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BUREAUCRATIC OPPOSITION: THE CHALLENGE TO AUTHORITARIAN ABUSES AT THE WORKPLACE[1]

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Resistance to formal organizational authority by individuals or informal groups is an ignored phenomenon in the social sciences. Yet everyone who has worked in a complex organization (bureaucracy) has either participated in or is familiar with periodic power struggles and/or "whistle-blowing" that has been undertaken by those employed within the organization outside of and against official procedures for processing grievances. Probably those sociologists who describe the principles of bureaucratic harmony, who show the functional dilemmas of organizational practice, or who discourse on the qualities of leadership may themselves have engaged in ousting a department head or in battling to maintain academic "standards." Resistance to formal organizational authority, or bureaucratic opposition, is pervasive. The amount of time that it absorbs, the consequences that it has for instigating or intensifying "rationalization" of tasks, the functions or dysfunctions that it has for the individual personality, and its ethical import within a mass democracy are all issues that have not been addressed by mainstream or even by critical sociologists.

The reasons why it has gone unnoticed are both theoretical and social. From a paradigmatic viewpoint, the various forms of functionalism have stressed social adjustment of strains and dilemmas through adaptive structures within a single normative order, while the varieties of conflict theory, particularly Marxism, have emphasized macro-structural and inter-organizational tensions and strife to the near exclusion of intra-organizational struggle. Socially, until the 1960s both apologists and critics agreed that the society was one-dimensional, the pluralists calling attention to limited competition within normative consensus and the conflict theorists identifying patterns of elite domination. The explosion of pluralism in the 1960s, following the emergence of anti-colonialism throughout the world after World War II and leading to various other liberation movements and challenges to established institutions, have made obvious the tensions within complex organizations.

Bureaucratic oppositions have occurred in both private and public organizations and have been perpetrated by one person or small groups, utilizing any of

a number of tactics, and meeting with a wide range of possible outcomes. These attempts at change from below, coming from those without authority, are labelled oppositions because they are outside of the normal routine, and are challenges to authority. However, their aims are not to usurp the reigns of power but to alter practices and/or personnel. In general, there are *two* types of bureaucratic opposition. One of them, probably the most frequent but least reported, is the revolt against *authority* considered to be arbitrary, abusive, or unjust. Such opposition is normally motivated by perceived inequities of treatment and may aggregate a number of individual grievances into a movement against a supervisor, a department head, or a division chief. The second type is the protest against or exposure of *situations* or *practices* that are considered to be illegal, inefficient, or immoral. Since unjust authority may also be immoral, and immorality, inefficiency or illegality depends upon inequities to keep it under cover, the two types of bureaucratic opposition are often found combined. However, they have two distinctive and different thrusts. Normally, resistance against unjust authority aims at ousting a power holder while opposition against a situation is meant to change a practice. The first is usually a matter internal to the organization while the second is related to its function and tends to spill over into the "public" domain.

The model of a bureaucracy, classically described by Weber, is one in which the tasks are totally rationalized. The traditional assembly-line manufacturing procedure is an example of nearly complete rationalization in which the work is so routine that the labourers are merely extensions of the tools that they use and have no discretion over their activities. However, where work is not fully rationalized and made machinelike there are possibilities for different interpretations of what should be done, what aspects of the occupational role should be emphasized, what constitutes justice with regard to rewards and punishments, and when decisions about work become commentaries on the worth of the worker (problem of individual dignity).

Routinization or rationalization (used interchangably here) refer to the triumph of instrumental rationality in which the means to an end are related stepwise in a predictable pattern of cause and effect. Transferred to the realm of human beings, the triumph of instrumental reason means the substitution of administration for politics. Bureaucratic oppositions are indicators that this substitution has not occurred, because they are political processes growing out of conflicts over proper goals or ends, just distribution of resources, and the right principles of conduct. Often oppositions indicate resistance to administrative eclipse of politics, as in cases of dissent against practices aimed at "efficiency" which disregard individual differences, exclude worker consultation or decision-making, or circumscribe discretion.

Bureaucratic oppositions have, for the most part, been undertaken by white-collar rather than by blue-collar workers. While there are political conflicts be-

tween blue-collar workers and "management" they most often concern the financial and physical conditions of work and are regularized in negotiations through unions. (Unions themselves, however, consist of white-collar type jobs and opposition within them should be analyzed in that context, despite the members occupations.) Issues concerning distributive justice are supposed to be settled by the "contract", while grievances are handled by the shop steward. The role-definition of the blue-collar worker is relatively unambiguous and programmed by machinery or other tools, and opposition to possibly immoral consequences of production is excluded by the terms of the "bargain". Oppositions against foremen considered to be abusive are initiated by blue-collar workers, but they are limited by the interposition of unions and the legal machinery for enforcing the contract.

Despite the analysis of white-collar jobs which indicates their increasing "proletarianization",[2] there are still differences between blue- and white-collar work that encourages political activity in the latter. First, modern Western culture has tended to divide experience between the realms of things and persons (Descartes' division between thinking substance and extended substance, Kant's differentiation of the phenomenal world and the kingdom of ends). Within the realm of things the principles of efficiency and economy (instrumental reason or Zweckrational conduct) are supposed to apply, while in the realm of persons, principles of justice and respect (Wertrational conduct) are appropriate. Much of white-collar work still concerns the realm of persons in which differing interpretations of decision rules may be at stake and in which conceptions of duty may clash. For example, those who handle "claims" or "cases" are interpreting systems of rules and are likely to have their own "judicial ideologies" which may clash with those of their superiors. Moreover, much of white-collar work requires diffuse cooperative relations, which often breed envy, jealousy, and competition, all of which may take a political form. Insofar as the "product" of white-collar work is something intangible like a decision and the "relations of production" are diffuse, the work resists complete rationalization and is a potential breeding ground for political opposition.

White-collar work is also pervious to political processes, particularly above the middle-level of organizational hierarchies, because it concerns the decisions about routine and therefore, cannot be made routine itself. There may be conflict over alternative policies, but even more important there may be disagreement about whether a particular decision was "right" or in "the best interests" of the agency or sub-unit. Further complicating the matter are differences among interpretations of professional codes, proper repositories for loyalty, and estimates of "competence", all of which may generate political opposition and generally do not trouble blue-collar workers. Another aspect of white-collar work favouring the emergence of political processes is the

traditional "white-collar consciousness" of being different from the machinelike proletarian. White-collar workers are often willing to take lower salaries than comparable blue-collar workers just to avoid the occupational self-concept of being the extension of a machine. Resistance to proletarianization may be a source of opposition.

Two political dimensions of white-collar work are intensified and exacerbated wherever promotion and firing, as well as working conditions (for example, scheduling in hospitals or academic institutions) are not routinized in seniority systems and specific rules. Competition for preferment, "undermining" rivals, and resentment at being "passed over" are not bureaucratic oppositions, but may encourage, lead to, or deepen them.

Essentially, with few exceptions such as keypunch operators and typists who produce tangible products and have little possibility for promotion,[3] white-collar workers have not been and perhaps cannot be totally subject to an administrative process that excludes political conflict. Attempts to make things seem as though they are routine or that they are determined by "objective" standards of efficiency or productivity are rhetorical strategies with their own political import of minimizing challenges to authority. Despite all denials, white-collar workers exist within a political situation.

Traditionally, politics has been viewed as the realm of human activity in which decisions are made about such issues as the proper definition of function, policy and justice. Politics has meant the possibility of choosing among alternatives within a public situation; hence, discretion and the possibility for varying interpretations are essential aspects of political relations. Economic or instrumental activity can be programmed; this is not the case for political activity where contradictory values may be at stake, not to mention the element of human choice in particular situations. Politics as an activity should not be confused with what goes on in government or the state. For example, John Dewey and C. Wright Mills[4] both defined politics in terms of public consequences rather than institutions. Insofar as organizations put people in situations where they have discretion, where there can be different ideologies of role definition, where their dignity is involved in their work, where their commitment and "loyalty" is mobilized, where they are taught an "ethic of ultimate ends" (as in some professions) that may clash with administrative expediencey — in short, where everything cannot be programmed in advance as on an assembly line — there is every reason to expect that organizations will show the characteristics that have been observed in so-called "political systems." Among these characteristics is the phenomenon of "opposition" which seems to be ubiquitous in the political process. The following discussion will relate oppositional activities in bureaucracies to the categories of political opposition discussed in recent political analyses with appropriate modifications to suit contexts other than the state.

State and Organization

Social scientists concerned with topics such as rebellion and revolution provide a more fruitful context for the understanding of bureaucratic oppositions than do organization theorists. In general, mainstream organization theory has stressed the monocratic authority of organizations and has interpreted factors which would tend to "disorganize" this order as problematic: problems that social scientists should study and problems that top management must eradicate. The residual category of "disorganization" substitutes for conflict as a normal and, perhaps productive, social process.

A good case can be made for treating bureaucratic organizations as the equivalent in many respects to authoritarian regimes. Organization theory in the United States has tended to make the business corporation the model for all other organizations, but it is equally plausible to make the state the paradigm for specific purposes, such as the study of bureaucratic opposition. Although corporations have neither absolute control over a territory nor armed troops, they function politically by allocating resources through systems of power. Antony Jay notes that the board of directors is analogous to a government, shareholders to a propertied class, and employees to citizens.[5] Particularly with regard to the last analogy, subjects of an authoritarian regime do not fare so differently from most employees of a corporation. In neither case is there freedom of speech, the right to a trial, or participation in rule-making. The business corporation and state, of course, differ in the penalties that they mete out for insubordination, but being fired and sometimes blacklisted can be as harsh or even harsher over the long run than physical coercion; witness such metaphors as "being given the axe".

Like rebellions, bureaucratic oppositions are outside of the usual course of events. As William Korhauser notes, rebellions occur when there are no political structures capable of accomodating political demands.[6] Bureaucracies are not set up to handle internal conflicts, particularly when the statuses of those engaged in the conflict have great power differentials. Bureaucracies are hierarchical arrangements of authority, visualizable as flows of decisions downward, and obedience upward. Max Weber attests to the lack of means for those without authority to make changes: "The official is entrusted with specialized tasks and normally the mechanism cannot be put into motion or arrested by him, but only from the very top."[7] Bureaucratic authorities are different from standard political authorities in the one significant sense that they do not administer a system of law backed up by organized physical coercion (except for the enforcement bureaucracies of the state). They must call on state agencies to aid them if laws are broken, but cannot use coercion against their employees. Hence, bureaucratic authorities cannot legally employ force, an important means in the array of social control mechanisms, against their

employees. If the employees use force themselves, they will probably have to contend with the state. Bureaucratic oppositions thus tend to be non-violent. However, aside from the legal limitations, backed by courts, police, and prisons, bureaucratic oppositions are essentially no different than political oppositions. Of course, bureaucracies are not democratic. But then, most states are not democratic either.

Within the context of the state, oppositional movements have been extensively analyzed, particularly revolutions, although rebellions, internal wars and social protest movements have also been studied. An attempt will be made here to consider this literature's usefulness for studying the phenomenon of bureaucratic opposition. In general, there are three major issues: the conditions under which oppositions arise, the processes and problems of oppositional group formation and coherence, and analyses of the various strategies which they may employ.

The Origins of Bureaucratic Oppositions

A distinction between "preconditions" and "precipitants", which has been developed to understand the conditions under which oppositions against the state arise[8], has direct relevance for analyzing organizational conflict. A precipitant is the last act in a sequence of tension-producing events which actually starts the "war". The preconditions, on the other hand, are both those prior events as well as the general circumstances that set the context, that charge the atmosphere, so to speak. The precipitant, the spark that ignites, the final straw that breaks the camel's back, does not seem to generate great interest among students of oppositions to the state. The same deemphasis would apply to bureaucratic oppositions where a one-shot offense does not seem to account for the ensuing action; there is usually a "long train of abuses".

Far more energy is spent by theorists of political oppositions in examining the preconditions. One popular hypothesis is that the weakness of the elite brings on the opposition. In a sense, the habit of public obedience to the established powers is somehow shattered and rebel leadership replaces the now defenceless elite. Pareto and other Italian elite theorists held, for example, that an elite which had the nerve to use violence decisively and efficiently could not be displaced. Such loss of nerve, however, is not a free-floating psychological phenomenon but may itself stem from the decline of legitimacy, the erosion of shared values, and generalized confidence in the community's superiority and destiny. William Gamson argues that such generalized sentiments as morale and loyalty are "slack resources" that leadership groups can mobilize in order to suppress challenges to their domination.[9] The disappearance of slack is both an indicator and a cause of political crisis in which effective leadership control is lost.

In a summary of various views of preconditions, Harry Eckstein divides them into intellectual, economic, social structural and political factors.[10] The first includes such elements as a regime's inadequate socialization program; for example, the observation that so-called Young Turks are more likely to be involved in many bureaucratic oppositions may fit here. Intellectual factors may also include the coexistence of contrary myths in a society; for example, are police supposed to help the public or have "cushy" jobs?[11] Under the category of social structure, Eckstein mentions the possibility of too much recruitment into the elite from non-elite groups, a situation which breaks the elite's internal cohesion. If one had a large sample of instances of bureaucratic oppositions where various controls could be instituted, this hypothesis could be readily evaluated. For example, where academic departments have "blown" and the heads have been deposed, does this happen more frequently when the faculty are recruited from comparatively less "prestigious" graduate departments holding the "prestige" of the observed "blown" department constant?

Among other possible causes of bureaucratic opposition is abusive or corrupt government; that in Parsonian terms, the function of goal attainment was inadequately performed. For states this might mean losing a war or being unable to cope with a depressed or inflated economy. For private corporations this might be measured in terms of profit. However, many bureaucratic oppositions are directed against heads of departments or sub-agencies, and performance in such cases is often difficult to measure. For non-profit (particularly governmental) organizations the whole concept of goal attainment is perhaps inapplicable. At best it may refer to getting desired appropriations.

Resistance

Regardless of all of the factors that make opposition a constant possibility in both states and bureaucracies, existent regimes have many means at their disposal for suppressing the public appearance of dissent and rebellion. These means fall under the general category of social-control mechanisms,[12] and range from violence to loyalty or what Parsons termed "value commitments."[13] While violence is not ordinarily an option for bureaucracies and strong and internalized sentiments of loyalty obviate the need for repression, there are many social-control mechanisms, some of them quite subtle, that fall between these two poles. Closest to outright violence are dismissal, geographical transfer, and sometimes blacklisting of personnel. Short of actual removal is the use of threats, sometimes aimed directly at dissenters and more often couched in terms of supposed dangers from other organizational competitors if internal unity is disrupted. The latter tactics may be reversed when elites foment interorganizational conflict to mobilize solidarity internally. Aside from negative

sanctions organizations can offer material rewards to dampen down dissent, attempt to co-opt rebel leadership,[14] and even require that their employees engage in conspicuous consumption so that they will become dependent on continued employment.[15] Of course, the use of rewards has narrow limits. Firstly, pay-offs to dissenters set a bad example that may encourage others to be disobedient so that they too get a bigger slice of the pie. Secondly, the strategy of elites is not to distribute the organization's wealth to employees, but to maintain their power through strengthening the organization.

Given the wide knowledge and use of a host of controls, it is even difficult to conceive of how bureaucratic oppositions arise at all. Yet they do occur.[16] Part of the solution to this mystery lies in recognizing that the modes of domination are only effective when people act in accordance with their so-called rational self-interest. But narrow-gauged self-interest within the limits of the structure (what Parsons calls "institutionalized individualism"[17]) is only one type of motivation for action; " . . . consciousness that does not transcend its rootedness in an economically competitive mode of production."[18] Weber himself was well aware of other varieties of motivated actions: "Less 'rational' actions are typed by Weber in terms of the pursuit of 'absolute ends', as flowing from affectual sentiments, or as 'traditional'."[19] Although Weber tends to associate different action types with different kinds of collective associations, it is unwarrented to conclude that other forms of action are not present in a certain type of social structure. Admittedly traditional action seems unlikely to motivate oppositions to authority. However, both action motivated by the pursuit of absolute ends and by affectual sentiments, together, or separately, certainly can, and does, actuate resistance. When employees "blow the whistle" on bosses because they are producing a product that is harming consumers, or they are misusing government appropriations, they are often motivated by a "higher reason" of absolute ends. Many of those participating in collective oppositions are actuated, at least in part, by affectual sentiments.

Bureaucratic oppositions, in contrast to those in the polity, do not require mass support, although it may sometimes be helpful. Nonetheless the dodge of foreign danger can be effectuated by stirring up interdepartmental rivalries or sentiments of interorganizational competition.

Mobilization and Tactics

Whether they term it revolution, challenge groups, or internal war, those concerned with the polity consider the opposition to be a group of people, rather than a lone individual. Because of the difference between political and bureaucratic opposition (appeal to other more powerful organizations is possible in the latter case), there are various strategies by which a person can go it

alone, and still be effective. This is particularly the case where the issue concerns the organization's function rather than abusive internal power. Despite the possibilities of individual opposition, there are compelling reasons for those involved in resistance to do it collectively. "Society" looks askance at those who march to "different drummers" and who point out that the "emperor has no clothes." Challenging the everyday notion of reality often brands one as mentally deranged, the modern equivalent of devil possession. Somehow if more than one person repudiates the official definition of the situation opprobrium is not usually as great. It is lonely to go it alone, because one very easily becomes a pariah at the work place. Further, more people mean possibly more ideas for action and more resources (such as connections with higher-ups, the media, etc.).

Groups rarely emerge spontaneously, despite widespread discontent. Someone needs to broach the matter of taking action and to mobilize others. To use Marxist terminology, a transformation of *Klasse an sich* into a *Klass fuer sich* is needed. Although griping and black humor are actions most useful for spreading discontent and delegitimizing authorities, they do not in themselves constitute oppositional movements. This is particularly the case where liberal ideology prevails and one is allowed to think anything and is given relative freedom of speech, limited only by seditious rousings. Yet despite lip-service to traditional legal guarantees of individual rights there is no sentiment that legitimates opposition within an organization. Quite the opposite, all habits of thought are those of obedience towards authority, even going so far as loyalty to and identification with the organization. These sentiments are usually reinforced and encouraged by the organization but are specifically taught by the major socializing institutions of the society: the family, the schools and the churches. This "natural" inclination towards obedience, this one-dimensional pattern of thought, is a major obstacle to getting others to take part in oppositions. Experimental studies by Milgram, although open to questions of validity, indicate that people are so willing to obey authority that they will inflict suffering on others simply because they have been told to do so.[20] In a sense, the more that bureaucratic oppositions are made public, the more likely are they to occur, because they present a hitherto "unknown" possibility.

Another hindrance to creating an opposition group is widespread fear of reprisals or alternatively, loss of possible rewards (in a bourgeois culture, "profits"). Blau's notion of "fair exchange"[21] and Homans' rule of "distributive justice"[22] (where one expects the profit to be proportional to the cost) give some insight into probable decisional influences on potential opposition group members. Most contemporary social thought, whether Marxist or functionalist, accepts that personal sacrifices must be motivated. Oppositional activity involves such sacrifices because it is dangerous. Fidel Castro and Mao Tse-Tung, for example, based much of their revolutionary theory and

practice on the use of "moral incentives" where "material incentives" are unavailable. Such moral incentives include, as James Downton has noted, comradeship, pride and purpose.[23] Gamson adds that commitment to a cause often allows the revolutionary to transcend the calculations of cost-benefit analysis.[24] Working under the principles of cost-benefit analysis alone, nobody would embrace an unpopular cause, but would allow others to make the sacrifices. In the case of political revolutionaries, moral incentives are often supplemented by expectations that their opposition will effect drastic changes in social and personal life, and that its members will rise to power. Bureaucratic rebels, however, must often rely on moral incentives alone. They frequently aim at making rather minor changes and even if they are successful, their personal lot would not appreciably improve. Indeed, the replacement of an ousted higher-level bureaucrat is usually *not* a leader of the opposition.

Once people begin to affiliate themselves with a protest group, a process of stigmatization, wherein "the rebel is depicted in negative terms by society, labeled 'irrational', 'degenerate', or at least 'irresponsible'," further pulls them into it.[25] When those participating in bureaucratic oppositions come "out of the closet", stigmatization often becomes even more effective in promoting solidarity among the dissenters, thereby backfiring against the authorities.

Of interest to those studying political revolt is the role of rebel leaders in organizing and directing opposition groups. They are described in terms of their ability to maintain commitment and direct effective action. Frequently there is a discussion of different types of leadership roles corresponding to various phases of the revolution. Hopper, for example, distinguishes the agitator (who makes others aware of abuses and injustices), the prophet (who has special knowledge and sense of mission), the reformer (who offers specific alternatives), and the statesman (who formulates and operationalizes new policy).[26] In a similar vein, Eric Hoffer indicates that "a movement is pioneered by men of words, materialized by fanatics and consolidated by men of action."[27]

The issue of leadership has a somewhat different focus when one is considering bureaucratic oppositions. For the most part the struggle groups are very small and are often made up of colleagues who find the creation of a formal hierarchy rather distasteful and unimportant to coordinating resistance. The organization of these groups would be better understood by reference to the various theories of face-to-face group interaction, exemplified in the classic collection entitled *Small Groups*.[28] Shared leadership seems to be the norm, ". . . the leadership role switches from one person to another (and) . . . there may be, in fact, many leaders in the same group if one follows its course of interaction from one moment to another."[29] Possibly the degree to which the situation is deemed critical would influence whether a leader emerged from the

group. Perhaps the importance " . . . of approaching the goal outweighs the dissatisfactions of being controlled."[30] However, if each stands to loose equally (there is an equal risk factor), relegating decisions to another might be considered as unfair.

The third major area of concern to those who study oppositions to the polity is the variety of strategies and tactics which are most effective in different cases. In general, the strategies adopted are a function of the goals sought and the structure of the political system. Goals can be differentiated in terms of some changes sought in policies, structures, or personnel. Some theorists use the terms revolution and rebellion to make a distinction among types of opposition, but there is so much inconsistency and relativity that the terms are not useful.

Coup d'états are clearly rebellions aimed at personnel changes, and they are infrequently accompanied by significant structural policy transformations. Most frequent in military dictatorships, they are not unknown within organizations. Bureaucratic oppositions directed against specific power holders focus upon their personal characteristics, as opposed to role definitions. In many instances their issue is one of abuse of power — the status has delimited rights and obligations and flagrant maximization of the former and/or minimization of the latter (role exploitation[31]) can inspire protest. Ordering a secretary to take dictation is within an executive's rights, as opposed to ordering her to work overtime without additional pay, provide sexual "favours", or to pad an expense account. The department chairman who fails to call meetings or inform the faculty of administrative requirements, the executive who is usually too drunk to work, or the Peter-principled bureaucrat who has reached his or her level of incompetence[32] are instances of minimizing duties. Most bureaucracies make little provision for dismissing employees for power abuse, particularly in the higher echelons. Weber states that "normally, the position of the official is held for life, at least in public bureaucracies; and this is increasingly the case for all similar structures."[33] Evaluation and threats of discharge come from those above, but frequently those in the best position to know of abuses of office are those working under the person in question. This disjunction between the capacity to judge and the ability to pass judgement accounts for much organization conflict and stress. There is no power of the ballot in most organizations. Intensifying the problem are norms or rules prohibiting underlings from "going over the head" of their immediate superiors. Where such practices occur, the strategy for bureaucratic opposition involves getting non-immediate superiors to take the reports of wrongdoing seriously. This is one of the most difficult phases of a struggle, since high-level officials have often approved the functionaries under attack, are anxious to avoid publicity, and may fear legal reprisals if they act in favour of the insurgents.

It is probable that both in the polity and within organizations, personnel

changes spurred on by those without power are easier to effectuate and have been more successful than structural or policy changes. The tactics which are used to attempt structural changes are many, and in part are influenced by how radical they are relative to the existing organization, the type of organization, and the resources available. R.H. Tawney writes that "revolutions, as a long and bitter experience reveals, are apt to take their colour from the regime they overthrow."[34] For example, bureaucratic opposition within a metropolitan police department (such as the struggle that Serpico led[35]) is apt to be more violent than one in a fire department because the police are involved with violence on a daily basis. Verbal strategies are frequent in most organizations, especially in academic situations, because symbols are the manager's and professional's stock and trade. Whereas political revolutions are usually violent, in terms of physical harm,[36] bureaucratic oppositions hardly ever resort to physical force. Rather than molotov cocktails and guns, their weapons are rhetoric, ideology and threat of exposure. Both political and bureaucratic oppositions do often try to manipulate the interorganizational context. For a bureaucratic opposition such foreign allies might be the press, legislative oversight committees, public interest advocates, or a regulatory agency. In those instances of whistleblowing where a person is alone in the struggle, the press has been a powerful ally.[37]

Conclusion

There are numerous strategies as well as typologies of oppositional struggles that fill the literature on political conflicts.[38] Many of these are useful to understanding bureaucratic oppositions, but it is not the intent here to do an exhaustive survey and a codification of the results. Rather, the above has been suggestive of a number of possible types of research that follow from the application of political categories to organizational analysis.

Aside from possible practical concerns, such as the encouragement of humane change in hierarchical organizations, the application of political categories to the study of bureaucracies is a sheer theoretical necessity in today's world. At present there is a sterile division in social theory between frameworks that describe macropolitical conflict and schema that treat of administrative coordination within organizations. This division reflects, perhaps, a world dominated by superpowers, in which the great conglomerates are at odds with one another while at the same time exerting repressive control over their subjects. There has as yet been no theory that addresses the strivings of those who must live in the shadows and under the control of mass organizations. The previous discussion has been an effort to synthesize political concepts and organizational analysis, with a view to overcoming the theoretical split. The

ultimate goal is that this theoretical nexus will help inform a praxis of liberation.

Students of revolutions, and of conflict in general, are interested in the results of such activity. While the most conservative and apologetic thinkers find nothing of positive value in opposition to constituted authority and often simply ignore it as a minor aberration in the pattern of social life, other theorists such as some functionalists do find conflict to be useful to the established order. A bureaucratic opposition which brings to light the illegal acts or abuses of power of an office holder " . . . brings together upright consciences and concentrates them," interpolating from Durkheim.[39] In other words, the official norms would be reinforced by the opposition. Lewis Coser, in books entitled *The Function of Social Conflict* and *Continuities in the Study of Social Conflict*, describes numerous possible functions: minimally "enacted desire . . . even if, in the absence of alternative channels, it be expressed through social violence, may help clear the air."[40] Claims that bureaucratic oppositions enhance the efficiency, or dialectically change the values embodied in the organization, are widely used justifications for them.[41] Hence, the latent functions of bureaucratic oppositions are at least equivocal; there is no assurance that they weaken the system, they may even strengthen it by purging it of gratuitous abuses, or actually lead to structual change.

Although it is impossible for a critical analysis of bureaucratic opposition to reach the conclusion that this phenomenon necessarily produces humane and liberating changes, such an analysis does reveal a significant dimension of contemporary social structure that is relevant to the issue of change. The great similarities between traditional political conflict and intra-organizational conflict point to the growing invasion of hierarchical control into all phases of human existence. Wherever such control appears the differentiation between the political and other spheres of life is lost and along with this loss goes the diminution of distinctive institutional autonomy. All organizations tend to become "conglomerates", organizing their members around the pursuit of abstract values, particularly control, which becomes the precondition of all other ends. Global political solutions, such as those proposed in nineteenth-century political sociologies and carried out in twentieth century super powers, depend upon politicizing the workplace, either directly (as in totalitarian states) or by analogy (as in mass democracies). Pitirim Sorokin called the social system of Western mass democracies "decentralized totalitarianism."[42] Each organization was, for him, an authoritarian state on its own account. The dangers, frustrations, and often contradictory consequences of bureaucratic oppositions, then, are merely exemplary of the problems of collective action in a world increasingly governed by abstract hierarchical control.

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Notes

1. This is a revised version of a paper presented at the meetings of the American Sociological Association in New York in August, 1976. The author wishes to thank Professors Marie Haug, Robert Perrucci, Arthur Kroker and Michael Weinstein for their helpful suggestions.

2. For a discussion of this trend see, for example, Martin Oppenheimer, "The Unionization of the Professional, "*Social Policy*, Vol. 5 (January/February, 1975): 34-40 and T.S. Chevers, "Proletarianization of a Service Worker," *Social Research*, Vol. 21 (November, 1973): 633-56.

3. For a study and discussion of those in such low level white-collar employment see Barbara Kirsch and Joseph Lengermann, "An Empirical Test of Robert Blauner's Ideas on Alienation in Work as Applied to Different Type Jobs in a White Collar Setting," *Sociology and Social Research*, Vol. 56 (January, 1972): 180-94.

4. John Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (New York: Henry Holt, 1927); C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958).

5. Antony Jay, *Management and Machiavelli: An Inquiry into the Politics of Corporate Life* (New York: Bantam Books, 1968) pp. 11-12.

6. William Kornhauser, "Rebellion and Political Development", in Harry Eckstein (ed.), *Internal War*, (New York: Free Press, 1964) p. 142.

7. Max Weber, "Bureaucracy", in H.H. Gerth and C.W. Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946) p. 228.

8. See Harry Eckstein, "On the Causes of Internal Wars", in Eric A. Nordlinger (ed.), *Politics and Society: Studies in Comparative Political Sociology* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1970) p. 291.

9. William A. Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Homewood: Dorsey Press, 1974) p. 111.

10. Eckstein, *op. cit.*

11. The gory description of what happened to Serpico, the New York City patrolman who "blew the whistle" on the NYCPD, stresses this point. See Peter Mass, *Serpico* (New York: Bantam Books, 1973).

12. For an analysis of this phenomenon see Deena Weinstein and Michael A. Weinstein, *Living Sociology: A Critical Introduction* (New York: David McKay, 1964) chapter 10.

13. Talcott Parsons, *Politics and Social Structure* (New York: Free Press, 1969).

14. For a discussion of this point see Randall Collins, *Conflict Sociology* (New York: Academic Press, 1975) p. 301.

15. In a conversation with a South African executive, he indicated that, within somewhat broad limits, executives in his firm are paid according to their standards of living — the more they spend the higher their salaries.

16. Of a class of 29 evening students, only three did not encounter an example of a bureaucratic opposition where they work(ed). My files have dozens of examples culled from newspapers and magazines, as well as casual conversations with acquaintances, I have no idea of the extent of current bureaucratic oppositions, but because almost everyone who is asked readily admits to knowing of at least one, they are probably rather ubiquitous.

17. Parsons, *op. cit.*

18. Lewis A. Coser, *Continuities in the Study of Social Conflict* (New York: Free Press, 1967) p. 145.

19. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, "Introduction: The Man and His Work", *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946) p. 56.

20. Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974); for an excellent critique of this work see Martin Wenglinsky, "Review of Milgram: Obedience to Authority", *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews* (November, 1975): 613-17.

21. Peter Blau, *Exchange and Power in Social Life* (New York: John Wiley, 1964).

22. George C. Homans, *Social Behavior* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961).

23. James V. Downton, Jr., *Rebel Leadership: Commitment and Charisma in the Revolutionary Process* (New York: Free Press, 1973) p. 62.

24. Gamson, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

25. Downton, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

26. Rex D. Hopper, "The Revolutionary Process: A Frame of Reference for the Study of Revolutionary Movements," *Social Forces*, Vol. 28 (1950): 270-79.

27. Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements* (New York: New American Library, 1951) p. 113.

28. Paul Hare, Edgar F. Borgatta and Robert F. Bales (eds.), *Small Groups: Studies in Social Interaction* (New York: Knopf, 1955).

29. W.J.H. Sprott, *Human Groups* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958) pp. 153-54.

30. Sprott, *ibid.*, p. 156.

31. For a discussion of the concept of "role exploitation" see Deena Weinstein and Michael Weinstein, *Roles of Man* (Hinsdale: Dryden Press, 1972) pp. 98-99.

32. Lawrence F. Peters and Raymond Hall, *The Peter Principle* (New York: William Morrow, 1969).

33. Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

34. Richard H. Tawney, *The Acquisitive Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1920).

35. Mass, *op. cit.*

36. Mostafa Rejai, *The Strategy of Political Revolution* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1973), p. 8.

37. Charles Peters and Taylor Branch, *Blowing the Whistle: Dissent in the Public Interest* (New York: Praeger, 1972) and Ralph Nader, Peter J. Petkas and Kate Blackwell (eds.), *Whistle Blowing: The Report of the Conference on Professional Responsibility* (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1972).

38. See, for example, the works of Lewis Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (New York: Free Press, 1954); and Ralf Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959).

39. Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society* (New York: Free Press, 1947), p. 102.

40. Coser, *Continuities in the Study . . ., op. cit.*, p. 110.

41. For an analysis of the justifications of violence see Kenneth W. Grundy and Michael A. Weinstein, *The Ideologies of Violence* (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill, 1974).

42. Pitirim Sorokin, *The Crisis of Our Age* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1941).