The State of California passed extensive legislation for an emergency plan in 1970. This is called "California Emergency Services Act" Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government code (Stats 1970, ch 1454). Copes of the text may be obtained from:

The Director of the Office of Emergency Services,
Los Angeles,
California, U.S.A.

L'Etat de Californie à édicté en 1970 une législation complète sur un plan d'urgence appelée "California Emergency Services Act" Chapter 7 of division 1 of the Title 2 of the Government code (Stats 1970, ch 1454). Le texte peut en être obtenu à l'adresse ci-dessus :

62.1 CCMS No. 9

GROUP EMERGENCE IN COMMUNITY CRISES:

A STUDY OF THE CONDITIONS CONDUCIVE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR

by

Arnold R. Parr
Department of Sociology
Disaster Research Center
The Ohio State University

ABSTRACT

Using data from five community crises, this study analyzes the conditions that facilitate the development of emergent groups in stress situations. We compare the empirical evidence from three community emergencies in which there was group emergence with empirical evidence from two community emergencies in which there was no group emergence. It is postulated that the conditions conducive to the generation of new groups in community disasters can be classified in a three-fold typology: (1) social psychological conduciveness; (2) cultural conduciveness; and (3) structural conduciveness. We anticipate that the findings of this research will expand and extend collective behavior theory through devoting attention to the origins of collective behavior, an area which has received little prior emphasis.

DISASTER RESEARCH CENTER PUBLICATIONS

I. PAPERS
speech, talk or paper given at a professional meeting, conference, etc.

II. RESEARCH REPORTS
accounts of field study

III. REPRINTS
article published in a professional journal, collection, etc.

IV. REPUBLISHED ARTICLES
articles reprinted in several different sources

V. REPORT SERIES
bound paperback reports

VI. MONOGRAPH SERIES
the major publications of the Center

The publications listed under the above headings are produced by the Disaster Research Center as part of a continuing series of articles, reports, and monographs. Publications are available from the Disaster Research Center. The cost of mailing and handling necessitates the addition of a small charge to orders for more than one item. Direct inquiries to:

Disaster Research Center,
The Ohio State University,
127-129, West Tenth Avenue,
Columbus, Ohio 43201

OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZATIONS IN DISASTERS

by E.L. Quarantelli and R.R. Dynes

The comments that follow are primarily based on field studies of about 45 different community emergencies conducted by the Disaster Research Center at Ohio State University. This research has examined many different facets of organizational responses in extreme stress situations. However, we shall report here only on certain operational problems of organizations in disasters.

In the Emergency Operations Symposium last year we set forth a fourfold typology of group behavior in community stress situations.[1] Since the bulk of this paper uses this typology, it would probably be best if we briefly restated it here again. The typology is derived from a cross classification of two important variables -- one, the nature of the disaster tasks undertaken by the groups; and two, the emergency period structure of these groups.

In any emergency, a group's tasks may be old, routine, or everyday ones. Or instead of regular, the tasks may be new, novel, or unusual ones for the groups involved. If a police department controls traffic, a fire department fights fires, or a hospital treats the injured, these are regular or traditional tasks for such groups. On the other hand, the irregular or newly created nature of tasks can be seen in crises where an army battalion has the responsibility of providing water for a community, a VFW post shelters evacuees, or Catholic nuns sort and distribute clothing from a relief center. Thus, it is possible initially to divide organizations and groups into those having regular or irregular tasks.

It is also possible to distinguish between groups with an old or existing structure and those with a new or crisis-developed structure. The former kind of group is one in which the members stand in definite predisaster social relationships to one another, expecially in their work activities. Such groups exist as an entity prior to the disaster event. In such groups during a disaster, the members continue in somewhat the same work relationships as they had prior to the emergency. Thus, the members of a metropolitan public health department or a ham radio club activated in a disaster normally have had work relationships prior to the stress situation. Such social ties, then, are maintained as the group engages in either traditional or irregular tasks during the emergency.

On the other hand, new group structure may come into being during the emergency. Such groups may either mushroom from a small predisaster core or they may involve the crystallization of some totally new entity. The crucial feature is that such groups have no actual preemergency existence, at least in the form that they take during the emergency. An example would be a local Red Cross chapter whose handful of full-time, paid personnel provides the nucleus for volunteers who undertake most of the expanded group's work. An example of an emergent group would be the search and rescue teams that develop in the immediate postdisaster emergency period. The new social entities may be partly planned, or they may be totally spontaneous, but the actual group comes into being only during the emergency period. The particular types of group behavior that appear in the immediate postdisaster period are depicted on the next page.

There are certain dimensions of the crisis situation that affect the operation of these organizations and groups. Going back to one of the variables used in the initial classification (the difference between groups that had a preexisting structure and those that developed a new structure), attention is given here to the implications of this difference for operations in the emergency period. For those groups with an existing structure, particularly Type I organizations, the basic problem can be seen as adapting the functioning of the ongoing organization to radically changed environmental conditions. In other words, the disaster event and its consequences create a "completely" different context for organizational activity, a context that makes the perpetuation of patterns developed from previous predisaster experience somewhat problematic. For those organizations with a new structure, particularly Type II, the basic problem is a radical change within the dimensions of the organization itself. In Type II organizations, the expansion of the nucleus or cadre with regular and emergency volunteers in effect creates a "new" organization, so that previous patterns developed among the cadre have little meaning for their disaster functioning.

STRUCTURE	TASKS: Regular	TASKS: Irregular
Old	Type I (Established)	Type III (Extending)
New	Type II (Expanding)	Type IV (Emergent)

ORGANIZATIONS WITH ESTABLISHED STRUCTURE

For those organizations that have a predisaster existence, it is important here to see that the disaster event itself creates a radically different context for organizational activity. The disaster event in most instances will create a sharp increase in demands made on such organizations, but it also creates conditions that produce a drastically changed external environment in which these demands must be met. To understand this new context, let us discuss initially five dimensions that are "new" as a result of the disaster event. These are as follows:

1. Immediately after impact, organizations have to operate under conditions of great uncertainty. They cannot automatically react to increased demands since they have no real knowledge of them. Uncertainty is a constant in every organizational environment. However, a disaster event initially provides only a tentative suggestion as to the scope of its impact. Thus an organization has little knowledge as to the magnitude of its future tasks. In addition to the uncertainty of the nature of the demands, organizations may also experience uncertainty as to the status of their own personnel and material resources as well as the status of other organizations on which they depend.

2. Organizations have to operate under conditions of urgency. As a result of the uncertainty and the probable increase in the tasks for the organization to accomplish, tasks which nominally could have been scheduled, routinized and delayed have to be reevaluated. Routines that develop out of the predisaster organizational experience may now become unnecessary luxuries. For example, the procedures for making decisions in an organization may be found unworkable since they are predicated on the presence of and the consultation among specific organizational members. Such optimum conditions for decision making after impact seldom occur but the frequency of making decisions increases. Many predisaster patterns, thus, of necessity are eliminated, abrogated or ignored in emergency activity.

3. Organizations have to operate in the context of the emergency consensus. In the new context, tasks that have previously been an integral part of organizational effort are eliminated for the "duration" and other tasks become the central focus. Most community organizations have multiple functions. They are engaged in many different types of tasks in order to achieve diverse ends. Some functions become extremely relevant after disaster; others become irrelevant. For example, handling traffic offenses may be an integral part of the predisaster activity of police departments but such activity almost always is suspended during the emergency period. It becomes relevant only when such offenses impede the restoration and maintenance of essential community services. This means, then, in such situations that personnel whose normal duties concern these functions have to be "withdrawn" since their activities do not "fit" the priorities of the emergency consensus. These personnel, then, become engaged in activities with a higher priority but such activities have only limited continuity to the particular predisaster activity of such personnel. Certain organizations cease functioning entirely during the emergency period since they do not have relevant tasks in terms of the emergency consensus. The same is true of certain subunits of organizations. Just as those organizations for which community expectations do not exist for their involvement may seek to become involved (e.g., Type III groups), subunits of Type I organizations may be "without" their traditional functions and predisaster activities. Shifting these personnel to new tasks necessary in terms of the new consensus may radically change the predisaster patterns within the organization.

4. Organizations lose autonomy in disaster conditions. In predisaster conditions, organizations have differing degrees of autonomy, i.e., an ability to control the organizational environment so that significant activities can be internally determined. In a disaster, organizations have to operate in a larger community context in which established relationships have to be reworked since they cannot be assumed. The same loss of autonomy is evidenced in the subparts of the organization. The detective bureau of a police department which previous to the disaster had a great deal of autonomy "comes back" into the organization in the sense that the predisaster understandings which give the bureau a degree of independence are no longer extant.

5. The basis for participation within organizations is changed in disaster conditions. Etzioni has suggested that the reasons why individuals follow organizational directives can be explained on the basis of three types of compliance.[2] The first type is based on compliance as a result of coercion. Individuals who are participants in prisons and custodial mental hospitals would illustrate this. The second type of compliance is utilitarian in which the

person participates because he is remunerated. Most workers operate on this basis when people are paid for their efforts. The third basis is normative, in which participation is a result of the belief that the demands made by the organization are legitimate. This type of compliance is found in religious organizations, universities, voluntary associations as well as certain political organizations. For most of the Type I and III organizations, compliance prior to the disaster in general is utilitarian but, under disaster conditions, the basis of compliance shifts toward the normative. In other words, the members of organizations participate on the basis of accepting the directives of the organization as being legitimate. Questions of whether they "have" to do something, or whether they will get paid for doing something are irrelevant, and the involvement of personnel is cast in terms of the necessity of their participation in accomplishing certain tasks.

These five dimensions represent radical shifts in the environmental context for the functioning of organizations during the emergency period. Taking these dimensions and their implications, it is possible then to look at organizations attempting to cope with increased demands in the context of uncertainty, urgency, a "new" emergency consensus, loss of autonomy and a changed basis of compliance. The specific implications can be only briefly suggested here. Every organization develops certain patterned ways of carrying out its tasks. To carry out these tasks, ways of communicating within the organization are developed as well as describable patterns of authority and decision making. It is also useful to think of an organization as complex, consisting of several units. Some of these units may be more affected than others in the disaster involvement of the organization.

In general, a disaster event will have the following consequences for groups with an established structure. Certain aspects of its previous activities will become less important in its disaster functioning. For example, the routines which it has previously developed to accomplish its tasks will be disrupted. Traditional lines of communication and authority will be abrogated. Decision making will involve different processes and people than previously. On the other hand, there will be a significant increase in activities which are related to communication and coordination. There will be greater concern for defining the boundaries of the organization. Certain segments of the organization will become more crucial to the functioning of the organization than they were in predisaster functioning. It is useful to treat such consequences in terms of the dimensions of the "new situation" which the disaster creates. While they will be treated here abstractly and in isolation, in most instances, several, not just one, of these factors would be involved in effecting change.

UNCERTAINTY

In its predisaster activity, an organization develops over time certain characteristic ways of achieving its tasks. In general, community service organizations have more diffuse organizational goals than do production organizations. When a disaster event occurs, the goals of the organization tend to be relatively vague, either because these are implied and seldom actualized or because it is difficult in the uncertainty which is created how predisaster activity can be accomplished. (In certain organizations, such as businesses, uncertainty may create doubt whether the organization can continue in such a

drastically altered context.) However, most community service organizations are expected to act in some fashion. Organizational members have accepted the notion that the organization should be involved and this is reinforced by the expectations of other community members.

Uncertainty works in two directions. First, it provides the conditions whereby an organization becomes involved. Second, it provides the impetus for certain shifts in the predisaster patterns of the organization. In addition to the diffuse "obligations" of the organization to become involved in disaster-related activity, uncertainty produces psychological strain on organization members. In order to overcome this strain, one common response is to "do" something. With such motivations, organization members often commit themselves to activities which have little relation to their predisaster activities or to the role which the organization has defined for itself in disaster. Individual commitment to particular activities as a defense for uncertainty then often leads to organizational commitment. If an individual becomes involved, he then may request help from other organization members and from the resources of the organization. Such requests then provide other organization members with "something" to "do" since they feel the same urgency to act. In addition, the involvement of individuals in specific disaster tasks often fosters organizational involvement. Since the individual is a "member" of the organization, there are certain obligations toward him, and the resources of the organization, not committed, may be diverted into "his" activities. Once committed to a particular line of activity in such a way, an organization may find it difficult to divest itself of the "responsibility" and to concentrate its resources in other directions. Also, such involvement tends to preempt this sphere of disaster activity so that other organizations move in the direction of different "unmet" community needs.

Uncertainty leads to involvement of organizations in another way. The existing organizations have readily available personnel who possess organizational "loyalty" and can be mobilized quickly and effectively. These resources are ready and waiting, but only the organization has knowledge of its task which is based on the reports that they initially receive. If they wait for a clarification of the situation so their role and tasks can be clearly defined, they run the risk of being defined by others as "not" willing to help. This leads to a rather quick commitment of personnel and resources to tasks which are often "outside" the scope of their predisaster experience or their anticipated disaster role.

Uncertainty also has implications for the internal structure of the organization. Certain segments of the organization become more crucial than others, and certain processes of the organization receive more emphasis and effort. In general, one might suggest that the operational elements of the organization increase in their importance while those segments which deal with organizational maintenance and administration recede in their importance. This, in turn, affects the relative status of individuals within the organization. Operational personnel become more important in the total operation of the organization. More specifically, uncertainty demands that greater organizational activity initially has to be given to gathering information. Certain personnel will have to become involved in gathering information about the changed environment and of the operational capabilities of the organization. This need for "knowing" often means that predisaster lines of communication can no longer be followed

and new lines, emergent in terms of the specific tasks which have been accepted by the organization, have to be developed. They are not developed by design but by expediency.

The authority patterns and the usual decision making processes tend to be "replaced" by new ones. Because of the impact of the disaster and the difficulties of mobilization for particular individuals, certain personnel involved in decision making may be absent. In addition, the new problems which are faced by the organization may demand a different type of expertise and a different pattern of consultation than the predisaster problems.

In the early emergency phases when the implications of the disaster are uncertain, there is also a tendency to add personnel, either in the sense of "over" mobilizing the organization, i.e., calling in all shifts, or by "stockpiling" volunteers who may be useful in activities which the organization might find itself at some later time. The addition of such personnel in itself changes the structure of the organization and the patterns of its predisaster activity. Such "excess" personnel affects certain segments of the organization more than others, but in any case, the presence of added personnel as insurance against the unknowns of the environment in many ways creates a "new" organization.

URGENCY

In addition to the uncertainty of the situation, organization members feel some urgency to accomplish those tasks which are as yet still undefined. This urgency is translated into a greater autonomy on the part of individuals throughout the organization. Individuals take the initiative for actions which, according to predisaster patterns, would require and result in extensive consultation with others. Decision making is short-circuited, not involving those who "should" be consulted but those who happen to be available. Decisions made in this way are often later given sanction in an "ex post facto" fashion. In other words, members of an organization experience an increase in autonomy. They initiate actions which they normally would not without extensive consultation. This autonomy of action is subsequently supported by those in authority as being appropriate for the occasion.

Urgency also affects certain segments of the organization more than others. Because certain segments of the organization become less important, such as administrative and other segments devoted to organizational maintenance, those individuals who have predisaster responsibility involving such tasks will have greater problems in determining their own activities. Stated in another way, the more a segment of an organization deals with routine maintenance tasks or administrative tasks, the more problems it will have in mobilization and in functioning during the disaster operation.

EMERGENCY CONSENSUS

One of the major reasons for shifts in the importance of particular segments of an organization is that such shifts are "demanded" by the emergency consensus which emerges. Certain tasks normally performed by an organization become irrelevant in this new context. For example, formal admittance procedures in a hospital may be ignored except as they relate to crucial medical information.

In certain ways, this tendency may increase the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization since those aspects of the behavior within an organization which are irrelevant tend to be dropped and efforts then center on accomplishing the immediately relevant tasks.

The emergent norms from the community consensus also tend to override norms specific to the organization which would conflict with them. For example, norms specifying appropriate dress patterns for work are neither enforced nor considered relevant. In general, status distinctions which may have been exceedingly important in the activities of the organization prior to the disaster are relaxed and equalitarian relationships become normative. Scarce goods and symbols which might have been the object of competition become common property. Offices which were sacrosanct now become communal property and organizational resources which were carefully conserved become available for use.

While the overall effect of the emergency consensus is to level status within the organization, the importance of certain tasks within this consensus tends to enhance the status of certain segments of the organization. For example, operational groups within an organization often have lower status than do certain administrative personnel. The disaster event tends to increase their worth and such segments temporarily achieve higher status and priority in the organization as compared to other groups and as compared to normal times.

Since there are shifts in the "importance" of different segments of an organization, this tends to modify the existing patterns of coordination among the various departments. A segment which traditionally issues requests to another part of the organization finds itself now becoming an "errand" boy. The same phenomenon is observed in coordination among organizations. Particular organizations which have not been essential in the ongoing community process are found to be critical and crucial during the disaster experience. For example, while normal community coordination may involve informal contacts among specific organizations, groups with a specific coordinating function such as civil government or civil defense may be almost ignored prior to a disaster but become exceedingly important during a disaster. Prior planning for disaster activities often ignores the importance of certain organizations during disaster operation, but judges them from their significance in predisaster relationships. In effect, it is suggested here that the status of an organization or a particular segment of an organization is determined by the closeness of fit between its disaster-related activities and the emergency consensus which develops within the community. Shifting status creates, for many organizations, a new operating context. Some lose, others gain status during the emergency period. Within an organization, certain segments become more important than others and reflect a pattern quite different from their predisaster relationships. This means that patterns of coordination planned for and actually used among organizations and within specific organizations then become disrupted.

LOST AUTONOMY

The norms of the emergency consensus come into prominence during the emergency period and override the more "private" norms of the particular organization. There is also pressure for any particular organization to show that it is properly concerned with the total needs of the community. By placing itself at

the service of the community, an organization then opens itself to receive direction from, or at least having to react to, influences outside the organization. Such influences may vary from specific requests from the city government to reacting to the activities of other organizations. All of this implies a loss of organizational autonomy.

In addition, many organizations which have to coordinate their activity with state, regional or national hierarchy may find themselves called upon to inform such levels more frequently of their activity, thereby reducing their autonomy. More likely, such higher levels of the organization may send personnel to help the local group. The presence of extra-community personnel on the local scene means that activity comes under their scrutiny and perhaps adds another level of consultations in decision making. For example, the local telephone company may request additional help or additional help may be sent without such a request. Such help often involves individuals whose normal position in the larger company is superior to any of the local personnel. The presence of such personnel often evokes changes in the traditional ways of doing things.

Within the organization, greater effort and energy must be spent on activities dealing with coordination. In addition, because of the greater permeability of the organization, it becomes more difficult to define clearly the boundaries of the organization -- in particular, what members can act in the name of the organization? Since individual members have greater personal autonomy, these members may commit the organization to activities without the advice and consent of the traditional decision makers.

CHANGED BASIS OF COMPLIANCE

It was suggested earlier that the basis of compliance shifts from a utilitarian to a normative orientation during the emergency period. This has several implications. Since the individual becomes "totally" involved with the activity of the organization, the organization of necessity becomes totally involved with him. In other words, concern for the total well-being of the worker is manifest as compared with a rather narrow concern during predisaster operation. Perhaps the best illustration of this would be in the instance where the family of the worker is put under the auspices of the organization for protection. This may involve responsibility for shelter and evacuation during preimpact periods. It may involve care for family members whose living arrangements have been destroyed or damaged by the impact of the disaster. Such concern and care for family members does, however, tend to divert organizational resources toward specific individuals to which the organization "feels" an obligation. In turn, such resources cannot be used in more diffuse community activities.

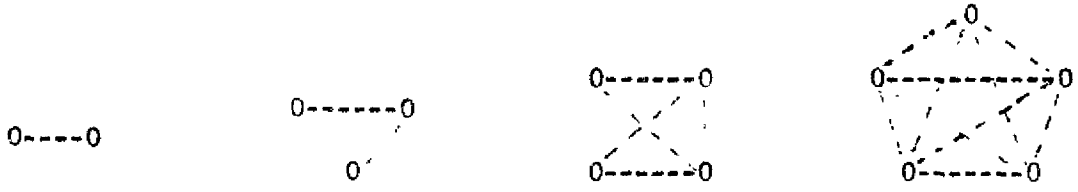
In instances where the organization assumes responsibility for family members, such "benevolence" is often repaid in kind by the family members who volunteer their services and work within the organization. These "family" volunteers then create for the organization the problem of all volunteers. In particular, it necessitates diversion of attention of regular organization members to supervision and instruction of the new personnel. The consequences of this will be seen more clearly in the discussion of the expanding organizations

ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS WITH AN EXPANDING STRUCTURE

As we suggested earlier, Type II organizations have a latent emergency function quite apart from their normal day-to-day activities. It is expected that these groups will become active in a different way during the emergency period. Such groups provide the name, a location and a cadre of permanent workers which serve as the basis for operations in a disaster. While such groups become involved in a variety of tasks, the common characteristic among such organizations which will be emphasized here is the expansion of personnel necessary to operate in the disaster context. While this expansion is "planned" in the sense that it is anticipated, let us suggest here that the basic operational problem for such groups is the unanticipated organizational change which occurs with this increase in personnel. A related problem stems from the kinds of changes which are made. Regular personnel move into new and unfamiliar positions within the expanding organization. Other positions are filled with volunteers who have varying degrees of skill and previous connection with the organization. The entire personnel then are occupying "new" positions and are involved in unfamiliar social relationships.

While many organizations grow in nondisaster settings, adaptations to the consequences of growth tend to be gradual. Specific problem areas become apparent and the adaptations necessary are made over time. Most of the organizations expected to "grow" during disaster operations consider such growth as a necessary condition for the accomplishment of anticipated tasks and have little awareness of the consequences of such expansion for the actual operation of the organization in the emergency period.

Initially, let us discuss some of the sociological consequences of an increase in size of an organization and then look at these consequences in the context of disaster operation.[3] Possibly the most important effect of increasing size is on the pattern of interaction among the parts of an organization. Stated more formally, as the "membership" of an organization increases arithmetically, the number of possible channels of interaction increase geometrically. The increase in communication channels is portrayed below. This is based on the sum of all possible combinations -- pairs, triples, etc. Also one is added for the possibility of simultaneous interaction of all parts.



2 persons - 1 relationship	3 persons - 4 relationships	4 persons - 11 relationships	5 persons - 26 relationships

With an increase in size, parts of the organization are differentiated -- certain parts do one thing and certain parts do others. In order to coordinate these diversified activities, the parts become arranged into layers of authority.

Thus, with an increase in size, there is a tendency to increase the number of levels of authority. This increase in the levels of authority could be portrayed as follows:

In addition, with increasing size, there is a tendency for the ranking systems upon which authority is based to increase. For example, in a small community, a mayor and a small number of personnel under him may "operate" the community. But as a community increases in size, a number of specialists are necessary to become involved in the engineering, financial, tax, personnel, etc., problems of this city. While the mayor may still "give orders," such specialists still have a considerable influence over the affairs of the city by virtue of their skill and knowledge in these more specialized but necessary areas. This increase in ranking systems can be portrayed like this:

While these are only three of the consequences of increase in size, these and others have important ramifications for the operations of an organization which expands. When expansion occurs over a period of time, adaptations are made gradually. With the increase in the channels of communication, certain ways of communicating become considered appropriate and others inappropriate. In other words, certain norms are developed to specify the appropriate channels of communication. These tend to become formalized which, in turn, leads to the characteristic formality of large organizations. Too, the coordination necessary for the proliferating parts of the organization is developed. Certain positions are designated with the responsibility for coordination. In part, this is done by giving certain positions control over other parts of the organization by the power to allocate resources differentially. Over time, the rights and responsibilities become institutionalized into an authority hierarchy. This implies that authority exists in an organization when others in the organization accept the rights and responsibilities of particular positions as being legitimate. Within the same developing authority structure, accommodation is made for the increase in the types of authority. In more familiar industrial terms, some accommodation is made to the line and staff problems of authority. While it would be overstating the case to suggest that outside the disaster context, organizations which experience growth "solve" such problems, it is appropriate to suggest that they do develop institutionalized ways of handling them. In most instances this is done by developing rules and more formalized specification of duties and responsibility which become an integral part of the day-to-day operations of the organization. Sudden expansion does not allow time to develop such institutionalized patterns. Nor are these patterns anticipated in the predisaster planning. Expansion is planned in terms of allocation of tasks

with the prime consideration given to more personnel to handle the increasing demands made by the disaster event. The achievement of disaster-created tasks, however, cannot be handled by the simple addition of personnel. Let us look at some of the more specific consequences of these expanding organizations.

1. Accomplishment of Tasks. While earlier we characterized Type II organizations as those who were involved in regular tasks, this was intended to imply that such organizations had latent disaster activities. These activities, however, are not necessarily identical or even similar to the day-to-day responsibilities of organization members. In the first place, in their organizational charter, many of these groups are expected to "assist," "help," "be responsible for" certain disaster-related activities. Both the extent and the limits of these responsibilities are often unclear. For example, if an organization is "supposed to care for survivors," does this mean to supply the basic necessities or does it extend to collecting information about the survivors and to providing such information to others? In this specific instance, it is common for several expanding organizations to begin to collect such information, thus duplicating the activities of the others. In communities without the experience accumulated by repetitive events, "the helping" have few limits. Organizations know they are responsible to do something but they are not sure of what is included in the "something." In this sense, the anticipated activities of the organization may not be particularly helpful to clarify their actual role.

Too, since the core members of the organization are reassigned to new positions within the expanding structure, the allocation of persons does not mean that they necessarily understand their new roles or are capable of operating effectively in them. For example, an individual whose previous position within the organization might have been at the operations level may find himself assigned to a position coordinating an influx of volunteers. Even if he clearly understood these sudden responsibilities, this is still no assurance that he would be effective in such a position. One might suggest that certain individuals may find it difficult to shift so quickly and, in fact, the person's experience over time in assuming his traditional responsibilities might develop a "trained incapacity" to fulfill new ones. This ability to function effectively might also be inhibited if those who have low status within the organization find that their new position involves supervision of persons who hold a much higher status within the community. This problem can be important at different status levels within an organization. Form and Nosow suggest that "professionals in organizations using volunteers often find themselves directing volunteers who have higher status in the community."[4]

Plans of expansion, then, usually involve moving regular organizational personnel in new positions with new responsibilities for tasks which may be anticipated but also may be vague. When the plan for expansion is operationalized, regular personnel occupy new roles with unfamiliar and unclear responsibilities and work with others with whom they have had little or no previous contact.

2. Communication. As we suggested earlier, an increase in the size increases the channels of communication geometrically. In normal expansion, this problem is usually handled by the specification of appropriate channels of communication. Such appropriate channels are normally specified formally and the actual means

of communication may also be specified. For example, a work group is supposed to report verbally to their supervisor; the supervisor is supposed to report by memo to someone else, etc. In addition, channels of communication often develop informally. The prescribed ways may be replaced or supplemented by widely understood but informal means. In expanding organizations, the formal specification of appropriate channels of communication may be made in "planning" but following them requires both knowledge and experience and the expanding organization has neither. Too, no informal means have developed, since the group has not worked together previously. So, an expanding organization has no channels of communication meaningfully specified either at the formal or informal levels. This means that appropriate intermediate filtering which "protects" those in top positions from being flooded with information is not present.

Openness of communication is also facilitated by the disaster context. The leveling of status tends to open up communications channels which normally would be closed by status inhibitions. A lower level employee whose normal position within the organization would inhibit his approach to "top" personnel now feels a degree of comraderie with them on the basis of their continuity of experience within the organization. Too, the loss of status symbols, the shifting of personnel to new positions and the influx of new personnel all contribute to a fluid status structure within the organization which accentuates the flow of information along the increased channels of communication.

3. Authority. It was suggested earlier that an increase in size is related to an increase in the levels of authority, necessitated in part by the need for control of the newly developed subparts. It can be suggested that, in a disaster context, while more authority levels are "needed" with expansion, they do not develop easily. In part, they do not develop since prior planning of the expansion usually is concerned with task allocation rather than the coordinative functions necessary for tasks. The development of authority within an expanding organization is complicated additionally by three other factors. First, there is the intrusion of influence from the community which is irrelevant or even antagonistic to the emergent authority structure of the organization. Many expanding organizations anticipate their needs for new personnel and recruit on a standby basis those who have emergency-relevant skills. Depending on the nature of the organization, such personnel may possess technical, administrative, medical, public relations, engineering and other skills. While some of the activities these personnel will engage in are related to their predisaster training, their presence within the organization multiplies the types of influence which exist within the organization. This applied even when the person who possesses such influence is not functioning in a position which utilizes his particular skills. For example, a physician who finds himself in an administrative position may come to have greater influence in the direction of organizational activities than his actual position within the expanded organization dictates. This may not be due to any overt act on his part but, in his organizational performance, he will be evaluated by others, not in terms of his new organizational position but in terms of his more general community status. In the absence of knowledge about the authority of a new position, the more general status of the person will be accepted as a basis of authority. This tends to diffuse the authority structure.

A second problem of authority is related to the first. Many expanding organizations in most American communities have connections with other segments of their organization on the state, regional and national levels. As a part of predisaster planning, various personnel from other segments of the larger organizations may be dispatched to the local group as a part of their expansion. In the preplanning, such personnel are seen as supplementary and often are supposed to assume positions that are lower in authority than the local person in charge. In other words, they submit themselves to the local authority and do not attempt to impose external authority. However, such personnel, in predisaster and also in postdisaster situations, may hold positions in the larger organization that have higher authority than any member of the local cadre.

For example, a state director may temporarily become a "member" of a local organization and "submit" to local authority. Even though many of the new personnel would not know nor understand his predisaster position the permanent cadre would be aware of it and would, in most instances, react to him in terms of the predisaster pattern of authority relationships. The very presence of such a person would necessitate his involvement in crucial decisions and may, in many instances, inhibit the assumption of authority by other permanent cadre members.

A third problem relates to the institutionalization of authority. Influence does not become authority until others accept the legitimacy of the demands that those in particular positions can make. In other words, the establishment of a new position does not automatically establish a new level of authority. When individuals within an organization accept the notion that the person within the position has the right to "order" certain things done, then authority is established. These conditions are seldom met in an expanding organization because time does not allow this. The lack of experience of working together as a functioning group prior to the disaster event also creates the conditions whereby the authority of the preexisting positions tends to be carried over, either by those within the cadre or by those from other levels of the organization. Those local volunteers who are added for expansion do not have the experience and knowledge of the previous organization so they do not know the previous model of authority. As we have suggested, certain of the volunteers will bring disaster-relevant skills and, in the absence of a clear authority, their personal influence will often be accepted as a basis for authority which may have little relation to the "needs" for authority within the organization.

The status-leveling consequences of this disaster event also have implications for authority patterns. "Normal" status symbols disappear in the disaster context and the "loss" of these inhibit the development and institutionalization of authority necessary for the expanded organization. The problems of authority, then, reside in the "necessity" for more levels to develop within an expanding organization. The institutionalization of authority, however, takes time to develop. In the absence of institutionalization and in the status-leveling context of the emergency period, the preexisting patterns of authority tend to be carried over. These patterns, however, are complicated by the addition of personal influence brought into the organization by various types of volunteers and by the lack of familiarity among those which become involved in the organization. The resulting pattern of authority relationships will seldom follow the preplanning for expansion of the volunteers nor will it necessarily be functional to the tasks created by the disaster agent.

4. Decision Making. In the predisaster functioning of an expanding organization, certain patterns of decision making exist. These may follow the patterns of responsibility and consultation expressed in the formal organization or informal patterns may have developed with experience over time. Since both the formal structure and the informal relationships change with expansion, such traditional patterns become less appropriate. With expansion, such traditional patterns become less understood among organizational members, particularly the "volunteers." Even the permanent cadre now are shifted into new relationships so they are uncertain of applicability of the predisaster patterns.

In the disaster context, there is an increase in the number and importance of the decisions that have to be made within the organization. The increased necessity for making decisions is further complicated by other factors. Information relevant to the decision-making process comes into the organization from a greater number of different points and from a wider variety of sources than is usual. Information received that makes demands on the organization may be suspect in the sense that it comes from "unknown" or at least "unfamiliar" sources. The nature of the information may also have an unbelievable character since it refers to tasks necessitated by the disaster event. Too, the fact that such information is received by "unknown" members of the organization tends to compound the evaluation process. The openness of communication tends to distort the information since it is channeled through many people.

As a result of these factors, it can be suggested that decision making tends to develop a greater degree of autonomy. That is, decisions have to be made, but the information necessary and the consultative pattern that is normative is not known by those confronted with the necessity for an immediate decision. Given such circumstances, the tendency is to make decisions on the spot for those who are immediately confronted with the necessity for making the decision. Such decisions often commit organizational energies without clear knowledge of organizational resources. Decision making, then, becomes more situational and decisions are made responding to immediate demands by those who have organizational identity but little organizational responsibility. All of this tends to diffuse the decision-making process and results in a lack of coordination among the subparts.

5. Delineation of Organizational Boundaries. A major problem for an expanding organization is the determination of the organizational boundaries. In most established organizations, "membership" in the organization is clear. People occupy particular positions within the formal structure and, by virtue of these positions, are able to act in specified ways for the organization. If their actions go beyond the authorization of the organization, there are disciplinary actions available. Expanding organizations, however, have little idea of their boundaries. Volunteers have little idea of their responsibilities and organizations have few mechanisms of social control available to "discipline" their personnel.

Organizational identification on the part of most volunteers is minimal. Their recruitment may be the result of a long-standing connection with the organization but it is often the result of circumstances whereby the person "walks in" and suddenly becomes a member. These volunteers have greater difficulty being integrated into the organization. Form and Nosow suggest on

the basis of the Flint-Beecher tornado that "individuals with poorly defined or undefined roles had to improvise so they lost valuable time developing rational responses to the demands of the situation."[5]

In fact, they go on to suggest that, "The help offered by volunteers may be more detrimental than helpful if not properly organized and channeled: it may a) 'overload' existing organizations; b) result in frustration for the volunteers since they are defined as unnecessary outsiders when they cannot find a functional position in the disaster system."[6] The motive of the volunteer is "to help." With unclear roles often offered him, it is difficult for him to develop any organizational identification. Because he is assumed by others to have organizational responsibility, he often makes decisions which commit organizational resources. In other words, he is a member of an organization but does not know his rights and responsibilities.

The organization, on the other hand, is confronted with an increased number of personnel but has few means of controlling them. There are few "personnel" policies which govern these workers. The functioning of the organization has to depend, in large part, on the willingness of these workers to continue. Since the availability of such personnel is flexible and may vary tremendously over the emergency period, the development of a rational plan which attempts to maximize energy and minimize fatigue is difficult. Since the activities of many of these volunteers are beyond the scope of observation of the regular members, the ability to define rights and obligations of particular positions is minimal. To do this systematically takes time away from disaster-relevant tasks and would require the time and energy of permanent personnel needed in other tasks.

The result of this is that individuals act in the name of an organization and commit organizational resources, given the conditions of autonomy in decision making in expanding organizations. To clarify organizational procedure and to define responsibility would take the time of crucial personnel and would risk alienating the motivated volunteer. The result, however, is that many persons act in the name of the organization with little knowledge of scope and limits of the responsibility and of the procedures which are normative to accomplish the tasks.

A FINAL NOTE OF PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZED ACTIVITY

While we have been discussing the problems of each of the four types of organizations and groups separately in order to simplify and sharpen the contrasts among them, this should not obscure the fact that the problems which confront specific types of organizations can also be experienced by different parts of the same established organization. Parts of an organization may be differentially affected by operations in the disaster situation. While its preexisting structure is "brought" into disaster operations, this structure actually may be modified in the organization's activities during the emergency period. Since organizations are characterized by complexity, this means that they have subparts. These subparts, then, may show different responses to the requirements of the disaster event. The direction of adaptation of the subparts tends to follow the pattern of the emergence of the four types of groups. Some subparts of the organization may operate in the disaster context with old tasks and with a structure which is relatively unchanged (Type I). Other sections of

the organization may be expanded by the addition of new personnel to cope with the overload of demands made on the organization (Type II). Part of the "addition" of new personnel may come from within the organization in the sense that the predisaster tasks of particular subparts now may no longer be meaningful and the personnel from these subparts can be utilized in performing "new" tasks (Type III). Because of the changes within the internal structure of the organization, accentuated by the rearrangements of shifts and the possible loss of key personnel, decision making may be relegated to a new "emergent" group within the organization (Type IV).

Illustrating this process, one might look at the operation of a municipal police department under disaster conditions. The communications section may be more likely to continue its predisaster tasks with the same personnel. These personnel possess somewhat specialized skills not easy to reproduce. There are also physical limitations of space and equipment which make expansion difficult. This part of the organization, then, continues operation during the emergency period following the patterns they have developed, working together prior to the disaster event. The patrol division, however, is expanded by the addition of a number of volunteers who assist the regular members in search and rescue, traffic control and security. Each patrolman may now have ten men "under" him and the officer in charge of the shift is now operating with a segment of the organization which is ten times larger than it was in its predisaster operation. The detective bureau may "suspend" its operation during disaster activity and its personnel, perhaps as a unit, are reassigned to new tasks. While this bureau has a predisaster existence, now it becomes engaged in "new" tasks. Because of such shifts within the organization, the predisaster patterns of decision making no longer are meaningful and a new group of decision makers, perhaps some of whom hold positions without such authority in their predisaster activities, now become involved in this process. In effect, then, the suggestion is made here that subparts of an organization may be affected in similar ways as the elaboration and changes which occur when one views the total organized behavior within a community. Certain groups (or subparts of existing groups) may continue traditional tasks but other groups or subparts may expand, become involved with new tasks and even "emerge" to cope with particular problems within the scope of their disaster activity. To the extent that the subparts are modified, they will evidence effects similar to those experienced by "total" organizations in the same situation of expansion.