comprised of the heads of each family, who elect one of their respected members as elder, according to their gifts. Should the Family ever evolve into a national cooperative, then each twelve councils would elect an elder who would become a member of a regional council. Then, the regional councils would each elect an elder and send them to the national council. There, the process would repeat and the national council would elect one of their numbers as Witan. The word Witan means "One Who Knows." A country could be divided into twelve regions, each having a complete government of its own, joined together by one grand or national council.

Have you noticed that no matter how much the system grows, no one individual is further away from his government than his family head or immediate council? An individual can walk up to these council persons and take hold of them with their hands. Also, no family head has to deal with more than his own family. Further, no elder has to deal with more than twelve family heads, and no older has to deal with more than twelve other elders.

The purpose of any council is to be a compact cooperative body empowered to make correct decisions that will ultimately affect those families or groups of families immediately under its jurisdiction to the best of its elder's ability. Each member of a council is first accountable to Father Adonis and then accountable to his family members. All community decisions or transactions will be decided by majority vote after first presenting the issues to family members. Each council member, as all elders, is first subject to the will of Father Adonis who will lend temperance, intent and reason to each issue. Then the elder will take into consideration all aspects and make the best choice, properly voicing the needs and desires of his or her family or families at council. Therefore adequate time must pass for all issues to be decided. Family opinions must be gathered, and then tempered with knowledge gained from the Rest of Light. Usually petitions and issues presented at one meeting will not be voted upon until the next, unless there is an emergency situation.

"A Family Council is held to
twelve members, one for each of
twelve families or regions, or tribes
or nations. If twelve good members
could not come to a fair decision,
a million more could do no better."

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Now, the members don't go to council just to have something to do. The call to council comes only when there is a need, and the local councils meet far more than the Grand council. Local Councils meet once a month, Regional Councils meet twice each year, and the Grand Council meets once a year unless a meeting is called for a special reason. The Grand Council meeting is the center piece of the yearly rendezvous where everyone gets together for a good time. It is on the longest day of the year that the grand council will meet and settle any business. This usually occurs in the summer, on June 21. The rendezvous usually starts about the first of June and runs for the rest of the month. Families visit for as long as they want, coming and going as they please. This is where the Grand and Regional Council members rub elbows with just about everyone and get a good idea of what is in the best interest of the nation.

The day and time of year is chosen for the same reason that June has always been vacation month. It doesn't interfere with either planting or harvest times. It is also the best time for travel as the snow has melted, the spring runoff is over, and the ground has dried out. It is neither too hot nor too cold, and there is plenty of pot meat afoot. It is the time when travelers will find the most comfort. The twenty-first day of June is chosen as this is the longest day of the year and no paper calendar is needed to find it. Cooperative council meeting days are determined by the movements of the sun and moon as there are times when no paper calendars are available. The way to find the longest day is to watch the sunrise. As the days lengthen, the sun will rise earlier and earlier until the longest day is reached. After the longest day has passed, the sunrise will come later and later. You can keep track of this with a couple of sticks and a few rocks.

Regional meetings are held twice yearly. The spring meeting is held fourteen days after the April local meetings, and the fall meeting is held fourteen days after the September local meetings. Everyone will get together during the rendezvous anyway, so there is no need for a summer meeting. No winter meeting is held as travel in most places is near impossible and very dangerous. The two regional meetings are somewhat inconvenient but necessary for balance. Even though they conflict with planting and harvest times, the spring meeting must be attended to make regional decisions and prepare for the Grand Council meeting. The fall regional meeting must be attended to prepare for winter and to see that the Grand Council decisions are carried out. So be it mote!

All members are required to become involved in their local community and will be expected to attend at least ten of the twelve council meetings a year. Council day, a sort of local rendezvous, will fall on the day of each month's full moon and be considered a holiday or market day where people may trade with each other. In any case, they will rub elbows with each other, and everyone will know all that is going on in the community. In the evening of that day, the council meeting will commence and be considered a necessary part of that community's social event following an informal community dinner and mixer. A dance or some other such recreation may be held after the meeting to wind things down. The night of the full moon is chosen because a calendar is not necessary to remind the members of the local holiday. It will also light their way home. Does this sound rather old fashioned, rural, and primitive? Well, it is. It is many thousand years old, dating back to the land of Sumer.

The Family believes in as little government as possible because conditions vary from region to region. What is good for the East is not necessarily good for the West. The main byword is: Leave well enough alone. The Grand Council deals with national issues such as security, trade, unity, and reciprocity. Under no circumstances does it meddle with local or regional business. Neither does the Grand Council or any other council levy taxes.

There shall be absolutely no taxes of any kind or any sort levied against the people because all forms of national or community service are strictly voluntary. A tax by any other name is still a tax, and there shall be none. Also, there will be absolutely no governmental wages or salaries paid or received. Family councils are excepted, but no major council member or other leader may serve for more than two years out of any ten year period. That way, no one has time to set up a regime.

No leader will continue in office long enough to begin holding court. However, when any elected council member must travel on Regional or Grand Council business, his constituents must accept responsibility and look after his interests during his absence, compensating him, and making sure that he loses nothing for his efforts on their behalf. The families may handle this in any way they choose. All council work is done on a sacred trust basis and all council members are directly accountable to Father Adonis and their families. They are never farther than a few steps from an angry wife with a frying pan in her hand. This means that government work is not to be a profitable business and no one may do any such work for personal gain. The only benefits to a council member are the respect of peers and a better country and standard of living for all. Therefore, only dedicated persons would very likely participate in governmental service.

Family problems should be dealt with at the family level. Local problems should be dealt with on the local level, and regional and national problems should be dealt with on their respective levels. Each community shall have their necessary volunteer public services such as police, fire, water and health departments. Also available will be all manner of healers, counselors, listeners, scribes, and seers. All members will donate a fair portion of their time to their communities. Monies for equipment will be accumulated through fund raisers, relying on community spirit and sweat to get the job done. In other words, everyone will have a vested personal interest in all that is done for the All. Now, you'll have to admit that it is pretty hard for corruption and greed to rise under such circumstances and the watchful eyes of everyone. There is no job security in governmental service.

Should a council member become unstable, he or she may be replaced at the next meeting. Frying pans carry a lot of weight, and the sixth law is not taken lightly. No welfare departments will be necessary as members, true to their nature, will aid and assist each other on the local level, precluding the necessity. Poor is an attitude, and no such attitude will be allowed to flourish. When a new family needs a house and has gathered their materials, the other families will help raise it. At harvest time, the families will all share in the work until the job is done. Public works if needed, will be provided by the public, financed by those who benefit from them. Should a locality see a need for such a work, members may approach their council with a petition. Each council member will study the feasibility of the project for at least a month, gathering the opinions and support or rebuff of all affected families. Then, if the petition is deemed popular and the great majority of the families support it, a vote is taken. Should the ayes have it, a fund raiser to finance the project may then be sanctioned. Once the funds or necessary materials are gathered, a time is agreed upon, and the project completed by community participation. Notice that there is absolutely no monetary profit to anyone allowed in such a project as everyone benefits from it equally. Neither is there any public debt accumulated or interest paid. The Family way is a cooperative not a business. For example, let us say that a Family community is divided by a creek or stream and a bridge is needed. Who will use the proposed bridge? Who will pay for it? Who will build it? The answer is: everyone.

Great civilizations rise only to fall, however, there is no need for a dark age after such a collapse. Rightly so, the survivors will be a mite gun-shy and standoffish, but they will still need some sort of interaction. The Family Way, level by level, will fit into a simple rural environment as easily as a high tech civilization. Chances are that after a collapse, there won't be very many power plants or great industrial complexes in operation so the survivors will have to return to the land and create a rural society, gradually working their way up again. The Family is a repository of knowledge that will make it possible for the old hand trades such as blacksmith, carpenter, potter, weaver, tailor, and farmer to return and flourish. By-the-way, each adept is expected to develop alternate skills and learn as many hand trades as possible for their own benefit as well as the benefit of others. As before stated, poverty is nothing more than an attitude that will not be tolerated, but independence is a blessing that cannot be ignored.