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PARTICIPATION IN VOLUNTARY COMMITTEES

A Nation-wide Study of Organization, Leadership, and Members' Characteristics

THIS SUMMARY PAMPHLET has been extracted from a 195 page technical report of the same title, containing tabular presentation of all findings referred to, as well as interpretative discussion and detailed description of the methods used. Both this summary and the technical report are working documents which will be superseded by publication in more permanent form. No portions of either document may be reproduced in any form without permission.

Survey Research Center

Institute for Social Research - University of Michigan

Chapter I: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The Oil Industry Information Committee's voluntary organization at the community level consists of about 25,000 employees of the oil industry working in about 3,000 committees across the nation. These committees have a good deal in common. In each of them, there is a chairman, and a number of vice-chairmen who may each be in charge of a separate activity. And the task of each of the committees is roughly the same -- to establish effective contact with the community and to bring relevant facts about the oil industry to the community's attention.

But there are striking differences in level of performance among the 3,000 committees. Some have been quite successfully launched. The members of such committees are active in the OIIC program and put a great deal of energy and effort into the organization, not only during regular working hours but also on their own time -- evenings, week-ends, during lunch hours. Other committees are not nearly so active in the OIIC program. They either never got "off the ground," or, if they have been launched, their members put relatively little energy into the program and devote relatively few hours to it.

By an intensive study of a nation-wide sample of OIIC committees, we have attempted to discover some of the factors which are related to these large and consistent differences in committee performance. It is the purpose of this report to describe the results of this research. In the following pages we will discuss a variety of organizational practices which show clear-cut relationships with committee activity level, some attitudes which have consistent relationships with activity level, and a set of individual background characteristics, community attributes and occupational factors which are influential in determining activity in the program.

Chapter II: COMMITTEE ACTIVITY AND INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

Among the principal criteria of the effectiveness of an organization are the amount of energy or effort which the members of the organization put into it, and the kind of product which results from this energy or effort. For some organizations this product is visible and easily measured. In a factory, it may take the form of the number of pieces which a machine operator turns out or the number of articles which roll off the assembly line. In an office, the product may be evaluated in terms of the number of letters which are typed or the number of forms which are processed. In a voluntary organization, effort and energy are likely to result in a product less easily measured. Nevertheless, measurement can be made in such terms as the number of hours which a volunteer devotes to the organization or the number of projects which he carries out.

The present study is focused on an analysis of energy or effort put into the OIIC program. Two types of measures are used to evaluate this effort. One of these is the activity of individual committeemen; the second is the average activity of committees as a whole.

In the next four chapters, where the effects of committee practices and other organizational phenomena are studied, the measure of activity used is committee activity. These chapters cover such group relevant phenomena as recruitment procedures, leadership, committee structure, and relations of the committee to the larger organization.

In Chapters VII and VIII, the emphasis shifts to the individual. Here we are studying effects of a member's personal characteristics, his background, his interests, his attitudes. Accordingly, the kind of activity studied in these two chapters is individual activity.

Both types of activity scores were derived from answers to a set of four questions. These questions are listed below:[1]

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1 A more detailed discussion of the construction of these activity measures is given in the technical report.

(1) "Were you involved in OIIC throughout the past year, or was most of your OIIC work concentrated at one or two periods during the year?" (The question was framed in this way because, in the scouting phase of the study, it was found that in many committees the only activity took place only during Oil Progress Week or perhaps one other time during the year.)

(2) "Over the past 12 months -- about a 52-week period -- in how many of those weeks would you estimate you had anything at all to do with OIIC?" (The members' responses ranged from those who were not active at any time during the year to those who did at least some OIIC work during all 52 weeks of the year.)

(3) "About how many different activities or projects would you say you were connected with during this period -- less than 10, between 10 and 20, or more than 20?" (The term "activities or projects" was not defined for the respondent. Exactly what constitutes a specific OIIC project is difficult to define, but early scouting indicated that this way of phrasing the question would help to differentiate between those people who were more active and those who were less active in the program.)

(4) "Would you look at this chart and tell me which of these best describes your part in OIIC?" (The respondent was given a chart which contained six categories of activity, ranging from "I have nothing at all to do with OIIC" to "I spend most of my time on OIIC." Our aim here was to obtain an over-all measure of the members' self-perception of their involvement in the program.)

Chapter III: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

Some determinants of committee activity date back to a time before members are asked to join. The selection of the proper type of committee personnel, and the manner in which such persons are asked to join, appear to influence the subsequent activity of the committee. Among the important factors are:

(1) The recruitment agent. The more active committees are the ones in which persons are asked to join by someone important to the potential member, e.g., persons in his company at a higher status level than himself. Active committees have chairmen who take some role in recruiting, but who obtain assistance from other persons -- other members of their own committees, persons in the potential member's company, or professional OIIC men.

(2) Motivation of members to join. The more active committees are the ones in which potential members have the purposes and workings of OIIC explained to them before they join. Efforts have been made to "sell the program" to such persons; they are not asked to join merely as a favor to someone. Personal contact is often used as a recruiting method in active committees, and appears to be most effective where the recruitment agent has some important relationship to the potential member. Where the recruitment agent does not have this relationship to the potential member, group meetings may capitalize on the supports that acquaintances give to each other in the decision to join.

(3) Selection of appropriate personnel. In the more active committees, persons are selected because they have jobs and skills which are useful in OIIC work. Active committees pick persons who will be a real asset to the committee; they do not select members merely because they are available, or because they are not likely to be in a position to refuse to join.[1]

It is also true that the selection of chairmen has significance for committee activity. Some of the important factors are:

(1) Selection of appropriate chairmen. In the more active committees, considerations similar to the choice of committeemen enter into the choice of OIIC chairmen. In these committees, the person chosen as chairman was selected because he had special qualifications for the job -- he had the skills and the experience necessary to chair an OIIC committee effectively. Committees which select chairmen merely because they are "available" are not likely to be active.

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1 In addition to the results presented in this chapter, this conclusion is supported by a number of findings in other chapters.

(2) Methods of appointing chairmen. In the more active committees, chairmen are often elected by the committee members. Such committees also generally select new chairmen every one or two years. Both of these procedures maximize the group's involvement in the selection of chairmen.

Even those committees fortunate enough to be launched with skilled personnel who were asked to join in the "right" way, still have a number of problems to meet and solve if the committee is to become a stable and high producing unit. They need leadership which will maintain the group and stimulate high activity; they need effective organization and encouragement so that the committee can develop into an effective team; and they need communication with and assistance from higher levels of OIIC. It is to these topics which we turn in the next three chapters.

Chapter IV: THE CHAIRMAN'S LEADERSHIP

A number of factors have been identified as aspects of successful leadership in OIIC committees. Among the important leadership practices are:

(1) Keeping informed. In the more active committees, chairmen are more likely to keep rosters of their members, to keep minutes, to keep track of members' projects, and to find out what particular skills each member has. Keeping in touch with committee business is one way chairmen can demonstrate to committee members the importance they attach to the work OIIC is doing; it also serves, of course, to enable the chairmen to perform more adequately their other functions.

(2) Maintaining the group. In the more active committees, chairmen are more likely to take every opportunity to strengthen the group. They contact members in group settings, rather than outside the group. They call meetings, and make sure that members attend these meetings. They distribute information about the committee -- such as rosters and minutes -- to committee members; and thereby facilitate communication as well as strengthen the feelings of the members that they are part of a team.

(3) Assignment of tasks. In the more active committees, tasks are distributed according to members' interests and skills. The evidence also suggests that although the chairmen of active committees distribute overall responsibilities, they allow committeemen to work out the details of their assignments for themselves. In this manner, work is both efficiently distributed and satisfactorily accepted.

(4) Setting high standards of activity. In the more active committees, chairmen let their committee members know that they expect a high level of activity from them. The approach in which members are made to feel that the work is important, and that a good deal of work is expected, seems to be more effective than the more timid approach of telling members that they will only be asked to help out on occasion.

(5) Implementing standards. In the more active committees, chairmen not only communicate their high standards to committee members, but they take steps to demonstrate that they expect a real attempt to meet these standards. Concrete recognition -- e.g., letters, citations, pins, plaques -- is given for outstanding work, and efforts to persuade inactive members to be active are made when persons fall down on the job.

All of the functions of the chairman are necessary, but their importance probably varies according to the stage of the committee's development. In the early stages of a committee's development, the chairman's attention to group maintaining procedures --

such as calling meetings, facilitating communication between members, and the assignment of tasks -- is of crucial importance. Without his attention to these functions, the group might cease to exist. As the group develops, these procedures are no longer sustained entirely through the chairman's own efforts; rather they become routine procedures known and accepted by all members. Still the chairman remains an important -- perhaps the most important -- member of the group. He is able to assist in setting standards for the group, and his active interest in seeing that these standards are met serve a very important motivating function. At all stages in the life history of the committee, then, the chairman's actions influence the development of the group and contribute strongly to the goal of a high level of group activity.

Chapter V: THE COMMITTEE AS A GROUP

The data in this chapter point to the advantages for OIIC of any measures which can be taken to encourage the growth of OIIC committees from aggregates of individuals into organized groups. Among the characteristics of organized groups which are found to be related to OIIC activity are:

(1) Specialization of assignments. The more active committees are the ones where members are assigned tasks which fit their skills and where they have specialized roles or positions. But it is not sufficient for the committee to be divided formally into a number of positions which exist on paper alone; the members themselves must have a clear awareness of their titles and a clear knowledge of what duties are assigned to them.

(2) Successful meetings. The more active committees are the ones where meetings are held frequently and regularly; the meeting place and time are convenient; and the members feel a sense of accomplishment at meetings. Meetings serve such functions as enabling efficient planning of programs, creating group goals and standards, and allow for discussion and evaluation of past and present projects.

(3) Group sanctions. The more active committees are the ones where the group itself attempts to influence its members to be active in OIIC. The members of successful groups do not leave such attempts to the chairman alone. They themselves attempt to persuade inactive members to accept their assignments and work toward the common group goals.

(4) Group cohesiveness. The more active committees are the ones where there is a high degree of group cohesiveness. They tend to feel a sense of commonality and identification with other members of the group, and they feel that there is a spirit of cooperation and that responsibilities are fully shared.

The emergence of such an organized group probably involves a number of stages. In the initial development, there is simply a collection of individuals who may or may not know each other. At this stage, there is little in the way of a perception of common goals or group cohesiveness or identification. After a while, as meetings are held and differential roles and responsibilities are assigned, the collection of individuals begins to take on some of the characteristics of an organized group. They begin to know each other, and what to expect of each other. The chairman, throughout this period, is calling group meetings, communicating the purposes of the program, and setting standards, and is therefore a key figure in the operation. But once the program is successfully launched, the group members themselves begin to shoulder responsibility for the group's direction, even to the point where the group itself will exert pressures upon members who fail to carry out duties assigned to them. It is at this last stage that the members come to accept fully and interiorize the goal of high activity in OIIC, and can be counted upon to provide their own impetus for steady and high activity in OIIC.

Chapter VI: RELATIONS WITH HIGHER OIIC

The data in this chapter emphasize the advantages to be gained by effective communication between the local committees and higher levels of OIIC. The relationships of active committees to higher levels of OIIC show the following characteristics:

(1) Communication between levels of OIIC. In the more active committees, chairmen are more likely to maintain close ties with higher OIIC. Some of these contacts are initiated by the committee, and some of them are initiated by higher OIIC. Chairmen of active committees are likely to see professional OIIC men or oil industry people who are leaders in OIIC at least half a dozen times a year. They report receiving written communications from the central OIIC office, including newsletters or newspapers. They make sure that activities of their committee are reported to the OIIC District Office.

(2) Mutual understanding between levels of OIIC. In the more active committees, there is likely to be a feeling that the committee understands the overall OIIC organization and also that people at higher levels in the organization are aware of and understand the committee's problems. Such mutual understanding is probably a result of good communication between the active committees and the central organization. Mutual understanding is of importance because it is a condition associated with interpersonal trust, which in turn is related to the willingness to cooperate and accept suggestions.

(3) Autonomy of local committees. Optimal effectiveness is secured when the local committees themselves make at least some effort to originate and elaborate OIIC projects and programs. In this way, a greater sense of personal involvement is probably achieved, i.e., the members come to identify the goals of the program as their own goals.

Another important finding pertaining to the relationship of local committees and higher OIIC may be recalled from Chapter IV. It was shown there that the standards of committee activity held by the chairmen are associated with the standards held by higher levels of OIIC. Where the area chairmen expect a high level of activity from the community committees, and communicate this expectation to the local chairmen, the local chairmen in turn expect a high level of activity from their committees. And where these expectations are high, the activity of the committees tends to be high, too.

Although maximum activity is obtained where people at higher levels of OIIC help to set the local committee's activity standards, and where higher levels provide suggestions to the local levels, this does not necessarily mean that the higher levels should specify precisely how the local groups should carry out their programs. The optimal relationship between the levels seems to be one

between two extremes: at one extreme, every activity of the local level is directed by the higher level; at the other extreme, the local committee has no communication whatever with the higher level, and either goes off completely on its own, or, more likely, does nothing. The most effective OIIC leadership consists in helping committees understand their part in the total picture, in setting high standards, and, through frequent communication, in demonstrating that higher OIIC takes a strong interest in what is happening at the local level. At the same time, effective leadership encourages the local levels to become involved in their work through working out the specific aspects of their programs by themselves.

The importance of the various functions served by higher levels of OIIC probably helps to explain the success of a recent innovation in OIIC. In some regions, there are traveling liaison personnel between local committees and higher levels of OIIC known as the "Flying Squadron." The adoption of this practice as well as related practices -- particularly where they are carried out by well-trained, highly motivated personnel -- would appear to be of critical importance for the success of a geographically disparate, locally autonomous volunteer organization like OIIC.

One major advantage of communication between local committees and higher levels of OIIC is that it gives members a sense of being an integral part of a larger organization. They come to know that others are engaged in similar operations and that their efforts are not confined to themselves alone. They also come to feel that others know of their efforts and that their efforts are appreciated. In the same way, then, that it is important that members feel they are a part of an organized group, it is similarly important that members feel they are part of a larger organization.

Chapter VII: BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF MEMBERS

The findings in earlier chapters on the importance of committee process (relations between group and chairman, within the group itself, and between the group and higher levels of OIIC) are supplemented by the findings in this chapter that personal characteristics are also important. Among these characteristics are:

(1) Occupation. Members who work in oil companies are considerably more active in OIIC than members who do not work directly for oil companies, i.e., dealers, distributors, jobbers, and consignees. To explain this difference, several factors are pertinent: Those who do not work for oil companies are less likely to have experience or training useful in OIIC committee work, and less likely to see themselves as appropriate persons to be in OIIC; they have less understanding of OIIC's purposes; and they are less likely than oil company employees to feel that OIIC is important to the oil industry. Moreover, those who do not work for oil companies have fewer supervisory responsibilities and they have a somewhat more critical attitude toward the oil industry than oil company employees. All in all, many OIIC members outside the oil companies feel they would "just as soon" not be in OIIC. The situation is quite different among oil company employees. They have more positive attitudes toward OIIC and toward the oil industry; they have more appropriate training and skills; and they are very willing to do OIIC work.

(2) Type of community. The larger the city in which the committee is located, the more active the member is likely to be. Two reasons for this are the greater accessibility of community committees in larger cities to OIIC area headquarters, and the more extensive pool of skilled and interested talent found in the larger cities from which the committees can be staffed.

Committees in small towns (under 10,000) present an important problem. About half of the inactive members are located in such small towns. Committees in these towns must be staffed primarily from the ranks of dealers, jobbers, distributors, and consignees -- that is, the persons least likely to have the skills or interests to be active in the program.

(3) Age, sex, education. Members with some college education are more active than those who have not gone to college. However, there are no differences in activity between younger and older members; nor are men any more active in the program than women. And although men and women as individuals are equally active, committees which include a woman on their rolls are more likely to be active than those which are staffed entirely by men.

(4) Interests and skills. Members who report having various interests or skills are more active than members who say they do not have such interests or skills. This is especially true for interests or skills in areas which are relevant to OIIC committee work: public relations, journalism, commercial art, public speaking, photography, salesmanship, and writing.

Chapter VIII: KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES

This chapter discusses a number of psychological characteristics of members which have a bearing on their activity in OIIC. In the previous chapter, discussions of the importance of background characteristics such as occupation and community necessitated reference to the psychological characteristics with which they were associated. In this chapter, a more direct examination of the relations of these psychological characteristics -- beliefs, attitudes, knowledge -- to OIIC activity is made.

In general, OIIC members have favorable attitudes toward OIIC and toward the oil industry as a whole. However, the active members are more likely to report favorable feelings than are the less active members. The following characteristics differentiate active from less active members:

(1) Understanding of OIIC purposes. Most members say they have a good understanding of the OIIC program, but high active OIIC members are more likely to report this than are less active members. High active members are also more frequently able to state specific purposes of the program in contrast to vague, general purposes.

(2) Acceptance of OIIC purposes. Most members feel that it is important for the oil industry to have the OIIC program, but high active OIIC members are more likely to feel this than are less active members. They are also more likely to feel that they, personally, ought to be in OIIC; in addition, they are more likely to express a desire to continue as an OIIC member.

(3) Feelings about advantages of OIIC membership. Most members feel that there are a number of advantages to OIIC membership, e.g., opportunities to be of service to the oil industry, opportunities to make contacts, and opportunities to learn things or develop their abilities. Again, high active members are more likely to report these advantages than are less active members. Neither high active members nor low active members are likely to report that OIIC offers any opportunity for direct economic gain (e.g., getting ahead in one's job, improving relationships with the boss, or help in finding another job elsewhere).

(4) Feelings of social support for OIIC membership. High active OIIC members are more likely to report that other persons want them to be in OIIC. This difference in perception between high active and less active groups is most pronounced when the persons inquired about are the member's boss or others in his company at a higher level. However, high active OIIC members are also more likely to see support for their membership in OIIC from persons in their company at the same or at a lower level, from other oil men outside their own company, from their family, and from their friends.

There is virtually no feeling among OIIC members, regardless of their activity level, that any people they know are opposed to their membership in OIIC. Rather the differences found are between feeling that other persons support OIIC membership and feeling that other persons are indifferent about one's membership.

One area which does not differentiate high active and low active groups are feelings about disadvantages of OIIC membership. Such disadvantages are rarely reported by any members, regardless of their activity level.

The picture which emerges, then, is a generally favorable one for OIIC. There are few hostile feelings toward OIIC or toward the oil industry among the members of OIIC, and, by and large, there is a general acceptance of the program. But there is still room for improvement in the strength of conviction that some members have about the importance of OIIC, in the specificity of their understanding of OIIC's purposes, in some members' inability to see the possibility of deriving any personal benefits, in many members' failure to perceive social support for the program. The feeling of a number of members seems to be that the program is "Okay," but "Why pick on me?" It is such indifference -- rather than hostility -- which must be overcome to achieve high activity.

A finding from the previous chapter is of relevance here. The positive attitudes tend to be concentrated among oil company employees and among members in large cities. To some extent favorable attitudes may be ensured by choosing the "right" people. But there are two other ways to build favorable attitudes: (a) Through association with a cohesive group. Persons who are initially not very enthusiastic about the program may come to feel its importance if they come into contact with a dedicated, hard-working committee. (b) Through an active attempt to "sell" the member on the program. Personal attention, convincing arguments, and general enthusiasm may very well serve to arouse the active backing of those who are initially indifferent.

In short, to some extent you can select members who are likely to have the "right" attitudes and sufficient understanding, simply by selecting persons who hold appropriate jobs in oil companies. And to some extent, the "right" attitudes can be developed in other people as a result of successful experience in OIIC groups.

Chapter IX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In the previous chapters the summaries have contained a relatively straightforward presentation of results. Interpretative discussion was held to a minimum.

The present chapter attempts a different kind of summary. Here there is an attempt to compress into a few central ideas the major significance of the OIIC research. The following five topics are included:

A. Resources and Cultivation

B. Establishing Initial Bonds

C. Patterns of Leadership

D. The Importance of Structure

E. The Meaning of Voluntarism

A. Resources and Cultivation

The experience of OIIC in creating a nation-wide voluntary organization suggests an analogy between the growth of such an organizational "crop" and the more conventional kinds of agricultural efforts. It might be argued that a crop can be grown almost any place. Soil deficiencies can be corrected, drought conditions can be fought with irrigation, rocks can be carted away and stumps uprooted by bull-dozers. The yield from such poor land may never be impressive in relation to the effort and investment which went into it, but this may not be the most important consideration. If we had reasons why an unpromising plot of land must be cultivated we must understand and pay the cost of compensating for its natural disadvantages.

It is more usual, however, for the farmer to have some choice in such matters. He may have limited manpower, machinery and money for which he wants to show the largest possible harvest. If this is his situation, he will first plan to utilize the best land available to him and will avoid, insofar as possible, acres which would consume without appropriate return, his energy and resources.

Like the farmer, OIIC is confronted by acres which will respond quickly to cultivation and others which demand a great deal for the return they offer. The larger cities -- where there is more oil industry activity, where there are large numbers of oil company employees (many with skills and attitudes which fit OIIC needs) -- represent such acreage. These areas are closer to OIIC area headquarters, and are more likely to receive the benefits that communication with the central organization can bring. Company policy in these areas is usually to give strong support to OIIC. And persons likely to be chosen as members in these areas usually have a high level of identification with the oil industry. They usually hold positions which by reason of training and experience qualify them for OIIC work. Moreover, because their jobs have such an obvious relevance to OIIC, other persons expect that they will work for OIIC. These expectations constitute a social force not easily ignored.

By contrast, cities of 10,000 population or less are both inactive and unpromising. They have few oil company employees and include larger proportions of dealers, distributors, jobbers and consignees. These latter groups are characteristically less interested in OIIC, do not see their participation as necessary and have relatively little understanding of the organization. They are not hostile to the organization, but simply do not realize its importance, nor what if anything they personally can contribute. In addition, the distance of such towns from area headquarters may often make it difficult to provide the encouragement and assistance which all committees need.

If a voluntary organization is concerned with maximum return for its organizational efforts, the evidence suggests that those efforts be concentrated in areas which are relatively accessible, and with persons who have "role appropriateness" -- i.e., a position with duties so related to the organizational activity that one is both able and expected to participate in the organization. In OIIC, this means that efforts be concentrated on employees of oil companies in or near the major centers of population. If, on the other hand, the smaller towns and cities represent areas where it is of special importance to develop OIIC activity, the research findings argue that moderate activity can be generated in such areas, but at a cost of intensive cultivation.

B. Establishing Initial Bonds

Organizational growth is an orderly process but it is neither uniform nor assured. All committees begin as inactive by definition; some develop to low, medium or high activity and others remain inactive. The research findings support the notion that certain conditions must be met if the growth process is to get under way. One such condition is the formation of bonds of association among the new members of the group.

Until a stable relationship has been established among the earliest members, the basic condition for committee development has not been met. Members must quickly come to feel that they are a part of a group -- initially for the essential purpose of preventing the disintegration of the committee, and then to derive the benefits of mutual support and an efficient division of labor. Until the members, themselves, feel that they are part of a common team, external forces are necessary to keep the members together.

This is probably the usual situation for a new committee: The beginning members of the committee will be brought together because of external forces acting on each of them. For example, a senior person in one of the companies may convene a few potential members primarily on the basis of his personal influence and prestige. Or a few employees may appear before a professional OIIC man only because their supervisors suggest that they do so. Such a convening of individuals is not a committee, nor even the viable nucleus of a committee. There are no real ties among the convened members, and if the person who brought them together should leave the group it would probably dissolve.

At this point, the members are usually united by little more than their common curiosity about the program, or by their deference to those who have requested their participation. The bonds which keep the members together initially are primarily external to the group; it is largely the interest of supervisors or representatives of the central OIIC organization, rather than the motivation of members themselves, which keeps the members together. This is quite natural, inasmuch as interest in an organization is often aroused through contact with other persons who are already involved with the organization.

However, the committees are not likely to become stable until the bonds of association among members stem from within the group. When some joint decisions and duties have been agreed upon, when these first members have begun to value each other and feel responsible to each other, then the professional OIIC representative or the experienced OIIC area leader can begin to relinquish the task of keeping the group together. The group will have begun to build

its own social supports for continued membership and enlarging activities.

The quicker a nucleus of a committee is established -- a few persons who regard themselves as a functioning group -- the more readily will subsequent members feel that they are becoming part of a going organization. The effective organizer of a committee will make particular efforts to create such a nucleus. He will take advantage of the ease of establishing feelings of association among persons with common interests -- e.g., by choosing the first members from among persons who hold similar jobs. He will take advantage of a common allegiance, e.g., by choosing the first members from oil company employees, insofar as this is possible. And finally, he will take advantage of the feelings of interdependence which develop among persons engaged in a common endeavor, e.g., by attempting to start the committee on an actual group task as quickly as possible.

C. Patterns of Leadership

The research findings tell us that skilled and sensitive leadership is, if anything, even more important for developing voluntary groups than for more structured kinds of organization. Moreover, it seems that the pattern of leadership requirement is not fixed but changes as the committees develop.

An early phase in committee development is one characterized by very heavy reliance on leadership within the group. Initially, the need is for a group builder. Such a leader must concentrate on problems of recruitment, playing an active role himself in bringing into the group new members with the background and skills which promise easy integration with the committee nucleus. Yet excessive attention must not be paid to this requirement to the neglect of other equally important functions.

The leader is also an important source of motivation for the committee members. When he sets his sights high, the committee members are likely to be stimulated to meet this challenge. The chairman who is overly cautious about urging members to participate may be met with an apathetic response. On the other hand, a genuine enthusiasm by the chairman will probably be readily accepted by the committee. The effective chairman will encourage pride in the committee, and in its accomplishments. He will give generous praise and recognition for each achievement, and will deal frankly but constructively with failures to carry out group decisions.

The chairman of a new committee must give special attention also to establishing structure, getting agreement on procedures and practices. Such apparently routine matters as setting regular times for meetings, working through plans for activity which specify the functions of each member, and agreeing on titles and responsibilities have a great significance for the young committee. These procedures facilitate the stability and efficiency which the committee needs in order to effectively carry out its activities.

In all respects, the guiding principle of the chairman must be to strengthen the group as a team rather than as a collection of individuals. His recognition for good work needs to be supplemented and even replaced in part by the express approval of other members. His initiation of goals and standards will be shared increasingly as other members are motivated to take on some of the responsibility of leadership. The leader of a new committee builds the group and relinquishes some functions and shares others as the group matures.

Building the group, working through the group, encouraging group maturation and responding to the growing assertiveness and leadership of other members is a difficult and taxing assignment,

especially for a chairman who may have virtually carried the group through an earlier phase of its development. Moreover, the group building process may involve temporary inefficiencies. The experienced chairman who knows what needs to be done may find a give and take discussion of program tedious. Yet if he attempts to be a committee instead of building one the long range prospect for activities are poor.

Many voluntary organizations have been plagued by such an "indispensable man" brand of leadership. A committee so led may look promising for a time, but its activity cannot develop much beyond its one-man-power and its future is marked for collapse when the key man can no longer lead.

D. The Importance of Structure

A collection of people becomes a group when each is in touch with the others, influencing them and influenced by them, and aware of their common membership. But a group becomes effective in accomplishing a task only as it becomes organized. An effective committee is one which has organized itself to accomplish work. The total job has been divided into manageable parts and the parts have been assigned. Procedures have been worked out to insure the completion of the individual task. Regular opportunities for communication among members are provided; work is reviewed and arrangements modified as required.

All this implies structure: Titles, records of decisions made and responsibilities assumed, regular meetings at intervals frequent enough to facilitate program review and decision making, formal discussions and definite conclusions. In short, the effective committee is a highly specialized piece of machinery and not a collection of free lancers, however motivated. Nor does the need for structure end with the local committee. Close articulation and regular contact with the larger organization are additional marks of the successful committee. In this way the local committee gets the specialized help and broad experience of the central staff and local experience is fed constantly to higher organizational levels.

The "props" of organization -- titles and assignments, schedules and meetings, minutes and rosters -- are sometimes belittled by voluntary groups as trappings more appropriate to industry and government. The findings of this study argue otherwise. Voluntary groups need to learn and to practice some of the elements of formal structure which are standard operating procedure in business organizations. These attributes are not for ornament and the most successful voluntary committees have explicit and well developed internal structures.

E. The Meaning of Voluntarism

In leadership and structure, similarities between successful voluntary groups and effective non-voluntary organizations are many and impressive. There are, however, some special characteristics of volunteer activity which should be noted.

If we look at a person who plays some role in an organization we can distinguish various motives which impel him to give of his skill and energy. Some of these motives we may think of as intrinsic -- those which are an end in themselves, rather than a means to some end. Thus the toolmaker may find satisfaction in the exercise and development of his skill, or the OIIC volunteer may value the opportunity to appear as a public speaker. In the category of intrinsic motivation also, we would place those motives which stem from the individual's identification with the organization's goals and welfare. An example would be the OIIC volunteer who is impelled to activity because of his conviction that the program of the organization must be carried to a broader public.

By contrast, we may label extrinsic those sources of motivation which make the individual interested or active in an organizational role only because he sees such behavior as conducive to other goals to which he aspires. The worker who goes each morning to a job which bores him, to be supervised by a foreman who irritates him provides an extreme example of our point. He may continue to work in this setting even though he is indifferent or even hostile to the purposes of the overall organization. Why does he subject himself to such unsatisfying experiences? Because they are a means to other things which he values -- such as money, security and status.

Classical theories of management have emphasized the extrinsic reward and only in recent years has the importance of job content, interpersonal relations, and acceptance of an organization's purposes come to be appreciated. The full integration of such factors into management theory implies important modification. Nevertheless, the external motives remain strong in the work situation and are frequently dominant.

In voluntary organizations, however, the situation is probably otherwise. In the OIIC, at least, the extrinsic motives do not appear sufficient for voluntary activity. Few members feel that OIIC affords much opportunity to satisfy such motives as getting promoted, finding a better job, or improving relations with one's supervisors. Moreover, the few people who feel that OIIC could satisfy these motives are no more active in the program than others. On the other hand, a member who believes in the purposes of OIIC and sees them as vital for the industry is likely to be active. The active members not only believe in the program, but feel that they can make a direct contribution to it. Without such identification with the purposes of the program,

chances are strong that members will be inactive or will leave the organization.

Because it is not possible for voluntary organizations to provide strong extrinsic rewards, it becomes especially important that they pay careful attention to the satisfactions which can be directly obtained by activity within the organization, and avoid any practices which lead to hositility or indifference. Leadership patterns, involvement in program decisions, and all the interpersonal factors of group life become particularly important in voluntary organizations. On them the organization must stand or fall; with them it must attract and activate its membership.