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The Development of a Grassroots Citizen Action Organization

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GRASSROOTS
CITIZEN ACTION ORGANIZATION

by
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A practicum submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

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The Committee approves the practicum of Mary Christine Runge
presented May 1978.

Melbourne W. Henry

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The primary purpose of this study is to develop a model community organizing plan for persons wishing to establish a grassroots citizen action organization. Existential in nature, this model will be geared toward easy and practical application, i.e. a "cookbook" approach to the process of organizing a citizen action organization. A secondary purpose of this study is to provide students and beginning community organizers with a basic theoretical and historical orientation by which to understand the field of community organization.

This study will address itself to the growing problem of citizen apathy and the individual's inability to participate in and influence to any significant degree public and/or private policies which affect their lives. Contemporary society has become so organizationally complex that the decision-making process is being carried out through a rigid bureaucratic structure which isolates and removes the individual from active participation. Whether the situation involves an individual problem such as access to decent housing, or a broader state level problem of the environment or public utilities, the individual appears to be powerless.

In addition to its practical application, this study will provide the reader with a historical and theoretical framework of

community organization which encompasses locality development, social planning and social action. In addition, it will provide the organizer with tools to build a structure that will empower people to participate and influence powerful bureaucracies.

Statement of the Problem

The democratic way of life springs from certain ideas such as liberty, equality, majority rule through free elections but protection of the rights of the minority, and freedom to subscribe to multiple loyalties, to religious, economic, political and other groups rather than a total, singular, unqualified loyalty to the state. Its spirit is the importance and worth of the individual and the ever-striving for the kind of world where the individual can achieve as much of his potentialities as possible.¹

The above quotation by Saul Alinsky clearly expresses the author's perception of the democracy of life. This way of life cannot work, however, unless individuals express their concerns and participate in some form of community organization or citizen action group where solutions can be formed and actions taken to bring about their desired objectives.

However with the advent of modern complex living and the rapid growth of urbanization, we have witnessed an abdication of responsibility on the part of a vast majority of citizens. Policies are made, laws passed and enforced, styles set, and opinions crystallized and expressed by isolated few, who are often vaguely referred to as the "power structure." As a result, the role that a free citizen can exercise in determining his/her destiny has become increasingly limited, leaving the individual frustrated, apathetic and without the resources to translate his desire into active participation.

One possible solution to this problem is active and viable citizen participation. But the question remains: "How is this to be accomplished?" This is where community organization and the formulation of citizen action groups play an important part in "fanning the embers of hopelessness into a flame to organize and fight."² It can bring hope and communicate the means or tactics whereby the people may feel they have the power to focus on issues and find solutions to increasing societal and personal needs. In other words, a citizen action organization provides, not the answers but the means by which citizens shall seek the answers. They decrease the individual's sense of alienation by drawing one into participation and strengthening in everyone the skills (i.e.: strategies, tactics, techniques of organizing, planning, policy making, and administration) one will utilize to meet one's own needs as well as the needs of others. Citizen action strengthens self help and enables people to make better use of professional agencies and services within their community.

This then, is the issue: the individual must be made intensely aware of the importance of his citizenship rights and responsibilities to his self-interests so that he will be moved to action. In addition, it has been stated that most people will become concerned to the point of action only on issues which directly and immediately affect them and about which something can be done in a relatively clear cut fashion and in a short period of time. In other words, if the problem is too abstract, it could be lost in a state of confusion.³

Community organization can provide the intersecting point between often isolated individuals and the mass society, integrating a sense of belonging and utilizing the helping and problem solving resources of both the individual and the community. A sense of commonality often comes from sharing ideas and possible solutions, and joint action encourages a sense of oneness and enhances competence in the group to influence events and decisions that affect them.

Importance of the Problem to Social Work

The problem addressed in this study is the individual's inability to control many of the circumstances that affect his life and environment. This appears to be the result of the increasingly sophisticated and complex nature of power and decision-making which reside in government and large corporations. Often the resulting situation leads to a defeated or apathetic feeling accompanied by unresolved problems that range from health care needs to the lack of self-esteem.

The problem is very important to social work which is concerned with the care and treatment of individuals, groups and communities, and the elimination of social conditions which adversely affect these. Social work is any service or activity designed to promote the welfare of the community and the individual emphasizing the following principles: accepting people as they are, working at a pace suitable for individual's internal growth, respecting the right of free decisions on the part of individuals as well as groups, locating and building up indigenous leadership among groups and communities, enhancing people's

competence for solving their own problems, and fostering enthusiasm and self-confidence.⁴

In the early years of social work, the field was alive with social action movements and organizing activities. The following quote reflects this very well:

Every settlement fought for more and better schools, and it was common to find a settlement resident serving on local school boards. Settlements were active also in labor affairs. University settlement, for example, encouraged use of its rooms and other facilities by labor unions. . .

The progressive era spawned an army of dedicated, professional reformers imbued with the ideal of service--service to the ill-housed and ill-fed and to the community, whose vision of a classless, democratic society was belied by the stratifications of race and class. Reform had to be full-time and organized because of the alleged exploiters (such as monster corporations and tenement landlords). In a sense, the professional reformers, men and women like Edward T. Devine, Mary Richmond, Jane Addams, Lawrence Veiller, Florence Kelley, or Joseph Goldmark, were humanitarian efficiency experts anxious to organize the social environment in such a way that every individual could attain his maximum physical, mental and cultural development.⁵

Mary Richmond stated, "I have spent twenty-five years of my life in an attempt to get social casework accepted as a valid process in social work. Now I shall spend the rest of my life in trying to demonstrate to social caseworkers that there is more to social work than social casework."⁶

At the turn of the century much of social work practice emphasized the direct service approach or treatment model made popular by Sigmund Freud and psychoanalysis. Although somewhat stifled, the reform element of social work directed its activities toward achieving change in social provisions, legislation, and methods of rendering

services to people. Community organization identified with coordinating and planning functions of councils of social agencies. Many of the techniques used in the past included the organization of people on a house-to-house basis, identification and study of the dimensions of social problems, development of policies and program proposals, formation of pressure groups, and the conduction of campaigns to achieve change objectives.⁷

Recently social work has again begun to strengthen its reform elements. This has partially been the result of the heavy pressures being exerted by society on the profession to address itself to social injustice and dysfunction, and secondly, the realization that many of the problems do not lend themselves to solution through the direct service approach.⁸

Methodology

The primary purpose of this research project is to provide a handbook or a guide for practitioners and students in the area of community organization. Based on community organization theories, an historical review of existing community organization literature, membership in a dynamic local community organization project and the author's own perception and commitment to the principles of community organizing, this project is designed as a "cookbook" approach to the various phases involved in the construct--community organization.

The fundamental assumption on which this thesis is based is that the individual, for a number of reasons, has abdicated his political and social responsibility of active participation in the democratic

process; consequently, has become effete in influencing the political process which controls his life.

The following research questions provide definite guidelines for the conduct of this project:

1. What are the historical antecedents of contemporary community organization efforts? Who were the major actors, and what were their causes?
2. What are the major theoretical and conceptual bases upon which community organization methodologies are based?
3. What are the salient points to be considered in motivating and organizing a local community?
4. What are the strategies and tactics which might be employed by a contemporary organization for pursuing social change?

Project Design and Data Sources

The design employed in this project is descriptive utilizing library research and observational field methods.

Data Organization and Analysis

Because of the nature of the study, little or no emphasis was placed on empirical data, statistical tests and quantitative analysis. Logic and pragmatism determined the organization and description of the collected data. For example, attention was given to the sources and nature of data to determine appropriateness, reliability

and effectiveness. Where appropriate content analysis was used to report similarities and differences in the literature and describe characteristics of varying community organization models.

Limitation of Report

This report, although based on popular community organization theories and concepts, is the author's perceptions of a "blueprint" for community organization. This means that it is not without bias. Therefore, generalizations to all communities should be suspect, and should take into account the special and unique characteristics of the community in particular.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions attempt to provide expanded background information pertinent to an understanding of this study. The following are operational definitions and may or may not be consistent with denotative definitions.

Citizen participation. A process wherein the "average" citizen of a community exercises power over decisions related to the general affairs of the community.

Community organization. Kramer and Specht believe that community organization comprises various methods of intervention whereby a professional change agent helps a community action system composed of individuals, groups or organizations to engage in planned collective action in order to deal with social problems within a democratic system of values. It is concerned with programs aimed at social change with primary reference to environmental conditions and social

institutions. It involves two major interrelated concerns: the interactional processes of working with an action system, which includes identifying, recruiting and working with the members and developing organizational and interpersonal relationships among them which facilitate their efforts; and technical tasks involved in identifying problem areas, analyzing causes, formulation of plans, developing strategies, and mobilizing the resources necessary to effect action.⁹

Elites. A person or group who has access into the power structure of the community and is able to influence and/or manipulate the decision-making process.

Power. The ability of a person, group or organization to get others to think and act as that person, group or organization wants them to think and act.

Strategy. The overall plan of how to influence the power structure in order to achieve your goals. It involves knowing where you are going, where you are now, and what steps you may take to help you obtain that end. It is not a static conception but a dynamic process which changes and develops to fit the needs and resources of the organization.

Tactic. Tactics and techniques may be regarded as specific interventive devices or means that contribute to the operationalization of a strategy. They are actions in context, reflecting specific situation and strategic ideological frameworks. They provide the concrete experience on which one can evaluate the success of one's work. The organization must always be able to justify the tactic in

terms of its strategy. The key difference between strategy, tactics and techniques is one of scope and duration. In sum, it is doing what you can with what you have.

FOOTNOTES

¹Saul Alinsky, "Principles of Citizen Action," Lecture presented before the State Conference of the Washington Association for Social Welfare: Tacoma, Washington, May 27, 1963.

²Saul Alinsky, Rules for Radicals (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 194.

³Alinsky, "Principles of Citizen Action," p. 4.

⁴S. K. Khinduka, "Social Planning and Community Organization: Community Development," Encyclopedia of Social Work, Vol. 2, No. 16, p. 1346.

⁵Roy Lubove, The Progressives and the Slums (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963), p. 192, 214.

⁶Frank J. Bruno, Trends in Social Work (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), p. 186-187.

⁷Arnold Gurin, "Social Planning and Community Organization," Encyclopedia of Social Work, Vol. 2, No. 16, p. 1326.

⁸Jack Rothman, "Introduction," Strategies of Community Organization, ed. F. M. Cox et al. (Itasca, Illinois: F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 1974), p. 7-8.

⁹Ralph M. Kramer and Harry Specht ed. , Readings in Community Organization Practice (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975), p. 6.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to briefly discuss the field of community organization so that the reader will obtain a theoretical and historical framework from which to better understand the reason, functions and the growth of citizen action groups.

The theoretical framework is a condensed discussion of Jack Rothman's well known models of community organization practice: locality development, social planning and social action.¹ The social action model is the model for the grassroots citizen action organization and will be discussed in detail in chapter III. These three models were selected because of the strength of their conceptual base, their somewhat universal acclaim, and their practical applicability.

The presentation of the historical framework is to trace the background ideologies and movements that have been instrumental in providing the groundwork for today's grassroots organizations. A review of the literature will begin with the early Greek city state and conclude with the social movements of the 1970's.

Citizen participation is not a recent phenomenon in our society. It is as old as the classical Greek Era, and has been practiced in the early history of the United States, especially in the New England colonies. The early history of settlement houses and charity organiza-

tions also reflected a strong adherence to the principles of citizen participation. Labor unions, the Civil Rights Movement and a number of social movements in the seventies relied heavily on citizen participation for their effectiveness in dealing with local and statewide issues.

History

Historically the ordinary human being has been dominated by tradition and the so called elites of a particular culture, and for the most part the need for self-determination has been stymied. However, research has uncovered some traces of communal assemblies among prehistoric peoples of India, Africa, and elsewhere.²

Although this may have been so, the first great surge of mass participation in public affairs came in the classical Greek city-state, and the second was in the medieval European cities. However, the most visible and dramatic breakthrough was in the Ecclesia of Athens, which consisted of a popular assembly open to all free, male citizens who were eighteen and older. The purpose of this forum was for public debate, consensus seeking and democratic decision-making.³

Later urban artisans formed voluntary associations known as guilds in order to advance and protect their crafts. This was the first time in history that control over some public affairs passed beyond the religious-governmental complex to an organized group of citizens. The first experience with citizen organization in the United States was the town meeting. The towns of colonies held certain powers which were exercised jointly by citizens through a town meeting.⁴

By the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, rapid industrialization, urbanization, immigration, the emergence of the modern working class and changes in the Black population after the Civil War presented a challenge to our society. The ideological thoughts of this era were social Darwinism, radicalism, pragmatism and liberalism.⁴ Citizens turned to a number of voluntary associations such as churches, charity organizations, settlement houses, urban leagues, and trade unions to address their needs. These voluntary associations represented a wide range of interests and ideologies and provided opportunities for persons from varying backgrounds and political consciousness to express themselves freely. Citizens discovered that through active participation in voluntary movements, adverse social conditions could be addressed and alleviated. Some of these groups provided the nucleus for current case, social and political advocacy.

One of the outstanding voluntary associations of this era was the Charity Organization Society, comprised of persons who were essentially elitest. This organization preserved their elitism through social reforms, legislation and direct service provision to the poor. The first organization of the Charity Organization Society was in England in 1869 and in the United States in 1873. Their most significant contribution to community organization was the development of community welfare planning organization and social survey techniques. An example of this was the famous Pittsburgh survey which interpreted hours, wages, housing, court procedures. . .in terms of standards of living and the recognition that the basis for judging of social

conditions is the measure of life they allow.⁶

Following closely on the heels of the Charity Organization Society was another powerful community organization movement, the Settlement Movement. Samuel Barnett opened Toynbee Hall in 1886 and established the University Settlement on the Lower East Side of New York City later that same year.⁷ Although the Charity Organization Society and the settlements were prompted by the same social conditions, their analysis of the problems were different which in turn lead to different objectives and programs. For example, rather than looking to individual character as the root cause of social problems, settlement house leaders typically blamed environmental factors, and as a result drew more on the liberal and radical views of the day. The leaders were well educated, but drawn from the middle classes, and were frequently critics of the social order who identified with and shared the lives of the poor to some degree. Their pragmatism was their most striking quality as they looked for answers that would be both feasible and effective. Although human services were an integral part of their activities (e.g., kindergartens; clubs for children; recreational programs; adult education, and art exhibitions), the major thrust was in social reforms and consciousness raising. Also, they were involved in legislative and administrative innovations at the local, state and national levels. They were responsible for the development of vocational education and guidance in the public schools; school nurses; hot lunch programs; education for retarded and handicapped children; creation of small neighborhood playgrounds; housing code improvement; city planning, and social centers. They were also

involved in work laws for women and children, helped organize the National Child Labor Committee and the National Women's Trade Union League, and helped neighbors develop potentialities to their fullest. The impact of their growth can be demonstrated by the phenomenal growth of the organizations from six in 1891 to four hundred in 1910.⁸

The early social workers/reformers organized people on a house-to-house basis, identified and studied the dimensions of social problems; devised policies and program proposals; formed pressure groups, and conducted campaigns. However, at this time the budding field of professional social work did not recognize the work done as social work. Social work, at this time, was predominately individual, case-work oriented, and social reform was seen as a profession separate and apart.

During this era Black Americans also felt the need to organize. Their organizational efforts were very extensive. Among the organizations were: Colored Farmers Alliance and Cooperative Union, Afro-American League, National Association of Colored Women and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.⁹ These groups organized and enforced their rights, stimulated greater awareness of civil rights and promoted constructive solutions to problems of racial discrimination.

The next major era for citizen participation was from 1914-1929. During this time urbanization continued to increase, industrial potential escalated and racial conflicts intensified. The ideological conditions of the day were complacency, optimism and affluence. It was also a time of psychoanalysis and anti-intellectualism. The

Community Chest and United Fund were formed as a result of the increase in the numbers of welfare institutions and the demand for coordination and fund-raising. Bureaus were established to provide standards for welfare agencies; investigate individual agencies and measure their operations against standards; to recruit and select new agencies; to encourage members and public support, and to respond to emergency needs such as "War Chests" for victims of World War I.¹⁰

In 1914 there was the congressional passage of the Smith-Lever Act which set up the Cooperative Extension Services through which county agents went out from land grant colleges to educate and organize farmers and their families. Sponsored by the federal government, these services turned out to be an historic step in the progressive movement toward greater citizen participation. This program, which stressed leadership and participation, consisted of local people working with the county agent to initiate and carry out plans. Out of this model of participation came the farmers committees which set local production quotas and made other decisions for agriculture programs adopted by the New Deal.¹¹

The next major period was from 1929 to 1954. During this time the country was deeply affected by the depression and World War II. Prevailing social forces included: socioeconomic problems such as high unemployment, mortgage foreclosures and loss of individual financial resources; the growth of government, and increased government expenditures, programs and controls; the growth of unionism, which included the founding of the CIO, the passage of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935, and the organization of the Brotherhood

of Sleeping Car Porters; strides for Black Americans including the establishment of the Civil Rights section of the Justice Department and the establishment of the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in Armed Services. Also, on the international scene, the growth of communism was having a significant impact on the United States society.¹²

During this time community organization agencies found themselves unable to cope with the massive needs of the country due to the depression. This period marked a shift of emphasis in operations from local and private decision-making to regional and national public decision-making. The federal government became the main impetus for social planning through agencies such as the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and later through the Federal Security Agency.¹³

The last major period was from 1954 to 1973. After World War II the national government returned to domestic programs on a grand scale. Vast new social programs concerning urban renewal, juvenile delinquency, poverty, manpower training, model cities, neighborhood health centers and community mental health were initiated. Each program was similar to the procedure used in Cooperative Extension. Major funds and guidelines were offered from the national level, and specific program determination, matching funds, and execution was done at the local level. However, in most cases the actual locus of program implementation was at the neighborhood level and with a high degree of citizen participation. For example, the Housing Act of 1949 had a provision in the federal regulations that required citizen participation.¹⁴

Participation was given general and widespread thrust with the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. This act was in response to growing

civil rights pressures, and contained the well-known "maximum feasible participation" clause. Many citizens and professional organizers used it as a mandate to seek citizen control for local anti-poverty programs through anti-poverty councils; to initiate wider efforts toward gaining control over local welfare, education and public housing institutions, and to create and broaden local citizen participation in public affairs. Although this was an increase in participation, a relatively small percentage of citizens actually participated, and most of those who did found they had to battle established elites for power over decisions.¹⁵

Students, women, consumers, public employees, middle-class environmentalists, white ethnics and prisoners soon began to demand more self-determination. As a result, new social development programs continued to flow out of Washington. Professor Raymond Vernon of Harvard estimates that before the outbreak of these contemporary participation efforts, less than five percent of citizens had real power over decision making in public affairs. Today, he estimates that up to 20 percent may have such power, and the proportion is increasing. This, however, means that over 80 percent of the people are without participation power.¹⁶

The end of the McCarthy era, the Supreme Court decision on school desegregation in 1954, the Montgomery bus boycott in December of 1955, and the growth of the Civil Rights Movement gave birth or renewed vitality to a number of organizations which sought to end inequality of opportunity. The Congress on Racial Equality in 1963 sponsored nonviolent resistance in the form of sit-ins, freedom rides

and demonstrations. The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, Black Panther Party, Black Muslims, Republic of New Africa, NAACP, Chicanos of the Southwest, people of Mexican origin and LaRaza Unida stimulated by Cesar Chavez for California farm workers were among organizations affected by the rising tide of civil rights activities. Activity included neighborhood control of schools; Black-owned businesses; professional societies; Black-led Model Cities programs, and National Welfare Rights Organization.¹⁷

Homosexuals fought discrimination in jobs and housing. Women affirmed the right to control their own bodies by lobbying for abortion reforms. They also demanded liberation and equality which are reflected in the Congressional approval of the equal rights amendment to the Constitution and its ratification by many state legislatures.¹⁸

Student activism also increased. Many joined Students for a Democratic Society, Peace Corps or VISTA. Others turned to Social Work and particularly to community organization.

The trend toward federal government responsibility for welfare problems was escalated by the War on Poverty. Among specific programs were Head Start; VISTA; Neighborhood Youth Corps; Job Corps; Adult Basic Education; Assistance to the Rural Poor, and Community Action Programs offering opportunities for local initiative in legal aid, health, housing and consumer education.¹⁹

This was a time in which virtually all the previous ideas about community organization practice reappeared. On the one hand, there was support of governmental responsibilities in solving the problems

of welfare. On the other hand, there was a renewed emphasis upon participatory democracy. All of these moves to solve urban problems raised the same issues; Which strata of society will have power? How are the poor to be represented? How are priorities to be determined? Ideological currents included a basic capitalist structure versus an attempt to change the structure through peaceful or violent means.²⁰

Early in 1973 there was a decrease in appropriation for many programs of the Office of Economic Opportunity and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. As a result, most of the programs were severely cut or eliminated altogether. Eventually violent ideologies and solutions were perpetuated and frustration over the lack of federal commitment to civil rights and to ending the Vietnam War lead to an alternative "drop-out" culture.²¹

During the early 1970's to the present there has been a spawning of grassroot associations. The 1960's set the stage by raising questions and mobilizing people. However, the 1960's groups were unsuccessful in the fact that when the smoke and the commotion cleared and the television cameras left, the people were left as anomic individuals relating symbolically to a national level thrust. The discussion of contemporary grassroots organizations that concludes the historical development section of this study is taken from the work of Janice E. Perlman.²² Her study done in 1976 included 60 groups in sixteen states, both urban and rural. She noted that the organizations had one or more of the following characteristics in common: mobilizing large numbers of people, having significant impact and/or utilizing an

innovative approach.

Today groups have learned several lessons from their previous heritage. The first is that most people are less concerned with making history. The 1970's groups are more localized and address themselves to issues more rooted in peoples' daily lives. They also have longer term perspective and raise people's consciousness through involvement at a concrete level in their communities. Another lesson learned was the need for a mass base rather than a minority base, which unite low and moderate income people of different races. The terms of ideology was the third lesson learned. The radical rhetoric of the 1960's has toned down and deintellectualized so as to start from where the people are. Today's groups are mostly anticorporate though not altogether anti-capitalist. They are more reformist than revolutionary, and their political leanings include anti-ideological, pluralist, populist and progressive. The leaders, many developing their skills in the 1960's, consider themselves radical, independent left, or even socialist. One of these contemporary leaders is Tom Hayden, former member of Students for a Democratic Society and now running for Congress in California. In 1976 he stated that "the radicalism of the 1960's has become the common sense of the seventies."²³

Contrasting from previous time, most groups today take advantage of the cracks in the system to win victories and demonstrate that authority can be challenged and that there is power in numbers. They rely very little on the media for their credibility. They often rely on full-time, trained, paid organizers, drawn on the organizing style of Saul Alinsky. The organizational structure often is a combination

of union models, welfare rights models, civil rights models, service provisions, economic development and electoral involvement. In addition, these organizations are inventing new approaches which are integrated with those just mentioned.

Although the organizations are not alike they do share the following: independent community-based membership organization (or coalition), composed of people acting on their own behalf; focus collective action on their social, economic and physical welfare through: (a) demands directed at the public and private institutions controlling selected goods and services; (b) electoral strategies to take over the institutions, and (c), initiating alternative arrangements to cope with the needs of the population that those institutions fail to meet, and deal in collective activities, multi-issues and multi-strategies. It is important to stress that the organizations are not governmentally initiated and controlled programs, not advocacy groups, and not nationally based.

The new groups reflect the 1970's changing consciousness influenced by a series of internal and international events which have legitimized institutions of power. Recession, unemployment, inflation, increase in taxes, and the decline in quality and quantity of services have left many people angry and frustrated. In response to the problems contemporary grassroots organizations have been created and are classified into three categories: direct action pressure groups, electoral arena groups and alternative institutions.

Direct action pressure groups are single issue or multi-issue, and are organized on a neighborhood, city, state, or multi-statewide

level. The constituency is usually moderate and low income, and racially balanced. They are self supportive, obtaining their money from yearly membership, community church support, and fund raising events such as bake sales, picnics, and dances. Social change strategy is to arouse citizen concern regarding a local grievance. Organizational success and longevity is often improved if the organization is working on several issues concurrently. This is because it is difficult to maintain people's interest after stop signs have been installed, potholes repaired, abandoned buildings demolished, massage parlors closed or a highway rerouted. A victory has a tendency to result in personal satisfaction but may not lend itself to longer range social change and a failure reinforces pessimism, cynicism and individualism, summed up with the statement "you can't fight city hall."

Organizations focusing on the electoral arena seek power electorally to replace existing elites and institutions. Their constituency consists of liberal coalitions of professionals, students, minorities and workers. Often there is a national network for coordinating progressive efforts. Their major drawback is the amount of energy outlayed in getting a candidate elected, and may often be powerless to effect major social change.

The third group is alternative institutions. They bypass existing centers of power. Included in this group are large scale urban community development corporations, rural cooperatives, self-help food coops, and consumer cooperatives. The constituency is usually low income; and they often rely on government and foundation funding.

Leadership in the three models presented tends to be better educated, younger, more often male, and have a higher social background than that of the often conservative constituency they represent. Most of the groups maintain paid staff, pay rent on office space, print pamphlets and newsletters, and mount campaigns. Issues addressed include: housing; redlining; tenant organizing; neighborhood preservation; utility rates; telephone rates; generic drugs; tax assessments; public transportation; budget monitoring; zoning and land use; crime and safety; pollution; senior citizen issues, and health facilities.

Door-to-door canvassing is one of the biggest breakthroughs in contemporary organizing. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are generated with no strings attached, by asking for \$1-3 in low income neighborhoods, \$3-5 in moderate income areas, and \$5-10 in middle-class areas for a total of \$65 per night.

Perlman's study shows that contemporary groups have grown rapidly, have low participant turnover, emphasize process, a high degree of solidarity, and the development of leaders from the constituency that concentrate on future needs.²⁴ Also, it is apparent that individual group accomplishments are adding up. People are beginning to understand the issues, how power and politics operate, and the potential and limitations in collective action. In addition, citizens' self-esteem has increased.

In conclusion, one must keep in mind that further work needs to be done on factors accounting for successes and failures, survival or demise of the organization; the potential for creating alliances;

raising consciousness, and affecting social change. Questions to ponder are: whether these organizations will be in existence in 1980, whether they will succumb to the establishment, and, whether if still in existence what new innovations will be added?

Theoretical Background

Jack Rothman's models of community organization practice will provide the theoretical framework for this study.²⁵ The models include locality development, social planning and social action.

Locality development. Locality or community development is a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community. Active participation; reliance on community initiative and integration; democratic procedures; voluntary cooperation; self-help; development of indigenous leadership and education are emphasized. Community development is concerned with the participation of all groups in the community; including sex, race, nationality and religions, economic, social and cultural.

Local community is frequently seen as overshadowed by the larger society. According to Ross, "technological change has pressed society toward greater industrialization and urbanization with little consideration of the effects on social relations."²⁶ Goodenough, sees the tradition-bound community of illiterate populations lacking skills in problem-solving and an understanding of the democratic process ruled by a small group of conventional leaders.²⁷ In such situations the locality development model has been beneficial in communities that are fragmented, alienated, disillusioned, lacking in meaningful relationships and democratic problem solving skills. Also, it is useful

when populations are homogenous and consensus exists.

The basic strategy for change involves getting a broad cross section of community people involved in expressing their "felt" needs, in determining and studying a desired goal and solving their problems. Consensus strategies are employed, involving small group discussion and fostering communication among community individuals, groups, and factions. This approach is characterized as, "Let's all get together and talk this over." Process goals receive heavy emphasis.²⁸ According to Roland Warren, cooperative and inclusive techniques are very important.²⁹

The practitioner conceives of the community as composed of common interests or reconcilable differences. He has a rationalist-unitary view of the public interest. Clients are conceived of as citizens engaged in a common community venture, with participation in the problem-solving process. His characteristic role is "enabler" and catalyst or, as more recently suggested by Biddle as an "encourager."³⁰ According to Ross, the enabler role is one of facilitating a process of problem-solving and includes helping people express their discontents, encouraging organization, nourishing good interpersonal relationships, and emphasizing common objectives.³¹ He is skilled in creation and manipulation of small task-oriented groups; in teaching and guiding the processes of collaborative problem-finding, problem-solving, and ethical values.

Clients are likely to be viewed as citizens who possess considerable strengths not fully developed, which with the services of a practitioner will be improved. Considerable stress is placed on

groups in the community as the source through which learning and growth take place. Since the definition of the community client system includes the total geographic community, members of the power structure are also involved. However, one consequence of this might be that only goals upon which there can be mutual agreement become legitimate or relevant, leaving goals of incompatible interests, ignored and discarded. Values and constraints narrow the goals to those upon which all actions can agree. As a result, system-change goals are likely to be excluded.

Examples of locality development include: neighborhood work programs, including the Peace Corps; community work in the adult education field, and activities of the applied "group dynamics" professionals. In general, the emphasis is on the unity of community life, with the interests of various groups and factions seen as reconcilable, and responsive to the influences of rational persuasion, communication, and mutual good will. Experts in the field include Biddles, Goodenough, Franklin, and Clinard.³²

Social planning. Social planning emphasizes the technical process of solving substantive social problems, such as delinquency; city planning; urban renewal; physical rehabilitation; alcoholism, and mental health. Rational, deliberately planned and controlled change has a central place. Community participation may vary from much to little, depending on how the problem presents itself and what organizational variables are present. The approach presupposes that change in a complex industrial environment requires expert planners skillfully guiding change processes through the exercise of technical

abilities, including the ability to manipulate large bureaucratic organizations. For the most part, concern is establishing, arranging, and delivering goods and services to people in need. Building community capacity or fostering radical or fundamental social change is not emphasized.

The basic change strategy is summed in the statement, "Let's get the facts and take the logical next steps." Pertinent facts about the problem are gathered, followed by a rational and feasible course of action. Task goals oriented toward the solution of problems are stressed.

The planner views the community as composed of a number of social problem conditions or a particular substantive problem. His function is to gather and to analyze facts and determine appropriate services, programs, and actions. This may or may not be done with the participation of others. Technical or "expert" roles as follows are emphasized: fact-finding, implementation of programs, and relationships with bureaucracies and professionals from various disciplines. According to Murrey Ross, the expert role contains these components: community diagnosis; research skill, information about other communities; advice on methods of organization and procedure; technical information; evaluation, and manipulation of formal organizations.³³

Planners tend to have an idealist-unitary view of the public interest. They place great stress on the power of knowledge, facts, and theory in arriving at a view which is free of political self-seeking or popular mythology influence. Morris and Binstock suggest that the planner in seeking to establish goals should base his deci-

sions on an estimate of community need, determined through four major avenues: evidence of demand from the records of service agencies; judgements of experts; population studies, and reanalysis of demographic studies. They state goals cannot be determined by facts alone but that "preference goals" are usually determined through decisions based on value-tinged judgements as well as on knowledge.³⁴ At times these goals are subtly influenced by the elites.

The client system may be a total geographic community or some functional subpart. Clients are thought of as consumers who will receive and utilize programs and services resulting from the social planning process. They are active in the determination of policy or goals, as this function is reserved for the planner or policy-making instrumentality, such as a board of directors or a commission.

There is no pervasive assumption about the degree of intractability of conflicting interests. The approach appears to be pragmatic, oriented toward the particular problem and actors enmeshed in it.

The power structure is frequently present as sponsor or employer of the practitioner. Planners are highly trained professional specialists whose services often require considerable financial outlay in salary, supplies, facilities, and auxiliary technical and clerical personnel. According to Rothman, Martin Rein states, "much planning is by consensus of elites" who are employers and policy-makers in planning organizations.³⁵ As a result, interests, motivations, and means of employing organizations and planners are similar.

Social planning is practiced in numerous federal bureaus and

departments; social planning divisions of urban renewal authorities, community welfare councils (particularly the newer project-oriented agencies); community mental health planning, and university departments of public administration urban affairs, city planning and social work.

Experts whose writings reflect this model are: Morris, Binstock, Wilson and Perloff.³⁶

Social action. Social action presupposes a disadvantaged or ignored segment of the population that needs to be organized, perhaps in alliance with others, in order to make adequate demand on the larger community for increased resources or treatment more in accordance with social justice or democracy. Emphasis is on making policy changes in major institutions or community practices; redistribution of power, resources, and/or decision-making in the community. System change is viewed as critical.

The change strategy is articulated as, "Let's organize to destroy our oppressor." Issues are crystallized to enable people to learn who their legitimate enemy is and mass action organization is utilized to pressure selected targets. Targets may include an organization, such as the urban renewal authority; a person, such as the mayor; or an aggregate of persons, such as slum landlords. Emphasis is on confrontation and direct action tactics, and the ability to mobilize relatively large numbers of people for rallies, marches, boycotts and picketing. Mass organization is necessary due to the constituency's few resources or sources of power outside its sheer numerical strength. Existing bureaucracies in comparison possess considerable resources

and legitimacy.

The power structure usually represents an anti-ethical, oppositional or oppressive force that must be coerced or overturned so that the interests of the client population may find satisfaction.

Task goals and/or process goals are stressed in the social action model. Examples of task goals include obtaining specific legislative outcomes, changing specific social practices, and modification of policies of formal organizations. They are feasible, help build the organization, create power, and increase self-esteem. Process goals include building a constituency with the ability to acquire and exercise power. The latter is exemplified by Saul Alinsky³⁷ and the Industrial Areas Foundation or the militant black power movement. In the latter, the objective of building local-based power and decision-making centers transcends the solution of any given problem situation. Goals are often viewed as results of changing the system rather than tinkering with small-scale or short-range problem situations.

The practitioner frequently views the community as a hierarchy of privilege and power. He has a realist-individualist conception of the public interest. Oppressed, deprived, ignored, or powerless populations are seen as suffering social injustice or exploitation as a result of the power structure; such as, big government; corporations; the establishment, or society at large.³⁸ The practitioner's role and medium of change incorporate democracy and activism. He is an agitator, broker, negotiator and partisan. The concept of the organizer is one of employee and servant of the constituency. Polit-

ical processes are influenced when he creates and manipulates mass organizations and movements. The autonomous power base or structure supporting or sponsoring the practitioner is an extremely important variable in the success of social action.

The benefiting group is often composed of constituents or employers. Frequently they are referred to as constituents or fellow partisans rather than in terms of the "client" which may be patronizing or overly detached and clinical. Ideally the membership runs the organization by determining broad goals and policies, and in participation of mass action and pressure group activities.

Examples of the social action approach include civil rights and black and brown power groups; Alinsky's unions; cause organizations and social movements; the welfare rights movements, and student groups association with the New Left.

Experts in this area include Alinsky, Haggstrom, Reissman, Cohen, Pearl, Grosser, Clowerd, Elman, Glasgow, Funnye and Erlich.³⁹

FOOTNOTES

¹Jack Rothman, "Three Models of Community Organization Practice," Strategies of Community Organization, ed. F. M. Cox et al. (Itasca, Illinois: F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 1974), p. 22-39.

²James V. Cunningham, "Citizen Participation in Public Affairs," Public Administrative Review, (October 1972), p. 589.

³Ibid., p. 590.

⁴Ibid., p. 591.

⁵Fred M. Cox and Charles Garvin, "Community Organization Practice: 1865-1973," Strategies of Community Organization, ed. F. M. Cox et al. (Itasca, Illinois: F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 1974), p. 41.

⁶Ibid., p. 42-44.

⁷Ibid., p. 44.

⁸Ibid., p. 45.

⁹Ibid., p. 45-46.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 47-51.

¹¹Cunningham, op. cit., p. 592-593.

¹²Cox, op. cit., p. 51-53.

¹³Ibid., p. 52-53.

¹⁴Cunningham, op. cit., p. 593.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Raymond Vernon, personal interview reported in Alan L. Oten, "Fragmented Power," Wall Street Journal, September 24, 1971.

¹⁷Cox, op. cit., p. 53-54.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 54.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 55.

²⁰Ibid., p. 56.

²¹Ibid.

²²Janice E. Perlman, "Grassrooting the System," Social Policy, (September/October 1976), p. 4-20.

²³Ibid., p. 7.

²⁴Ibid., p. 19-20.

²⁵Rothman, op. cit., p. 22-39.

²⁶Murray Ross, Community Organization: Theory and Principles (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), p. 80-83.

²⁷Ward H. Goodenough, Cooperation in Change: An Anthropological Approach to Community Development (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1963).

²⁸Ibid., p. 30.

²⁹Roland L. Warren, "Types of Purposive Community Change at the Community Level," Papers in Social Welfare, No. 11 (Waltham, Mass. Brandeis University, Florence Heller Graduate School for Studies in Social Welfare, 1965), p. 37.

³⁰William W. and Loureide J. Biddle, The Community Development Process: The Rediscovery of Local Initiative (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), p. 82.

³¹Ross, op. cit.

³²Rothman, op. cit., p. 24.

³³Ross, op. cit.

³⁴Robert Morris and Robert H. Binstock, Feasible Planning for Social Change (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 42.

³⁵Rothman, op. cit., p. 32.

³⁶Rothman, op. cit., p. 24.

³⁷Ibid., p. 28.

³⁸Ibid., p. 29.

³⁹Ibid., p. 24-25.

CHAPTER III

GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZING A CITIZEN ACTION ORGANIZATION

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with insight into the development of a contemporary grassroots citizen action organization. What follows will be a detailed, step-by-step discussion of such an organization. The reader can use this chapter much as he would use a recipe in a cookbook, as the guidelines outlined will enable the beginning organizer to start at base zero with nothing but an idea and translate that into the reality of a dynamic, well-planned out and organized, powerful organization.

Areas to be discussed include: initial entrance into a community; the principles of a mass based organization, the chapter building process; canvassing for money, issues and memberships; leadership development; strategies; tactics; actions; publicity; research and interorganizational development.

Keep in mind that this chapter is meant as a helpful road map, and that there will be many new and challenging aspects that will present themselves during your own organizing drive.

Principles of Mass Based Organizations

The principles of mass based organizations which will be used in this section were taken from the Department of Social Work Education at California State University, which is an adaption from Citizen

Power and Social Change by Meryl Ruoss; and include the following observable themes.¹

1. All citizens are political equals. All are competent and capable of managing the affairs of a free society. Competence grows by daily use.
2. Living together is a political process. We learn how to give and take, how to share common good, and how to fight for public priorities which reflect individual values. The essence of a political process is the compromises which make life together possible. And, the possession of power is what makes compromise possible.
3. A community is considered "powerless" when its power is not visible, recognized and used regularly. Power is present in people and material resources. Once visible the community can demand recognition, and can then act with responsibility and dignity.
4. Self-interest is a basic trait of humanity. The individual uses his power for the promotion or protection of his interests. The honest recognition of self-interest is the basis of understanding among structures, groups and individuals. The clear identification of self-interest is the beginning of trust, and conflicts between the identified self-interests can then be negotiated.
5. Conflict is an inescapable part of the human condition. Each man sees life differently with differing values and goals, which are often in conflict. And the recognition of power, the definition of self-interest, and a clear-eyed view of conflict must be present for a society or a community to develop a viable system of priorities.
6. There are no "total solutions." A wide variety of interests at stake can not be equally satisfied, and often any resolution produces a new situation with different conflicts of interests. Resolution is tentative and partial, but essential to permit development and movement.
7. There is no single-line development of a problem. A variety of goals create a conflict or a problem. There is not a single cause, and there is not just one way in which to deal with a problem. One has to be selected at a given moment.

8. Priority is a central issue. We always seem to want more than we have means available to achieve, and consequently some objectives must be given higher priority than others.

As a particular community looks at its relationships to the larger society, priority may be in the form of the question; "What do we want changed?" or "What must be altered in the larger system so that it can help us to achieve our goals?" The following needs to be asked: "What are the areas in which freedom for us must be strengthened?" Internally, the question of priorities for a group or a community is: "In what order are we going to tackle problems?" or "In what order are we going to allocate resources?" Such questions uncover conflict or precipitate it. The establishment of priorities is a process of resolution and an inescapable responsibility.

9. The political process establishes priorities by consensus.
10. Gray courses do not produce action. No situation is without its ambiguity, but when action is required it must be viewed as black and white. Action requires a plunge.
11. Goals must be specific, immediate and realizable. As the saying goes, "bite off only as much as you can chew." Unattainable goals and unavailable means are not real alternatives.
12. Protest-Opportunity-Achievement. These are the stages of modifying changes and stimulating revolution. They are the best sequence of antidotes for the social sickness of feelings of powerlessness and ineffectuality. It is a common experience for individuals and groups to feel that "things are too big for us."
13. Accept the world as it is. A realistic view of the world is essential.
14. Operate within the experiences of the people of the community. Use the organization for their particular grievances, frustration and anger, their hopes and their goals.
15. Man's full humanity consists of freedom, community and hope. The historian Arnold Toynbee insists that nations, civilizations and peoples are destroyed by defects within more than by hostile forces without. A nation which denies any of its citizens full humanity in any way has planted the seeds of destruction within itself.

16. Revolution is a total process. One area of community life may be the present target for change, but eventually the whole community is changed. The stimulus of one "nerve center" may produce both foreseen and unforeseen results in a variety of parts of the "common body." Revolution is a chain reaction.
17. Neighborhood associations seem to be replacing the old-fashioned "political machines." This is an important act of contemporary political life, and as a result they provide the base for mass based organizations. Local interests control the process and organization, and dominate the goals and programs. They may be the vehicle which will help citizens overcome their alienation from the larger community and from a democracy's all-important political process.
18. A strong democratic, representative organization is a community's best defense against manipulation by outsiders. Mass based organizations can replace the one-way streets of manipulation by special interests with wide and open two-way streets of citizen participation.

Initial Stage of Organizing

Initially the organizer needs to create a welcome for himself and establish an identity in the community. This includes an acceptable reason for being there. He must agitate, introduce ideas, get people occupied with hope and a desire for change. He must convert the peoples' plight into a specific, immediate and realizable issue or problem. Through action, persuasion, and communication, he must make it clear that organization will give them power, ability, strength and force. The organization is born out of issues and issues are born out of the organization. Of utmost importance, he must identify himself as the person most qualified for this purpose.

Key people in the community must be convinced that he is on

their side, has ideas, and knows how to fight to change things. They must have faith in his competence, talents and courage. There must be a belief that he will provide the opportunity for action, power, change, adventure and the promise, almost an assurance, of victory.²

Initially the organizer takes risks so that if things go wrong, he is held accountable. As risks diminish and the organization's power increases, the constituency gradually begins to take the risks. It is important to remember that a new idea must be initiated in the language of past ideas, so that it does not threaten the community with an uncharted idea. The organizer must be aware of mass based rationalizations by which the community excuses itself from active participation. The organizer must learn to search out these rationalizations, treat them as rationalizations, break through them, but must not focus on them as though they are the issues or problems.³

In order to attack apathy and encourage citizen participation, it is necessary to challenge prevailing lifestyles. The present arrangements must be disorganized and replaced by new patterns that provide the opportunities and means for citizen participation. "Community disorganization," the first step in community organization is then accomplished. Most change is disorganization of the old and organization of the new.⁴

Initially every move revolves around how to recruit new members and how to increase the strength of the organization. As a result of this priority, the mass power base should be developed before any major issues are confronted. Once this is accomplished, winning limited victories will build confidence, and with each victory comes

a feeling of power to confront more and larger issues.

Life is a series of shifting desires, changing elements, relativity and uncertainty. Yet the organizer must stay within the experience of the constituency, and act in terms of specific resolutions and answers, definitiveness and certainty. However, resolution of a particular problem will bring on another problem. The organizer may know this but doesn't mention it because if he did he would invite and encounter a feeling of futility. He also knows that what the people fight for today as matters of life and death will soon be forgotten, as emotional situations will change desires and issues. It should be emphasized that what the organizer accepts as uncertainty would be seen by the people as a terrifying chaos.⁵

In sum, power comes from organization, and change comes from power. Power and organization are one and the same. In order to act, people must get together and obtain the feeling that they can alter their situation. This is done through an organization which allows them to experience this idea in action.⁶

Chapter Building Process

In this section emphasis will be placed on the steps in building a chapter for effective community organizing. Although the primary sources of data are from Oregon Fair Share⁷ and Massachusetts Fair Share,⁸ these will be supplemented with the author's personal experiences.

Selecting the area.

- Criteria for selection:
 - low-moderate income (\$7,000-\$10,000)
 - 50% homeowners
 - availability of local issues
 - lack of strong neighborhood organizations
 - 1,000-2,000 households
 - political significance of neighborhood
(look at future contenders for political office)
- Obtain information from:
 - census
 - neighborhood description
 - planning departments
- Size:
 - 2,000 households too large to cover before first chapter meeting by one organizer (ideal is 1 staff to 1,000 households)
 - not crucial to contact everyone before first chapter meeting
 - some neighborhoods are not carved out in neat physical boundaries, thus look at school boundaries and political wards
 - core area versus overall chapter area (because of initial time frame core area may be concentrated on)
- Be flexible about size and core area

Making first contacts.

- Before you start:
 - Type address labels from Coles, in quadruplicate: 1 for 3 X 5 index cards to be used at the doors, 1 for files, and 2 for mailings. (Labels put on 3 X 5 index cards provide staff with name and address when door knocking. Cards are used for recording comments on issues, potential for membership, people to avoid, etc. When using the cards, put 1, 2 or 3 in corner as a code for not interested, possibly interested and very interested.)
 - Obtain office space--often in a church rectory.
 - Obtain an answering service.

- Purpose of making initial contacts is to locate potential members, leaders and issues. (Find out issues; other contacts in neighborhood, church or union affiliation; resources; skills; people to help on doors, mailings and phones. People to come to first organizing meeting?)
- Process:
 - Door knocking from 3:00 p.m. until dark on weekdays and longer on Saturday and Sundays when people are home from work.
 - Institutional contacts (schools, churches, senior centers)
 - Stores--get permission of local merchants to do a survey in front of store. Ask for gripes, neighborhood problems and improvements desired. If necessary mention one or two obvious issues to get them started. If the person shows interest ask if you can stop by their home later. Get person's name, address, phone and suggestions. Follow up with a home visit within the next two days.
 - House meetings. Host invites neighbors to discuss organizing and issues. Invite to first organizing committee meeting.
 - Touch base with competitive organizations. This could be touchy. As a result, present yourself by stating or conveying that you have been invited into the area, and some people already are coming to the first organizing meeting. Explain that the organization is interested in broader issues than what existing organizations may be working on.
- Do research on possible issues. Use census data on neighborhood; news clippings, government operations. Issues may include: land-use plans; stray dogs; drainage water; abandoned houses; vacant lots; street signs; city budget; zoning; junk cars; street repair; resurfacing sidewalks; street lights, police-alert systems.
- Miscellaneous:
 - Issues are what potential constituency is worried about and care about. Organize around these issues.
 - Problems become an issue only if you can do something about them.
 - Be accessible face to face when needed on any work related issue.

Preparing for first organizing committee (OC) meeting.

- Find a home of a member for the first OC meeting. This member should be one whom you hope will become active, and whom you think will be well liked.
- The meeting should be scheduled for seven to ten days from the initial contact. It is important to have a central location.
- Invite your best contacts to the OC meeting being careful to avoid "important" people and "crazies."
- Obtain members while door knocking. They often turn out to be active members and can be a big help at the first OC meeting. It is important to get people to state publicly that they will seek contacts.
- Contact people well in advance for OC meeting. However, everyone invited to the first OC meeting should be recontacted immediately before the meeting. (Fifty percent of those asked don't show.)
- Secure two potential issues raised from your prior contacts. These will initiate issue discussion at the meeting.
- Find a potential meeting place for the first meeting of the chapter. Get a tentative okay for its use about 5 weeks in advance from first OC.
- Develop letter, listing issues and brief introduction of the organization which will be signed by people at the meeting. This letter will be mailed to homes in the area. This makes future door knocking slightly easier because of the introduction and the possibility that the person at the door may know a person that signed the letter.

First organizational committee meeting.

- Usually takes place in someone's home.
- Turn-out goal is 10-15 people (50% of those asked don't show).
- Purpose:
 - Discuss first issue that organization will work on

- Sign letter to be sent to every household in the selected area
 - Membership recruitment and new contacts
- Time limit should be one to one and half hours.
 - Agenda:
 - Introductions
 - Statement of what your organization is
 - Discussion of neighborhood issues (discussion started by the organizer who talked to community people to find out what they were concerned about)
 - Reading of sample letter to be mailed to other residents inviting them to the first chapter meeting, listing issues of concern, describing the organization and signed by members of the OC
 - Stating the location, date and time of the first chapter meeting
 - Invite others at the OC who have not yet joined to become members, and to volunteer to help door knock, telephone and work on mailings
 - Select a time and place in the neighborhood to work on the first mailing
 - Have people committed to bring others to the second OC meeting
 - Discussion:
 - Organizer basically chairs the meeting (guides questions so people don't feel left out or lose face)
 - Discuss problem of powerlessness of the individual versus collective action (stress strong cohesion and shared vision)
 - Agitate
 - Stress initial project needs to be small, specific, achievable. Decide on an action rather than just talking

Between the first and second organizational committee meeting.

- Staff responsibility:
 - Contact no-shows from first OC meeting
 - Do preliminary research on the issue or issues that people were most concerned about at OC meeting

- Contact interested people from OC meeting and keep them involved.
 - . Since 50% of first OC recruits won't show, discuss the no-shows with them to see if they know them (however, be aware that too long a list could be defeating to the members)
 - Get people to bring one more person to the second meeting.
- The first mailing:
 - Should go out no later than two days after the first OC meeting
 - If signatures were not gotten at the first OC meeting, organizer goes to the houses of others who were interested, but couldn't make the meeting, and ask them to sign. Try to get a geographical spread of signatures, not all on one street.
 - The letter is typed on stationery, with signatures typed in and original filed to show the signatures if needed.
 - A folder-leaflet done on electro-stencil telling about the organization outlining the borders of the neighborhood, and announcing the time, date and place of the first chapter meeting.
 - Material for mailing is taken to an active member's house and an assembly line is set up. Questions from new members can be answered while you work.
 - Door knocking:
 - From 3:00 p.m. until dark on weekdays, and longer on Saturday and Sundays
 - Speech at the door
 - . Introduction, letter, explanation of the organization and local victories if pertinent; prominent members in the neighborhood, their ideas about what the group should be working on; and encouragement to join the organization to support its work. Invite them to first chapter meeting (or if the person seems to be a potential leader invite him/her to the second OC meeting); leave the flyer. Ask if they are planning to come to the meeting and if so do they need a ride. Make notes on your 3 X 5

index card based on judgement of what they are interested in.

- Recruiting:

- If a person indicates interest, or if he/she joins, recruit them to help door knock, help on second mailing, or help on phone committee.

Second organizational committee meeting.

- About two weeks after the first organizational committee meeting.
- Chairperson for this meeting is picked by the organizer. It doesn't have to be the person whose house it is in. This chair's role is weaker than chair in the chapter meeting.

- Purpose:

- The main emphasis of the meeting should be on issue discussion
- Report on progress
- Divide up tasks for the chapter meeting

- Agenda:

- Introductions
- Report on the momentum of the drive--door knocking and mailing
 - . "Picked up x number of members since last OC meeting"
 - . Enthusiastic support, remarking that some new people are here tonight, and some are coming to the chapter meeting (go around the room stating how people got there, i.e., someone knocked on my door, saw a flyer, etc.--avoid the tendency of people giving long dry reports)
- Issue discussion
 - . Issues raised at first OC meeting research and new issues. This is most important part of the meeting
- Set time to work on the second mailing
 - . Get a volunteer to be responsible for it
- Get volunteers to help telephone people who said they would like to come to the chapter meeting and get someone to help coordinate

- transportation
- Discuss leadership roles to be taken in the chapter meeting
 - . Chairperson
 - . Welcome
 - . History of the organization
 - . Recognition of work done by members
 - . Issue discussion
 - . Membership recruitment
 - . Sign-in desk
 - . Telephone Committee Coordinator
- State when and where the third OC meeting will be held
- Recruitment of new people
 - . Have someone previously lined up to say in the meeting, "I am going to recruit x number of people, would anyone like to do the same?"
- Membership recruitment
- Most important part of the meeting is before and after the meeting.
 - First part must make people feel comfortable
 - Afterwards encourage people to mingle and to discuss the organization and the issues
 - . Refreshments are optional

Between the second and third organizational committee meeting.

- Same as between the first and second OC meeting.

Third organizational committee meeting.

- About four to seven days before the first chapter meeting.
- Purpose--to prepare for the chapter meeting.
 - Have a copy of written agenda for use at chapter meeting
 - Divide up leadership roles
 - . Chairperson
 - . Welcome and introductions
 - . History of the organization
 - . Report on what has been done so far
 - . Issue discussion
 - . Membership recruitment
 - . Registration table
 - . Greeter
 - . Testimonial from local member, i.e., the need for a group in the local area

- Review last minute details
 - . Room set-up
 - . Supplies
 - . Signs
 - . Rides
 - . Phone committee of 10 to call people on the cards
 - . Plan to follow up on doors previously contacted (2's and 3's), remember that face-to-face contact is best
- Discuss plan of action for particular issue or issues that possibly will be voted on at the chapter meeting

Between the third organizational committee meeting and chapter meeting.

- Main emphasis is what can we do to get people to the meeting.
 - Staff should physically contact them, especially number 3's and members
- Work with phone committee.
 - Role playing with phone committee
 - Divide index cards up per area
 - Approximately 20-25 cards per caller
 - Xerox letter to be used by committee while doing phoning (stressing time, place, etc.)
 - Report back to organizer day before chapter meeting
- Transportation should be worked out for those needing rides.
- Distribute flyers.
 - Good way to get people from OC meeting involved
 - Knock on doors to remind people and give them flyer
 - The printing of the leaflet or flyer is very important--it reminds people of the meeting-- specifics of time, date, location (specific room, etc.)
- Do some research on issue people most concerned about.
 - People must understand that the issue may change at the first chapter meeting

First chapter meeting.

- Six to seven weeks after the initial contact.
- Chairman welcomes people and introduces members of the OC meeting who are seated at the front of the room.
- Member explains why he/she felt that such an organization is needed.
- Someone explains what the organization is all about.
- Process of issue selection.
 - Hand out list of issues discussed in OC meetings
 - Issues, new and old, written on Blackboard (approximately 25)
 - . Vote on each one to prioritize
 - Select the top four or five to work on
 - Stress that initially the organization will work on only one
 - Someone makes a recommendation for an action. The person doing this was previously selected at the OC meeting for smoothness and momentum at the chapter meeting. This gives the rest of the people a feeling that the organization does more than just discuss.
 - . This person states, "I propose we meet with such and such, and that this be our first action for the chapter meeting."
 - Vote on action proposal
 - Committee sign-up sheets for other issues
 - . These people will be contacted in the near future to meet and decide on what specific aspect of the issue they want to work on, and what action they will take.
 - . Remember that the sign-up on a committee doesn't mean commitment, so one needs to develop ways of keeping them interested and thus increasing the organizational base.
 - Someone to volunteer to convene a meeting, get people signed up to work on the first issue and action
- Election of officers (optional, can be postponed until the second chapter meeting).

- Chairman takes nominations for President
- Vote is taken after people nominated leave the room
- Repeat procedure for other offices (Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer, and Area Representatives)
- Membership recruitment.
- Next meeting.
 - Time, date and place
 - Don't have chapter meetings too often. No more than every 6-8 weeks. Other chapter meetings will discuss actions, issues and organizational progress.
- Adjournment. (Remember all meetings, whether chapter, planning or organizational, should start at 7:30 and adjourn at 9:00. This maintains interest and doesn't fatigue people.)
- Follow-up.
 - After the chapter meeting, go out for a drink with the leaders for evaluation of the meeting.
- Action should quickly follow the chapter meeting-- approximately one week later, as people will be evaluating the organizations commitment to the people and their ability to act.

Leadership Development

Leadership development is one of the most important steps in building an effective organization. Leaders are the people with network contacts, enthusiasm, support and active involvement in planning meetings and actions. "Making of a leader and making of an organization are inseparable."⁹

Selection of leaders should be done early in the organizing drive. Their main purpose is to help recruit new members into the organization and take leadership roles during the actions. They constitute a variety of personalities and strengths, and some have

prior leadership experience. Some represent a large constituency, while some do not. Two types of leader are important to recognize: the task leader who is goal directed and concerned with achievements, and the socio-emotional leader who functions in maintenance of groups.¹⁰ Since few leaders are all purpose, the best organization is one in which there is a collective and shared leadership. According to Steve Max of Midwest Academy, "developing leaders is like teaching singing, acting or painting. You can't create talent where none exists, but you can shape and develop what talent there is."¹¹

Initially the organizer observes the person's current networks and begins testing out a potential leader. This testing process includes recruitment of member; getting people to organizing meetings; doing work; research, and involvement in an action. The organization should be very loose in order to permit the organizer and new membership to judge the talent and keep things open so new talent is not blocked off.

Initial leadership is usually the closest leadership at hand, and is selected in the enthusiasm of the first campaign. Leaders in the third month of an organization's life, however, are seldom the leaders in the third year. The second generation leadership have the most to lose as well as give in talent, money and experience. They are not usually the first to join, but are often reluctant because they desire to check the organizer and the incipient organization out prior to their involvement. However, they probably will never join if they see there is no room for them in top leadership.¹²

Motivation is frequently a problem after the selection of

potential leaders. Steve Max said:

No one can be a leader without wanting to be. Motivation is necessary, however it is not sufficient. Some people are charismatic leaders. They can make others follow them but don't necessarily have organizational skills or understanding of the issues. Thus, they can only organize as far as they can reach.

In many cases individuals want to be leaders but lack the talent. At times they obtain leadership positions by working harder than anyone else.

Usually there is a vacuum of leadership. In this case look to the person who shows the necessary talent but never considered becoming a leader. Such an individual may be the most valuable find. They are the members on whom you now rely the most, and can be cast into the leadership role by their own organizational activity.

Time and time again we encounter the effective leader who says, "A year ago I never dreamed I would be doing this."¹³

People become leaders when they discover that they can do things they never believed they were capable of before. This includes: chairing a meeting; talking to strangers; giving instructions to others; standing up to people in powerful positions; speaking to a crowd; writing an article; planning an action; inspiring others to act; raising money; talking to reporters; being a person through whom lines of communication flow; making assignments and following results; communicating and defending group decisions; speaking for the group; handling emergencies; developing strategy, and spending the organization's money. Responsibility should be gradual. And remember, it's not enough for them to watch the organizer do it, but that personal experience results in greater learning and understanding.

Kim Clerc, Director of Oregon Fairshare states, "real leaders come out of the actions." He further states, "the way new leaders are

found in the action is by observing the current leaders' performance, and those in the audience that make a good appearance, and are articulate." In addition, he stresses that "during each stage of leadership development, the organizer needs to continually ask himself what else do I need to teach them, and what do they need to learn?"¹⁴

In order to be an effective leader, other members of the organization need to start thinking of him as a leader; and create an organized and explicit support group for him. As this occurs the leaders need defined tasks, clarification of whom they are accountable to and when, and the feeling that his skills are mandatory for the organization's success.

According to Barbara Susin, the leader's first goal is to build the organization. He must be sophisticated; sensitive; flexible; self-confident; alert and smart; act a role, step back from it, assess himself in it, and make changes based on that assessment; initiate and control; collect data, and feedback to appropriate sources. He must be in continual touch with the constituency, as he speaks for and to their concerns, acts when necessary on their behalf, and works with them on an on-going basis. She concludes by stating, it is important for experienced leaders to get out of the way so new ones can grow.¹⁵

Strategies and Tactics

Organizational activities take place within a definite historical context, influenced by past history and social currents. As a result, an analysis of strategy and tactics must include an assessment of

prevailing political, economic, and social trends in the country at the present; evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the opposition and its allies; understanding of the most desirable direction of organizational growth, and formulation of long range goals and steps leading to them.¹⁶

If the goal is a change in authority, control and ideas rather than just a redistribution of goods, then the following general aspects must be considered in developing a strategy. Will it, reach most constituents and work toward building a majority movement; present intermediate goals that are realizable and desirable to show the necessity and possibility of organizing; develop collective action; materially improve constituency's lives; give members a sense of their own power, and alter existing relations of power.¹⁷

This criterion should be applied to any activity, whether it be confrontation with specific demands; negotiation; questioning legitimacy; bargaining; forcing an issue at a public hearing; embarrassment pressure such as picketing; public expose in the press or in a hearing; mass public protest meetings; mass demonstration tied to a specific campaign; guerilla and dramatic activities; legal disruptive actions such as a strike, boycott and stockholders meeting, or civil disobedience. (The latter is useful on occasion but it should be remembered other tactics are just as effective, less alienating and less costly.)¹⁸

No strategy is without difficulties, or is right for every circumstance. After strategy selection, remember that it is an intermediate strategy, and as a result must be re-evaluated; it must

provide ways that people can move from understanding specific issues to an understanding of interrelated social reactions, and it must keep ultimate and immediate concerns in view, and take into account the needs and strengths of the individuals, their understanding of what is possible and the nature of the opposition.¹⁹

More specifically will it broaden and relate to many aspects of members' lives; convert a vision into specific activity; help members gain self-respect; unite people and build mass organization; identify felt needs that would move people into direct action where they can evaluate their efforts; identify institutions and who within exercises control over the issue and has the power to make reforms in response to pressure; identifies what a victory would be; provide step-by-step activity for involvement, and provide a few initial victories that are important for self-confidence.²⁰

An effective strategy and/or tactic maintains interest and activity; has strong flexible goals, and experiences that are digested, reflected on, related to general patterns, universalities and meanings, and synthesized. They utilize the strengths and resources available: for example; How much time is necessary or available? Who and how many will support? Does the opposition possess the power to the degree that it can suspend or change the laws?

Lastly, a basic requirement for the understanding of politics of change is a recognition of the world as it is, thus working with it on its own terms.²¹

Rules of Power Tactics

Tactics basically mean doing what you can with what you have, or how to take and how to give. They should be dramatic, clever, headline catching, have immediacy, produce response, and allow people to see cause and effect. A mix of tactics is usually recommended, as strength for an organization is to be able to work on many levels and to move easily from one tactical approach to another.

Following are the rules of power tactics from the work of Saul Alinsky:²²

1. Power is not what you have but what the opposition thinks you have.
2. Never go outside the experience of your people, as the result is confusion, fear, retreat and collapse of communication.
3. Wherever possible go outside of the experience of the opposition, in order to cause confusion, fear and retreat.
4. Make the opposition live up to their own book of rules. This is extremely effective as they often can not obey their own rules.
5. Ridicule is man's most potent weapon, as it infuriates the opposition and is almost impossible to counterattack.
6. A good tactic is one your people enjoy.
7. A good tactic that drags on too long becomes boring, as man can sustain militant interest in any issue for only a limited time.
8. Keep the pressure on with different tactics and actions.
9. The threat is usually more terrifying than the thing itself.
10. The major premise for tactics is the development of operations that will maintain a constant pressure upon the opposition. It is this uneasing pressure that results in the reactions from the opposition that are essential for the success of the campaign. The action is in the reaction, and that action is itself the

consequences of reaction to the reaction, ad infinitum. Pressure produces reaction, and constant pressure sustains action.

11. If you push a negative hard and long enough it will break through into its counterside (based on every negative has a positive).
12. The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative, as you can't risk being trapped by the opposition in sudden agreement with your demand by them saying "You're right, we don't know what to do about this issue, now tell us."
13. Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it. This is often difficult in a complex interrelated urban society, as it is difficult to single out who is to blame, as there is a lot of "passing the buck."
 - a. One criteria in picking your target is the target's vulnerability. However don't get sidetracked if the target asks "why do you center in on me? as there are others too." Disregard these arguments and for the present forget all of the others to blame. Also, as you zero in and freeze your target, others appear by their support of the target.
 - b. The target must be a personification, in order to develop hostility. Let nothing get you off target.

Actions

Actions are used to demand rights or interact with the system in order that needs are heard and relief to the problem given. It is important that the organization not be put off by study committees, but instead obtain response and action as soon as possible.

In order to assure that the action is successful, the following aspects are emphasized: purpose should be clearly stated; issue must be important to the constituency; there must be strong, effective leadership with the ability to chair meetings and allow wide, diverse participation, and keep the group focused and moving.

There are many types of actions. Examples include: a strike; an election; a legal suit; confrontation; education, and service. In order to make a selection the following criteria for evaluation may be helpful:²³

1. Is the timetable of action internal or external (an election is external as you have no control, the boycott is internal as it starts and stops when you want).
2. What are the legal constraints? Many actions must be conducted according to procedures outlined by law (an illegal action can be appropriate, but the consequences must be considered).
3. What relationship does the action establish between leadership and membership or use of support? What is the relationship between the organization and the opposition?
4. Will the action bring in allies who have a common interest? How will it affect and alter their interest?
5. What is the inherent power of the action; is it symbolic action versus power?
6. What is the permanence of the result?

Preparation for an action is essential. You must know exactly what you want to do, get necessary permits and permissions if feasible, plan the media publicity, notify interested people and organizations, decide on the number of persons required and assign responsibilities to people or committees. If the meeting is not well organized with

specific things to be done, people will lose interest and not return.

Approximately one week in advance distribute flyers stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting. One to two days before the meeting call each person previously contacted and remind them of the meeting and how they can benefit from attending and working for the issue. Involve clergy if possible as this helps create trust and credibility and select a room that accommodates the number of people expected to come to the action but make sure it is small enough to give the affect that the room is packed.

After the action it is important for organizer, leaders, and constituency to respond immediately with feedback. Don't let situations fester, but see that they are resolved as soon as possible. In evaluating and criticizing the action refer to pre-set goals; use observation, and criticize behavior patterns rather than specific acts. Success of action can be undermined in two ways: if it does not attain its objectives, or if it attains its objectives, but someone other than the members of the organization is seen as responsible for the result.²⁴ Lastly, a successful action should always increase membership and interest in the ability of the organization to build power.

Strategical Considerations of Actions

The strategical considerations which will be discussed in this section were taken from the Property Tax Organizing Manual prepared by the Movement for Economic Justice.²⁵

Decision needs to be made regarding what the best issues, goals,

best plan of action, who and what the targets will be and when the action should occur. However, it is important to remember, that no matter what your overall strategies are, avoid political party affiliations or being labeled politically "left" or "right." The following are some strategical elements to be considered when undertaking an action.

Is it a good issue? Be sure the issue is worth your time and effort, and that accomplishing your goal will benefit the people you want to organize. Also, consider if the issues will benefit many people or only a few, whether they will be of great value or relatively insignificant, and be aware of who will be penalized. Also, ask yourself if you are organizing to get direct relief for your constituency or as a way of changing the system, or to build the power of your organization. (Probably you will want to do all three, but know what kinds of actions to use to obtain each goal.) Don't confuse relief with reform, as relief is more immediate action which corrects illegalities or unequal application of the present system, while reform is a long term goal which changes the laws of the present system to achieve more equality for everyone. Neither, of course, is possible without an educated, activist public who knows how the present system operates and how it can and should operate.

What are the issues? For your first effort, choose the most obvious issues and ones you have the most chance of winning and that will involve the most people. Often this will mean attacking the weakest spots in the system, and building on small victories to organize and gain power to confront bigger issues.

Define the issues. Don't take on too much or more than your group can handle effectively, and don't gather too much material with which to work with. Expand the issues as your group grows and has more talent and resources.

Be specific. State what inequalities exist and how the organization thinks they should be corrected. Use simple graphs, charts, and statements; and be aware of how each affects the other.

Use specific examples to show the inequalities. Find two to three people being victimized and have them tell their story, and how they tried to battle the system but failed as individuals. (Tell the story to the meetings and to the media.)

Where does your group fit in? Is your issue the only organizing issue or part of a larger multi-issue community organizing effort? If you are part of a larger organizing effort, don't diffuse your energy by working in too many issues at once. A core group should concentrate on an initial issue.

Who and what is the target? No matter what the issue, choose a specific target for your activities; and direct your attacks not only against the target but against a specific person if at all possible. (The target and the person should represent the unfairness of the system.) Use them as the prime example. Listen carefully for any quotes from the person that you can use against him. Investigate his or her other activities and try to discredit the person in other areas as well (this last point is optional).

Make the plan of action flexible. You know the issues and decided where to start, and developed a long range plan and timetable,

but don't plan from day to day, as the plan must be flexible and always include alternative actions so you can recover from defeats. Channel your victories toward your final goals and take advantage of changing situations. Be equally flexible on larger issues, but keep in mind that the group must decide what compromises, if any, it will accept. Be prepared to detect the mistakes and weaknesses of the system and turn them to your advantage. Anticipate defeats and victories.

Don't tell all you know. Plan to reveal inequities and campaign strategy over a period of time. This type of constant pressure is better than telling all you have found out at once. Continuing revelations of new inequities or examples often will keep the opposition off balance. They will have to defend their system from new attacks constantly; and they won't know where or when the next assault will be. Also, the press and media can continue to carry new information, thus keeping public interest high.

Know the facts. Continue to gather more of them, as you will lose your strength and public confidence if the system proves your facts to be wrong, even though your general thesis is right. The opposition has professionals working for it who will try to confuse you and the public; however, you can deal with them confidently only when and if you have the facts and know what you are talking about. The opposition may produce figures that disprove your information, so as a result, be able to understand the studies and show where they are wrong and how they distort the true situation, if they do.

Know the system. How does the system work? Where does the money go? What is the nature of the power structure? Don't waste time with assistants who have no power, but find out who has the final authority, how he got the job, whose support he needs, and what his qualifications are. Review boards for the following information: who sits on them, how did they get the job, their qualifications, what other jobs they hold, whether they own land, etc., and their political allies.

Know the processes and timetables. Know when papers are filed to appear before appeals board, when are hearings of interest to you being held, dates and deadlines, etc.

Outline of Agenda to be Used at All Actions

In this section discussion will be on the agenda to be used at all actions. The primary source of data is from Oregon Fair Share²⁶ and the author's personal experience.

7:00 p.m. (Pre-meeting)

1. Welcome and introductions.
2. Why we are here.
3. What we want.
4. How we want to proceed.

7:30 p.m. (Meeting)

1. Welcome and introductions.
2. Why we are here.
3. How we want to proceed.
4. What we want.

5. Discussion and negotiation.

6. Summary of what we got.

8:30 p.m. (Post-meeting)

1. Evaluation and next steps.

2. Membership recruitment.

3. Adjourn (9:00 p.m.).

It is important to understand that the meeting is held in three parts. The pre-meeting is attended by only the members and citizens. It is intended to get the people emotionally involved and prepared to go after their requests in an orderly fashion.

The meeting includes the above and the city officials or the opposition that are to be questioned or confronted. The officials should be politely escorted in by a sergeant at arms at 7:30 and escorted out at 8:30. During the meeting, the points of importance should be discussed and commitments from the officials should be secured and summarized so both the official and the members understand the agreements.

The post-meeting is attended by only the members and citizens. The purpose is for evaluation and direction for next steps.

In order to avoid lengthy and unproductive meetings, it is important to start the meetings on time and follow the above time frame. Also, keep in mind that the action should be fun for the people, produce additional members for the organization and generate concrete discussion.

Publicity

Publicity is an important element of a successful citizen action

organization. It can help attract supporters to the community organization and/or action, it can help build pressure on politicians or institutions and it can help educate the public at large. The primary source of data used in this section is from the Oregon Fair Share Workshop²⁷ and the author's personal experience.

Internal

- Flyers, posters, signs (part of the action)
 - Build it into action itself
 - People should have fun with it
- Newsletter
 - How to write a news story; use newspaper style (key part is the lead--first paragraph--most important)
 - . Summarize everything you're saying
 - . Assume no one reads past the first part
 - . Must "grab" people
 - Short paragraphs--nothing over two sentences
 - Assume the general public reads at the eighth grade level (if you're concerned about a word, test it out on people in the vicinity)--use simple words
 - Don't leave important points to the end, as it is edited from the bottom up
 - Put "fluff" at end
 - Break up story with quotes
 - . Need to tell the person that you're going to use it
 - . After meeting or action, call people up and ask them what they thought
 - Series of short articles are better than one lengthy one--assume attention span is not very long.
 - Goals:
 - Try to get members to write the stories
 - The stories should be written with two points in mind:
 - . Recognition of work already done
 - . Broader information and experience to reach others
 - There should be sharing between chapters of flyers, clippings, press releases, etc.
 - News to be included should go beyond just the chapter.

External

- Media--when and how to use it:
 - When you have something newsworthy
 - When organizing
 - Use as a weapon (otherwise it becomes over-saturated)
 - Avoid creating false expectation--never lie to the media
 - Put self in media's position (why should they be coming?--conflict, action, human reaction)
 - Use press primarily for an action
 - Use press primarily for exposure--informational purpose
- Process:
 - Press release should go out 5-7 days before the action
 - . Include the name of the organization, address, 2-3 telephone numbers to call if more information is needed
 - Have list of who you want to send it to-- papers, radio, television stations
 - Be aware of the timing--send one copy to state headquarters for approval
 - 2-3 days before the action, divide up press list, and have them call the media on the list to ask them if they received the press release
 - The day of the action--call them up again and ask them if they are going to cover it, and if they are not would they like a follow-up report?
 - . If television not at the action, they probably don't want a follow-up
 - . Radio--may want interview, often even before the action
 - Possible question: Why are you doing it?
 - What do you hope to accomplish?
 - Good pre-action publicity
 - . Television stations--getting reporters for night coverage is the worst-- morning and daytime, before 2:00 p.m., is best
 - Media committee at action
 - . Greet press
 - . Find out what press is there, answer questions, give flyers
 - . Be by sign-in table
 - . Sign-in press
 - Press may want to interview key leadership--

don't let it happen during the action but let them do it after the action, when it can be done on own turf.

- Assignments
 - . Modify media sources
 - . If reporter not there, and they want a report, call in a report
- Evaluation with media committee
 - . What worked, didn't work
 - . Recognize press when they did a good story

- Other:

- Public service announcements
- Talk shows
- Set up relationships with reporters--give reporter information on other stories (favors)
- Be honest
- Hand deliver press release--may improve media relationship with organization
- Investigative reporters--good floaters
- Rotate who is going to be spokesperson for the press

Research

In this section emphasis will be placed on the importance of research in building a successful organization and winning victories. The primary source of data is from a staff workshop sponsored by Oregon Fair Share in December 1977.²⁸

- Know what you are looking for (most important).
 - Who it affects--friends, enemies, potential allies
 - History of issue (initially should be simple--ask key people what happened over past ten years)
 - Ask timing question:
 - . Do you have control over the time or is it external?
 - . How much can we control it? Are you going to initiate it or is it coming ahead faster than it can be dealt with?
 - . How much time do you have?
 - Who has the power to resolve it? (different people

- have little pieces of the power)
 - . Isolate out who has each little piece and how much can they decide on or delegate to next step.
 - How are you going to use the research for the organization?
 - . Use it initially for the basis of whether or not to get into an issue
 - . Assuming you get into an issue-- can you do something about it and have enough base?
- Find out someone else to do it other than organizer (must be clearly defined, use of role-playing often useful)
- People that do the research should find the research that's already done
- Know how to use it
 - Think of it as a tactical weapon
- Timetable (these are the things we need right now and those that we want later).
- Have idea of where you're going.
 - Map out loose campaign program
 - Ask what do I need to know as an organizer to build a tactic?
 - . Who are the people involved in an issue and how to get at them?
 - . Events
- Remember the basic principle: contradiction of what people do and say they'll do, and what they say and what they really do.
 - This exposes oppositions vulnerability
- Sources
 - Informants, city officials, media
- How you use it
 - Personalize it
 - Break issue down to some human scale--not tragic, but x number of kids killed (volume is dramatic)
 - Need to neutralize opposition with research.

- Need to look like you know your facts, in case it is used with press
- Opportunity for action
- Just getting the information itself

Interorganizational Development

Success after the organizing drive; recruitment of members; fund raising, and completion of successful actions, depends on the structural elements necessary for maintaining the mass organization, as well as interpersonal and behavioral elements that influence internal harmony and strength. The primary source of data is from The Community Training and Development Project.²⁹

Structurally there should be an explicit structure and decision-making vehicle; levels of involvement to allow members to make more or less of a commitment depending on their interest and time; division of labor, reviewed systematically and designed to help less skilled members gain skills; leadership responsible to the organization; work and involvement having some relationship to decision-making, and information dissemination throughout the organization.

In regard to interpersonal and behavioral elements the following are important: creation of an open, problem-solving climate throughout the organization; trust among individuals and groups; competition made relevant to work goals in order to maximize collaborative efforts; increased sense of "ownership" of the organization and its objectives; staff and leaders functioning according to relevant objectives rather than only according to past practices; increased self-control and self-direction for people within the organization. Group work is more effective if organized to accomplish a given task;

time is used productively; leadership dealt with as a function and not just a personality. Interpersonal relationships within the organization are improved by communication patterns; openness in expressing what one thinks and feels; degree of understanding and acceptance among the staff and members; trust and respect, and constructive approaches to conflicts. Problem-solving can be accomplished by reducing unhealthy competitiveness among people; resolving intergroup conflicts around such things as overlapping responsibilities or confused lines of authority, and establishing objectives across two or more aspects of the organization.

The following behavioral science principals should be emphasized: meet individual needs as well as the organizations requirements (this tends to produce the highest rate and quality of performance); individuals expect recognition in satisfying interpersonal relativeness; people have a drive toward growth and self-realization; group climate which allows openness about positive and negative feelings produce strong identification with other organizational members and staff, as well as goals (this also helps the group become increasingly able to deal constructively with potentially disruptive internal issues); personal growth is facilitated by a relationship which is honest, caring and nonmanipulative, and positive change flows naturally from group which feels a common identification and an ability to influence their environment.

FOOTNOTES

¹Meryl Ruoss, Citizen Power and Social Change (New York: Seabury Press, 1969) Adapted by California State University, San Francisco, Department of Social Work Education "Principles of Mass Based Organizations," p. 1-4.

²Saul Alinsky, Rules for Radicals (New York: Random House, 1971) p. 98-104.

³Ibid., p. 109-112.

⁴Saul Alinsky, "Principles of Citizen Action" Lecture presented before the State Conference of the Washington Association for Social Welfare: Tacoma, Washington, May 27, 1963.

⁵Alinsky, Rules for Radicals, p. 106-107.

⁶Ibid., p. 113.

⁷Oregon Fair Share, "Staff Workshop," (Portland, Oregon: December 16, 1977.)

⁸Massachusetts Fair Share, Steps in an Organizing Drive (Boston, Massachusetts: Massachusetts Fair Share, n.d.).

⁹Nicholas von Hoffman, Hard Talk on Organizing the Ghetto (Little Rock, Arkansas: Arkansas Institute for Social Injustice, Inc. n.d.), p. 5.

¹⁰Steve Burghardt, "A Community Organization Typology of Group Development" Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare (September 1977), p. 1091.

¹¹Steve Max, Four Steps to Developing Leaders (Chicago, Illinois: Midwest Academy, July 1973), p. 1.

¹²von Hoffman, op. cit., p. 2-4.

¹³Max, op. cit., p. 1.

¹⁴Oregon Fair Share, op. cit.

¹⁵Barbara Susin, Analysis of Campaign to Control High Rises (CCHR, 1975), p. 7-8, 20.

¹⁶Steve Max, Organizing III: Choosing a Tactic (Chicago, Illinois: Midwest Academy, 1973), p. 1-2.

¹⁷Chicago Women's Liberation Union, Socialist Feminism: A Strategy for the Women's Movement (Chicago, Illinois: by the author, 1972), p. 6-9.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 13.

²⁰Ibid., p. 14-18.

²¹Alinsky, Rules for Radicals, p. 12.

²²Ibid., p. 126-133.

²³Max, Organizing III, p. 4.

²⁴von Hoffman, op. cit., p. 17.

²⁵Movement for Economic Justice, Property Tax Organizing Manual (Washington, D.C.: by the author, 1973), p. 39-42.

²⁶Oregon Fair Share, op. cit.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Youth Project and the Golden Gate Chapter, The Community Training and Development Project (San Francisco: American Society of Training and Development, 1976).

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to provide a handbook or a guide for practitioners and students wishing to establish grassroots citizen action organizations. In addition to its practical application, this study provided the reader with an historical and theoretical framework for community organization which encompasses locality development, social planning and social action.

Elements of organizing that were presented in the study reflected the author's impression of basic aspects pertaining to the success of an organization. These elements include initial stage of organizing; principles of mass based organizations; chapter building processes; leadership development; strategies and tactics; actions; publicity; research, and interorganizational development.

This study addressed itself to the growing problem of citizen apathy and the individual's inability to participate in and influence, to any significant degree, public and/or private policies affecting their lives. The author theorized that this apathetic situation exists because society has become so organizationally complex that the decision-making process is carried out through rigid bureaucratic structures which isolate and remove the individual from active participation. With the help of organizations similar to the model presented in Chapter III, it is believed that citizens can obtain the power to

influence decisions and policies which impact on their lives. Through citizen action organizations, which are predominantly multi-issue and self-supporting, citizens who previously felt powerless can now begin to challenge the ways things have traditionally been done.

The conclusions drawn from this study are as follows:

1. Community organization over the years has predominantly attracted only a committed few. Formerly community organization participation has been limited to special interest groups. Not until recently has community organization attracted masses of people from varying backgrounds working together to demand their rights and influence social conditions.
2. The following are characteristics of contemporary citizen action groups: self-supporting; focused on local and multi-issues and strategies; long-term in perspective; raise people's consciousness through involvement at a concrete level in their communities, and help individuals to understand the political process in order that they might effect change.
3. Based on a review of community organization literature and on the author's personal experiences, there seems to be a growing trend in citizen participation. As more consumers become disgruntled with the "system" and are aware of their legal

rights they will be making demands on the system heretofore unknown.

4. Developing a powerful citizen action organization is not an easy task. Anyone wishing to do community organization must perceive oneself as a change agent and subsequently the impetus for social change. One must be able to influence, inspire and gain the trust of the community before one can motivate people to act. It is of paramount importance that this person be self-confident and knowledgeable, and is aware of and prepared for possible pitfalls that may hinder the creation of such an organization. Ultimately, such an organization creates an environment where people experience activity and success in directly meeting their needs through confrontation, negotiation and resolution of the problems with the power structure itself.

It is hoped that this study, with special emphasis on Chapter III, will provide the organizer with basic tools to build a structure that will empower people to participate and influence powerful bureaucracies. It is the author's belief that effective organizations may play an important part in redistributing power, creating economic alternatives and developing ways to increase citizen participation in this country. Lastly, observation of contemporary groups and citizen participation may provide us with critical insight into where the effective sources of social change may lie in the foreseeable future.

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