THE POWER BIND

By Warren C. Haggstrom[*]

The Auspices

At the outset, officials of Syracuse University and I agreed that the Community Action Training Center (CATC) would be supported to carry out its mission even though that commitment would involve us in considerable controversy. Later, when funding was secured from the Office of Economic Opportunity, OEO officials added their reassurances that they would be steadfast in the face of criticism.[1]

It soon became apparent, however, that Syracuse University wanted to minimize the possibility of conflict between the new program and the Syracuse power elite. When we were creating a nonprofit corporation [the Syracuse Community Development Association] (SCDA) to sponsor the organizational effort in low-income areas, university officials wanted the board to be weighted in favor of the community power elite. The university also intervened in the selection of CATC staff. At first I selected staff, acting with the advice and help of colleagues. Soon it became a requirement that Vice President Ahlberg screen all senior staff members. By the summer of 1965 all students and staff members selected, including even secretaries, had to be approved by means of an interview with one or another university official from outside CATC. The screening process worked to favor the recruitment of mild, docile people, regardless of their competence.[2]

In the fall of 1965 the university quietly ended its support of the CATC-SCDA program while publicly remaining uncommitted or in favor of it. After this time, staff members and students associated with CATC had the option of adopting the university administration orientation to make our work "safe" or the CATC-SCDA policy. Most took the latter course. However, those staff members and students who openly preferred the university position were sure to receive some university protection in retaining their association with CATC, no matter how negligent or disruptive they were in carrying out their duties. Supporters of the university position could also count on university help in securing further employment. Those who supported the CATC-SCDA program, on the other hand, were protected only to the extent to which the university was forced to "save face" in its employment policies. CATC-SCDA supporters could count on no comparable university help in finding new jobs, although they were generally the most competent and hard-working students and staff members.

A university vice president went out of his way to inform me that under no circumstances could I discharge PS, a senior staff member of CATC closely associated with the university administration. But the decision to terminate the employment of Saul Alinsky was made to my surprise and without consulting me. James A. Tillman, Jr., who supported the university position, was paid by the university from CATC funds for several months during an unannounced and unexplained absence from his office, and

university officials suggested that I was vindictive for finally protesting. Stan Gluck, who continued to support the CATC-SCDA effort, first was subject to an illegitimate attempt by the university to discharge him, and then was paid for several months from university funds with the understanding that he would assume no university responsibilities.[3]

The Office of Economic opportunity likewise began to pursue a course in which CATC and SCDA were given warm public praise while quietly shelved. The organizations of the poor which had been created, together with CATC-SCDA personnel, began a public campaign which had a maximum goal of reversing the OEO decision to cut off the CATC-SCDA funding and a minimum goal of avoiding a quiet death as a “success" in the war on poverty. Although the public image departed from reality further with each passing month, Sargent Shriver continued to express his support of the program that he finally and prematurely left without federal funds.[4]

The administrative officers of Syracuse University, while maintaining a constant public image, also began in the fall of 1965 to wage an internal campaign to discredit those who were struggling to continue the CATC-SCDA program. Their purpose was to draw the program back in line with covert university policy or, that failing, to end it. The university employed a number of devices for this purpose: attempts to sow suspicion and distrust within CATC, attempts to limit the authority of staff members loyal to the CATC-SCDA effort, attempts to portray CATC-SCDA activities as illegitimate, and interventions to dissolve CATC as soon as possible. Thus there were quiet informal efforts to persuade me to resign as director of CATC. And our research was scheduled to be subject to outsider evaluation visits twice in a few months, an unprecedented practice in research Russian roulette in which each visit could result in a decision that would end our funding. In general, the university became gravely concerned about the quality of the research when considering my responsibility in relation to it, but was unconcerned about the safety of data which one of its sympathizers destroyed or the research reports which its sympathizers failed to write.[5]

Both Syracuse University and the Office of Economic Opportunity kept a single public image while tailoring their internal and informal accounts of the course of events to the persons and situations of any given moment.

In general, the university and OEO interventions into CATC tended to reward incompetence and punish competence, to ensure that much money would be wasted, and to adversely affect the lives of many people who in one way or another were associated with the organizational-training-research effort.

The Field Program

The greatest problems in the social action field placement had been the tendency of students to become involved in field experience at the expense of classroom education, the inclination of students to want to build new organizations rather than to continue to build on previous efforts, and the difficulty in coordinating the efforts of various students.

Despite the introduction of a field instructor, a field director, and full-time organizers in the Community Action Training Center, these problems were never overcome. They became, instead, more acute.

In addition, new indications that something was wrong in the field effort appeared very early in the CATC-SCDA program. The organizing staff and students continued to hold to a wide variety of perspectives on the purpose and nature of the organizational work in which they were engaged. Some wanted to organize only Negroes; others defined the population to be organized as the poor, regardless of race. There were various ideas of the nature of organization. Some saw organizations that they wanted to build as groups in which people began genuine communication without the bureaucratic internal structure of the major society, and which would confront and transform the affluent community. Others saw the organizations that they wanted to build as having a simple structure with a strong leader to get things done, but were not very clear beyond that. The field director, Fred Ross, held in his mind a detailed replication of the organizations that he had built in California and Arizona. A few persons had experience with organizations along the lines of those in Chicago associated with Saul Alinsky, and maintained their work styles and expectations from that experience. It was, therefore, our task to create an organizational staff with enough of a common definition of their work to enable them to coordinate their efforts to build effective organizations of the poor that in turn would be able to coordinate *their* efforts.

The organizational effort began in February 1965 under the direction of Fred Ross. The students had been selected within a time span of about one month, and they were then, after a week or two of initial instruction, immediately assigned to field activities. They would, following the approach which Fred Ross had elaborated in detail, hold small meetings in the houses of people in areas of poverty to learn the problems collectively seen in each neighborhood, and then mobilize people to tackle those problems through collective effort.

Students and organizers alike found that the "house meeting" approach was not as easy as they had expected. Often no one would show up at the place and time at which a meeting was scheduled. In many of the meetings there was only half-hearted support for the idea of organization, not the expression of anger and determination that would flow into a tough, effective, fighting organization of the poor. Fred Ross, relying to some extent on colorful accounts of what organizations of the poor had done elsewhere, did usually arouse enthusiasm. But none of the field personnel could draw on a comparably rich experience, and there were only limited opportunities for others to sit in on house meetings with Mr. Ross in order to learn the approach more quickly.

Although the organizational work was the source of many early frustrations, especially for people whose values and assumptions about organizations of the poor were different from those of Fred Ross, most organizers and students worked hard. By early April the first of nine neighborhood organizations eventually to be created was functioning with a temporary structure and was engaging in initial work on neighborhood problems and issues.

There developed even before April a struggle between some of the students, on the one hand, and Fred Ross, Saul Alinsky and myself, on the other. These students stated that the kind of organizational work being taught and practiced was, perhaps, appropriate to the 1930's, but did not take advantage of innovations since that time. The civil rights movement did not use those obsolete ways of organizing. Further, the students were in a bureaucratic structure, expected to conform to standards that they had not fashioned. The discontented students began commonly to ask: "Isn't it inconsistent to build democracy in the community when we do not have democracy in our own structure?" A few students began to needle Fred Ross in staff meetings and to harass Saul Alinsky in seminars. They also allied themselves with students enrolled elsewhere in the university in one or two civil rights demonstrations.

Fred Ross was indignant at this diversion of student attention from the difficult job of learning organizational work and enlisted me to support his advice to students to keep their eye on the ball if they wanted to become organizers. I did agree with, and supported him, both within and outside of formal staff meetings. Also with my support, Mr. Ross vigorously rejected the suggestion that the structure of organizers and students be democratized. His primary argument was that organizations of the poor could not be jeopardized by inexperienced decisions. We tried to redirect organizer and student attention to their roles in the ongoing, field effort.

Differences in approaches to organizational work continued to be the focus of internal friction in the organizational effort. Some of the students rejected the notion that a successful organizer has to exercise severe self-discipline, be able to follow orders and work consistently and hard. Mr. Ross to the contrary notwithstanding, some students began to participate in field activities only sporadically, to invite selected leaders of the organizations of the poor to their parties, and to participate in the organizations of the poor much as did the formal leadership of those organizations. "Boss Ross" was listened to—and then often ignored. This development posed a dilemma for Mr. Ross and myself since some of these same students often displayed enthusiasm, hard work, and ingenuity, and had, as a result, won our respect. That many students had positive feelings (as well as negative ones) about Fred Ross may have been indicated by the fact that the students arranged for him a birthday celebration, complete with a birthday cake on which an affectionate greeting was written.

As had been expected, student understanding of the nature of organization was comparatively limited: few students hold a very explicit idea of criteria that they were attempting to meet at different stages in the development of the organizations. But, we had not expected that students would continue to cling to the preconceptions that they brought into CATC to the extent to which they did. By spring, 1965, many students were involved in recurrent cycles of intense activity and very high self-expectations, followed each time by disillusionment, immobilization, and frequent accusations that the CATC program was not working. Fred Ross and I held a vision of the future which was different from that of such students, but which we failed to convey very clearly to the students and organizers. We expected the organizations of the poor to be financially self-supporting by

the end of three years and to attain their maximum effectiveness some time after that point had been reached. It had been our experience that, after an initial wave of enthusiasm, successful organizations of the poor usually decline in size, and only gradually and more slowly later resume their growth on a sounder basis.

By summer, six neighborhood organizations had been formed, four in public housing projects and two in low income neighborhoods outside of public housing. The organizations had sponsored picket lines, sit-ins, and confrontations of many kinds, had worked together on a number of issues, and had won concessions from public housing officials, public welfare officials, and other persons in positions of authority in institutions relevant to them. The city power elite were in furious opposition. The controversy attracted an investigation by the Office of Economic Opportunity, many angry newspaper attacks, and testimony by Mayor Walsh to two congressional committees and an association of mayors about the dangerous communistic tendencies of the university-sponsored agitators. Altogether, Fred Ross and I felt that the organizational drive was proceeding pretty much on schedule. Most of the research staff and many of the students were, however, scornful of the failure of the organizations to make the big changes that everyone agreed had eventually to be made.

Fred Ross became increasingly concerned about the tendency of some students to ignore what seemed to him necessary requirements of their field effort. On the other hand he began to be criticized by others on the staff as weak, unwilling to take the measures against the former students that would ensure that organizational work would proceed on a sound basis. Some students and staff members appealed to me to intervene, and, when I restricted my intervention to discussing the problem with the students who were reportedly in violation of what we regarded as good field practice, I also became seen as weak and cautious. Finally, the issue was forced when some students took leaders of organizations away from a "joint housing" meeting to a convention of the poor which was sponsored by Students for a Democratic Society in Newark. The students said that they had only brought up the Newark conference to their organizations as information, and after that merely followed the maxim to: "Let the People Decide." Fred Ross had told them not to weaken the joint organizational effort by pulling leadership elsewhere, nor to divide the organizations within and among themselves by injecting into them the SDS stand against the war in Vietnam. There were simultaneously other events which finally convinced Mr. Ross that he must act to avert possible disaster to the organizational effort. Since the organizers could not be spared for further supervisory duties, he immediately placed the "irresponsible" students under the supervision of others who had shown more "maturity." The three students as quickly went on strike and refused to accept additional supervision. After a few days of discussion, Mr. Ross excluded the three non-degree students from further participation in field activities and I gave then notice that they would be terminated from the program.

One of the terminated students left Syracuse, the other two stayed to protest their dismissal. They appealed to the organizations with which they had been working for support, and the organizations objected to Mr. Ross and myself about the loss of "their organizers." They organized a picket line in front of the CATC office composed of the

three students, their friends, and a few members of the organizations with which they had been associated. They appealed to the CATC-SCDA staff, to the university administration, and to the Office of Economic Opportunity. The decision concerning then did not change.

The organizational effort faltered under the impact of the controversy. Some of the leaders of the organizations of the poor began to identify CATC with other programs from "the hill" (meaning Syracuse University) that had traditionally made decisions for people who were poor. Friends of the dismissed students who remained in the CATC-SCDA program reflected this orientation to some extent in their own organizational work. Because personnel decisions were held to be confidential, Fred Ross and I could not explain in any detail the sequence of events that had led to the dismissal of the students and, therefore, could not effectively dispel unfounded rumors which began to circulate about the reasons for the dismissals.

By fall, three new organizations of the poor had been formed, making nine in all. One of the first organizations to be formed decided that they did not need further help from organizers, and the staff and students consequently worked only with the remaining eight. Fred Ross had gradually come to see the mayor as a symbol to the organizations of the community elite that confronted the organizations at every step. The mayor had attacked the program from the very beginning. It had been by a confrontation with him that one organization had gotten a security guard in their public housing project. Several organizations had affected city decisions about recreation areas through picketing city hall and negotiations with the mayor or his representatives. And when the mayor had attacked the program before a congressional committee in a hearing in Syracuse, leaders of the organizations testified to the committee on their own behalf. Many members of the organizations sat in the audience and applauded the presentations of their representatives. The mayor had formerly been the commissioner of public welfare and appointed members to the public housing authority. Finally, when several women "sat in" at the welfare agency, they were arrested., and the mayor promptly attacked them publicly with statements which seemed to convict them before trial. It was clear that the mayor wanted to use this episode to further his campaign for re-election.

The welfare committees of the newly formed organizations met jointly (a meeting of 60 or more people) to plan next steps. Since they wanted to take action against the mayor who was campaigning for reelection, they decided to combine a voter turnout campaign with a public confrontation with him. For this purpose they needed quickly to report back to their memberships or executive boards, who alone could authorize and engage in action efforts. With the help of the organizers and students, the problem was referred to the various organizations around October 24. A twofold campaign was authorized: (1) to got voters out for the forthcoming election, and (2) to begin public demonstrations demanding from the mayor an apology for his remarks about the women who had been arrested.

This "eight-day campaign" began with much enthusiasm on the part of members of the organizations involved and the organizational staff. The daily demonstrations usually

occurred at a place at which the mayor was giving a campaign speech. The demonstrators sometimes held up signs asking the mayor to apologize for his remarks, or a spokesman would ask the question directly. Morale began to sink, however, when no apology was forthcoming. Fred Ross, who returned during the campaign, began to be blamed for the "failure." There was a general recovery of spirits, however, when the organizations finished the campaign by sponsoring a "people's convention” in which they spoke against support for either candidate in the mayoralty election to occur two days later.

The election itself returned the incumbent mayor to office along with many other Republicans. This fact in itself, of course, is irrelevant to an evaluation of the eight-day campaign, since its purpose had been primarily to demonstrate that the organizations could make a difference in the political process. There were some reasons to believe that this effort was successful. The losing candidate for mayor charged that much of the difference was caused by a backlash by voters throughout Syracuse to the eight-day campaign. And one candidate for county supervisor, who had taken pains to associate himself with the new organizations, defeated his incumbent opponent. In general, it seems clear that some of the organizations helped a very high proportion of the eligible voters in their neighborhoods to vote, but that the outcomes of few of the races were thereby affected.

I saw the eight-day campaign as a substantial accomplishment. However, there was no corresponding morale boost to those who had carried it out. Most of the organizers and leaders of organizations expected more from the effort than was likely to happen and they tended to be disappointed by the outcome. My primary criticism of the eight-day campaign was different: it was that committees of the organizations tended to rubber stamp organizer initiatives rather than to become identified with their own courses of strategy and tactics.

The eight-day campaign was neither more nor less successful than many others carried out by the organizations both before and after that time. The course of events in each campaign would be roughly identical. First, the organizations would work on a number of different problems and issues, making progress on some of them but leaving many unresolved. Within the organization, opinion would then crystallize in favor of an escalation of action on unresolved issues. If the escalation did not occur, many people would begin to describe the organizations as talk groups that never did anything. For this reason the leadership usually began to want a heightened pace of action, usually projected over a time period of several days or weeks. In the heat of the campaign, expectations would begin to soar for immediate and sweeping victories far beyond the likelihood of accomplishment. The organizations would mobilize for a maximum effort. The pace of events began to move so rapidly that the process of interpretation would not be able to keep up, and there would not result a real consensus on what was taking place. The number of people who would participate in a maximum effort would then begin to decline, leaving a dwindling number of especially devoted people carrying out an increasing portion of the demanding but declining joint effort. Many of those who now left the campaign would rationalize their departures by arguing that the leadership was bad, the wrong approach was being used, etc. At the end, the participants would see as an

unexpected and serious defeat a course of events that I would regard as a relatively successful stage in an overall struggle that would take years. There was a concomitant fall in morale.

Even before this time a new force had begun to affect our fieldwork.

The funding uncertainty began to reflect itself into the organizing effort during the summer when the anxiety of the Office of Economic Opportunity about the controversial Syracuse program became apparent and when the university administration began to appear reluctant to support the program. By September 30, when there was no word about continued funding at the end of our first grant period, the future had come to seem very uncertain. When another month passed without word, the uneasiness about funding was often reflected in conversations among organizers and students. Planning began for the creation of an organization of organizations of the poor, projected for the spring of 1966. Fred Ross announced his intention to return to California immediately afterwards. Members of the organizational staff expressed doubt that the organization of organizations could be formed that soon and wondered whether Mr. Ross had not set the date early because he now wanted to leave the program. Other students and members of the staff began also to talk about leaving, and a sense of impending disaster grew throughout the month of November. The growing anxiety about funding began to be discussed with leaders of the organizations, and the organizational process perceptibly lost momentum. The tension in one staff meeting was broken by general laughter when someone advised everyone to apply for unemployment insurance. One organizer (a close associate of Mr. Tillman who later led the opposition to the "national campaign") seriously suggested that the organizations hire a bus and go to Washington to expose the poverty program "for what it is." The staff decided to discuss with the executive committees of all the organizations the possible premature termination of the CATC-SCDA program and to invite publicly expressed organizational support for the program if the organizations wanted the continued help of organizers. By the end of November, we had been unable to pay students their stipends, a failure which appeared to symbolize the status of the program and which was especially difficult to ignore because several of the students had families to support,

On November 30th, the blow finally fell. SCDA was funded on a reduced basis for 90 days during which there could be an application for further funds to the local community action program, the Crusade for Opportunity (CFO). To the CATC-SCDA organizing staff and to much of the leadership of the organizations, this culmination of three months of negotiation with the Office of Economic Opportunity meant that there would be no way for the organizations of the poor to become self-sustaining. The preceding eight months of work appeared to have been wasted. Active members in many of the organizations thought that this outcome was more or less what they had expected all along from the federal government. Thousands of people from the areas of poverty had been drawn into at least minimal association with organizations on the basis of assurances that now could clearly be seen to have been false. It was especially insulting to be referred to the Crusade for Opportunity, the controlling elite of which had, since its inception, been the most vigorous opponents of organizations of the poor in Syracuse.

The Crusade had not even dared to spend the federal funds allotted to then for "community development" the previous year. There was no reason now to believe that this conservative group would fund, on a basis that would not restrict their freedom, the controversial conflict organizations which the CATC-SCDA program had built.

Within the CATC-SCDA program, the announcement by the Office of Economic Opportunity was seen as a politically motivated abandonment by the federal government of commitments that had been made, the discarding of its legitimate role and responsibility. Since the ultimate source of legitimation was seen as the carrying out of our commitment to create autonomous democratic organizations of the poor, the OEO-university position quickly became perceived as an illegitimate selling out of the poor. One could not conform to such a decision, and further behind-the-scones negotiations had only resulted in the disaster. There appeared to be only two alternatives: (1) the CATC-SCDA program could close down at once and the organizations could disband, and (2) there could be developed a unified struggle by CATC-SCDA personnel and by the organizations of the poor to change the university-OEO position. It was my belief that the state of morale would not allow "business as usual" any longer, and it would have been impossible to expect the organizations of the poor to fight to save a program which did not fight to save itself.

On the basis of a belief that there might yet be some possibility that the federal decision would be reversed, we adopted the second of the two alternatives mentioned above. The CATC-SCDA structure was accordingly shifted as people took their stations in a social movement to secure a reversal of the funding decision. The organizational staff members were divided into those conducting a "national campaign " and those continuing work in the neighborhoods of poverty. My role in field activities, which had been sporadic after June 30 when SCDA was created, again became substantial when, on the evening of November 30, I was selected by staff members, students, and members from some of the organizations to be "general" for the campaign.

The organizations held a large rally in which eight of them formed a People's War Council Against Poverty (PWCAP) to protest the federal funding decision. Representatives of the organizations met together regularly to carry on the campaign, but the formal source of authority remained the general memberships coming together in joint meetings. The PWCAP, with the help of CATC-SCDA personnel, waged a vigorous drive, highlighted by the sending of two delegations to Washington, one to the LBJ ranch in Texas, and finally by a national convention of the poor held in Syracuse, which supported the PWCAP stand. During this drive, the newly organized poor demonstrated their ability to mobilize around issues which were not immediately relevant to their daily lives as they coordinated and carried out an impressively difficult series of actions over a period of several months. At this time they also learned a great deal about the politics of poverty, since they heard government officials talk in their favor and saw the same officials act against their organizations.

Within the organizing staff, the unanimity of November 30 was broken by the emergence of a small group that supported the university-OEO position and advised that an

application be made to the local community action program. This group consisted of the Associate Director of CATC, Mr. Tillman, and his closest colleagues, a group which had previously created a flurry of concern for having supposedly held "black nationalist" meetings to organize a portion of the staff. Soon the expressions of dissent became actions to harass those engaged in the campaign. After mid-December Mr. Tillman never again appeared at his office to work, while officials of the university administration winked at his absence. His close associates within the organizing staff began to act as though they were following the strategy of "sitting on their hands" and then blaming the program for what was consequently not accomplished. They also regularly expressed their view that the campaign was not legitimate since it opposed the university and the Office of Economic Opportunity, and they argued that I had not informed the staff and students of the whole truth about the OEO decision.

The organizer responsible for continued efforts in the neighborhoods did relatively little to discharge those responsibilities, blamed the lagging work in some neighborhoods on the national campaign, and claimed that a small and sinister clique associated with me had come to dominate the program which should be run by the neighborhood people. Those who supported the national campaign (including most of the staff members and students) angrily disagreed. Two students, for example, argued that they were not only heavily involved in the national campaign but that the organization with which they were associated was also functioning very well. The James Geddes organization, in fact, did continue to work on welfare problems: in December about 20 people attended their welfare committee meeting. About 45 people attended the regular January meeting and the distribution of surplus food to elderly people was begun by the organization. The first work on a credit union also took place in the James Geddes organization at this time. At least two of the organizations, both staffed by organizers supporting the national campaign, increased their strength in December and January. On the other hand, every organization staffed by people who opposed the national campaign either remained weak or declined in strength at this time.

The CATC-SCDA staff members and students become increasingly preoccupied with the internal factions opposing one another. As the hope of winning the campaign declined in January, the intensity of the internal conflict increased, although it never exceeded verbal disagreement and harassment. The organizers and students on each side began to recruit the organizations with which they were associated to support their stance within the staff. Thus two of the eight organizations of the poor participating in the campaign began to criticize it and to consider applying for funds to the Crusade for Opportunity. Eventually, the Peoples War Council Against Poverty voted its president out of office after he had engaged in a series of maneuvers to undermine the efforts of a majority of the membership. Eventually, also, three dissident students and one organizer were terminated from the program by a joint decision of the now SCDA field director and myself. Some of those terminated soon found new employment in the Crusade for Opportunity after Mr. Tillman, shortly after leaving his CATC position, became the Executive Director of CFO.

The new discharges triggered a new wave of anxiety as rumors spread wildly about the reasons for the decision. However, the most intense atmosphere of crisis gradually

subsided in March 1966, and the remaining months of the program were less tumultuous. During the height of the crisis there had been a wave of harassment, rumors, excited and agitated behavior, paranoid ideas, delusions, mutual suspicion and distrust. In the new phase there tended more to be obvious depression in the context of brittle or low morale. Factionalism continued on a less intense basis in the field staff until the end of the program. It was not possible to develop stable funding at a level sufficient to continue the work that had been launched, and my efforts to develop other funding alternatives within the low income areas were regarded as visionary by organizational leaders and field students and staff members alike. By spring of 1966 nearly all the organizations were in an obvious state of decline. No longer confident of confronting the establishment, they turned increasingly to the development and improvement of services to their members. An organization of organizations was eventually created, but it is not clear whether any of the organizations originally formed will survive without funds available to support full-time organizers for them. Leaders in the organizations felt betrayed: the CATC-SCDA program seemed in retrospect to be much like other programs which started with big promises and then broke them. The staff members and students who supported the campaign began to search for work elsewhere.

Very early in the history of the organizational effort, the maintenance of a single clear compelling definition of the situation had been an uncertain enterprise. After the most intense period of the funding crisis the effort to develop and apply such a definition had clearly and permanently failed.

The Research Program

For most of the history of the Community Action Training Center, the research staff consisted of about six participant-observers, three data-analysts (one of whom coordinated the work of participant-observers), two training materials-writers, a historian, and several secretaries. It proved impossible to recruit a research director: few people with substantial relevant experience and qualifications would consider moving to Syracuse to direct research in a controversial project for an uncertain but probably short period of time while less demanding, better paying, and more permanent research jobs went unfilled in government agencies and universities throughout the United States. For that reason, after the first weeks, I functioned both as project director and as research director.

This arrangement meant that for about three months in 1965, I was responsible for the development of organizations of the poor, for the education of students to do organizational work, and for research into the organizational process. However, after June 10, 1965, SCDA assumed responsibility for building organizations of the poor, and my duties were only in the areas of research and classroom education. During the funding crisis, this division of labor was blurred since the CATC and SCDA staffs worked together with the organizations of the poor in an effort to secure a reversal of the OEO decision to discontinue funding SCDA. I held an unofficial leadership role in that campaign for about three months after December 1, 1965.

There was some criticism of my assuming both an action and a research role. Some colleagues felt that the director of research should not have a stake in the outcome of what was being researched, that this would impair research objectivity. They argued that if research and action functioned together in one overall effort, the outcome at best would be "action research" and not an objective account or evaluation of what was taking place. I, too, preferred there to be a separate research director, but for different reasons. The work involved in the direction of both research and action, seemed to me to add up to more than one person could competently carry out. The criticism of my research role, while reflecting an orientation very common in the social sciences, was not convincing to me. It was my view that theoretical research analysis has been most successful when conducted by action-oriented investigators and that, further, researchers who are part of an effort can be allowed inside access to the process being observed in a way that would be impossible for outsiders. This, I believed, was especially the case for a controversial organizational effort in which outsiders are normally suspect.

This difference of opinion became important to the functioning of research during the fall of 1965. At that time, some participant-observers felt that specific reports of criticisms of CATC or of me should be kept from me in view of my position of authority. The interviews of the historian with various people and concerning CATC had, with my approval, always been withheld from me, and I now authorized the "time-locking" of sensitive participant-observer reports under certain circumstances.

The first research coordinator resigned in July. She was replaced by Mr. Jonathan Freedman, a graduate student from Brandeis University with some training and experience in participant-observation methodology. Vice President Ahlberg had originally vetoed my suggestion that Mr. Freedman be appointed CATC research director, and later pointed to Mr. Freedman's campaign against CATC as evidence that he had been correct all along in his early judgment. On the other hand, from the time that Mr. Freedman appeared to take the position of the university in early December until after he resigned from CATC at the end of February, the university administration usually reflected Mr. Freedman's arguments that there was no freedom for research inquiry within CATC because of the project director, that the project director had assigned participant-observers to action posts away from their "lamppost" neutral and legitimate role, and that CATC research data were worthless. Even after this time, Dr. Kravitz of OEO publicly made a point of his firm conviction of the accuracy of these arguments without having ever visited the research building, talked with any current research staff members about the charges, or seen any current report concerning CATC research.

One of the issues in research methodology that had to be resolved in CATC was to determine the extent to which observers should participate in the events being observed. One opinion was that an observer should take no part in the process observed and should, furthermore, be emotionally detached from it. This came to be known as the "lamppost" approach. At the other extreme, it was sometimes argued that the observer should participate fully in the organizational process in order to understand it from the perspective of those involved. Research reporting would still emphasize accuracy and

candor, but not neutrality. In the field, as it turned out, observers tended to be drawn toward the latter position in which they were not so likely to be excluded from the inner workings of organizational activity as a useless burden and/or a possible threat to the organizational process.

Originally, the CATC research coordinator and I both prohibited observer participation in the activities that were being studied. However, because of the pull toward participation, in May I felt it necessary to add an injunction to the research staff to avoid the role confusion" that would result in their inappropriate participation in organizational work. Toward the end of June, one exception was made to this rule. A former student with training in organizational work was employed in a dual role, as observer and organizer. It was hoped that this exception would furnish some indication of the different perceptions of observers who participate and those who do not participate in the organizational processes being studied.

Mr. Freedman, favorably impressed with the contribution of the “action PO," soon advocated that additional observers be employed in a dual capacity and that all observers participate to some extent in field activities.[6] By fall, he proposed further to Fred Ross and myself that one of the now areas under consideration be organized entirely by observers.[7]

In early December, the CATC-SCDA staff members and students supported the newly created neighborhood organizations in their decision to wage a campaign against the unexpected federal decision to discontinue funding the organizational effort. Mr. Freedman initially supported this effort, even to the point of releasing the training materials writers from their duties until after the funding controversy was resolved. Most observers continued to engage in both research and action, but in new roles appropriate to the new context.

Very soon, however, Mr. Freedman expressed reservations about the campaign to change the federal decision. He surprised many and shocked some of his colleagues by proposing a smear campaign against the city antipoverty agency, and the staff rejected his proposal. When he protested that observers had been assigned new roles without his approval, this was widely interpreted as indicating opposition to the CATC-SCDA campaign. Mr. Freedman’s orientation toward the participation of observers in action now abruptly changed. Ignoring me, he appealed directly to Dean Winters about the supposed assignment of "his" observers solely to an action role in SCDA. (No such assignment had been made.) A wave of resentment met him when he wrote stern memoranda to most of the participant-observers, ordering their return to a research role. One observer was exempt from censure: GL supported Mr. Freedman's new orientation and shared his concern. Most colleagues expressed their indignation about Mr. Freedman's supposed alignment with those who were trying to destroy the program.

Mr. Freedman now altered his behavior toward other research staff members. During the previous months, he had been relatively unruffled when an observer turned in few or no reports during periods as long as two months. He now became very anxious lest a few

days would lapse without reports, and he rejected out-of-hand the adequacy of group taping by the research staff as-a substitute for individual reports. Without having inquired of observers the nature of their research activities, and without having read their reports, he felt able to conclude that they had abandoned a research for an activist role. Observers who had before enjoyed his praise now found themselves characterized as unable to produce valid research documents; their data would have to be heavily discounted. On the other hand, Mr. Freedman did acknowledge that withdrawal of research staff members from their action roles during the crisis would result in organizer animosity toward research and deprive research of much valuable data.

GL, the one observer who supported Mr. Freedman, began to receive, in return, Mr. Freedman's support. GL, and GL alone, was now said to have been able to maintain “astounding" detachment during this time of crisis. GL was truly and uniquely a valued and respected lamppost observer. It did not matter that Mr. Freedman had earlier requested (and received) approval from me for GL to be employed as an "anti-organizational" observer because of the intensity of his hostility to CATC. It did not matter that Mr. Freedman had several times tried to discuss with GL his relations with colleagues, or that GL had for some time been consulting regularly with the personnel director for help with this problem. It made no difference that GL often refused to attend meetings to which he had been assigned, while insisting on attending meetings that were already covered by other observers. It was overlooked that GL erased most of the data from about a dozen large research tapes in order to avoid haying to place them in the research safe. It did not even count that Mr. Freedman, when threatened by a slap in the face from GL, declared himself frightened, or that GL hotly threatened to "kick in the ass" of an observer colleague, a young woman, although no other person in the research staff ever angrily threatened violence to colleagues.

A number of associated changes also began to appear in Mr. Freedman. His evaluation of the CATC research effort plummeted. In September he had described the research effort of CATC as a potential model for the entire world; in February he concluded that in the monolithic atmosphere of CATC, attempts on his part to do research had been a waste of time. By the latter date he had launched a determined struggle (which probably was effective to some extent) to persuade relevant administrators to discontinue further funding of the CATC research program. The research design or report, which he had promised momentarily ever since September as a guide for research analysis, was never produced. In a letter to me in February he wrote: ". . . I have prepared no written research report for you to evaluate as I feel, given current conditions, that you (sic) incapable of evaluation of any qualitative research report, sophisticated or otherwise that takes a different position than those you espouse."

As a member of a minority opposition during a time of great crisis, it is understandable that Mr. Freedman felt much pressure, and comprehensible that he responded with anger and withdrawal, taking care to rationalize his action. Unlike colleagues in similar positions who supported the CATC-SCDA campaign, Mr. Freedman managed to continue his employment with Syracuse University.

The events that swirled about Mr. Freedman's head can also be placed in a more general context. From the beginning, there were problems associated with the exercise of authority within CATC. There was resentment when the first research coordinator set forth clear research policies, and there was even a temporary work stoppage by observers in protest against what were felt to be improper attempts to spy on the observers (i.e., to inquire of organizers when they had been accompanied by observers). On July 31, 1965, most of the observers carried all of the data out of the research office and refused to return it until assurances were given that confidentiality would be adequately protected and that Mr. Freedman would not conduct research into the private lives of organizers. The data were returned a few hours after being taken. Mr. Freedman had attempted to lead a training seminar for observers, but gave up after a few sessions of which most observers only attended the first. The plans for data analysts to talk regularly with observers were not implemented. During the first month of the funding crisis, the lines of formal authority were regularly bypassed, and attempted supervision of the work of observers was very difficult thereafter. During the first year-and-a-half of CATC the source of authority was most effectively the decisions made by staff members in research staff meetings. During the final six months of CATC the problems associated with attempts to exercise supervision subsided, probably because there was no longer a need to coordinate a complex effort in the collection of data.

During the first year of CATC, whoever was responsible for supervision of observers was free either to apply the design in the original CATC proposal or to develop an alternative. Although it was urgent that the reasoning involved in the collection and analysis of data be made explicit, no explicit research design was ever applied. By the beginning of 1966 the effort to have data collection guided by an explicit design was abandoned, and each person subsequently proceeded in the theoretical analysis of data to create his separate research report.

The relationship of research staff members to organizers changed strikingly during the history of the project. At first, the organizers were supremely confident, usually regarded observers as useless excess baggage, and at best tolerated the presence of observers. Observer morale was consequently often very low during the first months of CATC. As time passed, observers increasingly shared the work of the organizers. They more nearly became treated as colleagues and had higher morale. Especially after the beginning of the funding crisis, the morale of organizers began to fall. Observers by that time had begun to believe they could out-organize the organizers. Although few of the observers, in fact, knew much about organizational work, their relative status increased until some organizers began to rely on observers for advice and counsel. Organizers now wanted "feedback" from research, and there was now interest in "researching" an area before beginning to organize it. But the majority of the research staff became disillusioned with, and scornful of, the organizational effort, an attitude which is reflected in some of the eventual research reports.

As time passed, the attention of the research staff also turned away from a complete preoccupation with the organizational process to a concern with the effects of the funding crisis within the CATC-SCDA staff. This shift of concern was certainly stimulated by the

harassment to which some of the research staff members were subjected by unknown persons. A lengthy analysis of the Syracuse power structure was stolen. For weeks most of the white (but no Negro) members of the research staff were telephoned throughout the night, only to hear each time bongo drums or deep breathing. Keys, money, and minor articles were stolen. During this period, staff tension and anxiety were intense, rumors were eagerly circulated—and often believed. Differences of opinion became transformed into feuds and mutual suspicion replaced mutual trust. It surprised me that much work did continue in the highly emotional atmosphere. By March l, when further funding was widely regarded as lost, all the research secretarial staff had resigned, University College had collected all tape recorders, typewriters, etc., and work had cone to a complete halt. When OEO finally announced that CATC would receive a terminal grant, the research staff gradually resumed its duties, and began to function at a high level of competence during the final months of their employment.

Finally, it is curious and revealing that the university administration and Office of Economic Opportunity adhered to a double standard in the collection of research data. There was, on the one hand, a belief that low income populations and CATC staff members should naturally agree to be objects of research observation. On the other hand, when I requested permission for a participant-observer to observe a conference with Dr. Ahlberg, Dean Winters, Dr. Kravitz, and myself, the response of Dean Winters was "absolutely no!"—even if the reports were to be kept secret for a substantial time period. Similarly, Dr. Kravitz and Mr. Schmais from the Office of Economic Opportunity would not permit a tape recording to be made of their talk with the CATC-SCDA staff, a talk during which Dr. Kravitz expressed his belief that observers were not zealous enough in ensuring accurate research reporting. For the most part, the CATC research staff members, in contrast, were consistent. Research staff meetings were often tape recorded and observations made of research staff work activities.

Classroom Seminars

Students in the Community Action Training Center were expected to attend, among others, a Social Action Seminar, which was supposed to be especially relevant to their field experience. At first, all students together attended a single seminar. But student dissatisfaction with the seminar was evident from the beginning. After about two months in the program, students formed an organization which they called the CATC Cong, to secure for themselves participation in decisions about all aspects of CATC, including the educational program. Although the organization soon dwindled to a few students, the CATC Cong began a boycott of all activities except those in their field experience, and negotiated with me for more power. The boycott ended when an education committee composed of students and faculty was formed that would examine and make recommendations concerning the curriculum. This committee met several times and made a number of proposals concerning the seminar before disbanding (when Saul Alinsky refused to meet with it, commenting that one shouldn't give matches to pyromaniacs).

Perhaps the central complaint about the social action seminar was that some perspectives concerning social action were not being taught. Accordingly, we arranged guest lectures by about a dozen of the best known persons in the United States of various points of view, including orientations which the students had felt were missing. We tried also to acquaint the lecturer ahead of time with questions especially relevant in student discussions, and discussed the work of each guest lecturer in a seminar prior to, and on a session following his appearance. Many students continued to regard the seminar as inadequate and often did not prepare very much for class sessions.

In the fall of 1965, two social action seminars were created. One, intended for graduate social work students, was projected to emphasize readings and theoretical analyses to a greater extent than the other, non-degree seminar. Both were taught primarily by myself and were developed in relation to expressed student interests. I also prepared detailed syllabi for the students. After a strong beginning, participation in the seminars declined as students became caught up in field activities and as the uncertainty of continued funding began to have an impact on morale. After the acute phase of the funding crisis began on November 30, I was not able to lead seminar sessions with most of the non-degree students. For several months thereafter I led only the graduate seminar, although all non-degree students were invited to attend and several did.

During this period the attention of the seminar was partly focused on the conflicts internal to CATC, the collective anxiety and demoralization, and the consequences of these for the further progress of organizational work. The dissension and suspicion with CATC eventually reached a pitch at which one of the students (who disagreed with the general campaign) felt that the final examination would be used as a pretext to eject him from the program. Dean Winters, both orally and in writing, supported the student and indicated to me his severe disapproval of the prospect that I would unfairly use examinations to penalize those students who disagreed with me. I bitterly responded that, although no organizational program could afford a faction of organizers undermining the work of the rest, there would be classroom freedom and fairness for all points of view. In fact, I had been criticized just as severely by others for not taking some kind of action to end disruption of the CATC-SCDA program.

The immersion of students in the field (and especially in the campaign to reverse the OEO decision) created also a growing concern in the School of Social Work about the academic performance of CATC graduate social work students. One faculty member circulated a memorandum complaining that CATC students were spending 17-hour days in fieldwork and were unable, therefore, to participate adequately in any other area of their education. Although 17-hour days in the field were not the rule for CATC students, and were not expected of them, it was my belief that some concern was justified. During 1966 I devoted much effort to increasing student emphasis on classroom participation. Within CATC this meant increased stress on classroom analysis of field activities and reading as opposed to learning directly through the experience of building and maintaining organizations of the poor.

The CATC social action seminars were taught from February 1965 until September 1966. In general, the rate of student learning was much greater during the last months than it had been at the outset of the program. However, the effort put into the seminar by students tended until the end to oscillate between periods of enthusiasm and serious and determined study, followed by periods of depression and little academic tenacity. Over time, also, the differences among students in their fund of seminar-related knowledge, increased. And, although the educational progress of the students compared well with that of other graduate social work students in community organization programs, their progress did fall far behind the aspirations that were originally bold both by the students and myself.

Haggstrom

My own course of action and feeling is implicit in the previous account, but I will recapitulate it here.

I began CATC with what, in retrospect, were great expectations doomed to disappointment. My previous experience had included organizational work, research, administration, and university teaching. In CATC all these skills would be needed for what would be a complex but practical effort. The university administration and faculty colleagues, after clear and even vivid warnings that the proposed center would be controversial, continued their support of the idea. Although recruitment would be very difficult in such a short period of time, some key staff positions were very early filled by able people. In particular, the association of Fred Ross and Saul Alinsky, respectively with the field and educational sectors of CATC, enhanced my confidence that we could eventually build a good program.

Two months later the age of innocence had ended. The auspices of CATC were shaking; I felt as though I were in a small boat in the grip of a hurricane, struggling to keep afloat. I tried to maintain a calm and rational outlook. My accompanying anger, fatigue, enthusiasm, and occasionally, depression, lasted for about a year. The future of CATC vanished during that year.

With the passage of time the perception of me changed. Before the advent of CATC I was regarded as a somewhat unorthodox but generally respected faculty member. After the first months of CATC, many people began to see mc as a true believer, recklessly and stubbornly following a course regardless of the consequences. Only within CATC was there more often the impression that I was a rather cautious, even timid, basically authoritarian bureaucrat and middle class egg head. Everywhere, though, I was held responsible for a sequence of events that shook the CATC-SCDA program, a process that seemed to me to be nearly entirely outside my control.

My efforts were directed in large part to the development within the CATC-SCDA program of an understanding of, and hence greater control over, the process that held us in its grip. For that purpose I developed an "analysis game" for use in the social action seminar and tried to support analytic efforts by anyone associated with the CATC-SCDA

program. If a realistic common definition could be developed, I believed, our chances of eventual success would be greatly enhanced. The process of analysis and increasing experience in working together appeared to me to have a stabilizing effect. Given time, I believed (and believe), we would have been generally recognized as uniquely successful.

It was (and is) my opinion that the OEO decision to discontinue the direct funding of SCDA decisively destroyed our program. By the spring of l966, although I continued to do what I could to support the continuation of SCDA and of the social action field placement in the School of Social Work, I began also to plan a different kind of organizational and educational effort which would not be so vulnerable to political decisions by establishment institutions.

In addition to my view of myself in my CATC role, on the basis of comments made by Vice President Ahlberg, Dean Winters, Dr. Kravitz, and others, it is possible to state with some precision the Haggstrom seen by them. Such an account goes approximately as follows.

Warren Haggstrom began with the best wishes and help of most of his colleagues within and outside the university. He was employed as a consultant to the city urban renewal agency, and then to the Mayor's Commission for Youth. The School of Social Work helped him to innovate a new kind of field training in social action; the Youth Development Center of Syracuse University helped him to secure the time and funds to conduct research into organizations of the poor throughout the United States. The university administration itself helped him to start the Community Action Training Center and to secure funds for its operation. A local settlement house even invited him to write "The Huntington Story," and he received many invitations to speak to local social work and church groups.

But this initial generosity was invariably ill repaid. Dr. Haggstrom's relationship with nearly every group associated with him worsened in proportion to the length of time of the association. City agencies found him stubbornly and rigidly adhering to his pro-conceptions regardless of the political situation in which they found themselves as a result of adopting some of his ideas. Further association with him became difficult; he was, in the end, a liability. Within the university the sane process occurred in spite of all the help which had been offered to him. He violated the structure in which he worked by transforming the Community Action Training Center into a social movement that openly defied a funding decision of the federal government, regardless of the outcome for the university. His colleagues on the faculty gradually withdrew their support of him—but were rewarded only with blunt and sometimes sarcastic remarks about the extent to which they were discharging their responsibilities to the poor. He claimed, for example, that social workers should not even work in areas of poverty unless they took the side of the poor, that otherwise social workers resembled colonial administrators. He depreciated the extent to which sociologists who study areas of poverty come to understand the poor.

A succession of senior staff members of the Community Action Training Center had similar experiences, but they were in a more vulnerable position. There were three

associate directors in two years, the first two resigned, having the impression that Haggstrom was rigid, did not trust them, would not back them up when they tried to discharge their responsibilities, and did not delegate responsibilities to them. No fewer than five persons were successively responsible for the coordination of participant-observers. The first resigned under pressure, saying that he had not really been given a chance to do the job. The second resigned saying that Haggstrom did not back her up. The third resigned, charging that Haggstrom was dictatorial and would not allow an atmosphere of freedom within the research staff that would allow serious work to be done. The nature of the atmosphere can be conveyed to some extent by the fact that in two years, six of about twenty six students were terminated from CATC!

Twice there were student strikes, once a picket line in front of the CATC office, and one group of students angrily wrote to the local newspaper about the "witch doctor" in charge of the CATC program.

Inevitably, the School of Social Work ended its association with CATC and decided against any resumption of the social action field placement. The university administration withdrew Ford Foundation research funds from CATC and closed it down entirely after two-and-one-half years of operation. The Office of Economic Opportunity reduced funding to CATC, and phased it out as soon as possible. These agencies learned the lesson which had previously been more quickly picked up by the Mayor's Commission for Youth when they found themselves forced to discharge Dr. Haggstrom very quickly because of the political consequences of his association with them.

The problem is that Haggstrom is a true believer. He subordinates everything to his system of ideas. This trait, merely tiresome in the average ideologue, becomes dangerous (as is well known from a study of history) when such a person assumes a position of authority over others. Only those who are in agreement can remain associated with such a person; all others must resign or be forced out. Thus Haggstrom and a declining number of true believers gradually isolated themselves from the community and the university, but were still treated with a generosity that they hardly merited. As is often the case with such people, there was, consciously or unconsciously, a hidden agenda. Haggstrom was working to build himself and his ideas, regardless of what happened to associates or to the institutions with which he was associated. In the last analysis, one cannot ignore the fact that institutions have to look out for their own preservation, and other functions have to be performed by them. They cannot engage in a single-minded total venture on behalf of one system of untested ideas. Our experience with him has reinforced our belief that if a man has only one critic, the critic may be mistaken. But if he is criticized everywhere, the object of criticism is most likely wrong. Dr. Haggstrom was criticized everywhere. The university and OEO were forced to terminate this unfortunate experience, but tried to do this in a way that would not be vindictive toward Dr. Haggstrom and his associates. From now on, research that we sponsor into organizational work in low-income areas will be objective, and our education of social work students for social action will take into account that there are many varieties of social action, and in an academic setting all of them need to be considered and taught.

The Question

In the sequence of events mentioned above, virtually everyone violated what others assumed to be the appropriate enactment of his work role. Yet these presumed violations did not result in the level of embarrassment or outcry that might have been anticipated. Each person involved found it possible to argue that his course was justifiable no matter how absurd it may have appeared to others.

In most cases, persons not only were able to regard their apparent role violations as legitimate, but were able also to convince others of the correctness of their conduct.

Under the circumstances this outcome is odd and surprising. One would suppose that a senior staff member who refused to work for two-and-one-half months without an excuse, during which time his work organization suffered its most severe crisis, would be perceived to have been at fault. At least he would hardly be soon appointed to a new position with increased responsibility and salary. And if a local government built half a school before abandoning the effort, public indignation would create a tumult. Usually, people count on one another and protest the instances in which they are failed. Those who violate the codes suffer punishment at the hands of superiors or peers. But with respect to CATC, violations of norms were usual, while violators felt that they were justified and most of the time escaped negative sanctions. How can one understand or interpret this phenomenon?

The remainder of the present paper will be devoted to an attempt to explain some of these peculiarities of the CATC-SCDA program.

Historical Context

To some extent, one can better understand the events just described by placing them in a historical context.

Contrary to widespread belief, upstate New York has an authentic radical tradition that began in colonial times and continued until well after the Civil War. In eastern New York, tenant farmers carried out occasional revolts against landlords for over two hundred years, until they finally broke the power of the old land-owning families. Defeated in the 1760's, 1790's, and in 1812 and 1813, their efforts culminated in the great anti-rent rebellion of the 1840's, which at times faced troops called out by the governor.

The rent strike by the farmers of upstate New York was more determined than its more recent urban descendents. More than ten thousand tenant farmers organized, first for direct action against their landlords, and later as a political force. For direct action, the farmers disguised themselves as Indians and (like the Minnesota and Iowa farmers of the 1930's) made impossible the forced auction of their property for nonpayment of rent. Anyone foolish enough to make a bid at such auctions would find his own property

destroyed and his neighbors unwilling to associate with him. Law enforcement officers found themselves unable to take any action on behalf of the landlords. It was a reckless farmer who would even express a view contrary to the rent strikes. Eventually there was violence, and Dr. Boughton, an anti-rent leader who had appeared in Indian disguise as "Big Thunder," was sentenced to life imprisonment. The movement continued in political channels, electing friendly sheriffs and local officials who made impossible the efforts of landowners to collect rent. The farmers organized town, county, and state committees, held conventions, published their own newspapers, and came to hold the balance of power in New York State. At the height of this influence they helped to put a governor into office (who pardoned the 18 anti-rent political prisoners) and an attorney general (who launched an investigation into the titles of the large landowners to their land). Most of the landowners eventually sold out to their tenants at a sacrifice.[8]

But the reform spirit that raged elsewhere appeared only in a more genteel form in Syracuse. In the mid-nineteenth century, Mr. Forman initiated legislation for the Erie Canal and, knowing that the canal would give rise to new cities, purchased 250 acres of land that he then developed. The land is now downtown Syracuse. In 1819, when Mr. Forman founded Syracuse, only two frame houses stood in a small clearing. By 1830, Mr. Forman was able to purchase 300,000 acres of land in North Carolina and lived out his days as a wealthy figure.

Mr. Forman was sorrowed by the ungrateful citizenry of his invention who did not award him an office that he sought. This, however, is one of the few recorded instances in which Syracusans did not reward their businessman-politicians. A recent study of political life from 1880 through 1959 concluded that Syracuse politics was always dominated by local merchants and manufacturers, and that the extent of business domination tended to increase rather than decrease during the eight decades examined. In view of the racist nature of the United States, it perhaps was inevitable that the substantial early Negro population (593 in 1880, 1345 in 1920) should remain outside the political life of Syracuse, but blue- and white-collar workers, and professionals (including even lawyers) have normally also been unimportant in the political process.

Many of the problems of times past remain today. As early as 1843, the inspector of common schools protested that the creation of private schools would not solve the problem of education for the poor who would find the old schools inadequate but could not afford the new. In 1923, the schools available for the poor were still inadequate, and an attempt to use schools as community centers was opposed by allegations of the destructiveness of the children. (One principal pointed out 34 bullet holes in the glass of a new school building.) In the mid-1960's, the areas of poverty were still stigmatized by the newspapers and politicians as areas of crime, the schools remained scandalous, and large numbers of poor children were formally or informally excluded from them.

In 1910 there was a segregated "vice district" in Syracuse. About 200 prostitutes in some 30 houses plied their trade with police protection and under medical supervision. They had an estimated 3,000 clients each week, and brought an estimated million dollars annually into the economic life of the burgeoning town. More recently, Syracuse was

distinguished by allegedly having one of the most corrupt police forces in the nation. In spite of periodic campaigns against vice and corruption, both probably continue to flourish in different forms but as vigorously as ever.[9]

In the context of this conservative city, Syracuse University has often been portrayed by the normally sensation-seeking newspapers as a center of radical thought. For example, on November 22, 1934, the Syracuse Journal ran a headline reading: "Drive All Radical Professors and Students from University." The newspaper had disguised two young men as prospective students, sent them to interview the head of the department of educational psychology, and reported that he admitted to being a Communist. He denied having made such a statement. The next day the paper quoted another professor as having said, "I teach isms."

The professor claimed that his words had been: "I teach no isms." Eventually there developed a campaign to "examine" several professors, including Dr. Floyd Allport, one of the few members of the faculty of Syracuse University with a national reputation. The newspapers in 1965 played a similar role, even to replacing the sentence:

> "if you had been determined to criticize us and could find no factual basis for doing so, you would then have acted exactly as you have acted."

by the sentence:

> “if you had been determined to criticize us and could find factual basis for doing so, you would then have acted exactly as you have acted.”

without informing the reader that a change had been made in the text of the letter to the editor.[10]

Newspaper outcries about Syracuse University have seldom had much foundation, however, since that institution has always rivaled the city in conservative tendencies. The pattern was established by James Day, the outstanding chancellor in Syracuse University history.

An admirer of Chancellor Day claimed that he had "taken a half-baked Methodist college that stood on a windswept hill, and by his indomitable ability and Simon pure genius . . . transformed it into a real university." And there is no doubt that the university expanded steadily during his nearly three decades (1893-1921) as chancellor. He ran a tight ship.

Before coming to Syracuse, Chancellor Day had been a minister in St. Paul's Methodist Church in New York City. John D. Archbold, a member of his congregation and President of the Board of Trustees, secured his new position for him. Mr. Archbold, a multimillionaire high official of the Standard Oil Company, subsequently gave more than three million dollars to Syracuse University. It is, perhaps, natural that when Theodore Roosevelt campaigned against trusts, Chancellor Day called Roosevelt a "dangerous anarchist" and invited wealthy people to "take the taint off tainted money" by using it to

build up Syracuse University. Mr. Archbold, in fact, had originally announced that he would support selection of a chancellor who would implicitly believe and steadfastly preach the doctrine that the lion of Nineteenth Century corporate wealth could lie down peacefully with the lamb of first Century Christianity.

When Chancellor Day was selected, one of the trustees, a Methodist clergyman, expressed the satisfaction of himself and his colleagues that they had a man who could not be driven away by hostile professors. As it turned out, the new chancellor even surpassed their expectations. Rarely did a faculty member venture to disagree with him. When he ordered the faculty not to teach evolution, there was no dissent. When a professor did disagree with the chancellor, he soon resigned or was dismissed. The trustees themselves quickly lost influence, and their meetings declined into ceremonial formalities.

Chancellor Day's views, in fact, were better attuned to the world of business than to the nurture of the intellect. When a professor requested a promotion, arguing his case on the basis of having written a book, he was told not to expect promotion since a man who has written a book must have spare time on his hands.[11] When some students invited a Socialist to speak on campus, the chancellor screamed: "This place is honeycombed with sedition!" He held that if an IWW or socialist orator should attempt to make a street corner speech, he should be taken to jail—or to "the ditch." In his book (written in the early 1920's) the chancellor took the position that union labor is founded on principles directly opposed to those of our government, and that the strike is a conspiracy and nothing else.

Dissent, not completely erased, was carried on primarily by students. In 1919, after a mighty football victory over the University of Pittsburgh, the students demanded a holiday. When the university refused, the students went on strike. Classrooms were picketed, and students and faculty members who wanted to continue in the classrooms were harassed. Chancellor Day tried to persuade the students to take their work seriously, but it is reported that they did not listen to him.

Since the time of Chancellor Day the university has maintained the stance which he gave it. In 1939, it won in court the right to dismiss a student without giving adequate reason. (The student reported that the university found her to be not "a typical Syracuse girl.")

The Maxwell School of Syracuse University began a program which gave students experience in the political process while furnishing free assistance to the local politicians. And fundraising remained the central administration concern. The university continued to emphasize its ties with the Methodist Church while raising funds from Methodists, although emphasizing its nonsectarian character while raising funds elsewhere. The present chancellor even outdid his illustrious predecessor when he clubbed a student who was engaging in a nonviolent protest against ROTC. (The newspapers politely called it a "caning," and took advantage of the occasion to praise him.) Even I became the object of frequent furious memoranda in which the chancellor hurled at me such charges as the one that I had held CORE meetings in my office.[12]

The majority of the faculty remained docile and quiet in the presence of high administrative officials. And students who did not strike (as in the football strike of 1919) but who did participate in civil rights demonstrations found themselves vigorously harassed by the university administration.

Although the power of the present chancellor is exercised primarily by key vice presidents, and although the voices of faculty dissent are more numerous than they used to be, Syracuse University remains a conservative centrally administered football-oriented academic institution in basic intellectual and ideological harmony with the community surrounding it. Its sponsorship of the Community Action Training Center was the single notable, however temporary, exception to the general rule.[13]

In addition to the historical context, we might understand the peculiarities of the CATC-SCDA events by considering the nature of organization and how a process such as that described above might develop within an organization. We will next turn to that task.

Organization and Non-Organization

An organization travels in a situation that it defines.

An *organization* may be thought of as a symbolic system together with a system of bodies which is regulated by the symbolic system. In other words, an organization consists in part of such things as implicit or explicit job descriptions, rules for coordination of work, directions concerning lines of authority and communication, rules for decision making, descriptions of sanctions permitted and conditions for their use, and so forth. This symbolic system creates activities of bodies and relationships among bodies. If the organization is informal, the symbolic system may consist more of the pattern reflected in habits than in officially and explicitly stated or written prescriptions.

To say that an organization *travels* may indicate that it is making progress in carrying out the mission that legitimizes it. That mission may, for example, be the manufacturer of automobiles, the preparation of an entrance to heaven, or the conduct of a revolution. In other cases, an organization may use its mission as a cover which enables it more easily to acquire resources. This would happen if a social work agency were to act more to secure additional funds or power than to help its clients, although it may continue to claim that it was acting solely on behalf of its clients. In any case, the travel of an organization is marked by its changing relationship with the situation about it. Thus, an organization gets ahead of (or falls behind) its competitors, and tops (or fails to top) the million dollar annual budget mark.

The *situation* of an organization consists of the things about it that are relevant to its travel. The situation of an organization, like the situation of a person, is largely invisible and difficult to assess. For example, it includes the meanings which the organization has to its rivals and to its clients, the meanings of the moves and actions of the organization,

the intentions of legislative committees and other powerful groups toward it, the relative case of acquisition of resources in future years, the consensually validated meanings carried by organizations and other objects in its vicinity, and so forth.

In *defining* its situation, an organization singles out and orders aspects of it in relation to its course of action. If the organization believes that it is seen by its rivals as powerful, it will adopt a different course of action than if it believes it is seen by its rivals as weak. In defining its situation, the organization may therefore present itself to others in such a way that it will appear to others to be powerful and, in preparing to act, take into account the anticipated reaction of others to its apparent power. A powerful organization can in part create the situation that it defines and can project long courses of action. Thus a defined situation is not restricted to the here and now. It may come to include distant objects and events, both in social space and in social time. The organization orders a stream of actions in the defined situation with the purpose of maximizing returns to it in the form of distance traveled, resources acquired, and so forth. The ordering presupposes assumptions on the basis of which the definitional process has taken place, including assumptions that certain aspects of the situation can safely be ignored while others must quickly be attended to.

Since a situation is very indistinct, and since an organization cannot survive except by defining it and acting in relation to it, the definitional process is both crucial and hazardous. The stresses of improvisation are usually gradually reduced as the organization comes over time to rely increasingly upon experience from the past precipitated into routines as the best guide to the future.

An organization has a structure of internal power, the power to ensure that its internal process is effectively mobilized on behalf of its external objectives. An organization must coordinate and direct the work of its members on behalf of its decisions and in such fashion that it will continue to acquire resources and move toward its objectives. Without the ability of an organization to direct and control its members, that is, without the structure of internal power, there would be no organization. However clear the symbolic system might be, the necessary relationships among, and activities of, members would not be produced.

When an organization is unable to develop or maintain its internal structure of power, the members no longer can rely on the organization to stabilize, regulate, reward and punish them. When the internal structure of power of an organization collapses, the members may suddenly find their own situations undefined, or redefined in a fashion that no longer allows them to anticipate the future. Other definitions, organizations and objects immediately appear different to them, may acquire more salience in their lives. The members lose the power that they have been able to exercise by virtue of their position in the organization and their relationships with other members within it. We may say that when an organization fails to develop or to maintain its internal structure of power, the members find themselves in a *power bind* insofar as the organization is concerned.

A comprehension of the power bind is especially useful to those who wage conflict. An army may seek to dissolve the internal power structure of an opposing army while remaining strong itself. A labor union has increased bargaining power if it is able to undermine the internal structure of the power of management—and vice versa. In a struggle between city hall and organizations of the poor, the issue can eventually be decided if one side, while maintaining its own internal structure of power, can demolish that of the opponent. One can say, even, that the theory of conflict-organization is primarily the theory of how to create the power bind for opponents while defending against its appearance within one's own organization.

If we consider some instances of the power bind it may become easier to envisage theoretically conditions under which the power bind is likely to occur.

1. The structure of internal power never develops in some utopian communities. Paul Conkin (*Two Paths to Utopia*, pp. 192-194) has compared the traditional Hutterite community, which very successfully maintains itself, with the Llano community. The latter was created by a heterogeneous group of settlers with varying interpretations of fundamental ideas about the nature of their new colony. Factions soon began to dominate the colony, marking the attempts to translate into reality the various abstract visions which they had held of the good life. The factions waged miniscule but fierce holy wars on behalf of what turned out to be mutually inconsistent definitions of the community which they were determined to create. The colony, as a result, was unable to sustain itself.

2. During World War I the French armies progressively became more exhausted and frustrated in their ponderous and hopeless assaults on the German lines. In 1916, mass demoralization appeared. Mutiny became so widespread that 54 divisions refused to obey orders and thousands of soldiers simply deserted. Over a hundred thousand soldiers were court-martialed; 23,000 were found guilty and sentenced. 55 were officially shot and many more shot without benefit of sentence. A great gap was created in the French lines which the Germans, however, did not take advantage of. The French armies only again recovered, and then solely for limited warfare, when the soldiers were assured that there would not again be a major French offensive.[14]

3. In 1952, an attempt to reform the California prison system was followed by unrest and riots. The maximum custody prisons had been administered in many respects by informal inmate organizations. These had made assignments to cells and jobs, the distribution of privileges, the sale of concessions and even the imposition of discipline. A reform administration decided to develop an individual treatment program to replace inmate self-government. But unrest quickly flared and it was soon apparent that individual treatment would not control it. Many prisoners sought to transfer to other prisons and complained that the tensions within reform prisons had increased. The discontent eventually erupted into a series of riots marked by the taking of hostages.[15]

4. At about the same time, the University of California was shaken by what came to be known as the loyalty oath controversy. The regents had ruled that all members of the faculty should, as a condition of their employment, sign a loyalty oath. A large proportion of the faculty, remembering that the first stop in the destruction of the German and Italian universities had been the administration of loyalty oaths, opposed the new ruling. They waged a struggle against the loyalty oath, and hence against the ruling of the regents. During their struggle a process of disintegration soon appeared within the faculty, a process which one would hardly expect in a group of high status, stable, relatively conservative men of maturity and experience.[16] Faculty members began to display or complain of neurotic symptoms. There were "worry, depression, fatigue, fear, insomnia, drinking, headaches," indigestion, "failure to function well, worsening of relations with colleagues, suspicion, distrust" and loss of self-respect. Instead of the unity which more usually occurs in the face of danger, there was a deep internal division and the faculty became preoccupied with internal as well as external enemies. As time passed it became clear that the regents would not alter their opposition, and the faculty members opposing the oath found themselves also opposing established authority and hence acting in a revolutionary manner.

Let us examine what happened in greater detail.

There had been an original rush of enthusiasm on the part of the faculty for the fight against the oath. Later, a few voices began to urge caution and to suggest that the regents would not have made such a ruling if they did not have good reason for doing so. Once faculty members had taken this position, they had made a commitment, and they found it difficult to return to their earlier stand. Soon many of the faculty insisted on procedures: one should go through regular channels, it was argued.

It could be observed that faculty members who urged caution and attention to procedure most strongly tended to be those who had in the past been most closely associated with the university administration. Faculty leaders who opposed the oath reminded themselves that totalitarian movements gain their staunchest supporters from law-abiding citizens.

There were signs of anxiety and projection which, over time, reduced the ability of those involved to predict what would happen next. Some faculty members began to see the regents as wise and benevolent elder statesmen, others saw the regents as robber barons. Most faculty members argued that the regents were at least reasonable and just. But each of these assumptions was held without much concrete knowledge of the regents and their actions. The faculty continued to expect (wrongly as it turned out) that the regents would eventually enact the role of judicious authority. When it became clear that the regents would not change their ruling, faculty attention was drawn more to the alleged overwhelming power and ruthlessness of the regents. The same people who originally saw the regents as wise and benevolent now argued the uselessness of opposing them. Faculty members spoke of wanting a strong President, a strong leader behind which to rally, and the President came to be seen as a good authority as distinct from the bad authorities on the board of regents.

Opponents of the oath relied for a long time on the presumed wisdom or justice of the regents; very late and very cautiously they carried their case to the broader California public. They assumed, falsely, that their case was widely known outside the university, and feared, also falsely, that they would be subject to widespread public disapproval. Faculty morale declined and opponents of the oath began to find themselves in opposition to a substantial portion of their colleagues as well as to the regents. Those who refused to sign the oath, a shrinking group, tended to be inner-directed people with roots in other communities. Eventually, opposition to the oath dwindled to a few persons who were forced to leave the university. The fight had been lost.

The above are four of a large number of illustrations that might have been mentioned of the power bind. Each came as an unwelcome surprise to adherents of the organization that dissolved. The guiding original leader of the Llano colony expected to found a good community and promptly was involved in intense factional disputes that made it impossible to implement the vision. The French generals, starting with a major offensive, found themselves with no military organization at all in many parts of the offensive area. Authorities in California instituted a humanitarian prison reform and were met with rising tensions and, eventually, riots. Neither the regents nor the faculty welcomed the downward spiral that followed initiation of the loyalty oath in the University of California. How can one explain these surprising outcomes of well-intentioned initiatives? Let us next outline briefly some of the factors which appear to have been operative in the above illustrations.

When the Llano colony began, it could have been supposed that its members more or less held a single definition of their enterprise, a single doctrine. But any doctrine is likely to be interpreted variously by persons who adhere to it but who have not practiced it. If there is an attempt to apply the doctrine, various interpretations will reflect themselves into conflicting views about practices to be followed. There results, as within the leadership of the French or Russian or Chinese revolutions, intense struggles among factions, each claiming legitimacy for itself and regarding its rivals as heretical. Unless there is an underlying consensus about how decisions are made, etc., such factional disputes will prevent an organization from arising. The Hutterites, on the other hand, long ago embedded their doctrines in the practices of their community. Over time common interpretations of doctrine have evolved and been applied in their lives and activities. The consequent deep consensus has created an organization which can only be strengthened by realistic internal conflict of limited scope and to be resolved by procedures which all accept.

The French Army lost control of its men by its inability successfully to carry its offensives through to a conclusion. As a result, it could offer its members only the repeated dashing of expectations and hopes, only disappointments and failures and dangers, more negative in themselves as sanctions than those used by the army to maintain discipline. Further, the soldiers had to survive for a long time with the ever present but ambiguous threat of extinction, broken by sudden and unpredictable acute crises. There was the strain of constant vigilance, and the frequent need for improvisation

in order to meet crises that could not be anticipated. The anxiety and fear, the inability to define the situation, the lack of rewards, together detached large numbers of French soldiers from the symbolic system which bad previously controlled them.

Before the reforms were introduced, the California prisons had meshed the formal prison structure with the informal prisoner structure to create a single organization in which informal prisoner leadership received formal and official legitimization. The situation was relatively stable; each prisoner could pretty well know what to expect from those with whom he had contact, and official recognition and sanctions bolstered informal prisoner behavior and relationships. A common organizational definition was fashioned in part out of the perspectives of prisoners, and the result was routinization and norms to which prisoners were inclined to adhere.

The reform withdrew legitimization from the informal prisoner structure, sought to dismantle it, and brought some (but not the incorrigible) prisoners into contact with an alternative and alien treatment perspective. It followed that prisoner leadership would be threatened, that the common definition of the situation would be undermined. The result was an increase in tension and discontent which leaders sought to channel (while maintaining their own threatened positions) by sweeping the prison population into collective action. An innovation in tactics had appeared (the taking of hostages) which bolstered hope in this alternative. The riots followed.

Faculty members, like the prisoners just mentioned, were faced with an objectionable innovation (the loyalty oath) by authorities that broke down their collectively elaborated view of themselves and the university. As in the prison situation, tension and discontent rose and many faculty members sought to leave and go elsewhere.

However, the faculty attempts to oppose the regents were relatively half-hearted and feeble. Not only were the intentions and motives of the regents hidden, but also there appeared throughout the faculty some inclination to maintain their identifications with the regents, a group which had become their aggressors. Since they waged no effective struggle against the regents, the faculty became dependent on ambiguous, but ominous, forces. The inability of the faculty to maintain a collective definition of their situation resulted in immobilization, privatization, timidity, and various psychopathological manifestations.

One can see from these brief analyses some of the kinds of stresses that threaten to dissolve the internal power of an organization or prevent it from being formed. A very heterogeneous population cannot easily create a single collective definition of their situation. Long continued ambiguous danger for an organization and its members tends to destroy the organization by turning the attention of members to the preservation of themselves and their families and friends. An organization may not be able to survive if its members are caught in powerful but different definitions of the same situation, whether the sources of the alternative definitions are factions within the organization or two sets of conflicting legitimate authorities. And an organization is especially vulnerable to enemies who are legitimately within it.

Next, let us consider this question more systematically.[17]

First, characteristics of a *situation* may threaten the internal power structure of an organization. For example, when the situation threatens disaster to members or to the reference objects of members, and is such that members believe that the danger can be avoided but are not exactly certain how to do so, then the members may abandon their organizational roles for private goals or primary groups. The organization may then collapse. For example, reports suggest that in a tornado or earthquake, people are likely to regard the preservation of the organization that employs then as secondary both to their self-preservation and to preservation of members of their families, friends, associates, or even strangers. Toward the end of World War II, German women at Pillaus sought passage on a ship that would enable them to escape the Russians. Only adults with a child were allowed on board. Some mothers tossed their babies to relatives on the dock so that the same baby might be used as a ticket half a dozen times. Some babies fell into the water, others were lost to strangers. The normal family organization was sacrificed for the preservation of the desperate women and their friends and relatives.

The situation may be resistant to definition and the organization may find it extremely difficult to orient itself in order to attain its objectives. Such a situation may not provide a frame of reference for the organization, or provides conflicting cues about possible frames of reference, or elicits contradictory decisions about it, or is ambiguous, unexpected and unclear. The Ku Klux Klan uses their white costumes to dissolve the norms that otherwise would presumably regulate their conduct; the official community then finds itself powerless to regulate its members. The colonists adopted Indian disguises for the same purpose when dumping tea into the Boston harbor. During the Russian Revolution, a band of Cossacks found themselves at the same time the object of appeals by Bolshevik agitators to save the revolution and orders from their officers to destroy the Bolsheviks. The Cossacks did neither and instead ceased entirely to act as a military unit.

Second, the organization itself may have characteristics that make it vulnerable to the onset of the power bind. For example, it may be too weak to command adequate resources and overcome obstacles or opponents. The weakness and susceptibility to disintegration of the bonds in a lower class Negro family with a long history of unemployment contrasts sharply with the case with which powerful and wealthy families maintain family ties, even to the point of regulating the behavior of children until long past adolescence.

The organization may have become overly routinized and thus inappropriately rely on old ways of interpreting new situations, with increasingly disastrous results. Armies for centuries have destroyed themselves by countering guerilla opponents with a persistent and foolish reliance on military principles learned in conventional battles. Midwestern farm families who did not adopt technological innovations found themselves under great economic pressure.

The organization may lose touch with other organizations on which it is dependent and then suddenly find part of its situation to be unpredictable, as when some Southern

business elites, secure in the practice of employment discrimination, found themselves subject to effective Negro boycotts of their businesses.

The structure of the organization may be unclear, or it may have been partially destroyed. In one organization of the poor, there had developed no consensus on how decisions were to be made. When reporters tried to contact the organization, they asked to talk with the president. There was no president, and so a few of the members, who happened to be walking together, selected one of their number as president and introduced her to the reporters as such. The selection of the president placed a severe strain on the organization when members who were not present learned what had happened.

The structure of authority within an organization may be undermined**.** For example, a corporation vice-president may have a number of opinions contrary to those of his immediate subordinates and therefore frequently overrule their decisions. When persons low in the hierarchy become aware of this difference, they may appeal to the vice-president or to his immediate subordinates in order to secure decisions which they favor. To the extent to which authorities are thus played off against each other, the legitimate process of making and carrying out decisions is avoided and the introjection of private interests into organizational direction reduces the ability of the organization to function or orient itself effectively.

An organization may allow itself to be controlled from outside by definitions of it different from its own definitions. For example, when the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee adopted the Black Power slogan, some of its leaders announced that they no longer wanted to be controlled by white money that would force them into action in support of a program for racial integration. Although the contributions to SNCC immediately declined, it was then argued that SNCC would emerge stronger by not being subject to outside control.

An organization may define the situation too narrowly in social space and social time and thus fall prey to forces that suddenly and unexpectedly loom before it. A school of social work that limits itself to training prospective employees of present agencies will discover that other disciplines are arising to meet new social needs to which its graduates are not seen as relevant. The sudden definition of social work as irrelevant to problems of poverty has already adversely affected the prospects for employment of social workers in a number of sectors of the War on Poverty.

When confronted with a difficult situation, the organization may prematurely define it as unmanageable, a definition which itself tends to disintegrate the organization. On the one hand is the apparently irrational determination of the Bolshevik Party to seize power in Russia in 1917**,** a determination crowned with success. On the other hand is the decision of the large Populist Party in the United States in the Nineteenth Century that they could not achieve and exercise power—and the consequent dissolution of the populists into the Democratic Party of William Jennings Bryan.

An organization is likely to be especially vulnerable if it lacks traditions which serve to orient it in ambiguous situations, or when a break with routine makes it impossible to rely any longer on tradition for guidance into the future. In World War I, T. E. Lawrence used the traditional Arab styles of fighting in rousing them against the Turks. Attempts then and since to form the Arabs into more conventional armies have often resulted in less effective military forces which were not so likely to survive military engagements intact.

Third, members of an organization may themselves contribute to the creation of the power bind in which they eventually find themselves. For example, a leader who panics or appears ineffective in a crisis will loosen the affiliation of adherents to his organization. In crises of all kinds leaders take pains to be present with an air of confidence or determination, giving an appearance of being in command of the situation whether or not they actually have any idea of what to do.

As mentioned before, heterogeneous membership is not easily incorporated into a single organizational definition of the situation. When a Negro member of a labor union was expelled, the white majority almost unanimously believed he was expelled properly and in accordance with the union constitution, and that race had nothing to do with it. The allegations about racial discrimination were dismissed as attempts by the expelled member improperly to trade on his race. Most Negroes in the union, however, believed that the expulsion, although done "by the book," really was due to anger that a Negro had "stepped out of his place." There resulted intense bitterness between the two groups in the union.

If the members are extremely fatigued they may not be able to continue to sustain the organization. Every military unit engaged in long forced marches becomes weakened to the extent to which it leaves part of its membership behind. And a research group may break down into squabbling overtired non-contributors.

Members who are easily drawn into a preoccupation with idiosyncratic and personal goals commonly do little to support the organizational definitions on which the internal structure of power depends. People participate in organizations for many reasons: to make money, to gain status, to find a mate, to avoid loneliness, and so forth. The fact that these reasons have little or no reference to the stated aims of the organization may not weaken the organization provided it can continue to motivate and regulate appropriate behavior on the part of its members. However, when members begin to raid the petty cash box, to over-conform in the hope of acquiring a key to the executive washroom, or to neglect their duties in order to engage in amorous pursuit of one another, the organization does not prosper.

Members who are inclined to be anxious, defensive, ineffective, incapacitated or irresponsible, or predisposed to bizarre forms of behavior under normal conditions, often cannot maintain their organization during a long period of ambiguous danger or the threat of disaster. Such people are likely early to fall prey to the collective symptoms of the power bind which later may spread throughout the organization. These members reveal

weak points of the organization even in stable and secure times, and they may become acutely neurotic or psychotic when exposed to the additional stress of the power bind.

Members who are isolated from each other are more easily detached from common organizational definitions. That is, the meanings of events are fixed by consensual validation, by the fact that there is a general agreement on the nature of events and their relevance to the organizational effort. Collective assumptions about the situation, definitions of it, are necessary bases for the coordination of ongoing action. Isolated members more often act on deviant assumptions in deviant ways and hamper the coordination of activity. Isolates also do not help maintain the informal interpersonal ties that bolster the formally defined relationships among members.

Rigid members may not be able to adapt to a shifting situation. Every university faculty contains persons whose outlook was irrevocably fixed decades ago on all the major questions of their discipline or profession. When such persons are in senior positions, as is often the case, an attempt by the faculty to reorient itself to current knowledge and challenges is regarded as heretical by such members, who then act to stamp out innovation and thereby immobilize the faculty as an organization.

When members each belong to many groups with different orientations to the situation, they may become uncertain or immobile, or they may orient themselves, not by the organization, but by alternative sources of meaning and authority. One person who was a leader of an organization of the poor that was attempting to have a "drinking club" removed from the neighborhood was also a minister in the church that covertly owned the club. The organization lost the leadership of this minister for the duration of the issue.

Members who place more importance on internal disputes than on the common bond among members of the organization, or who orient themselves to one another and not to the organization or to their leaders, place strains on an organization which may result in a power bind. A current liberal and highly respected United States Representative was a student leader of a campus veterans' organization 20 years ago. He belonged to a small conservative faction in the organization. On the last day before it was time to elect officers and delegates to the national convention, this young man, whose father was the dean of the School of Law, brought 75 or more law students into the organization. The new members dominated the meeting, elected all the officers and delegates, and were never seen in the organization again. The organization never fully recovered.

Fourth, and finally, in many cases the determinants of the power bind cannot be found in the situation alone, the membership alone, or in the organization alone, but stem from the interaction of two or all three of these factors. Let us consider some illustrations of ways in which the interaction of components produces the power bind.

For example, the organization may have been developed to meet a situation different from that which now obtains; the situation may require of the organization a response which is beyond its capacity, the situation may make demands on members which tend to detach them from their organizations, or the situation nay demand from the organization

responses that detach members from it. Organizations of the poor and of other relatively powerless groups outside the major community are most likely to find themselves in such extremely compelling situations. Tiny organizations of many kinds in Negro ghettoes are deprived of badly needed leadership when their presidents are made powerless but prestigious members of various boards and committees that continue to be dominated by white outsiders and which administer the ghettoes. These leaders are promptly attacked within the ghetto for having gone over to the other side and are thereby cut off from further effective participation in their organizations—which suffer as a consequence. The white administrators may then expect "their" "indigenous leaders" to win public acceptance for the programs that the white administrators have developed, an effort that normally divides and isolates the membership even more than it was. When an organization gives formal assent to this process, its requests of its members are seen to be contrary to their values and interests, and their response is to leave the organization or lesson the extent of their commitment to it.

The social position, and therefore the situation, of each member is different from the situation of the organization. Thus the demands made by an organization on its membership may conflict with other espouses required by the situations of members and induce in the membership a stress that becomes reflected back into the organization. Married organizers usually discover that their spouses, who do not appreciate their evening and weekend work, begin to insist that they spend more time at home. Whether or not the organizer accedes to this demand, his organizational work is likely to suffer. If he stays home as much as most men, he misses working hours which are often crucial for the success or failure of his work. If he ignores the pressure, the resulting continual intra-family tension is likely to lower his efficiency at work. It is in this situation also that an organizer is most tempted to jeopardize all that he is doing by having an affair with some person from the neighborhood where he is working. To state this more generally, informal associations or alternative formal associations may become more salient to members and, during crisis periods, distract them from their normal participation in the organization.

Of great importance in creation of the power bind is the pace of events in an organization. Confronted with an ambiguous and alarming novel situation, the organization can no longer successfully rely on routine or tradition in defining it. Where everything before proceeded smoothly in accordance with established practice, in the new situation improvised decisions are constantly required on the basis of inadequate evidence, each of major importance for the organization and its members. Further, unusually strenuous effort is required by the organization to enable it to remain secure in the uncharted social territory. And there must be much effort expended merely on the acquisition of sufficient relevant information for action to proceed. The pace of activity quickens in an accelerating spiral that, if not regulated, will end in the collapse of the organization. Each time it attempts to recover, it may become involved again in the whirl of activity that each time also ends with the destruction of the organization. This process may be considered the organizational analogue of a manic depressive cycle in persons.

It may be supposed from the above paragraphs that the power bind occurs everywhere, and that most organizations are precariously perched on the edge of succumbing to it. That supposition, however, would be incorrect. Most organizations do not succumb to the various pressures on then, and they continue to function with remarkable stability. On the other hand, persons affected by the power bind may not recognize what is occurring and may also have a stake in not reporting it. The power bind, therefore, probably occurs much more frequently than one would suspect solely on the basis of a survey of the relevant literature. Further, one can delineate socially structured areas within a society in which it does occur particularly often: disaster areas, areas of poverty, places of crisis, of rapid technological innovation, and so forth. An understanding of conditions that produce the power bind and of places where it is likely to occur is useful equally to the organization that seeks to avoid it within itself and to the organization that attempts to create it in others. The need for such information becomes most apparent when we turn our attention to the outcomes of the power bind for those affected by it.

The disintegrative process set in notion by the onset of the power bind may be reversed at any stage. Or it may continue a downward spiral until all the formal and informal social structures that bolstered the organization have been pulverized and the former members remain completely alone, with no remaining bonds among them. Let us reconstruct a hypothetical course of events that would lead to the latter outcome.

When the internal structure of the organization first gives way, fragments of the organization may remain functional in the wreckage. A company of men may continue on their mission despite the general demoralization of the division about them. An office staff may continue to work long after the activities to which the papers are relevant have ceased to exist. Usually, such surviving fragments of the organization are isolated from the rest of the organization and not as exposed to the pressures that have operated elsewhere.

There also remain informal groups that had previously existed in subordination to the functioning of the organization. There might be friendship groups, cliques, or factions that are now suddenly raised in importance and apparent relevance to the members as the organization disappears.

Also remaining are the formal and informal groups from outside the organization to which the members have been affiliated. The families of members are usually the most salient, but political and religious organizations and other reference groups may also remain relevant. These outside groups may become major reference points for the continued action of members caught in the power bind. Just as easily the attention of the members may become fixed on the disintegrative process about them and outside groups may be ignored. Since members cast about for points of stability in a crisis, some are likely to orient themselves to external groups while others become preoccupied with their immediate surroundings, a development that undercuts the possibility of the emergence of a common definition of the crisis situation among the members.

After an initial shock, members are likely to begin to work toward a consensus about the nature of the situation and the course of action to take in respect to it. This activity marks attempts to begin a new and primitive collectivity (which might eventually develop into a social movement) through which, if it is formed, the members will begin to act together.

The dissolution of the organization has the consequence that the relationships among subgroups are no longer regulated and that the borders of membership are no longer maintained. There immediately follows a power struggle among still functioning sections of the organization to restore it and the informal groups that have been in the organization and that now seek to increase their power with respect to each other or to affect to a greater extent the collective decisions concerning what to do next. Not only does rivalry appear, but also since the relationships among these subgroups are no longer regulated by the organization, the rivalry may take forms that previously would have been regarded as entirely illegitimate. One group may start an unfounded but widely believed whispering campaign that Communists dominate another faction. The group to make such suggestions may be sincere; the interpretation seems to account for the sudden appearance of an unpredictably hostile opposition group during a time of crisis. Normally the organization would discourage unfounded charges against groups within it, but that restraining influence is no longer present. For similar reasons, the faction that is being red-baited may reply by referring to the first group as paranoid or collectively psychotic—and this also appears as a reasonable interpretation for the apparently irrational behavior of their rivals.

Not only does internal factionalism often come to dominate the membership, but also, since the borders of the organization are no longer distinct, outsider groups are drawn into the internal process. Their attention is drawn to the crisis near them. Rumors circulating within the membership begin to find acceptance outside as outsiders attempt to define those aspects of their situations that have become unpredictable. Becoming concerned, outsider groups may be moved first to criticism and advice and then to participation in attempts to stabilize the power bind process itself. This may be a dangerous intervention in the same sense in which it is dangerous for someone to seek to pull a drowning person into his small canoe—the aspiring helper may become a victim.

To the members, the onset of the power bind means that the familiar world suddenly and unexpectedly becomes disorganized. Even though there may have been a cognitive awareness of danger, the members had acted as though the organization would endure for a long time. As long as possible the members may continue to try to conduct business as usual, a defense against anxiety that interferes with their making adequate preparations against the possibility of disaster. Even when the disaster is anticipated, the dissolution of the organization normally comes as an abrupt emotional shock to the members. Even now many members may feel that the disaster is unreal, that they are detached from it, and cling to the idea that things will work out after all. They are likely to continue to lean, in their new and ambiguous situation, on assumptions that guided their conduct before the crisis developed. When such assumptions become clearly untenable, members may lose their moorings entirely and begin to be buffeted about by demands made on them by the current situation. The past and the outside world become irrelevant, and there is no

assured future. But this means that members find themselves struggling in the grip of conflicting expectations. The newly emerging collectivity expects them to enter into the course of action in which it is engaged. The remnants of the former organization expect them to reenter their former roles. The struggling factions seek to enlist members in support of them. Outsider groups, which have been drawn into the situation while lacking a close appreciation of what is happening and of how it came about, stubbornly persist in making demands on members that cannot be met. And in addition to the conflict among all these perspectives, the members may find themselves acting contrary to their own underlying sense of what is proper, as did allied prisoners who identified with German guards in World War II prison camps.

Sensing the anxiety and confusion, officials and leaders attempt to reassure and inform the membership, but the time is past for such a standard remedy, and the messages fail to find general acceptance. Solidarity has been replaced by distrust, and communications intended as rational are viewed with suspicion as manipulative attempts to gain personal or factional advantage. Rumors circulate, one set gradually becoming validated by a general consensus since they serve to justify a course of action towards which the members have been inclined. Collective anxiety therefore temporarily disappears into relief and even enthusiasm as the collectivity impulsively moves into prematurely decided upon courses of action. There is again a tendency to cling to the course of action, however it turns out, once it has been decided on. It is, again, a defense against the underlying anxiety. But eventually the attempt to master the situation has clearly failed and the effort stalls with a consequent apathy, reemergence of anxiety, and demoralization within the membership. The cycle of collective and impulsive action, followed by apathy and demoralization, may continue for a long time as the remaining social fabric falls apart.

As the sources of stability decline, the need for improvisation increases, the carrying out of action becomes more difficult, and the members get a sense of a generally increasing tempo of action. This may result from the increased strain and time involved in trying to maintain action at all under such difficult conditions. Collective decisions must be made on the spur of the moment on the basis of inadequate knowledge. Internal conflicts, when they are dealt with at all, must be dealt with on an emergency basis, since they threaten the continuation of any collective action. The increasing unmanageability of the situation means that the fragile collectivity must often resort to more drastic sanctions to maintain itself than an organization with an intact internal power structure. Unable to grasp the apparently complex and rapidly shifting pace of events, attention is progressively restricted in space and time—with the consequence that members are less and less able to anticipate and cope with the situation. Members become trapped in the here and now, and they begin to engage in wildly fluctuating courses of action. Failures to control what is happening lead to the projection of exaggerated fantasies onto the situation—just as sailors and members of many societies are said to use magic to relate to ominous and uncontrollable aspects of their situations. Increasingly, the definition is projected onto the situation rather than being derived in large part from it.

The downward spiral is also marked by a shift in the nature of scapegoating behavior. Normally an organization releases surplus hostility irrationally upon a relatively weak outsider who has, by stereotyping, lost his humanity to become merely a social object. Public welfare workers may come to scapegoat recipients of welfare as immoral or stupid, regardless of the facts, which is a device that avoids the need for self-criticism. But the gradual dissolution of social structure in the power bind means that surplus hostility will more often be directed toward conspicuous persons who may or may not be present any longer and who were officials or leaders in the organization. These are blamed for "getting us in this crisis," or "selling us out." Scapegoating continues to protect members against self-criticism, but now it becomes a shifting force to discredit insiders, one which undermines attempts to form an acting collectivity from the membership. A crowd devours some of its own leaders while failing to notice some real opponents.

The procession of collectively elaborated definitions itself creates a continually shifting situation to the people caught in the power bind. At one moment the enemy is outside and the appropriate course of action is to move against him. This requires the tedious development of appropriate lines of strategy and tactics, an estimation of the nature of the enemy, and the course of action that will win the struggle. Then an internal enemy might be discovered, and the former preparation is now rendered largely useless as attention focuses on those "who sold us out in order to achieve personal advancement." This requires an entirely different course of action, new elaboration of strategies, as the former definition departs from the center of attention. Next the complaint is heard: we have no real leadership, and the membership becomes concerned with deposing old leaders and putting fresh ones in their place. This also may end in disappointment since leadership is not always possible during a power bind; the conditions of trust and communication necessary for its appearance cannot be made to obtain. Thus the constantly heard complaint among demoralized minority populations that "we have no real leaders" need not reflect on the ability of those who helplessly flounder in their leadership roles.

Leadership, in fact, often can only be exercised within the factions that compete for supremacy. Thus the leader of a small faction may dominate an emergent new collectivity that temporarily crystallizes opinion and sentiment in a larger unstructured population. The faction may mobilize the entire membership into confrontations and bargaining with presumed opponents. Since these actions typically do not stem from a careful assessment of the situation, they can be understood as socially structured defenses against shared anxiety, as safety valve mechanisms. Indeed, over time the analysis of what is transpiring becomes ever more simplistic, ever more dominated by irrational processes, and therefore also ever more destructive to the action which takes place on its basis. Collective behavior becomes more extreme and bizarre before the possibility for further collective action finally disappears entirely.

For the members who are now alone, cut off from each other, there is apathy, anxiety, restlessness, floundering, heightened suggestibility, a tendency to believe in bizarre and unexpected events, and susceptibility to wild rumors and panic. Members may turn inward to create private paranoid interpretations of the situation as a last desperate and

irrational effort to cope with the danger. Members now seek private security regardless of what happens to their former comrades. No longer is there any confidence in support from a nurturant surrounding group. Even long-established interpersonal relationships may be broken. Former reactions of childish helplessness in the face of overwhelming danger become reactivated. People so affected may begin to make dire predictions about what will happen next. There may be an increase in merely random behavior that is not goal directed. Minor events trigger severe anxiety as omens of further disaster. People find it difficult to concentrate, and they engage in neurotic or even psychotic behavior.

In practice the power bind does not often run the full course to complete privatization and demoralization. If the danger recedes, the fragments of the organization may be able to reconstruct it again. Even if the danger remains, the new collectivity may develop into a social movement that can regulate its members and exercise enough force to overcome the danger. If so, a new organization eventually crystallizes from the successful movement and it may be less vulnerable to the stresses that caused the former collapse.

Interpretation

The reaction of Syracuse University and the Office of Economic Opportunity to the CATC-SCDA program was like that of a pair of commanding officers in a battle plagued by one man who keeps jeopardizing the entire effort. At first they try to keep the man in line, and, if this fails, they sacrifice him for larger goals.

From the beginning, city political elites viewed with alarm any attempt to organize the poor to exercise political power comparable to that of other groups. It did not matter much how effective the organizational effort was. If it was intended to create a powerful political force of low-income people, it could count on the opposition of community power elites whose security would be jeopardized if the intention were carried out.

Since the CATC-SCDA program was a national demonstration project, it was seen as having national relevance, and a number of mayors were moved to ensure that they would not be plagued in their cities. This influence, exercised on the Office of the President of the United States, was eventually decisive in ensuring that the Syracuse demonstration project would not continue.

Within Syracuse, the traditional ruling elite was naturally moved to a more intense opposition than their counterparts elsewhere. The Crusade for Opportunity was used as a channel to Washington through which to attack the demonstration project that was (falsely) portrayed as a rival to the city hall-dominated community action program. Newspapers fulminated, a kind of power elite panic developed, and reprisals began to be taken against Syracuse University. A few key persons, informal brokers for community decisions, piloted the effort against CATC and SCDA to a successful conclusion.

Syracuse University and the Office of Economic Opportunity were both under fire as a result of our organizational work. Further, the more effective we promised to be in

developing organizations of the poor, the more the resulting pressure built against OEO and Syracuse University to discontinue the program. The reaction, of course, was out of all proportion to the cause. The new organizations were still weak and fragile; they could hardly at that stage have posed a serious threat to the social position of very many persons or to very many established institutions. On the other hand, the appearance of such organizations in itself shocked many of those who had assumed that the poor in Syracuse were leaderless, apathetic, ego-defective, completely unable to organize to accomplish anything, and consequently to be cared for by caretaker institutions supported by a benevolent affluent community and staffed by benevolent professional caretakers. Most influential Syracusans had held some variation of this view before 1965.

Officials of Syracuse University were soon stung by actions taken against their institution. The pledges of large sums of money to the university fund drive were (temporarily) withdrawn. The university found that city codes concerning its property were applied more vigorously than previously. A donor of a rare book collection decided not to give it to the library of a university that would support CATC. It was believed that it would be very difficult for the university to get city cooperation for the projected urban renewal expansion of its campus.

Because of the prevalent assumptions about the poor, the new organizations of the poor were seen, not as independent entities making their own decisions, but as agents of CATC, a unit of Syracuse University. The opponents of CATC and SCDA were able, therefore, to project responsibility for the new threat onto the university, and punished the university for sponsoring it.

The university was not in a position to ward off such threats without support from the federal government—and it soon became clear that such support would not be forthcoming to the extent that would be required. A conservative institution, centrally administered, with relatively little in reserve funds, Syracuse University would not be likely to create influential enemies merely for the sake of doing good. As time went on, the enemies of the CATC-SCDA effort constructed a network of assumptions that appeared to justify their attacks, and the pressure became more and more intense. During the fall of 1965 Syracuse University gave way to the pressure and thereafter apparently became preoccupied with the problem of how to phase out the CATC-SCDA program in a way that would not provoke new unpleasant outcomes for it.

By virtue of its centralized decision structure, Syracuse University was more easily able to take effective action than would other universities in which the faculty played a larger role. It could ensure that, regardless of the criteria for competence within CATC, persons with university orientations and meeting university criteria would fill key positions such as that of Associate Director of CATC. Such key persons could make it certain that the administrative needs of the university were met regardless of the extent to which these conflicted with the ability of CATC to attain its legitimate objectives.

But it was not entirely the pressures placed by Syracuse University and the Office of Economic Opportunity that gave rise to the internal process described in the first part of

this paper. It was the meaning of the pressure that had the greatest impact. When the university and OEO both began to reflect onto CATC the pressure that they were receiving, two facts became clear. First, neither was very stable in the face of pressure. Second, each could easily take effective action to destroy the CATC-SCDA program. After those facts became widely known, the CATC-SCDA effort was always precariously wandering near disaster, a threat that, moreover, was relatively undefined. To what extent could the pace of organizational work be stepped up without the auspices destroying their program? No one knew. If the effort attained a sufficient momentum to enable the organizations of the poor to secure needed changes, that success in carrying out the legitimate objectives would itself feed back in the form of sanctions against CATC and SCDA. The auspices would remain stable if the CATC-SCDA program were totally and completely a trivial dusting off of the community furniture. The reward of self-perception of success must necessarily accompany the punishment of threatened loss of resources; the punishment associated with the self-perception of failure must necessarily accompany the reward of promised continued access to resources.

University-OEO actions and inactions fed into the basic uncertainty. The violation by the university of the principle that sanctions should not capriciously be applied to personnel resulted in a sense of uneasiness about what to expect next. And during most of the history of CATC there was no way to discover whether, and under what terms, OEO would continue funding for longer than a few weeks. We were constantly at the mercy of a distant and apparently arbitrary federal agency that we could not predictably affect.

The Office of Economic Opportunity and the university, however, were not the only forces that impinged on CATC from an outside-inside position. The SCDA board was composed of liberals and clergy representatives of the groups in Syracuse that have traditionally waged civil rights struggles. CATC was associated with the School of Social Work and the Youth Development Center, the latter a research setting of the university. Among students and staff members, some were closely oriented to the civil rights movement, some to "black" consciousness, some to Saul Alinsky, and some to religious groups. There were informal groups of persons who had known one another previously and known the families of CATC-SCDA personnel. As the crisis deepened, the families, the SCDA Board, and the School of Social Work rushed in to protect their interests and assert their perspectives. And the staff members and students in CATC and SCDA began to look to all the reference groups about as positive or negative points for orientation in their attempts to define and control their situations. These developments did not diminish the crisis. They meant, instead, that the crisis had now become anchored in forces far beyond those that immediately gave rise to it. The effect was divisive since some CATC-SCDA personnel were positively oriented and some negatively so to the university, to the profession of social work, to black consciousness, and to other reference objects. It was therefore one of the most difficult tasks of leadership to attempt to halt the ever-widening incorporation of new reference objects into the CATC-SCDA collective subjective world.

The process of recruitment of staff members and students had in part created the problem. In order to meet the tight time deadlines that would be necessary if we could

expect to have developed an organization of organizations of the poor within the two-year OEO time deadline, we had to recruit students and staff members in great haste. I travelled from city to city. In each city, I contacted universities, civil rights organizations, churches, unions, and existing community organizations. In January 1965, the most conspicuous group of people interested in becoming organizers were civil rights activists. They became the largest single pool from which to select students. I interviewed potential staff members and students in each city and then, in consultation with staff members already employed, recommended to the university the employment of certain staff members and the admission of certain students.

We had originally wished to limit the original number of students to six. However, university-OEO public relations and administrative needs led us to expand that number to 14. We had originally wished to have four experienced organizers to carry the brunt of the organizational effort. However, it was immediately apparent that one could not recruit experienced organizers that quickly who would be acceptable to the university. Thus we found ourselves with two experienced organizers and 14 students instead of, as we had hoped, four experienced organizers and six students. This change did not prevent continuing attacks on us for the high per capita cost of education of each student, since the newspapers pretended to be unaware of the fact that any of our funds went for research or organizational work. But it did mean that the outcome of our field effort depended much more on inexperienced persons who would not have very much of an experienced organizational staff to which to relate.

The students, consequently, carried into our program many different perspectives and reference orientations that we would have to induct into a common effort based on at least some underlying common assumptions. Since the recruitment process also left us understaffed but with a very heterogeneous group of staff members, we did not have very substantial resources with which to achieve a direction and underlying consensus. The task was also complicated by our need to evade the university attempts to recruit people who would regard it, rather than the carrying out of the CATC-SCDA mission, as the source of legitimate authority. Although the recruitment of relatively young students who distrusted the "establishment" was likely to accomplish this end, such students also would easily come to see CATC and SCDI as outcroppings of the establishment. The resulting distrust by students of our efforts at education and supervision would increase further the difficulty of building a common effort.

After the new students had arrived, we quickly became painfully conscious of this problem. Bright, committed, and energetic as they tended to be, they also were inexperienced in working in low-income communities, and, for the most part, lacked both an intuitive and conceptual understanding of the nature of organization. Many of the students had no disciplined work background and tended to agree that, “you can't trust anyone over thirty."

The fact that they were deeply committed to the idea of their doing organizational work had the result that the students would also be very anxious if the effort were endangered, very likely to succumb to depression if they were clearly to fail. Without much sense of

the nature of organization and community, without much experience in efforts to secure social change, and distrusting what they regarded as irrelevant experience of the past, students found it easy to carry their own heterogeneous and untested preconceptions into their classroom and field education and to aspire to goals which could not be attained. In view of the fact that, in addition, the extent of staff experience was less than we had hoped, the stage was set for an internal social process that did not nurture rationality.

Fred Ross and I (who had worked together most closely in recruiting) found that, on the one hand, we were under suspicion by the university administration for recruiting people who might cause problems and, on the other hand, stigmatized by many students for our association with the university, the Office of Economic Opportunity, and the profession of social work. Both the students and the establishment saw us as not entirely legitimate. Both groups in turn were thereby freed to use means to influence us that they would otherwise have rejected as illegitimate. Students could rationalize a covert avoidance of supervision without felling guilty. The university administration could rationalize capricious and covert interventions into CATC without being too concerned about their departures from more usual administrative practice.

There developed two underlying ways by which CATC-SCDA personnel could legitimate their courses of action. On the one hand, they could justify an action by reference to the extent to which it promoted the (variously interpreted) building of powerful democratic organizations of the poor. (This mission was also used to legitimize our educational and research efforts.) On the other hand, a course of action could be legitimized by reference to the authority structure of Syracuse University. Neither of these sources of legitimization was as simple as it might appear at first glance. Legitimization by the CATC-SCDA mission, in application, often was transformed into support for whatever was decided by organizations of the poor, no matter how self-destructive or pointless such decisions night be. Legitimization by reference to the university authority structure became ambiguous when the university policy clearly began to diverge from that of Fred Ross and myself.

Gradually, two authority structures disentangled themselves from one another. One structure consisted of the university and CATC-SCDA personnel who looked to the university administration for direction as "higher" authority. This structure usually reached into CATC by way of the associate director and those staff members and students with whom he was most closely associated. At no time did this structure involve more than four or five staff members and students of CATC. The other emerging authority structure reflected the decisions of Fred Ross and myself. We justified our decisions by reference to the CATC-SCDA mission and evaluated decisions of the university administration or the Office of Economic Opportunity by their impact on our mission. This structure usually involved a majority of the CATC-SCDA personnel. However, many persons within CATC and SCDA only nominally accepted either authority structure and soon found that the presence of two structures made it unnecessary for them to comply very seriously with the requirements of either.

The CATC-SCDA administration on the one side, and the university-OEO officials on the other, began to some extent to compete for the affiliation of staff members and students. Staff members and students, on their part, began to try to manipulate and control the authority structures, each of which had become, to a greater extent than would have been usual, dependent on them.

The dual authority structure that was emerging also had other consequences. Any attempt to exercise authority within CATC was likely to be seen as illegitimate by at least some people, and to be interpreted as an outcome of personal motives rather than organizational responsibilities. Attempts to apply sanctions against students and staff members who were in clear violation of important requirements of their roles became interpreted as malicious attempts to punish differences of opinion. Normally, such an interpretation would not matter, since an organization projects its own overall definition forcefully enough to continue a sustained effort. But in our case, personalized interpretations of organizational sanctions did matter. Field staff members who rejected supervision could carry their views into the organizations of the poor or could appeal to the community elite opposed to such organizations. Both courses were taken at one time or another, and each seriously jeopardized the further continuation of our program. In addition, the dual authority structure meant that inexperienced people were thrust into a crisis situation with which they were unfamiliar without stable authority figures on which to rely. As a result they were subject to great stress.

The development of two competing structures of authority, neither able to ensure the general compliance of CATC-SCDA personnel, had also the outcome that the momentum and direction of the new program began to be determined to an increasing extent by processes internal to it, irrespective of authority of any kind. CATC and SCDA could no longer be controlled by the exercise of authority, whether the control was intended to achieve the announced mission or to save Syracuse University and the Office of Economic Opportunity from embarrassment. Any collectively elaborated definition of the situation, a prerequisite to action, would have to emerge from a process internal to the program.

Even if one were not to dwell on authority as such, the role structures of CATC and SCDA were often merely job descriptions which had not become embedded in the course of actual events. This meant that many people could not judge their success or failure by the extent to which they enacted their roles. The criteria for success or failure became various and ambiguous, especially for those who began to evaluate their efforts by the extent to which they were contributing to the building of powerful and democratic organizations of the poor. This evaluation would depend largely on such subjective states as assumptions about the course of organizational work that were held by various people before they entered the program. Given any specific state of affairs, it was easy either to become elated over the probability of success or depressed because of the likelihood of failure.

To these gaps in situational supports for self-esteem, one must add the nature of conflict organization itself. It is the purpose of a conflict organization to break up existing

institutionally elaborated ways of perceiving the situation in order to create conditions that will lead to the emergence of alternative perspectives and associated changes to the benefit of the people of a community. This has the consequence that assumptions normally made can no longer be held; the situation becomes obscure, and efforts at orientation are far more difficult. Under these circumstances the development of a common definition by the conflict organization requires that it have a stable and effective structure. This requirement was not met within CATC and SCDA. In consequence, the definitions of the situation that were collectively developed were adhered to only uncertainly by varying numbers of people for unpredictably short periods of time.

It may be, in addition, that the structure of the CATC-SCDA program was too complex easily to sustain a common effort. In establishing SCDA outside Syracuse University, we rescued the organizational effort from destruction by the university. But the price was yet another group of people (the SCDA board) who were related to the joint effort in a way that most people did not clearly understand. By segregating the research from the remainder of the effort, we avoided (for the most part) charges that researchers were introducing inappropriate perspectives that would make the field effort more difficult, a charge that would have been inevitable in view of the intensely critical and somewhat naive attitudes of several members of the research staff to the progress being made in the field. Further, the segregation of research ensured that tentatively held research hypotheses were less likely to have negative political consequences. But the price was an undefined and stressful portion of the situation for field staff and members of organizations of the poor who were under surveillance but could only speculate on the outcome, if any, for them. In all, the advantages of the complex CATC-SCDA structure probably outweighed the disadvantages, provided one assumes that we had to remain associated with Syracuse University and that we would make a substantial research effort. If one makes this assumption, the dysfunctions of the structure tended more to be those of most bureaucratic structures, dysfunctions which, during a crisis include the difficulty of developing disinterested sources of information for persons in authority, the difficulty of persons being supervised to understand the reasoning behind directives, and the tendency of secretaries to enhance their importance by becoming sources of "inside" information (and, therefore, of rumors) to others.

Given the factors working against the development of a common definition, controlled by us, of the CATC-SCDA situation, the kinds of measures that could be taken to maintain a united effort would have had to concentrate on the development of an adequate common definition. We lacked the force to secure compliance to organizational goals; we would have to look to other sources of unity. To the extent possible in a conflict organization, we could develop routines in order to escape the strain of constant improvisation. The classroom could be used to develop common interpretations of expressions such as “power” and “democracy” in organizational work. We could stress a set of common ideals, a myth, symbols, and rituals, to which everyone would gradually become committed. We could make more explicit the CATC-SCDA structure and decision process in order to reduce as far as possible areas of ambiguity. We could relate daily events to a longer time perspective so that the fate of the program would not seem to depend on each success or failure. We could relate daily events also to more fundamental

assumptions and values that would give rise to common evaluations of our progress or lack of progress. We could anticipate the future to some extent and help staff members and students to prepare strategies to cope with alternatives that appeared most likely to occur. We could develop clear channels of communication and use them vigorously to disseminate accounts of what was taking place, accounts which reflected an underlying consensus of assumptions and values. We could develop an explicit induction process through which new personnel would come to understand our common experience and goals and our present situation. We could create social places in which discussions would regularly occur among staff members and students, discussions designed to deepen the analytic understanding of the causes of successes and failures in the overall effort. We could recognize, and help others to understand, the extent to which depression or anxiety were shared, and mobilize people into collective undertakings which would dispel, or at least defend against, these demoralizing psychological states. In particular, we could take pains to explain very clearly to each person his responsibilities, the rationale for them, and the relation of his contribution to the overall effort.

Where goals were likely to result in failure, we could support the development of modest goals over shorter periods of time, which would have led to modest success and which would acquire significance by their relationship to the more distant objective. We could interpret within a common CATC-SCDA framework those communications from outside or within the CATC-SCDL program which otherwise would undercut developing common assumptions. We could attempt to increase our roles as sources for common definitions of the situation, and stress the importance of the shared mission, the moral rectitude of both the shared goals and the shared means of achieving those goals, and concrete signs of progress toward goals in carrying out the mission. We could keep records of legitimate decisions and distribute copies to refer to when differing interpretations of them began to reflect themselves in activity.

As much as possible of our time, in fact, was spent with these and related objectives in mind, but we were not very successful. Students were pulled into their field activities and away from much investment in staff meetings or seminars. There was no central nucleus of people with the time and inclination systematically to develop and disseminate a common outlook. Although students and staff members constantly sought to understand what was taking place, they developed idiosyncratic orientations in informal groups or individually, and these fed into no general process of discussion and evaluation. Anxiety was great: when a university or OEO official would offer his account of events, such an account could be overtly rejected but covertly continue to have an influence. We were, as a consequence, buffeted about by the perspectives of institutions with courses of action inconsistent with our objectives. Unregulated conflicts between groups within CATC became irresolvable, and jeopardized what elements of underlying consensus had been created. We could maintain collective activity for short periods of time. But since such activity was not directed by a jointly held perspective and was inadequately rewarded, it quickly collapsed. Members did not receive enough positive psychological returns to motivate continued work together. We began to inhabit a collective dream world in which a common definition of the situation would on the surface be maintained, but deeper forces caused the definition to veer unexpectedly from one week to the next. Ideas began

to appear primarily as disguises for courses of action already determined by other forces, not as guides for action. Since, with the faltering CATC-SCDA effort, the situation always threatened to become unmanageable, personnel were always rushing to ward off disaster. The consequent pace of events made it impossible adequately to evaluate what was happening or to communicate evaluations that could be used as a basis for the guidance of action. For example, I was occupied with recruitment of staff members for positions that remained unfilled, frequently did public speaking in order to interpret our program to various community groups, interpreted each crisis to university and OEO officials since they always wanted immediate information, taught seminars and classes, tried to keep informed about, and be helpful to, the development of organizations of the poor and the research effort, recruited members to the SCDA board and helped it to get started, and so forth. At best, my duties would have taken much time. But students would not take part in seminars until they had negotiated with me for more control over their educational situation, participant-observers went "on strike" until they could be assured that no injustice was involved in a research personnel decision, and a general non-compliance with supervisory expectations led most supervisors to appeal to me from what they viewed as the capricious exercise of authority. Persons throughout the program began to feel faced with unmanageable tasks. Those most efficient were overburdened as completely as those who were inefficient. And yet, it was not that each job was impossible to do. It only became impossible to do well when no common definition of the situation could be maintained, and when the resulting repercussions increased the emotional, cognitive, and sheer physical strain on everyone. Thinking themselves in the grip of authority, most staff members and students were instead in the grip of a disintegrative process that controlled their behavior but left them with the agony of making subjectively free decisions of seemingly great moment without cognitive guidelines on which to base them.

The process, of course, spread from CATC-SCDA personnel into the organizations of the poor. As Daniel Foss has pointed out, the ideas of self-determination for the organization, of following the maxim to "Let the People Decide," often meant that organizers and students were abdicating responsibility for their contribution to the success or failure of the organizational campaigns. With the abandonment of legitimate roles, other kinds of relationships took their place, and the extent of illegitimate manipulation increased between organizers and the organizations to which they had been assigned.

The typical downward spiral (campaign to disillusionment to collapse of the campaign) began to appear during the summer of 1965 and gained momentum thereafter. Each apparent failure meant that the next effort was likely to be less determined. With the advent of increasing uncertainty about continued funding, hope faded for what could be accomplished over a longer period of time, and everything had to be crammed into the time of which we could reasonably be assured.

To sun, up, it was clear by the early summer of 1965 that I had made some monumental blunders. I had given far too much weight to the assurances of continued support by university and OEO officials. I had not taken into account the fragility of these structures and had thereby taken risks that suddenly placed the entire effort in jeopardy.

Compromises had been necessary in order to got funding: to work through university auspices, to project an intense effort over a short period of time, to continue other faculty duties concurrently in the School of Social Work, to fail to get binding and written guarantees of the autonomy of CATC, and so forth. It was now clear that these compromises led to a process that threatened the entire enterprise. On the other hand, it was likely that over time the downward spiral would be arrested as our stabilizing efforts began to pay off. In spite of the anxiety and crisis atmosphere, we continued to make good progress in the field and research parts of the program, and the collective irrationality could be expected to dissolve as people became aware of that progress and began to regulate their future in relation to a continuous collective past.

These hopes ended on November 30, 1965, when the OEO decision concerning continued funding made impossible further efforts to build the CATC-SCDA structure. Neither the neighborhood organizations nor the CATC-SCDA staff and students could be expected to maintain themselves in the face of the new blow. We decided, therefore, to support the general inclination of the organizations of the poor to seek to reverse the OEO decision. Accordingly, we restructured the CATC-SCDA effort into a social movement for that purpose. Research persons continued to have research responsibilities, but they were also assigned roles in the action effort. Students continued to be expected to continue their education, but also to participate in the new movement.

The restructuring of the CATC-SCDA effort meant that we were now not only helping the organizations of the poor with struggles against community enemies, but we were also openly opposing the university-OEO determination to control or end the program. Those who had previously tended to ally themselves with the university now found themselves to be a minority faction in an intense conflict within the CATC-SCDA movement. The associate director and the research coordinator lost status by the change. They held more peripheral roles in the new effort and, together with their associates, began openly to oppose the movement in every possible way. Having supported the change, I was seen as responsible for it, and became the target for increasingly virulent and increasingly open attacks.

Prior to this time a history of CATC and SCDA would have to stress the conflict between the organizations of the poor and their enemies, while only alluding to the role of the auspices in affecting the wobbly CATC-SCDA morale. After the restructuring, however, the primary conflict occurred between the new movement and the OEO-Syracuse University opponents, with the community enemies of the organizations of the poor continuing a secondary and independent opposition to us. During the succeeding months the course of this struggle must be understood as conditioning the power bind process that had already been under way.

Perhaps the central differences in strategy of the sides in the conflict followed from the differences in position. We had nothing to conceal and could avoid the impact of exposes, muckraking and rumors better to the extent to which we were as open and explicit as possible. We therefore took public positions, engaged in public confrontations, and allowed public scrutiny of our actions. Neither the university nor OEO had this option.

They had the problem of pretending to continue to be fair and to support us while actually not doing so. As a result, they resorted typically to covert and concealed courses of action which, when revealed, were embarrassing to them. The odds, of course, were greatly against us. They held both the resources and the formal lines of authority. The point at contention eventually became whether they could compel or persuade us to disappear gracefully and quietly and without causing a fuss.

In wielding their weapons of resources and authority, the university-OEO allies engaged in various kinds of maneuvers.

Status Degradation

Moves would be made in a manner likely to humiliate us, to convince us of our insignificance. For example, I had been removed as a staff member of the Youth Development Center for months before being informed that the change had occurred. The School of Social Work feigned ignorance of my continued position on the faculty. Dean Winters assigned to SCDA the mimeograph machine on which CATC was heavily dependent without troubling to inform me of the transfer. In public, however, an air of affable camaraderie was usually maintained with me.

Instrumental Use of Words

The university and OEO used words, not to describe or interpret a state of affairs, but rather for administrative ends. For example, Dr. Kravitz privately indicated to me his knowledge and approval of the employment of participant-observers in an action role. In public, not long afterwards, he ringingly protested his ignorance and disapproval of research conducted in this fashion. When Sargent Shriver terminated CATC, he did so in such a way that the Syracuse Post-Standard announced (3-29-66): "Monday's announcement by Shriver, was a vote of confidence by OEO for CATC to finish the two-year program as planned."

Sometimes the deceptions backfired, as when Steve Plumer and James A. Tillman, Jr., the first two Associate Directors of CATC, insisted that three CATC staff members had to be fired because OEO would not waver in its insistence that their positions be terminated. They were not fired when I found that Dr. Kravitz of OEO could not recall having heard of such a decision.

Concealment

Aware of their vulnerability, the university and OEO typically preferred to be out of the range of tape recorders or participant-observers. A large portion of the CATC-SCDA process, on the contrary, was tape recorded or described by participant-observer reports, although some of the reports and tapes were later destroyed (e.g., by GL) or mysteriously disappeared.

Role Restriction

Since I was seen as primarily responsible for the problem, but continued in the performance of my duties and so could not easily be discharged, there were frequent attempts to limit my role. Jonathan Freedman worked to deny me access to research

reports and to research staff meetings. SB wanted me excluded from field staff meetings. There was no wish on the part of the School of Social Work for me to reassume teaching duties in the school after a certain point, and I was asked by the Dean whether I really thought I should continue to attend faculty meetings. James A. Tillman, Jr., wanted me to rely heavily in decision-making on the CATC senior staff, a group that reflected university orientations to a much greater extent than did the staff as a whole. The university administration suggested that I resign as CATC director and only teach the social action seminar, or only serve as research director.

Invidious Treatments

The university or OEO would act against us, and we would be assigned the responsibility for their action. For example, Dean Hartnett explained to students that they might lose credit for their social action seminar because I had not prepared appropriate curriculum materials to send to the Council on Social Work Education for approval. On the other hand, he made certain that the school did not make a decision on the social action field placement, a description of that was essential to the materials requested by the Council on Social Work Education.

Although I worked strenuously on behalf of continuing CATC and SCDA, those who wanted it ended described me as an aspirant for the “martyr” label who wished to dump the program.

Stan Gluck, an intelligent professional social worker, made a tireless effort on behalf of the continuation of the CATC-SCDA program and also did what he could to help students to learn about social action. He was attacked as inadequate in the latter role by critics in the School of Social Work and eventually paid not to work. Jonathan Freedman, who opposed the CATC-SCDA movement and who produced little in his research role at any time, and who had no social work training or experience whatever, was given an appointment to the faculty of the School of Social Work which he presently holds.

The social action seminars, in which every student was encouraged to develop and defend his own point of view, were attacked as indoctrination. In some other social work courses students did not dare to argue for their own views—but these courses were defended as appropriately professional.

These and other similar maneuvers helped to make life more difficult for us. In response, we attempted to continue to perform our legitimate duties and to work for continuation of the program. I tried to develop an open atmosphere of intellectual freedom among staff members and students, an effort that eventually succeeded to a considerable extent, although only after it had already become clear that our program would not survive. In the social action seminar I encouraged a process that was intended to result in more acute analyses of our work. Although, in contrast with our opponents, we were usually (but not always) open and honest, this fact cannot be taken to indicate virtue in us and vice in them. Given our institutional position, openness and honesty was the best and nearly the only strategy we had; given their institutional position, they were compelled to practice deception and concealment. One of our major and deliberate efforts was to point out the

contrast between our candor and their lack of candor. Our failure to communicate this difference very well may have been due to our inability to gain enough credibility in the eyes of people who assumed a priori that we must be engaged in deception at least as much as were the university and the Office of Economic Opportunity. We, of course, were desperately concerned to improve mutual trust and confidence within our program; our opponents must have believed that it was to their advantage to create an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion.

In some ways, the university-OEO maneuvers were dysfunctional for them. Essentially, they continued to use bureaucratic techniques of social control in an abnormal crisis situation. In a crisis, however, such techniques may be exposed and result in embarrassment to those who engage in them. Further, deceptive actions against a program, such as CATC, hardens the determination of people, many more of whom would otherwise have been co-opted into the university-OEO perspective or rendered ambivalent and immobilized as supporters of the CATC initiative.

The power bind and the overriding conflict between us and the university-OEO coalition finally reduced the CATC-SCDA program in March 1966 to a state of acute demoralization. Ties among staff members that had developed over a long period of time were abruptly snapped by the mutual suspicion. The program could no longer maintain a collective work definition. Broader personal relationships often replaced work relationships among staff members and students. Those factions that remained dominated the staff and organizational process. No longer was a campaign possible. Apathy and discouragement replaced frantic activity.

No portion of the CATC-SCDA program entirely recovered from the funding crisis, although each facet of the program was again operative to some extent by late spring, 1966.

Summary

One can best account for the strange events described in the first section of this paper without making assumptions about the moral characters or levels of competence of those who were involved. The threat posed by CATC and SCDA resulted in pressure against our auspices that was reflected into our program, eventually to destroy it. At no time were we free from the power bind. The internal structure of power in CATC and SCDA was never firmly established. Syracuse University and the Office of Economic Opportunity were also caught in a less severe power bind. The consequence was that all of us violated our normal roles and suffered embarrassment or more serious negative sanctions for having done so.

As for me, I do not intend again to accept university or governmental sponsorship of an organizational effort with which I am associated. And I assume that Syracuse University and the Office of Economic Opportunity have learned that they cannot, under present conditions, even try to organize the poor into powerful democratic organizations.

NOTES

* Warren C. Haggstrom, associate professor at the UCLA School of Social Welfare, died May 13, 1986 at his home following a long illness with cancer. He was 60 years of age. He was survived by his mother, Tillie Haggstrom, his children, Richard, Marni Rae, Erik and Karin Haggstrom, and Valerie Koski; and by his wife, Ophelia.

Born on his family's farm in Ottertail County, Minnesota, Warren grew up to witness the devastation of drought and depression that wasted the economics of the Midwest in the 1930s. At one point the family joined the trek of dispossessed farmers in search of work in the Southwest. Warren recalled wryly that his introduction to Hollywood was from the crowded bed of the family's aged truck. Though the climate was more salubrious than that of Minnesota, work was no more plentiful, and the family returned to Minnesota. This environment, his family's involvement with the Minnesota Farmers Union, and the area's deeply rooted commitment to the Scandinavian traditions of social justice shaped what was to be a lifelong concern for the poor and the powerless.

Following graduation from high school in 1942, Warren worked as a farm laborer in Minnesota and North Dakota. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1944 and was honorably discharged in 1946. With the support of the G.I. Bill, he entered the University of Minnesota where his superior intellect was quickly recognized. He received his B.S. *summa cum laude* in 1949 with a joint degree in philosophy and psychology. After a brief period of employment as a social caseworker with the Hennepin County Public Welfare Department, he entered the University of Minnesota School of Social Work and received his M.S.W. degree in 1958. Shortly thereafter, he matriculated at the University of Michigan and received his Ph.D. in 1962 with a joint degree in social work and social psychology.

Following graduation he was appointed assistant professor at the Syracuse University of Social Work and director of the Community Action Training Center. In 1960 he joined the faculty of the UCLA School of Social Welfare and served as associate professor until his death.

At UCLA, Warren taught courses in grass root organizing, social policy and community development. At this best, he was a creative and provocative teacher who attracted a small but highly dedicated coterie of students, many of whom have achieved positions of national eminence in both higher education and leadership positions within welfare and civil rights people's movements. He published numerous papers over his lifetime and was nationally recognized for his writings on poverty and the theory and practice of organizing indigenous groups. In his later years he devoted most of his attention to the development of a "language action science" which he envisioned would provide the means through which the social sciences could be revitalized and become more capable of serving effectively the attainment of a just and humane society.

Warren's greatest love and sanctuary was the library where he was a familiar patron. It was the treasury that contained clues and inspiration for his search for answers to the complex problems he had the courage to confront. Although a skilled statistician, he lamented the encroachment of the computer age, which he believed distracted students and scholars from the books and the continuing conversations of scholarly inquiry. Although he was the author of several widely cited seminal articles published in professional journals, these were but a fraction of the many papers and extended commentaries he wrote to clarify his ideas or to assist his students. Likewise, he carried on a voluminous correspondence with both scholars and the isolated organizers who turned to him for counsel.

Warren had a reputation throughout his life as a "disturber of the peace." It was an attribution that he cherished, for he insisted that while individuals continued to suffer needlessly and were deprived of the power to attain their rights, that ours was a counterfeit peace that cried out for correction. The world is not always at ease with disturbers of the peace or those who draw attention to the distance that separates

professions of belief and action; this is no less true of academia than of the marketplace and to a considerable degree Warren lived the life of the outsider and stranger.

Throughout his professional career, Warren lived with his family among the “outsiders” whose cause he served. It was a milieu whose vitality and hope belied the physical decay and disorganization, and one from which he drew the inspiration to persevere against the loneliness and doubts that pursue all pioneers. Warren evidenced his share of the faults and foibles that reminded us that he was one of us. Yet even his severest critic would not deny the enduring aura of his unique presence nor the impact that his company has had on all who share his dream.

Maurice F. Connery
Alex Norman
Harry Wasserman

[1] In July 1964, when the founding of a training center for organizers was being discussed, I raised with university officials the question of whether the university could tolerate the controversy involved, and added that it "would be a disaster if an enterprise affecting the careers of many students and faculty members were to be suddenly terminated because some portion of the community temporarily objected to it." My belief was that such an enterprise would pass its peak of controversy after two or three years when opponents would have at least become resigned to the continued existence of organizations of the poor. The university administrators felt they could weather any storm. They directed that some university and more Ford Foundation funds be used for initial funding of the new center. Their confidence may have stemmed in part from the fact that the social action field placement in the School of Social Work, had, without posing undue problems, completed its first year of field training for students in the practice of building conflict organizations of the poor. There was also in 1964 an awakening feeling that social work had not been effective in areas of poverty, and the university atmosphere became favorable to new programs to help low-income people.

A few months later we found that officials of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) likewise were interested in supporting training programs for organizers of the poor as well as research into the process of organization. The likelihood of controversy did not seen to trouble them. The part time association of Saul Alinsky with CATC was an asset.

In my previous experience, however, when community institutions found themselves sponsoring a controversial program, they would first try to continue the program in some modified form that would be less likely to generate opposition. Only when this failed would there be an inclination to discontinue the entire project. But the CATC program was certain to be controversial. Although there was some room for maneuver, the absence of controversy in a program to build conflict organizations of the poor could only be taken to indicate that the program was ineffective. For that reason I repeatedly took the position that my primary role was to "ensure the integrity of the project." In other words, we should not begin a process that we were not certain we could continue on a valid basis for at least the three or more years that would be required for the organizations formed to become financially self-sustaining. University officials were obviously somewhat irritated by my skepticism of their ability to sponsor such a project, but when I suggested the possibility that funds should be returned to the Office of Economic Opportunity, I was orally reassured that the organizational effort could proceed on a valid basis in so far as the university was concerned.

[2] From the beginning, the university was inclined to favor strategies that would minimize conflict. For example, Fred Ross (the CATC Field Director) and I spent much time in the process of selecting members of the board of the Syracuse Community Development Association (SCDA). We believed that the most important characteristic for board members would be invulnerability to pressure and determination to support the building of organizations of the poor regardless of the opposition that would develop. The university view, on the other hand, was that the board should include the most prominent and influential

people in Syracuse who could better protect the new venture. However, attempts by Vice President Ahlberg to determine the composition of the SCDA board were largely unsuccessful.

It was a different matter with the recruitment of CATC staff members. In this case, Dr. Ahlberg and I used much the same language in stating recruitment criteria. The best person possible would be sought for each position; it would be understandable that many of the prospective employees would have previously been regarded as controversial.

The recruitment process was begun. After the first few appointments, Vice President Ahlberg decided that he would like to talk with all prospective senior staff members. Soon I proposed a legal director, a former state legislator, highly recommended by a state supreme-court justice, and with substantial successful relevant experience. Dr. Ahlberg did not approve this nomination on the grounds that the nominee was not potentially a member of the university law faculty and hence appropriate to the university setting. He also stated his disapproval of my considering "old cronies" for employment in CATC. He did not refer to the fact that my nominee had been regarded as "not non-controversial by some of his colleagues. The legal director eventually approved was not potentially a member of the law faculty and had little legal experience of any kind—but appeared to be a rather mild young man.

I soon learned that potentially controversial nominees were likely to be rejected as "lacking enough administrative experience" or "inappropriate to a university setting," while questions were rarely raised about candidates who appeared to be docile. My protests were eventually answered by Dr. Ahlberg's good-humored observation that he, and he alone, made salary authorizations for CATC personnel. But by this time it was no longer possible for me to get the project abandoned: the work was already under way.

In the early months, only senior CATC staff members were subject to selection by Dr. Ahlberg. Secretaries and students were recruited entirely through procedures internal to CATC. However, by the summer of 1965 all students and staff members selected had to be inspected and approved by one or another university official from outside CATC. The inspections of secretarial staff appeared to me to be rather cursory, more a matter of form than substance.

[3] An interesting sequence of events took place around the prospective terminations of staff members and students. At first, when a member of the clerical staff was not carrying out her duties, after several weeks of supervisory consultation with her about the problem, her discharge required only that I write a letter giving her two weeks notice and inform University College that her salary was to be stopped after that period of time. Later, three students went "on strike." They refused to participate under supervision in their field activities. In this case the university arranged to hear their appeal, but supported the SCDA-CATC decision for termination from the program. The university reluctance to support CATC personnel decisions made supervisory personnel progressively more cautious about invoking minor sanctions when tasks were not performed. Staff members and students quickly learned that one could ignore supervision to a far greater extent than in most jobs or courses. Many of them began to regard the administration of CATC with some contempt as cautious and weak, concurrently arguing that attempts to maintain standards were dictatorial and punitive, and counting on protection by the university administration if there should develop any effort from within CATC to discharge them. And university protection was, to an unknowable extent, forthcoming in some such cases. The university stance appeared to me to jeopardize even partisans of the university within CATC, since it motivated increasing deviance from work responsibilities and resulted in major sanctions having to be applied to the more flagrant violations of work responsibility.

[4] In December 1965, the CATC-SCDA personnel supported the effort of eight of the nine neighborhood organizations to reverse the federal decision to discontinue support for organizational work. From that time forward the university administration and the Office of Economic Opportunity pursued a roughly parallel course.

During the discussions in the fall of 1965 concerning the funding, discussions that occurred frequently over a three-month period, no official from the Office of Economic Opportunity ever suggested that SCDA

apply to the local community action program for funds. OEO had been closely and continually aware of, and concerned about, the conflict between the mayor and his associates who controlled the Crusade for Opportunity, on the one hand, and the newly formed organizations of the poor, on the other. We were assured several times during October and November that the 15-month extension could be expected momentarily.

On November 30, however, we were not asked about the impact on the organizations of the poor of our seeking funds through the local community action program. There was only a directive that SCDA would have 90 days of funding on the current level while making application for further funds from the Crusade for Opportunity. This new directive itself was immediately clarified to indicate that there would be a substantial reduction in the level of CATC-SCDA funding even for the 90-day extended grant period.

When OEO became aware that the organizations of the poor, together with the CATC-SCDA personnel, would undertake a campaign to reverse their decision, Vice President Ahlberg established telephone contact with Dr. Kravitz, whose immediate inquiry was: "Can't you control Warren?" After Dr. Kravitz had been assured that I could not be controlled on this question by the university, Sargent Shriver sent copies of a telegram to persons who had protested the OEO decision. The telegram stated his regret that they had apparently been "misinformed by erroneous reports" regarding CATC, continued further to state that "the organization has created availability and reached established maturity sufficient to enable it to apply for community action funds as other groups have successfully done in other cities," and concluded with a report that he had met with a Syracuse delegation to allay misunderstandings. Sargent Shriver also expressed assurance of his continued support for the project! This cleverly constructed telegram concealed what had occurred—and was effective in undermining support for the new Syracuse-based campaign.

At first, most staff members of the Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington appeared warmly (but covertly) to approve of the Syracuse attempt to oppose the directive of Sargent Shriver. Dr. Kravitz also initially viewed the Shriver decision as a disaster, although he did not express an opinion to me about our opposition to it. Later, however, when he spoke to the CATC-SCDA staff in February, he took an official stance far different from his usual informal cordiality and charged (falsely) that I had not correctly apprised my staff of the facts and that I had known from the beginning that there would be no reversal of OEO policy. Dr. Kravitz apparently took a similar position also in informal discussions in Washington with other persons from Syracuse.

Sargent Shriver, in the telegram quoted above, had argued that three months would be ample time for funding to be assured to SCDA if the Crusade for Opportunity were unfairly to reject its application for funds. This was to include use of an appeals process of unknown duration which had never been used before. We were skeptical in view of the fact that the 90-day renewal of our first grant was announced two months after the end of our first grant period. This skepticism was probably justified since, even without use of a previously unused appeals process, the terminal grant to CATC was announced nearly a month after the end of the 90-day extension.

In announcing the minimum terminal grant, which did not include funds for organizational work and which reduced substantially the level of training and research during a phasing out period, Sargent Shriver held a news conference. Richard F. Long of the Syracuse Herald-Journal reported in part:

> "Shriver said that to date the project has reached some 2,500 families through 10 neighborhood organizations."
>
> "He said the student organizers role will be phased out eventually 'as the organizations become completely self-sufficient'."

The news account contained no indication that Shriver had mentioned that funds to SCDA had been entirely terminated; nor was there any suggestion of the premature and unplanned reduction and termination of the CATC training and research program. Also, when making that statement Mr. Shriver was fully aware that the student role was being terminated during a time of organizational decline due to

the decision which he had previously announced. He also knew that the organizations were further than ever from being "completely self-sufficient" (except in the sense that they could no longer get funds from OEO). The news release made no reference to the fact that several hundred thousand dollars of public money had been invested in a program that was then discontinued by OEO in a way that ensured that much of the investment was wasted. There was no mention of the outcome for leaders and active members of organizations of' the poor who had begun to devote much of their time to the difficult task of creating effective organizations only to discover that they had again been deceived by outsiders with good words who restricted themselves to safe deeds.

[5] In late October, Dr. Ahlberg told me that he was not sure that the university would accept further funds for the support of CATC. The Chancellor had reportedly become very critical of our program. When the OEO decision not to continue the funding of CATC was announced, officials of the university were (without my knowledge) in Washington, and had discussed with Dr. Kravitz the prospects of continued funding. There was immediate university disapproval of the CATC-SCDA public opposition to the OEO decision, and university representatives repeatedly argued that without our having hastily sent telegrams, they would have intervened in Washington on behalf of the continued direct funding of SCDA. After the matter became a public issue, however, they maintained, it was too late: they could now do nothing behind the scenes. In addition, university officials now refused to express public support for the continued direct funding of SCDA.

University officials first agreed that I should be involved in university-OEO communication concerning CATC and as promptly violated this agreement. I was enjoined to maintain better communications with Dr. Ahlberg, but was not invited to sit in on discussions with OEO concerning the future of the project of which I was the project director.

On December l, Dr. Ahlberg cautioned me against prematurely and completely relating events such as the OEO decision to the CATC staff. Very soon afterwards, Dean Winters indicated to the assembled CATC-SCDA personnel that I had not related the entire truth to them. (If the staff had not been accurately and completely apprised of the facts, my position would have become untenable at that time.)

The initial OEO grant was made to me as project director as well as to Dr. Ahlberg as financial officer of the university. At Dr. Ahlberg's initiative, this was changed for the second grant period to give sole responsibility to the university. Dean Winters expressed his disappointment that SCDA was independent of the university and could not also be "protected." Soon thereafter came statements by university officials of their decision to end CATC entirely. By the spring of 1966 university officials were informally and indirectly suggesting that I should, for the remaining months, resign as Director of CATC in favor of the associate director. I, however, refused to quit under fire.

From early December, CATC staff members and students who did not agree with the university views could expect to be the object of unusual university concern about the extent to which they were carrying out their legitimate tasks. For example, I was interrogated several times by university officials on the extent to which I was carrying out my teaching responsibilities. And, contrary to earlier practice, Dr. Ahlberg refused to allow our research to continue unless an outside evaluation team, arranged by him, decided that its continuation would be advisable. The evaluation team, composed of two able scholars with research competence, was surprised when they arrived in Syracuse to find that they were not being employed merely as consultants. After the evaluation team recommended that the research continue, and that they visit CATC again late in the fall, Dr. Ahlberg tried to arrange for their return before then in order to make a new determination. The members of the team did not accept this invitation. One of then telephoned me to state that he would refuse to be used as an administrative weapon of a university vice president against CATC.

The case was different with a few CATC staff members and students who expressed support for the university position. For example, the Associate Director of CATC, Mr. Tillman, did not show up at the office after mid-December. He was discharged after an unexplained absence of about two and one half months only through my having finally prepared a written memorandum objecting to the waste of public

funds involved. University officials felt that my request for his discharge was somewhat vindictive, and wrote him a letter asking rather that he resign because of the nature of the working relationship between the CATC Director and himself.

In September, the university supported the termination of students who refused to accept supervision. In February of 1966 the university was exceedingly reluctant to terminate dissident students who had long ago discontinued their participation in any educational process and who were disruptive of continued organizational work. On the other hand, there was little expressed concern about university responsibility for the much larger number of enrolled students who continued in a student role but who had become identified with the CATC-SCDA effort. Only pressure from the CATC-SCDA students and staff succeeded even in eliciting a public university stance to OEO on this issue.

When the university administration sought to avoid a decision by the faculty of the School of Social Work on whether to continue the social action field placement for graduate students, they created a fait accompli by assuring the field instructor that he would receive his salary for one more year provided he would agree to discharge *no* duties in the university any more. Previously the university had refused permission to this same field instructor to supplement his income through part-time employment in SCDA—and had sought to discharge him without adequate notice.

The university administration not only affected the personnel process through hiring and firing. It also took a variety of positions on various personnel questions in order to rationalize support or punishment for various persons or groups within CATC that were regarded as "friendly" or as "unfriendly" to the current university orientation. We can illustrate this point by considering the various university stances concerning the safeguarding and confidentiality of research data.

Prior to December 1965, the university usually supported CATC research policy. The three data analysts and I jointly signed a memorandum in July stating CATC research policy that the participant-observer tapes should be in the research office within 24 hours of being made and requiring that tapes be listened to in the office. At that time there was no question that the university would support this policy. In December, however, Mr. Freedman, acting as research coordinator, reversed himself to support the decision of GL to keep sensitive tapes outside the research office and to destroy the tapes rather than place then in the research safe. Acting as research director, I sought to maintain preexisting policy that was also supported by most research staff members. When, after some months, GL was, for this and other reasons, given his month's notice by me, the university administration heard GL's appeal, which was supported by Mr. Freedman. The university position was immediately apparent. Attendance allowed at the appeals hearing was biased to favor GL. The hearing itself became an examination of CATC policy rather than an application of it. And Dean Winters did not find that the evidence warranted such disciplinary action. I was lectured about the need to maintain an atmosphere of freedom in an academic setting, and university officials suggested to me that I was not objective enough as Director of CATC also to have a supervisory role concerning research.

The relaxed university attitude toward the safeguarding of data, however, soon dramatically and completely changed. Someone had started a rumor that something would happen to CATC data before it was placed in the university archives. Dean Winters and Dr. Ahlberg now frequently reminded me of the need to keep the data safe, and worried about the vulnerability of the research building and safe to burglary. Dean Winters even became concerned about SCDA records that he believed to be university property by virtue of the SCDA subcontract with Syracuse University. After Mr. Freedman resigned from his CATC position, the university concern about the safety of data again subsided—this time until the end of the project.

In addition to its impact on the CATC personnel process, the university administration took a variety of stances at various times concerning the continuation of the CATC-SCDA program. During the first months, the university supported continuation and made several attempts to provide CATC with a better (i.e., less controversial) public image. This defense ended in the fall of 1965, although no public change in policy was announced. The federal decision to end support for the action portion of the program led university officials to express a variety of opinions during the following weeks. For example, on November 30 Dean Winters

appeared to favor the idea that SCDA should approach the local community action program for funds. However, by the next day, Dean Winters and Vice President Ahlberg both maintained that the university would have negotiated quietly but firmly in support of further direct federal funding of SCDA if we had not already made a public statement opposing the federal decision. This university view was repeated several times during the next few days' attempts to convince people that CATC-SCDA personnel were to blame for the status of the federal decision. But within two weeks, when I inquired, Vice President Ahlberg said he did not know whether CATC would be allowed to accept a grant of $200,000 if it were offered. And on December 16 there was a conference in Washington in which the participants were Dr. Kravitz of OEO, Vice President Ahlberg, Dean Winters, and myself. When I inquired of Dr. Kravitz whether OEO would refund CATC if SCDA succeeded in securing funds for continued work, the reply was affirmative. Vice President Ahlberg, however, hastened to interject that he did not know whether CATC would be allowed to accept such a federal grant.

Less than two months later, after a confrontation with CATC-SCDA personnel, Dr. Ahlberg signed a letter stating that the university would support continued funding for CATC. The university took no position toward the continued funding of SCDA. Dean Winters soon helped to prepare a budget for a terminal grant from OEO to CATC, which was eventually approved in Washington. Dr. Ahlberg, on the other hand, withdrew all Ford Foundation funds (which had been available for CATC research) and took several steps to ensure that CATC would be phased out as soon as possible. The Community Action Training Center, a "permanent" unit of Syracuse University, was therefore ended on December 31, 1966, about two-and-one-half years after its inception.

[6] In August, at Mr. Freedman's initiative, a second observer was transferred into an action participant-observer role. Within a month Mr. Freedman began to urge the employment of activist members of neighborhood organizations as observers in order that their perspectives could also be reflected in the data. For this reason, and because he believed that a neighborhood leader employed by CATC would bring a following to the support of CATC organizations, Mr. Freedman secured the employment of a gifted neighborhood woman who had been employed by the city anti-poverty agency, and who would presumably now shift her loyalty. All those changes were made known to, and were fully approved by, officials in the university administration and in the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Thus in the fall of 1965 Mr. Freedman often expressed pride in "his" staff, a staff that he claimed to prefer, diverse as it was, to a staff in which the members were cut from the same mold. He recorded his methodological stance in October as follows:

"My feeling is that to be a good observer, one needs to have built into the observing situation, the freedom and autonomy necessary to allow for playing whatever role seems necessary under the circumstances. There are times when being a lamppost in a situation does not give the desired results. Here, in Syracuse, we are encouraging our best observers to be pretty much on their own. The roles these observers play vary considerably as they sense the nature of the situation under observation."

Occasionally, Mr. Freedman shared my concern that the sparse reporting by action participant-observers may reflect their over-involvement in action. But for the most part, Mr. Freedman held that the benefits from the action roles outweighed the disadvantages. He even considered the possibility that observers could "take up the slack" which had arisen in the organizational effort (from low organizer morale) but then rejected the risk of associated organizer-researcher-increased tension.

[7] By this time observers supported such plans, and many had come to be opinion leaders in the organizational effort that they were studying. I also favored changes, provided sound research reasons could be adduced in support of them. When I began to express insistent concern about gaps in research reporting, Mr. Freedman responded to the problem by instituting group conferences in which the descriptions by the research staff of the course of events was taped for later transcription. We jointly approved the temporary assignment of a training materials writer from the research staff to an action role during a campaign in which his talents were badly needed.

[8] For accounts of those events, see Henry Christman, *Tin Horns and Calico*, New York, Henry Holt, 1945; and also David M. Ellis, *Landlords and Farmers in the Hudson-Mohawk Region 1790-1850*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1946.

[9] Concerning the history of Syracuse, see Ellen Dickinson, "Joshua Forman, The Founder of Syracuse," pp. 400-407 in *The Magazine of American History*, Vol. VIII, 1882; John E. Lindquist, "Occupational Analysis of Local Politics: Syracuse, New York, 1880-1959," *Sociology and Social Research*, Vol. 49, 1964-5, pp. 343-354; Clayton Mau, *The Development Central and Western New York*, F. A. Owen, Dansville, N. Y., 1958; Lucia L. Knowles, "Neighborhood Organization in Syracuse," p. 552, *The Playground*, Vol. XVI, #11, February, 1923; and "Billy Sunday's Advocacy of Vice Districts," pp. 447-448 in *The Survey*, January 15, 1916. There are of course many other sources that I have seen but not used, as well as many that I have neither seen nor used.

[10] See Albert V. Fowler, "Yellow Journalism in Syracuse," *The Nation*, Vol. 139, December 26, 1934, and the Syracuse daily newspapers during 1965.

[11] In this respect, at least, Syracuse University has definitely changed.

[12] The charge was false; I have never belonged to CORE or held CORE meetings anywhere. But the falsehood of the charge is less significant than the fact that such a charge could be made in the mid-1960's by a person in his position.

[13] Concerning Syracuse University, see Edward Hungerford, "A Tale of Three Cities," *Harpers Weekly*, March 21, 1908, p. 15; R. F. Dibble, "The Hammer of Heretics," pp. 353-359 in *American Mercury*, Vol. 3, 1924; "The Strike at Syracuse," p. 558, Vol. X, *School and Society*, November 8, 1919; "The Right to Dismiss a College Student," p. 14 in *School and Society*, Vol. XXX, July 6, 1929; Marguerite J. Fisher, "Apprentices in Citizenship," pp. 213-217 in *National Municipal Review*, Vol. XXXIV, #5, May, 1945; "The Community as a Laboratory in General Education," pp. 151-153 in *School and Society*, Vol. 75, March 10, 1951; and the editorial on page 390 in *The Christian Century*, Vol. LXXI, March 31, 1954.

[14] See p. 163 in A. J. P. Taylor: *History of the First World War*, N. Y., Berkeley, 1966.

[15] See pp. 26-27 in Ralph H. Turner and Lewis M. Killian, *Collective Behavior*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, 1957.

[16] The following paragraphs are largely based on, and closely related to, the account of Nevitt Sanford, a participant-observer of the crisis, as published in his book, *Self and Society*, pp. 231-254.

[17] Although the following discussion is from my own perspective, the reader may wish to compare it with accounts of similar events in the following publications. Alfred D. Biderman, "Captivity Lore and Behavior in Captivity," pp. 223-250 in *The Threat of Impending Disaster*; Irving L. Janis, "Psychological Effects of Warnings," pp. 55-92 in *Man and Society in Disaster*; Kurt and Gladys Lang, "Collective Responses to the Threat of Disaster" in *The Threat of Impending Disaster*; and Ralph H. Turner and Lewis M. Killian, *Collective Behavior*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, 1957.

"The Power Bind," although unpublished, has been lightly edited by Moshe ben Asher, one of Warren Haggstrom's former students, who also edited his writing while serving as co-editor of *The Organizer* journal for ACORN.