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ABSTRACT

Community organization is increasingly advocated as a political strategy to increase the long-term group strength of the relatively powerless without the instability and dependence on third parties inherent in protest tactics. Approaching community organizations in terms of the incentives offered constituents to join and remain affiliated, this paper assesses their prospects and limitations. The problems of community organization are conceived as stemming from the need to develop resources to overcome the cost of membership and to sustain membership loyalty. We conclude that despite the promise of community organization to minimize dependence on exogenous forces, this strategy remains considerably restrained by the need to seek resources from the outside.

The paper is based on the authors' research into a variety of housing-oriented community organizations. Following an analysis of problems of initiating and maintaining community organizations, the authors suggest a framework for analyzing the relationship between the probabilities of success and the nature of issues around which community organizations develop. Housing as an issue is then assessed in terms of different community organization orientations.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION AS A POLITICAL RESOURCE: THE CASE OF HOUSING*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Community organizing is advocated by social workers, anti-poverty personnel, students, militants, ideologues, black capitalists, and businessmen's associations as a response to the problems of groups which have been characterized as non-participants in American politics. It is seen as a way to increase individual mobility, foster self-respect, and acquire the resources of power. It is regarded as a critical political activity for the relatively powerless and for the relatively poor.[1]

This paper is an attempt to analyze the process of community organization within the American political system. The discussion focuses on the incentives to membership that community organizations must dispense to get started and to sustain themselves. It concentrates on the constraints on community organizations deriving from the scarcity of resources among relatively powerless groups,[2] the need to rely on outside agencies in developing incentives for members, and the conflict between maintenance and goal attainment strategies. It provides a theoretical perspective on community organization as a political resource, and suggests a framework for evaluating the probabilities of successfully building a community organization and attaining objectives. We conclude that the dilemma of community organizations is that they often must trade for the capacity to initiate and maintain the organization, independence in action and the creation of goals.

Community organization is a mode of political action undertaken to increase the probabilities of concerted action on relatively specific goals by mobilizing a constituency from among a group identified with a particular locality and presumed to share other salient characteristics.[3] If city politics may be conceived as a bargaining arena, the basic problem of relatively powerless groups is that of exclusion from the bargaining arena because they have nothing to trade.[4] Whether denied opportunity or effectively opposed in efforts to secure such resources, these groups have minimal standing in the political market place. In a previous analysis, one of the authors concluded that the difficulties encountered by protest leaders in managing diverse constituencies suggested the inherent weaknesses of protest as a political resource.[5] Yet protest is not the only way in which relatively powerless groups may seek to increase their standing in the hypothetical bargaining arena. They may also attempt to enlarge their active membership and develop cohesion to increase the stability, persistence, and standing of the group. If long-run success depends upon the acquisition of stable political resources, then relatively powerless groups must develop their own organizations.

Like other organizations, community organizations seek to increase or stabilize membership, consolidate loyalty, and maintain themselves. But the focus here is on relatively powerless groups. Many organizations commonly referred to as "community organizations" already possess the necessary resources to enter the hypothetical bargaining arena. Such organizations are not community organizations, as we use the term,[6] if they already command sufficient political resources to compete politically.

Strategic organizational differences may exist among groups occupying varying places on the spectrum of power, and this distinction directs attention to them.

In describing community organization as concerned with increasing the probability of concerted action on relatively specific goals, we seek to restrict attention to those groups which attempt to define goals clearly, and who organize for tangible rewards. This excludes from analysis important political activities such as the development of black consciousness, which has facilitated the growth of community organization but which itself is a movement without relatively specific goals.

To facilitate discussion and narrow the range of issues, we will focus primarily on community organizing in housing. We have chosen this area for three reasons: many community organizations concentrate on housing problems; housing illustrations display analytic similarity; and problems of housing present important substantive questions in their own right. While we hope to illuminate the effectiveness of community organization as a means to specific goal attainment, we also need to know about the relationship between issue areas and specific organizational problems. In Section IV we evaluate the suitability of housing as a community organization issue.

The study of community organizations should also speak to some general conceptions of American politics. The "normal American political process," Robert Dahl has stated, is "one in which there is a high probability that an active and legitimate group in the population can make itself heard effectively at some crucial stage in the process of decision."[7] Although clearly, as Dahl wrote, this "does not mean that every

group has equal control over the outcome," we may inquire into the patterns of inequality that nonetheless may exist. Ignoring for the moment the different ways in which groups may be "heard,"[8] we may here raise a prior question concerning the probabilities of groups becoming active. In discussing factors which have previously gone unexamined in pluralist writings, we may be able partially to account for the failure of pluralist theory to anticipate both the turmoil of the 1960's and the continued fragmentation of insurgent groups. The study of community organization may address these concerns by the following questions. To what extent are relatively powerless groups comprised of individuals who are prepared to join politically oriented organizations? To what extent do relatively powerless groups have access to the resources on which concerted action in part depends? To what extent are relatively powerless groups, once organized, able to pursue group goals with independence? The answers to these questions should contribute to the continuing enterprise of describing the structure of inequality in the American political system.

II. CREATING ORGANIZATION

The development of politically oriented organization for any group is likely to be a function of at least two primary interrelated factors: the attractiveness to constituents of political activity and specific organizations, and the resources initially commanded. The following discussion is intended both to account for some of the difficulties in organizing low-income and minority groups, and to identify critical variables in the creation of a community organization.

Political activity generally involves costs to those who choose to become involved. Those costs may consist of time, bureaucratic irritations, and monetary contributions. For many, the benefits of performing one's civic duty or influencing elections and public policy outweigh the costs of participation. For many others, who are without preferences in elections and referenda, are unrepresented by available candidates, or are convinced that their interests are unlikely to prevail regardless of the energies they expend, the costs of participation may outweigh the calculated benefits.[9]

Cost/benefit calculations of political participation have recently been employed to help explain variations in rates of voting.[10] Similar calculations have been proposed in the study of organizations. Chester Barnard, in his classic work, noted:

> The contributions of personal efforts which constitute the energies of organizations are yielded by individuals because of incentives. The egotistical motives of self-preservation and of self-satisfaction are dominating forces; on the whole, organizations can exist only when consistent with the satisfaction of these motives, unless, alternatively, they can change these motives.[11]

Such considerations are consistent with the focus by organizational theorists on the inducements necessary to recruit and retain members.[12]

While this approach is equally useful in accounting for some of the difficulties experienced by community organization, traditional organizational theory is not fully applicable to groups whose members have been characterized in the past as nonparticipants. Where organizational theorists focus on variations in the nature of incentives, we focus as well on the constraints in obtaining those incentives. Where students of social movements start with the assumption that

followers are attracted because of a congruence between their sentiments and organizational goals, we focus as well on the problems of developing such congruence in an environment characterized by cynicism toward organizational potential.[13] Where theorists observe the routinization and accommodation of "movement organizations" over time as leadership becomes entrenched, we focus as well on accommodations that occur prior to the full development of community organizations.[14]

The behavior of organizations of the relatively powerless may be explained by analyzing both the costs and benefits upon which members may be understood to assess the invitation to join and participate with intensity, and the scarcity of inducements and resources necessary to attract, sustain, and increase the cohesion of membership. Community organizations, whose constituents have consistently experienced failures in political efforts, have comparatively greater need and fewer resources or incentives than organizations which recruit from other strata in the society. The necessary incentives, and the resources upon which they depend, must be developed, usually in interaction with competitors and other participants in the political process.

The less the dependence on outside interactions, the greater the competition community organizations encounter in attracting members. Although community organizations may provide social benefits, this kind of reward to participants is also available elsewhere. Apolitical organizations, and informal associations of innumerable kinds, may provide the same social benefits. At the other end of the scale, politically oriented community organizations may monopolize community incentives based upon securing tangible group benefits, but these are difficult to obtain.

In attracting membership, community organizations, like other organizations, must provide incentives to erode resistance to membership. However, they encounter the following additional barriers because of the circumstances of potential constituents.

1. If constituents are to be convinced of the possibility of benefits, community organizations must demonstrate an ability to overcome a history of past failures. Relatively powerless groups have developed a cynicism toward community organizations. Promises to obtain reforms in the past may have been thwarted by leaders primarily interested in self-aggrandizement, or by the inherent difficulties in obtaining significant reforms, challenging opposing and antagonistic interests, or acquiring necessary organizational resources. Such resources include money, skilled leaders, and technical assistance as well as active members. The poverty of finances and of experience among the relatively powerless makes it difficult to locate such resources. Scarcity of constituents' time compounds the difficulty. Community organizational activity is difficult to sustain after an exhausting work day. When the labor is physical, as it usually is for the working poor, when a second job must be carried, or the attraction of leisure time too compelling after a hard day's work, the need to compensate leaders and active constituents in some way becomes correspondingly clear. Moreover, some tasks, particularly those dealing with public agencies and organizations with which interaction is necessary, require nine-to-five schedules. These may not be performed by people with daytime jobs. Nor can constituents with daytime jobs attend meetings during this period. Thus community organizers must conduct some business during the day, and then put in

an equal amount of time at night at meetings. (Night organizational meetings exclude those who work at night, a factor having a greater impact on lower than on middle class organizations.)

2. The sanctions that may be imposed on members by forces outside the community organization may represent significant anticipated costs in a calculus where benefits are considered unlikely and remote. The murder of civil rights workers in the South may seem an extreme instance, but violent police repression of black militants is a current, highly visible illustration of the implications of an insurgent stance.

While members of most housing action groups and tenants' councils may not have to fear physical harm, they often must live in fear of losing their homes. Examples proliferate of evictions and rent raises in reaction to demands for improvements.[15] The fact that legislation and the courts serve the interests of the landlord to a greater extent than the tenants adds support to the poor tenants' fear of sanctions for which he has no protection or recourse.[16]

3. It is important to examine the marginal effects of participation on anticipated rewards. In regard to voting, for example, Robert Dahl among others has stated clearly the dilemma of the marginal contributor.

> Nearly every adult in an American community has at least one resource at his disposal: his vote. Yet, for any particular individual the argument is logically unassailable that except in the most unusual circumstances where his preferred candidate ties for first place or loses by one vote, his vote won't count and thus his private decision not to go to the polls will not, if he keeps the decision to himself, influence the outcome.[17]

Mancur Olson has thoroughly explored this dilemma for the purposes of explaining incentives to group membership.[18] He points out that often it is not rational (in the economist's sense) for individuals to

join organizations dedicated to securing collective goods. He shows that the costs of participation in time, energy or money are often considerable and always greater than zero, while the collective benefits won by the group will become available to the potential member whether or not he joins the organization. Thus a tenant may refuse to join a rent strike because he wants to avoid dues, meetings, and the threat of eviction, and because he knows he will benefit anyway from improvements in building conditions the landlord is forced to make. Thus a public housing occupant may refuse to join a tenants' organization because he does not want to be branded a troublemaker, and knows that he will be able to resort to the grievance machinery established by the tenants' organization if it is successful.

In an attempt to overcome this difficulty, community organizations may make incentives "'selective' so that those who do not join the organization . . . or in other ways contribute to the attainment of the group's interest can be treated differently from those who do."[19] To some extent this was the case with rent strikes in New York City, in a jurisdiction where rent reductions were available to individual tenants through legitimate official channels.[20] Similarly the National Welfare Rights Organization avoided this dilemma by showing welfare clients how to obtain individual supplementary benefits.[21]

Other kinds of selective incentives community organizations may offer are modest payments and peer approval of active participants and the negative inducements of social ostracism and sanctions against those who fail to join. Another way community organizations may be able to overcome the dilemma of collective benefits is by promoting the functional

equivalent of the sense of civic responsibility which appears to motivate a majority of electoral participants in the United States. In this regard black power and other ethnically oriented movements may be appreciated for their contribution to community organization efforts.

4. Elimination of some of the costs of participation may not in itself be sufficient to overcome long established attitudes. At times relatively powerless groups appear intractably opposed to organizational efforts. Among the reasons for this, three are particularly important.

First, politically oriented organizations are difficult to initiate regardless of the income or social status of the community. Not only do relatively few people belong to voluntary associations generally,[22] but those organizations that do exist "probably function more as entertainment and leisure time activities than as serious mechanisms for attaining one's central life goals."[23] The cynicism of relatively powerless groups concerning the efficacy of political activity, when combined with general lack of interest in voluntary associations, presents formidable obstacles to organization.

Second, relatively small variations in the costs and benefits of political activity may be insufficient to overcome the specter of the continued opposition of antagonistic forces. This consideration may explain the reluctance of individuals to test newly proclaimed "rights" after changes in civil rights laws have been enacted. A lifetime of political avoidance is not transcended in a day with the passage of legislation or the establishment of an organization with political ambitions.

Third, their disinclination toward politics may have cultural roots. The phenomenon of "apathy" as a lower class life style has often been remarked upon. Lee Rainwater, for example, has written:

> The most pervasive fact about lower-class people as organizational participants is that they are not socialized either within the family or in their outside lives to work towards the solution of their problems on the basis of organization.[24]

Occasionally the apathy of the lower classes has been related to the same costs and benefits analysis that we have employed above. Although Edward Banfield ascribes the dearth of lower class efforts directed toward ameliorating problems to a class culture, he acknowledges that the situation may make investment in the future "impossible or unprofitable."[25] The cumulative impact of a history of unfavorable costs in a calculus of political involvement may be conducive to the development of cultural norms which mitigate against political involvement.

III. MAINTAINING ORGANIZATION

Whatever the initial problems community organizations encounter deriving from widespread cynicism toward organization and the absence of necessary resources, they experience additional difficulties in attempting to maintain organization and consolidate gains. In this section we will discuss two problems of leadership development and the consequences of the scarcity of incentives to maintain membership loyalties.

A. Leadership Development

One set of difficulties involved in maintaining community organizations once barriers to formation have been overcome revolves around

problems of leadership development. Community organizations, often founded by one or a few individuals, soon may encounter problems if they become dependent on these people.

Community organizers may create animosities within the organization, or antagonize the local leadership in whose behalf they have been working. They may be committed to organizational activities for only relatively short periods (as has been the case with most student organizers[26]), may have career ambitions which can only be fulfilled by changing jobs, or may contract battle fatigue and "burn themselves out."[27] Some of the factors which may account for the "burning out" of community organizers are endemic to the job. It is difficult and exhausting to be the political man at all times. Yet community organizers must be on call "around the clock" if they are to continue to receive community support. This particularly may be the case where organizers must substitute energy and time to accomplish tasks that other groups can accomplish with money, status, or other available resources. When the organization does not fulfill an individual's career ambitions and when leaders are regarded suspiciously for their very success,[28] the strain is particularly heavy. The model of the urban political machine, commended for its apparent contributions to the welfare of relatively low income urban residents,[29] may also be commended for its systematic dispensation of rewards to ward bosses, inducing ongoing commitment through monetary, status and power benefits such as few community organizations are able to mobilize.[30]

The costs to organizations of dependence on a single individual or set of individuals are also illustrated by the often unmanageable

variety of tasks community organizers are required to perform. Organizers often must attend an unending series of meetings with constituents in order to lend support to recruitment efforts. They must also try to manipulate the press, coordinate with leaders of allied organizations, raise money and solicit support from various groups, and negotiate or threaten the targets of organizational efforts.[31] These time consuming concerns are not easily delegated. Initially, community organizations are publicly associated with the names of the chief spokesman. They are conceived by constituents and outsiders alike as personal organs for which only the publicly recognized leaders can speak authoritatively.

Because of the costs of dependence on the organizer, the development of indigenous leadership is critical. For the following additional reasons, it is even regarded by some as a prerequisite to successful community organization.[32]

The capacity to lead in poor communities is unrelated to formal or legal positions of authority. In every community, <u>real</u> leaders exist whose skills may be put to work for the community in a more systematic fashion.[33]

Leaders whose status is the same as constituents' are more likely to have the confidence of community residents, to communicate easily, and to be trusted.[34]

The development of a leadership cadre is critical to organizational vitality. Organizations without a flow of leadership recruits will calcify.[35]

Whatever the costs of dependence on organizers, and however desirable the development of indigenous leadership, the costs of developing

leadership may also be quite high. A particular strain which many community organizations must experience in developing leadership revolves around the structure of the organization. Procedures based upon democratic models must be established for electing leaders, providing constituents with a sense of influence in organizational affairs, and legitimizing leadership arrangements while at the same time placating dissident but not wholly alienated factions. Long meetings, obedience to parliamentary rules, and general deference to the views of all members are the wages of leadership development in these cases. At times it may be desirable to develop modest tasks in order to provide developing leaders with responsibilities. Yet this may drain away valuable resources and make the incipient leader feel that he has been shunted aside. Community organizers often must defer temptation to shortcut these developments, although they may know their costs in advance and be impatient over delays in work on substantive programs.

Organizations which seek to develop leadership from the ranks and avoid overdependence on a few individuals must be prepared to endure the inefficiencies and mistakes which will accompany such efforts. Considerable intra-organizational tensions can develop when unskilled people accomplish relatively poorly and over a longer time period what a skilled organizer might accomplish successfully and with greater dispatch. The organizer's ever-present conflicts are deciding whether or not to write the leaflet, attend the meeting, plan the rally and take primary responsibility for negotiating the contract, or to delegate responsibility to less experienced persons.

Community organizations must also resolve conflicts between the expressed goals and values of constituents or new leaders and those of

the organizers. Originally, goals may be projected which are either acceptable to constituents or such that the constituents may be easily educated to their validity. But the organizer may believe that such aims, although initially necessary, are insignificant or not appropriate from his ideological perspective. Saul Alinsky resolves the dilemma with a militant disinterest in goals per se and a militant concern for developing community power so that the group can pursue its own goals. Some critics have split with him over this approach, since it appears to condone and strengthen the racism that may exist in some communities.[36]

Differences between organizers, leaders, and constituents are rarely reducible to such clear conflicts. More typical may be the community organization whose timid membership or leaders favor tactics which the more experienced organizer considers ineffectual. Constituents may seek the most modest of goals when the organizer knows that such goals are not readily obtained when accompanied by equally modest rhetoric. Organizers who accommodate constituents' preferences too often risk losing opportunities to educate them on organizational techniques.

B. Development of Incentives

For community organizations, the development of incentives to increase and maintain membership requires strategies that may direct organizations toward goals and tactics they might not otherwise have favored. As suggested in the following paragraphs, the scarcity of

resources makes such organizations particularly vulnerable to incentives which compromise the organization's independence.

1. *The need for quick victories.* One of the first commandments of most community organizers is to demonstrate the organization's capacity to succeed by identifying a vulnerable target, pursuing a strategy designed to obtain a relatively quick and impressive victory, and securing tangible rewards. In theory this demonstration will not tax the long term capacity of the organization to sustain itself and may succeed in overcoming long standing doubts that political activity can pay off. But there are costs attached to such a strategy. Failure to win may well confirm the cynicism of the potential membership toward the organization.

The need for quick victories often forces community organizations to define goals and targets in terms of tangible rewards that they can easily obtain. While this pragmatism may be commended in attracting or retaining membership, it may not be directed toward targets and goals considered ultimately important by organizers or constituents. Community organizations may later flounder when selected targets are recognized as inappropriate or selected goals as relatively unimportant. This is the case when public officials are selected for attack, and an inspector is sent to the building in response. Yet the landlord, who remains ultimately responsible, may not make the demanded repairs.

Even when goals continue to be recognized as important and targets as appropriate, the compromises involved in winning often make the victory trivial. When deference is paid to the high price of some repairs in the hopes that the reasonableness of the "tailored" demands will result in compliance, compliance may come but with little change

in the condition of the structure. Similarly, recognition of the "expertise" of a public housing manager in one area so that he will be encouraged to give up some of his authority in another limits the protean tenants' council to far less than a full voice in management policy. An initially strong organization might be able to resist early, ultimately defeating compromise of this sort.

The vetoing of public policy is another way that community organizations can attempt to obtain quick victories and is considerably easier than securing positive policy changes. Even for community organizations which have succeeded in gaining legitimacy and recognition among policymakers, it is easier to veto than to influence policy positively. Community organizations often do not have the foresight or ability to follow up successful opposition to policy proposals with detailed alternatives. Yet retarding one plan without influencing the alternatives may be self-defeating and injure the capacity of organizations to continue to attract constituents.

2. *The weight of winning.* Ironically, community organizations may incur significant costs even when they succeed. For the sake of what turn out to be symbolic or minor tangible gains, they may take on major responsibilities or effectively limit their independence. Unexpected responsibilities may overwhelm the young group or tie up its few resources in an impossible venture. A tenant union may gain exclusive bargaining status for all tenants in buildings managed by the capitulating agency. It thus may be forced to attempt organizing the previously uninvolved in order to consolidate gains. When a tenants' council is presented an opportunity to manage the buildings

about which it complained, it may find it difficult to reject the offer and must endure tasks of apartment house administration for which it was not originally established.[37] Although such activities may blunt the capacity of the organization's leaders to expand the constituency beyond its narrow base, those who are already active may seize the opportunity to take responsibilities offered and consolidate gains. But the gains themselves turn out to be more cost than benefits. A young tenants' council has neither the money nor the trained manpower to make the necessary building improvements, and thus may become the "slumlord" in the eyes of tenants.

To the extent that victories require community organizations to divert scarce resources to bureaucratic needs, there is at times a contradiction in Alinsky's injunction to involve protean community organizations in constant struggle, and his prescription for demonstrating the efficacy of organizations.[38] These victories, sought in the name of constituency expansion, may alter or place limits on organizational ambition. Organizations may turn their attention to the details of administration and planning and the accommodation of constituents' material interests and away from evaluation and criticism. Such responsibility may contribute to organizational maintenance and growth through the provision of jobs, training, new positions of status and authority, and the concrete benefits resulting from good management or a good plan. But the community organization may no longer struggle for power or demand new spheres of influence. It may become devoted to service and to the creation of opportunity rather than to political

bargaining. These developments may or may not be acceptable to community organizers, but their consequences surely should be considered.

A variation of the theme of the liabilities of success is provided by the recent questionable victories obtained by the rent strikers in St. Louis public housing.[39] Here the victory may have been largely symbolic. With maintenance costs increasing, repair costs accelerating in older buildings, federal public housing subsidies frozen, and vacancy rates rising, the Public Housing Authority in St. Louis has vested authority with a tenants' board. Yet it is uncertain whether the economics of public housing permit successful operation at current inadequate levels of government subsidy, particularly where deterioration of projects has been permitted to advance markedly. The dilemma of the tenants' organization was undoubtedly a troubling one: accept responsibility for the operation of the houses or continue demanding reforms under the old regime. At this point no one can say with certainty if the tenants were wise in accepting responsibility for buildings and assuming the inheritance of neglect represented by public housing in St. Louis. We can, however, point out that victory for community organizations may prove hollow when symbolic or substantive victories are not accompanied by sufficient resources to permit realization of success over time.

3. *The need for tactics in which constituents will engage.* It is often alleged that successful community organization must be related to issues in which people have a stake. But the very salience of an issue may also account for the unwillingness of many people to jeopardize what they already have. The rent strike movement in New York, for example, prospered precisely because people were willing to become involved in

organizations directed toward the quality of housing, yet the tactics in which they were asked to engage consisted of using currently available judicial and administrative routines to harass landlords and press their claims with the city. People did not want to risk eviction.[40] The "bureaucratic," low-risk nature of the tactics may have been a weakness of the rent strikes, as some have argued.[41] But it was also clearly their strength.

Similar conclusions may be drawn from observing the efforts of the National Welfare Right Organization to persuade welfare recipients to spend their rent checks on other necessities to dramatize the inadequacies of present allotments.[42] This tactic was abandoned when it became clear that however dedicated to the organization and its broad goals, welfare clients would not risk eviction by participating in rent withholding. Significantly, the most successful Welfare Rights tactics have been those which have inundated the bureaus with thousands of requests for supplementary benefits. This tactic permitted the organization to oppose and inconvenience the system, and at the same time not jeopardize the welfare or housing status of participants. By subsequently eliminating the supplementary grant program, and distributing these budgeted funds among all welfare recipients as "bloc grants," the welfare administrations of New York City, Massachusetts, and other jurisdictions have significantly reduced the capacity of the welfare rights movement to organize against the system while working within it.[43]

Cloward and Piven correctly point out that orienting organizational tactics toward bureaucratic, currently acceptable channels may submerge the organization in a morass of details from which it cannot extricate

itself.[44] Yet community organizations are not led blindly to such tactics. They emerge from organizational needs to orient tactics toward those activities in which constituents will participate. This is the cost of overcoming resistance to participation, and of planning organizational participation which will not be priced out of the market in the constituent's political accounting.

4. *Shifts in goal orientations.* We have already suggested that the more tangible the goals, the more likely are constituents to be attracted to community organizations. But as the difficulties of gaining tangible goals increase, the relative desirability of projecting other goal orientations may also increase. Objectives such as heightened self-respect, black consciousness, or restructuring the economic system may become more attractive as the probabilities of attaining tangible rewards become clearer. In some cases, organizers may have initially withheld expression of such aims until constituents had been attracted to the organization. In other cases, they may have been developed later to justify the enterprise when there appeared to be little chance of success in achieving the original objectives. The organizers may emphasize or reemphasize other aims to rationalize how little they have accomplished.

Two orientations community organizations may adopt are discussed in the following paragraphs. These orientations to some degree coexist in most community organizations. While we have not discussed them extensively in this paper, we do not mean to imply that they are adopted primarily to rationalize failure, although this may sometimes be the case. Rather, we seek to highlight the increased appeal of such orientations when the search for tangible rewards is thwarted.

A. Community organization as therapy. Community organization is sometimes undertaken as a way to increase constituents' self-respect and foster upward mobility. The organization, and a member's place in it, are seen both as a source of pride in accomplishment and as a training ground in skills and attitudes useful for employment.[45] In some cases this may lead to accusations of ignoring the real constraints on the relatively powerless. The West Side Organization, as described by William Ellis, provides an example of a community organization which emphasizes therapeutic aims. Its leaders see "social change as the reconstruction of individuals--as the reconstruction of their views of themselves."[46]

B. Community organization as political education. Other community organizations either out of an ideology or experience see the struggle for political power to be a long, hard one, which will not be won by exclusively focusing on proximate targets. Thus they see their role as educating constituents to the nature of the political and economic system and preparing them for the possible part they might play in changing that system.[47]

5. *Demonstrations of strength.* Community organizations must constantly demonstrate their strength both for the membership they seek to inspire and for the skeptical audience from whom they must seek membership incentives. Unlike many middle class organizations, community organizations must continually show that they have acquired membership loyalties and can act effectively. Thus they often must pursue a "quick victories" strategy not only to gain and sustain membership, but also to continue to enjoy the respect, status, or fear without which they cannot generate supportive incentives.

Community organizations are vulnerable to charges that they are unrepresentative, or that they do not in fact command the loyalties they claim. To demonstrate otherwise, while at the same time masking real weaknesses, may require consummate skill. "Threaten to march, but never march," is the advice of a prominent community organizer well versed in obscuring the true strength of his following.

The need to demonstrate constantly organizational strength may induce an organization to picket and march to exhaustion, because in the short run it is a relatively easy way to provide evidence of organizational activity. But when specific actions are necessary, such as renewal of mass rent withholdings in order to enforce a contract negotiated between building agent and tenant union, the organization may be poorly equipped to deliver the necessary membership commitment. On the other hand, the capacity to evoke displays of membership commitment over time can enhance an organization's strength. Although the Milwaukee NAACP Youth Council cannot claim significant advances in the area of open housing in that city, the regular marches for open housing, sustained over a six-month period, were impressive testimonials to membership dedication and strength. Significantly, the marches also served to increase solidarity.

6. *Pressure to join "the movement."* Although most community organizations are formed independently, there is sometimes pressure to ally with other politically oriented organizations for common endeavors. Community organizations may also experience pressure to adopt with their allies a common ideology. These pressures are particularly felt by black organizations influenced by black power and black solidarity slogans.

Becoming part of what seems an exciting and ongoing political struggle may serve two purposes for the community organization. It may provide incentives for membership through the attraction of joining a "movement" and the appearance of greater strength.

However, it has its costs. Those who want to think of themselves as middle class may see alliances with other poor people's groups as dimishing rather than increasing status. Others may resent the imposition of the particular style or strategy they feel is implied. Tensions also result when recognized celebrities in the "movement" choose the city as a target for an organizing drive. Although meant to support and assist local efforts, this may undermine them. In 1966 when the Congress of Racial Equality made Baltimore its target city, its attack on segregated bars and taverns diverted attention and leadership energy from the issues of housing and welfare stressed by local groups.[48] Even when the issues are the same, however, the result can be diversionary. This was the case when the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, led by Martin Luther King Jr., came to Chicago in 1966 to "end slums." Although local organizations supported Dr. King as an individual, they lost momentum in their own immediate attacks on landlords and efforts to extend membership as both organizers and constituents became involved with the more broadly directed King offensive.

When community organizations do ally themselves with other organizations, they then find other pressures upon them. The tangible objectives or the mode of operation of one organization may conflict with what is defined by others as correct. Some community organizations may consider it important to become involved in elections and

voter registration while other groups disagree. A tenants' council may be advised by its allies in an urban renewal fight that private negotiations by local community organizations with the redevelopment authority are inappropriate.[49] The problem also arises when a community organization sees itself as primarily providing services to its members but is told by allied groups that the aim should be political power and the tactic political confrontation.[50]

7. *Reliance on technical assistance.* Housing-oriented community organizations often cannot operate without lawyers to help steer them through the judicial and administrative legal processes, and planners and architects to assist them in developing plans with sufficient quality to convince a skeptical redevelopment authority or federal agency. But high level assistance is difficult or expensive to obtain, and may be made available only for short time periods and without dedication and continuity. Organizations which seek to employ technical and volunteer assistance risk developing a dependence on exogenous support.

Major incentives exist to move in a direction which would capitalize on the proffered resources and to respond to the advice and orientations of the outside advisers, perhaps at the expense of directions promoted by indigenous personnel. Thus the outsiders gain a measure of influence, however much they may attempt to defer to the organization. This contradiction has never really been resolved by theorists of advocate professionalism.[51] In fact, some advocate professionals, dismayed by what they regard as the conservative tendencies of some community organizations, have recently asserted an

interest in influencing the ideology of community organizations for which they work.[52]

To reject such assistance is often inappropriate for relatively powerless groups whose inability to command technical and professional help comparable to that available to other organizations places them at considerable disadvantage. Yet community organizations have been known to consider rejecting such aid to gain a measure of psychological independence. These tensions are exacerbated when advisers are white and the community organization which they have been assisting is non-white.

8. *The loss of independence.* We have discussed some of the ways the goals and strategies of community organizations may be affected by their need to interact with other organizations and agencies in cultivating incentives for constituents. But perhaps the most severe symptom of this inherent instability is the vulnerability of community organizations to the reciprocal obligations which accompany the acquisition of necessary resources and incentives.

Community organizations may be granted the responsibility for a program they have criticized or helped develop. Thus they may gain status in the community, salaries for leaders, members or potential constituents, and opportunities to contribute to community affairs through successful program administration. But in exchange they begin to depend on government (or other) agencies whose programs begin to frame organizational expectations, in terms of which the impoverished organization begins to identify its needs.

Community organizations may be given governance responsibilities by which they also gain status, the power (more or less) to influence

decisions in a particular area, and the hopes of gaining additional responsibilities and perquisites. The opportunity to influence program hiring decisions often ranks high in leaders' calculations. But again, organizational expectations begin to be determined by the demands of governing.

Finally, leaders of community organizations may gain individual responsibility when hired for jobs in other agencies with responsibilities related to concerns of their organization. They may be more highly rewarded or feel they can do a more effective job on a larger scale, but they no longer operate with and for their community organization directly.

These developments share the following characteristics when they occur: they offer inducements which significantly contribute to the enhancement and maintenance of the community organization or the enrichment of individual leaders, and they require substantial reciprocal obligations of individuals or the organization.[53]

The realities of independence and subordination are of course apparent to community organizers. In many cases community organizations have resisted subordination by refusing the perquisites offered. The merits of accepting reciprocal responsibilities will be judged on the basis of their costs and benefits. The weaker the organization, the less it will be able to generate resistance to cooperative offers from stronger organizations. Some community organizations may be fortunate enough to acquire government funds for work which they were doing anyway, without incurring reciprocal obligations of any weight. But even in such a situation, the organization's independence may be

compromised by a rapid growth that is impossible to sustain when government program expenditures, for reasons possibly extraneous to the organization, are reduced, and public support is no longer forthcoming.[54]

IV. HOUSING AS AN ISSUE IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

In this section we raise some general questions about the role of issue configurations in community organization and try to assess the utility of housing for community organizing efforts. As in previous sections, we concentrate on two intertwined phenomena: the attractions of community organization to constituents, and the continued dependence of community organization on outside agencies. Although the focus is on housing, the following discussion generally highlights some of the components that make issues attractive to community organizations.

1. *Salience.* The immediacy with which people perceive problems, and the importance and relevance to their lives, are measures of the salience of issues. The greater the salience of the issue, the more will constituents be attracted to organizations which promise to deal with it. Housing is often a salient issue. People object to living in cold, dirty, crowded or infested quarters. But the salience inherent in an issue may not always be manifest.[55] For the migrant from rural Mississippi, the existence of a bathroom in the building may make the housing more than adequate. For the welfare recipient whose rent is paid by the Department, the high proportion of income spent on shelter costs seems irrelevant. For the poor man, discrimination and segregation may not limit his choices any more than his income already does. The

organizer may have to evoke the salience of housing as an issue by making people feel dissatisfied and exploited about where they live and what they are paying. This can be done through comparisons with affluent neighborhoods, and examination of the proportion of income spent on rent.[56] The fact that potential allies and technical assistants tend to see housing as salient may make it easier to mobilize support.

2. *Issues contributing to "community."* Issues will also be attractive to community organization members to the extent that they tend to focus the feelings of a particular group, or reinforce group identity. The more invidious conditions have impact on a specific locality, the easier will be the creation of organizations around that issue. Airport noise pollution tends to create an identification of interests among homeowners under the flight paths. Their common irritation and oppression are conducive to organization. Similarly, in a relatively segregated society, housing issues are conducive to organization because the boundaries of neighborhoods with inferior housing conditions tend to be congruent with racially or ethnically homogeneous neighborhoods which already may possess some solidarity.

Implied here is the necessity of aggregating constituents so that they may become a community where they are not already. Buildings may form convenient units on which to focus organizational efforts. But because tenants in many large cities often live in multiple unit structures and because the buildings of a single landlord may be scattered, the creation of community in housing organizing is made more difficult by the need to aggregate a substantial number of the individuals in a

building, or in the buildings of a single landlord. The development of a large scale organization must proceed deliberately, building by building. A tenants' council with 200 members might be considered successful at least in attracting members. Yet if the membership were scattered among 100 buildings, and the average number of units per building was 10 or 12 (as is the case among New York City tenements), then both the existence of community and the effectiveness of the organization might be easily challenged, while the organization would have difficulty in sanctioning landlords.

3. *Expectations.* The higher the expectations concerning rights or services, and the lower the recognition of rights and the level of services, the more attractive will be the issue to potential constituents. Expectations partially derive from social and cultural norms concerning the appropriate claims of citizens on government and private authorities. When an accident occurs, it is understood that doctors in the hospital emergency room will act: anger and protest are acceptable if they do not. Most tenants feel that they have claim to adequate maintenance from the landlord in return for rent. On the other hand, while people may feel they have a minimal right to shelter, they are often confused and unclear about who should be responsible for providing it.

Issues will also attract organizers to the extent that they can be translated into forms which will correspond with public expectations generally. Housing issues often appeal in this regard, since the images of children bitten by rats or families freezing in winter can be manipulated to evoke attention and favorable responses among allies and in the press.

Regardless of the actual expectations which constituents hold, virtually every community organization will generate rhetoric designed to show that the goals it has set are in fact just and that tactics are designed to secure no more than what people should be able to expect. Some community organizations are, in fact, dedicated to trying to change people's expectations of public responsibility and provision of services even at the expense of pursuing immediate, concrete gains.

4. *Responsibility.* Cutting across the question of expectations is that of identifying the specific parties or agents responsible for conditions. If constituents have difficulty determining who is responsible, the extent to which they can be mobilized around expectations of better conditions will be diminished. The following discussion of difficulties in locating responsible parties should be read as a commentary on problems in securing tactical goals as well as in designing tactics appealing to constituents.

The inability to identify responsible parties may stem from the following circumstances, among others.

A. Responsibility rests with plural entities. The more parties responsible, the greater the difficulties in securing rewards, benefits, or concessions from them, and the more discouraging to potential constituents are related tactics. This generalization is illustrated in the housing area by the difficulties experienced by community organizations in developing organizational tactics directed against landlords. The multiplicity of landlords in low income areas has forced some organizations to direct tactics toward official city

policies, rather than to attempt mobilization against the legally responsible owners.[57] Other groups discover that they must attempt to devise tactics in which they can identify a consolidated group of responsible landlords. For example, Chicago tenant unions, to avoid confrontations with the city, had to identify targets with control over enough properties to be vulnerable as a common "antagonist."[58] Thus they focused on managing agents with major ghetto holdings and housing developments belonging to a single owner. The tactics of selecting an offender as the target of organizational mobilization must overcome "why me?" defense of targets who can identify an army of equally responsible parties.

B. Responsibility remains privatized. Community organizations will attract constituents to the extent that responsibility for a given issue generally rests with the target of organizational efforts. Demonstrations of deviation from norms of responsibility make the possible target more (but by no means absolutely) vulnerable to organizational offensives. However, in a number of areas norms concerning the responsibility of government or private institutions are nonexistent. Thus on this single dimension one would anticipate greater ease in mobilizing constituents around issues of public education and police protection than around housing and employment issues. These are the implications for community organizations of much that has been written concerning American social welfare ideology.[59] If poor people are treated as if, and come to believe, that they are responsible for their own housing conditions (state of repair, neighborhood location, quality of upkeep, ability to move), community organizations will be correspondingly less able to mobilize them for concerted action.

C. Responsibility is elusive. Sometimes community organizations are confronted not with the problem of plural targets but with the elusiveness of responsibility. Responsibility may be dispersed, as in the case of a multiplicity of city agencies involved in inspecting housing conditions. Or it may be distant and divided, as in the case of a housing system where responsibility for credit to rehabilitate rests with private and public lending institutions, the quality and cost of production with manufacturers, and immediate maintenance with the landlord. Community organizations may also experience great difficulty in fixing responsibility for policy where urban renewal is funded through federal agencies to local ones for use on specific projects.

To avoid the problems suggested above, community organizations may direct efforts at identifiable but not ultimately responsible parties. Clearly this is the framework of Alinsky's prescriptive attack on visible targets.[60] Other community organizations may design tactics precisely to affect constituent and public consciousness of target appropriateness and/or vulnerability, as when an organizer initiates an attack on a landlord to illustrate his dependence on the banks and their responsibility. Some community organizers are attracted to housing reform precisely because it raises fundamental issues. To inquire into housing politics involves questions about the inability of the American political and economic system to provide for the minimal needs of its citizens, and about the consequences of making public policy for the benefit of those who either profit from the current housing industry or draw comfort from the consolidation of a status quo characterized by economic and racial segregation.[61]

5. *Extent of changes required.* The attraction of an issue will be partly a function of the relative ease or difficulty of goal attainment. Community organizations will experience difficulty in attracting members if the promise of joining appears unlikely to be fulfilled. The quick victories strategy is based upon this line of reasoning, although we have suggested that interest may diminish if goals prove inappropriate.

Community organizations must embrace a tension between issues which may be easily secured but make little difference to constituents, and those much more difficult to obtain but of relatively higher salience. The installation of a traffic light, while easily obtained, may prove to be a trivial objective. Community organizations in housing illustrate these tensions well. They may succeed in obtaining city inspections and garbage collection on a more regular basis, but fundamental housing conditions will not have been affected. The cost of improving housing conditions are high. Rehabilitation, repairs, and new construction, except in rare cases, will only be undertaken if economies of scale can be realized.[62] The owner of a tenement insists that it is too expensive to hire a plumber for a single apartment; public agencies find it uneconomical to rehabilitate single units. However, large scale improvements on which economies of scale would be realized require large investments. The same reasons that lead housing reformers to conclude that only massive federal subsidies can dramatically improve the housing stock of the poor[63] lead to the conclusion that organizing around housing is made difficult by the enormity of the need. Community organizations in housing will not quickly resolve

the dilemma of the unattainability of their ultimate goal and the relative unproductiveness of their stated goals for lasting benefits to constituents.

6. *Availability of resources.* The opportunity to acquire significant resources with which to attract and retain members, and sustain programs, may make issues attractive to community organizations. Housing issues often provide these incentives. Struggles over control of abandoned properties, or public housing units, represent chances to obtain authority over structures whose conditions significantly affect constituents' lives. The proliferation of government programs in areas of tenant management and low income housing rehabilitation provides opportunities for community organizations to compete for control over the resources allocated toward administering these programs. Even if winning is sometimes a burden, the opportunity to win control of tangible resources may still prove attractive.

7. *Risks of involvement.* Issues will vary in their attractiveness to constituents in relation to the risk involved in participation. Community organizations may jeopardize their ability to attract constituents if involvement might result in the loss of presently held values. On this dimension it may be easier to develop community organizations around issues of poverty or the establishment of a health center, where there is little risk in advocating the introduction of new programs, than it would be to organize around housing, where the threat of eviction is a sobering influence. In every controversy over housing, tenants are subject to coercive landlord sanctions. Indeed, the struggles against harassment, retaliatory eviction, and rent

increases are critical to the development of stronger community organizations in housing. It is sometimes claimed that poor people who live in such degraded conditions have nothing to lose by fighting for better conditions. The evidence does not generally support this contention.

The focus on housing issues in this paper has permitted us to analyze the potential for community organizations of a relatively discrete, if diverse, set of concerns. Many community organizations have made housing problems the target of organizational attacks, even though the probabilities of successful action appear low and their limitations as a focus many. The risks to constituents, the elusiveness and dispersion of responsibility for deterioration and unhealthy conditions, and the extraordinary costs involved in significant improvements constrain community organization in this area. On the other hand, the saliency of housing, the inherent possibilities for political education, and the opportunities for obtaining grants and program responsibility suggest that housing as an issue will continue to attract organizers and constituents.

Our analysis may also be instructive for contemporary debates on governmental organization in this area. Decentralization of authority in the form of tenant-controlled public housing projects, neighborhood planning boards, or tenant management corporations might provide community organizations with opportunities and resources which currently they find difficult to locate. However, housing is expensive to maintain or rehabilitate, particularly in those deteriorating neighborhoods where residents are unable to obtain good financing terms. Lending

institutions, construction firms, and related interests are unlikely to surrender control over costs and finances and would continue to exercise considerable influence. Decentralization of authority over impoverished facilities without financial resources would mean decentralizing and further reinforcing the poverty and hopelessness of deteriorating neighborhoods. There is probably an unresolvable tension between the desire of community organizations in housing to control facilities, and the recognition that decentralization may divert public attention from the need for large scale public commitments.

This study reflects an ongoing concern with the place of relatively powerless groups in American politics, and the strategies available to such groups to alter their politically impoverished status. Previous examination of protest politics in American cities led to the conclusion that protest strategies, for a number of reasons, were inherently unstable. Community organization strategies, designed to increase and stabilize group cohesion, offer considerably greater opportunities for the development of political resources. But, we conclude, community organizations of relatively powerless groups remain constrained by their need to secure resources and develop incentives to attract constituents. For the most part, those may be acquired only through interactions requiring compromises of group independence and goals. Although compromises are perhaps inevitable in any quasi-bargaining situation, the compromises upon organizations of the relatively powerless are inherent <u>in becoming organizations</u>.

This discussion concentrated on community organizations which were oriented toward developing bargaining power for relatively specific goals.

Community organizations oriented toward personal development and fulfillment of members, or toward the pursuit of an ideology have been largely omitted. The organizations on which we focus are precisely those which pluralist theory describes as potentially developing to represent the poor and minority groups. But the emergent picture in our analysis is one in which groups, while more or less free to compete without sanctions, find themselves in a bargaining arena severely biased against the relatively powerless. They may be "invited" to attend the competition, but the cost of entry is high, and may be paid only by assuming identities which severely limit their competitive effectiveness.

NOTES

*This article is based upon the authors' independent studies of housing-oriented community organizations in New York City, Boston, Chicago, Baltimore, and Philadelphia as well as extensive examination of written accounts of community organizations of low income groups. We have tried to develop a persuasive and useful framework for analyzing the dynamics of community organization. We recognize the limitations of the case data on which we have relied in refining our thoughts, and anticipate modification of assertions and hypotheses on the basis of further empirical research.

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[1]For social work theory see Murray Ross, Community Organization (New York, 1955); and Martin Rein and Robert Morris, "Goals, Structures and Strategies for Community Change," in Ralph M. Kramer and Harry Specht (eds.), Readings in Community Organization Practice (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1969), pp. 188-202. For community organization and the poverty program, see Peter Marris and Martin Rein, Dilemmas of Social Reform (New York, 1969), ch. 7; and Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz, Power and Poverty (New York, 1970), ch. 6. For student interest, see publications of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and by the Economic Research and Action Project of the Students for a Democratic Society, in Mitchell Cohen and Dennis Hale (eds.), The New Student Left (Boston, 1967). For militants' advocacy, see Saul Alinsky, Reveille for Radicals (Chicago, 1945; Vintage edition, New York, 1969). For black capitalists, see publications of the Black Research and Development Corporation of the Harvard Business School. For businessmen, see the publications of the Greater Baltimore Committee in reference to MUND (Model Urban Neighborhood Developments).

[2]Relatively powerless groups may be defined as those groups which, relatively speaking, are lacking in conventional political resources. For a useful list of such resources, see Robert Dahl, "The Analysis of Influence in Local Communities," in Charles R. Adrian (ed.), Social Science and Community Action (East Lansing, Mich., 1960), p. 32. This paper may be read as a continuation of research on and analysis of the political strategies available to such groups initiated by Michael Lipsky, Protest in City Politics: Rent Strikes, Housing and the Power of the Poor (Chicago, 1970). For further related discussion of relatively powerless groups, see chs. 1, 6, and 7.

[3]Salient characteristics around which potential community organization members are recruited include poor housing conditions, underemployment, subjection to inadequate services and facilities, and welfare recipiency. Groups sharing these characteristics tend to live in similar areas of cities, but community organization is not necessarily "neighborhood organization," since organizing activities may transcend neighborhood boundaries. The Welfare Rights Organization provides an illustration of these generalizations, as well as a test of the definition. Welfare Rights activities may take place throughout an entire city, but for organizational purposes are broken down into neighborhood and sectional efforts. Furthermore, the tendency of welfare recipients to be concentrated in and identify with certain sections of the city creates a situation where organizing around welfare turns into organizing around locality regardless of the original intention of the organizers.

[4]This framework is suggested in James Q. Wilson, "The Strategy of Protest: Problems of Negro Civic Action," Journal of Conflict Resolution, 5 (September 1961): 291-303.

[5]Lipsky, Protest in City Politics.

[6]In common usage community organization also refers to organizations of the relatively poor and powerless for the purpose of engaging in at least some degree of interaction and conflict with the agencies of government. Although local political clubs or associations of white, middle class homeowners who live in the same neighborhood could be considered community organizations under the definition, few politically-oriented community organizers would mean such activities as their work. For a history of the term in social work theory, see Mayer N. Zald (ed.), Organizing for Community Welfare (Chicago, 1967); "Introduction," in Kramer and Specht, Readings in Community Organization Practice, pp. 12-19; and George A. Brager and Harry Specht, "Social Action by the Poor: Prospects, Problems and Strategies," in George A. Brager and Francis Purcell (eds.), Community Action Against Poverty (New Haven, 1967), pp. 136-141.

[7]A Preface to Democratic Theory (Chicago, 1956), pp. 145-146. For a discussion of the centrality of group activity as a condition of pluralism, see Robert Presthus, Men at the Top (New York, 1964), pp. 8-24.

[8]A Preface to Democratic Theory, pp. 145-146.

[9]For this perspective we are clearly indebted to Anthony Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy (New York, 1966).

[10]See Stanley Kelley, Jr., et al., "Registration and Voting: Putting First Things First," American Political Science Review, 61 (June 1967): 359-379.

[11]The Functions of an Executive (Cambridge, Mass., 1938), p. 139.

[12]Ibid., ch. XI; Mancur Olson, The Logic of Collective Action (New York, 1968), especially chs. 1, 2; James G. March and Herbert A. Simon, Organizations (New York, 1958), ch. 4; Herbert A. Simon, Administrative Behavior (New York, 1945), ch. VI; and Peter Clark and James Q. Wilson, "Incentive Systems: A Theory of Organization," Administrative Science Quarterly, 6 (1961): 129-166.

[13]See Mayer N. Zald and Robert Ash, "Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay and Change," in Joseph R. Gusfield (ed.), Protest, Reform and Revolt (New York, 1970), pp. 520-521.

[14]Ibid., pp. 516-537.

[15]Both the East Garfield Park Tenants' Union of Chicago and the South End Tenants' Council in Boston found it necessary to write protective clauses on eviction and rent hikes into their arbitration contracts with local slumlords. In reaction to demands by public housing tenants in Baltimore, the public housing authority unsucessfully attempted to transfer an outspoken tenant leader to a project far from her organization. See Peter Bachrach, "A Power Analysis: The Shaping of Anti-Poverty Policy in Baltimore," Public Policy, XVIII (Winter 1970): 179-181. For further discussion, see Michael Lipsky and Carl A. Neumann, "Landlord-Tenant Law in the United States and West Germany--A Comparison of Legal Approaches," Tulane Law Review, XLIV (December 1969): 36-66.

[16]See Lipsky and Neumann, "Landlord-Tenant Law;" and Beatrice Levi, "Baltimore's Rent Court is the Landlord's Tool," The Sunday Sun, November 16, 1969, Section C. p. 2.

[17]"The Analysis of Influence on Local Communities," pp. 38-39. For further discussion of this point by Dahl, see Who Governs? (New Haven, 1961), chs. 24, 25, 26.

[18]The Logic of Collective Action, esp. chs. 1, 2.

[19]Ibid., p. 51.

[20]See Lipsky, Protest in City Politics, p. 159.

[21]See Richard A. Cloward and Francis Fox Piven, "Finessing the Poor," The Nation, 207 (October 7, 1968): 332-334; and "Welfare Rights as Organizational Weapon: An Interview with George Wiley," Social Policy, I (July/August 1970): 61-62.

[22]For a discussion of this question see Warner Bloomberg, Jr., "Community Organization," in Howard S. Becker (ed.), Social Problems: A Modern Approach (New York, 1966), p. 385, and references cited there.

[23]Lee Rainwater, "Neighborhood Action and Lower-Class Life Styles," in John B. Turner (ed.), Neighborhood Organization for Community Action (New York, 1968), p. 31.

[24]Ibid., p. 31. Also see Oscar Lewis, "The Culture of Poverty," and Warren C. Haggstrom, "The Power of the Poor," in Louis A. Ferman, Joyce L. Kornbluh and Alan Haber (eds.), Poverty in America (Ann Arbor, 1968).

[25]Edward Banfield, The Unheavenly City (Boston, 1970), pp. 216-218. For a further discussion of the relationships between organization and culture by Banfield, see The Moral Basis of a Backward Society (New York, 1958).

[26]For a description of the commitment of student organizers, see Richard Rothstein, "Evolution of the ERAP Organizers," in Priscilla Long (ed.), The New Left (Boston, 1969).

[27]The use of this term and discussion of the causes and implications of "burning out" can be found in Barbara and Alan Haber, "Getting By With a Little Help from Our Friends," and Michael Appleby, "Revolutionary Change and the Urban Environment," in Long, The New Left.

[28]For a discussion of the distrust of leaders among the poor, see Kenneth Clark, Dark Ghetto (New York, 1965), pp. 155-168, 182-198; and Saul Alinsky, Reveille for Radicals, p. 89.

[29]See Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson, City Politics (New York, 1963), ch. 9; and Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (Glencoe, Ill., 1957), pp. 71-81. For further speculations, see Robert Lineberry and Edmund P. Fowler, "Reformism and Public Policies in American Cities," APSR, 61 (September 1967): 701-716.

[30]For a description of the strain on organizers and the way political parties manage to overcome them, see Marris and Rein, Dilemmas of Social Reform, p. 186.

[31]For a further discussion of these tasks a leader must confront, see Lipsky, Protest in City Politics, ch. 6.

[32]See Alinsky, Reveille for Radicals, ch. 5. The theoretical underpinnings of the Community Action Program in the skirmish on poverty depended upon the identification and utilization of community leaders whose previously established community influence would now be linked to power and responsibility. For a discussion of this, see Marris and Rein, Dilemmas of Social Reform, pp. 167-168; and Brager and Specht, "Social Action by the Poor," pp. 143-150.

[33]It is generally accepted that ghettos have clear and complex leadership structures, although the leaders may not occupy formal positions of authority. See William Whyte, Street Corner Society (Chicago, 1943); and Alinsky, Reveille for Radicals, pp. 69-74. William Ellis in his case study of Chicago's West Side Organization, White Ethics and Black Power (Chicago, 1969), pp. 57-60, argues that the only men and women in the ghetto with the aggressiveness and administrative ability necessary to direct community organizations are those with experience in criminal activities.

[34]See Alinsky, Reveille for Radicals, pp. 64-69; Ross, Community Organization, pp. 168-170; and Daniel P. Moynihan, Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding (New York, 1969), p. 146.

[35]See Ross, Community Organization, pp. 190-194; and Zald and Ash, "Social Movement Organizations," pp. 527-528.

[36]For Alinsky's views, see Reveille for Radicals, chs. 9 and 10; and Marian K. Sanders (ed.), The Professional Radical (New York, 1970), pp. 61-62. For those of his critics see Frank Riessman, "The Myth of Saul Alinsky," Dissent (1967), pp. 468-478; and Richard Rothstein, "Evolution of the ERAP Organizers," pp. 274-275.

[37]After months of complaining, successful arbitration proceedings and continued landlord neglect, Boston's South End Tenants' Council through arbitration was awarded management of seven buildings. However, because the buildings needed major rehabilitation, the Tenants' Council soon discovered that the rents did not cover maintenance, repairs, and mortgage, let alone payment of administrative personnel. Rather, it found itself in the position of doing all the landlord's dirty work, including rent collection, but unable to improve upon the landlord's repair record.

[38]Alinsky argues that a good practice is to have "a fight in the bank" so that the people will constantly have an outlet for their aggressions and will always have something to do. And many of these fights should be winnable. See Reveille for Radicals, ch. 8, "Conflict Tactics." See also Milton Kotler, Neighborhood Government (New York, 1969), pp. 27-30.

[39]See The New York Times, November 2, 1969, p. 52; and Newsweek (August 25, 1969), pp. 49-50.

[40]See Lipsky, Protest in City Politics, p. 189.

[41]See Francis Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, "Rent Strike: Disrupting the Slum System," The New Republic, CLVII (December 2, 1967): 11-15.

[42]See The New York Times, September 24, 1968, p. 38; October 26, 1968, p. 1; and Cloward and Piven, "Finessing the Poor."

[43]See The New York Times, August 1, 1968, p. 23; September 24, 1968, p. 38; Cloward and Piven, "Finessing the Poor;" and "An Interview with George Wiley."

[44]Piven and Cloward, "Rent Strike."

[45]Both the South End Tenants' Council and, to a greater extent, the West Side Organization in Chicago even act as employment referral agents. On the West Side Organization, see Ellis, White Ethics and Black Power, p. 102-108.

[46]Ibid., p. 133. Ellis argues that the problem recognized as fundamental by the West Side Organization is racism, but that the way to attack it is through getting people to act and evaluate for themselves as a way to change their conceptions of themselves, ch. 6.

[47]The community organizations sponsored by the Economic and Research Action Project of Students for a Democratic Society are examples of this type of community organization. For a discussion of them, see Norm Fruchter, and Robert Kramer, "An Approach to Community Organizing Projects," Studies on the Left, 6 (March/April 1966): 31-61; Todd Gitlin, "The Battlefields and the War," in Cohen and Hale, The New Student Left, pp. 125-137; and Rennie Davis, "The War on Poverty: Notes on an Insurgent Response," in Cohen and Hale, The New Student Left, pp. 159-175.

[48]See Bachrach and Baratz, Power and Poverty, pp. 71-72, 76-77.

[49]In Boston in 1969 the South End Tenants' Council was near the end of several months of negotiations with the Redevelopment Authority for a package including management rehabilitation funds and eventual ownership of over 100 buildings. However, allied groups asked the SETC to join the moratorium on discussions with the Redevelopment Authority imposed by local groups fighting the rules of the urban committee elections. The SETC reluctantly complied.

[50]In order to maintain its independence, the West Side Organization is wary of too strong a coalition with the Chicago Students for a Democratic Society project and with The Woodlawn Organization. The groups disagree over the role of services and of anti-city actions. See Ellis, White Ethics and Black Power, pp. 123-124, and ch. 6.

[51]See Paul Davidoff, "The Planner as Advocate," in Edward Banfield (ed.), Urban Government (New York, 1969); Lisa Peattie, "Reflections of an Advocate Planner," in Banfield, Urban Government; and Francis Fox Piven, "Whom Does the Advocate Planner Serve?" Social Policy, 1 (May/June 1970): 32-37.

[52]See Chester Hartman, "The Advocate Planner: From 'Hired Gun' to Political Partisan," Social Policy, 1 (July/August 1970): 37-38; and "Sumner Rosen Comments," Social Policy, 1 (May/June 1970): 36.

[53]We have avoided using the familiar term "cooptation" because of the conceptual and normative difficulties which surround the concept. It is impossible empirically to know what direction an organization would have taken if the alleged cooptation did not take place. Moreover, the concept of cooptation is almost always used to denote a development displeasing to the observer. In this paper we are not concerned with judging community organizations. Rather, we seek to demonstrate the relationship between the needs of established civic groups and government agencies whose interests may lie in subordinating insurgent groups, and the needs of such groups to participate in their own subordination by developing relationships which will provide them with the incentives necessary to attract and retain members.

[54]See Bachrach and Baratz, Power and Poverty, pp. 81-85, for a discussion of the effect of funding problems on the Baltimore Community Action Agency.

[55]See Alvin Schorr, Slums and Social Insecurity (Washington, D.C., 1966), pp. 8-12, for a discussion of the relationship between self-perception and evaluation of residential location.

[56]On this point, Schorr has noted (ibid., p. 10):

> If physical surroundings are a mirror of us all, they will reflect an especially disturbing image to the people who, lacking the simplest amenities, are made aware of the riches that others quite normally own and consume.

[57]See Lipsky, Protest in City Politics, p. 179.

[58]In the process of doing this, however, one major landlord was found to be relatively invulnerable to pressure. Even though he controlled a large number of ghetto properties, most of his holdings were outside of the ghetto so that he felt little significant pressure when attacked there.

[59]See Gilbert Steiner, Social Insecurity (Chicago, 1966).

[60]See Alinsky, Reveille for Radicals, ch. 8; Sanders, The Professional Radical, pp. 70-79; and Kotler, Neighborhood Government, pp. 27-30.

[61]See the Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York, 1968), pp. 467-474.

[62]These assumptions inform the current "Project Breakthrough" by the Nixon Administration. See also A Decent Home: Report of the President's Committee on Urban Housing (Washington, D.C., 1969), pp. 100-110, 208-209.

[63]See Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, pp. 474-482; and A Decent Home, pp. 11-36.