The Antecedents And Consequences Of Organizational Crisis In A Voluntary Professional Organization

James Paul Miller

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August 19, 1979
THE ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF ORGANIZATIONAL
CRISIS IN A VOLUNTARY PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

BY
James Paul Miller, Jr.
B. S., Elementary Education, University of New Mexico, 1971
M. A., Public Administration, Ball State University, 1973

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

December, 1979
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This study investigated two instances of organizational crisis occurring within a voluntary professional organization. The central research task was twofold: (1) to reconstruct accurately the historical events which preceded and followed two unsuccessful strike bids by a voluntary teachers' organization; and, (2) to develop a theoretical explanation which would account for the antecedents and consequences of the crises which inevitably surfaced after the strike bid defeat. Concepts drawn primarily from the organizational crisis and conflict literature provided the general conceptual orientation.

A large urban teachers' organization in the Southwestern United States was chosen as the research site. Due to the process nature of the problem, an ethnohistorical methodology (Schumacher, 1972) was selected for use. Data collection techniques included participant observation (Bruyn, 1966), document collection/analysis, utilization of unobtrusive measures (Webb, et al., 1966), and informal interviewing. Analytical techniques included the constant comparative method of qualitative data analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), general content analysis, and propositional development/verification procedures suggested by Zetterberg (1965). The final product of the research was a theory-generating ethnohistorical case study.
The study suggested that voluntary professional organizations faced with an unstable and frequently unfriendly external environment develop over time a crisis frame of mind, conceptualized herein as a "crisis complex." In attempting to come to terms with the threatening nature of the environment, and thereby improving their own low degree of environmental control, these organizations plan the strategic creation of crises.

In the creation of these crises, voluntary professional organizations establish and rigidly adhere to a pre-programmed "crisis routine" comprised of a series of antecedent activities designed to promote the inevitability of crisis. Conceptually, these routines appear to be similar in structure and function to Pondy's (1967) notion of conflict routines, and in terms of process follow the sentiment-interaction-activity progression formulated by Homans (1950). Fully executed, the crisis routine should result in the occurrence of a planned crisis.

The study further claimed that rigid adherence to a crisis routine also results in a series of unanticipated intraorganizational consequences, many of them latent and negative. Among them are the enhancement of oligarchical control, the surfacing of intraorganizational conflict linked to elements of the organizational past, and the emergence of the "group think" phenomenon (Janis, 1972). Furthermore, it is posited that unless organizational planning can make provision for the probable internal consequences of crisis routine utilization, the "planned crisis" (antithetically speaking) will fail to occur, and a separate event which has all the elements of a "true" crisis (Herman, 1972) will indeed materialize.
Beyond the conceptual identification of the antecedents of crisis, the study suggested a number of equally unanticipated crisis consequences. The suggestion is made that the crisis aftermath is characterized by a chain of events, conceptually paralleling what Shepard (1964) has termed "loser behavior," i.e., "scapegoating," increased intraorganizational conflict, and pervasive expressions of negative sentiment. Moreover, such behavior results in additional environmental instability and loss of control, culminating eventually in conditions which lead, via the mechanism of the "self-fulfilling prophecy" (Merton, 1957), to the re-emergence of the crisis complex and another crisis cycle.
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Chapter 1

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

A frequent theme in American historical thought has been the role of public educational institutions in the growth and development of the nation. This theme found its genesis in the writings of the 19th and early 20th century historians and philosophers who, according to some observers, formed in their writings part of the overall ideological justification for the development of numerous domestic policies. A number of contemporary historians and economists have more recently, however, challenged this portrayal of the institutional role of public education, and have instead advocated a "revisionist" view of that role. "The American public school," wrote Colin Greer in an example of that perspective, "has a sacrosanct place in the democratic rhetoric of the nation" (Greer, 1972). The traditional perspective of schools as "the bulwark of republican institutions" (Butts and Cremin, 1953) and the revisionist view of such characterizations as "democratic rhetoric" together represent the continuing disagreement about institutional purpose and reality—a disagreement which has persisted over the past two hundred years.

It is interesting, although not particularly surprising, to note that both schools of historical thought have similarly assigned a relatively insignificant role in the process of the growth and development of American education to the largest group of educators—the classroom teachers. Butts and Cremin (1953), in their well-known
treatment of American educational history, have traced the interest of educators throughout American history, ranging from colonial to contemporary times, in such fundamental issues as universal education, public (as opposed to church sponsored) education, and in assurances of equality of educational opportunity. Both traditional and contemporary accounts have, however, primarily ascribed that interest and resultant policy influence to school masters, early administrators, citizen school board members, and to college professors. One typically finds in such accounts references to such men of stature as Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, and Nicholas Murray Butler. That perspective on influence has been carried on in the 20th century by others like Cubberly, Mort, Dewey, Counts, and Conant. Teachers, however, have been invariably absent from the lists of influentials, and it has only been within the past twenty years that teachers as a group have been able to assert an influence concomitant with their numbers.

The absence of teacher influence at the policy level throughout the broad expanse of American educational history has not been accidental and may be attributed more properly to a number of the more salient features of what Lortie (1975) has termed the "occupational past" of teaching. Attempting to capture the "ethos" of the teaching occupation, Lortie reviewed the writings of earlier scholars such as Waller (1932), Elsbree (1939), Butts and Cremin (1953), Stinnett and Huggett (1956), Lieberman (1956), Charters (1964), Ziegler (1967), and others. Moreover, Lortie examined the data generated from his own Five Towns' Study. He concluded from these accounts and the Five Towns' data that an interrelated cluster of factors has had a
pervasive influence upon teaching throughout history. Briefly, these factors include: (1) the historically grounded socio-economic status differential between teaching and other occupations which society has legitimized as "professional"; (2) the presence of an extensive network of normative controls on occupational and extra-occupational teacher behavior; (3) the pervasive and enduring quality of occupational isolation, separating colleague from colleague, teacher from community; (4) the peculiar (in the sense of being unique among the intellectually oriented occupational groups) demographic composition of the occupational work force; and, (5) the historic ambivalence surrounding the "professional" and the "employee" work roles within an institutionally determined work hierarchy of authority. In detailing these and other factors, Lortie noted that contemporary teaching practice and teachers themselves are seriously influenced by the "hand of history" (p. 1), for each of these factors appears to be recurrent within successive generations of teachers, and each in a combination of ways has diminished the degree of teacher influence on fundamental educational policy issues.

Collectively, educators in general and teachers in particular have sought to alter the impact of Lortie's factors upon the teaching occupation. These efforts have most visibly taken form in the inception and development of voluntary professional organizations.*

*The term "voluntary professional organizations" will be used hereafter in order to incorporate both the term "teacher association" (the label preferred by the National Education Association), and "teacher union" (the term preferred by the American Federation of Teachers), in order to avoid the semantic confusion which has surrounded these terms for some time. It will be later argued that conceptually, both associations and unions are, in fact, quite similar types of voluntary organizations.
Following the historic disposition toward citizen voluntarism in this country, educational as well as other voluntary organizations have long played an integral part in the operation of the democratic government (Steinberg, 1977). In doing so, voluntary organizations of all types have carried out a variety of latent and manifest functions for their membership, as well as for the larger society.

In a review of the involvement of voluntary citizen group participation in the public schools, Steinberg (1977) has suggested that both manifest and latent functions arise from four conceptually distinct but functionally related theoretical bases: (1) the theory of participatory democracy (classical democratic doctrine), characterizing the voluntary association as the protective "linkage mechanism" between the citizen/member and his/her governmental representative (Pateman, 1970); (2) the theory of mass society, depicting the contemporary character of modern society (industrialized, bureaucratized, migratory, urbanized) and pointing to the integrative role of the voluntary association, binding the citizen/member to an increasingly fragmented society (Durkheim, 1933); (3) pluralism theory (Prewitt and Stone, 1973), suggesting voluntary organizations as one of a series of representative interest groups vying for influence within a polyarchic decision making system; and, (4) social system "functionalist" theory speaking to the "interest articulation" (input) purpose of organized interest groups, i.e., voluntary organizations, in an interrelated, interdependent political system (Easton, 1965).

Steinberg concluded that "there is general agreement among most theorists that for individuals, the primary functions of
voluntary organizations are protective and integrative" (p.2). They are protective to the extent that they mediate on behalf of the citizen/member against real and imagined abuses of power by governmental representatives, by increasing the responsiveness of such representation to association member interests, and by helping to insure that the established means of citizen/member participation in the decision making process function as was originally conceived in contractual agreement and/or in law. On the other hand, voluntary organizations serve an integrative function by linking individual citizen/members to other larger, primarily governmental, organizations.

Whether or not voluntary educational organizations as originally created were explicitly intended to serve these functions is uncertain. One may speculate that they came into existence primarily to serve the integrative function. Historians have reported that the earliest recorded formal teachers' organization was the Society of Associated Teachers of New York in 1794 (Dershimer, 1969). The Society served primarily as a forum for the discussion of pedagogical issues, and, in some sense, as an "integrative" force in the development of a collective occupational consciousness among its teacher members. This later function was apparently not integrative in the current political science use of the term, i.e., in binding the membership to the larger employing organization, for this organizational purpose did not appear until later in the 19th century. This, too, was true of the protective, i.e., member welfare concern, function of the voluntary teacher organization.
Contemporary viewers of the 20th century progeny of the New York Society observe the major teacher organizations, the National Education Association of the United States (founded 1857), and the American Federation of Teachers (founded 1916), aggressively fulfilling both the linking integrative function and the member welfare oriented protective function. Although how these modern voluntary organizations go about the performance of these functions reflects not only their own maturity and sophistication as organization but to a high degree the current state of the educational enterprise, they are invariably tied to the influences of an equally omnipresent "organizational past" which parallels Lortie's "occupational past" of teaching.

Teachers, like the members of other occupational groups, carry about with them a private, unique record of personally significant events of the past, frequently their occupational past. To these events are attached particular meanings which, over time, become the antecedents to future actions.

So it is with organizations. A formal voluntary organization, defined as "a nonprofit, nongovernmental private group that an individual joins by choice" (Smith and Freedman, 1972), carries with it, in the form of precedent and procedure, a "living past." More importantly, perhaps, are the tacitly-held perceptions of the organizational past--its successes and failures, its personalities and problems--retained by past and present organizational members. Often, that past, particularly in the case of teachers, is characterized by many of the same factors that have distinguished the occupation,
and frequently the occupational and the organizational are intertwined. The influence on the present is profound and occasionally disturbing, for, as in the case of individual teachers, the events of the past become the antecedents for present and future activity.

Not frequently, it is under a unique configuration of events that the impact of the past is particularly disturbing. At such times historic influences can create one or more variations of social conflict. As Kriesberg (1972) has observed, "Conflicts vary in their bases, their duration, their mode of settlement, their outcomes, and their consequences" (p. 1). Frequently, these variations manifest themselves in some form of either intraorganizational or interorganizational disruption, or in both. Such conflicts possess the potential, by chance or by design, for eventual evolution into a crisis of organizational dimensions and implications which, in the tenuous world of voluntary organizations, becomes a critical time, a potential turning point about which even the survival of the organization may well pivot.

The Research Problem

As has been noted, voluntary professional organizations in American education have been in existence since the late 18th century. There has been, however, a dearth of research, either theory generating or verificational, about this type of formal organization, particularly about its operation in times of crisis. The proposed research will attempt to partially fill this void.

In its most basic form, the research problem involved observation of a voluntary teachers' organization facing several
multi-dimensional organizational crises (occasionally of their own making!) over a five year period of time. Guided by several "foreshadowed problems" (Malinowski, 1922), the basic research problem was initially posed as: What are the leadership responses of a teachers' organization to a no-strike vote by its membership? Investigation conducted on this question led to a re-phrasing and refinement as the study progressed. Smith (1978) points to the practical necessity for this re-phrasing process: "As we learn more about the system at its concrete descriptive data level, we find areas that we hadn't anticipated and we find that we have to shift plans" (p. 19). Through this shifting process, the direction of the study expanded and the question became: What are the responses of a voluntary organization to a no-strike vote by its membership?

A third reconceptualization addressed the professional nature of the organization under study, as well as recasting the no-strike vote by the membership as particularistic form of a more general social phenomenon--organizational crisis. At this point in the investigation, the research problem was revised to ask: How does one account for the responses of a voluntary professional organization to crisis?

Subsequent data analysis suggested a final revision which more broadly incorporated the origins as well as the consequences of organizational crisis. The revision was stated thus: How does one account for the antecedents and consequences of crisis within a voluntary professional organization?

The latter formulation represents the evolution of the research problem which initially was anchored in the descriptive
level at which organizational responses were to be simply and accurately arranged in a chronological sequence, but ultimately arrived at an analytical level where the investigation went beyond establishment of an authentic and credible data base (Schumacher, 1972) to a theoretical interpretation and explanation of that data.

The final formulation of the research question also provided a structure for the major research objectives. Without reference to a specific order of execution, those objectives were:

1. to locate within the social science literature concepts and conceptual frameworks related to voluntary professional, teacher, and labor organizations, and to organizational crisis;

2. to obtain a detailed historical and ethnographic account of two crises faced within the past five years by a voluntary classroom teachers' organization;

3. to generate from the narrative account and the organizing concepts a "grounded theory" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) of organizational crisis; and

4. to expand the grounded theory to a "middle range" (Merton, 1957) theoretical explanation of voluntary professional organizational crisis.

The rationale for and the methodologies employed in the accomplishment of these objectives are discussed in Appendix A.
Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Despite a somewhat extensive descriptive literature regarding the teaching occupation throughout American history, there continues to be a remarkable absence of analytical research generated about the parallel development of voluntary professional organizations in education. The cursory research which has been conducted can be characterized as loosely descriptive, or normative and polemical (Rosenthal, 1966). Moreover, such work has often been conducted by the voluntary professional organizations themselves for purposes other than scholarly understanding, and as such, frequently lacks the objective quality of disciplined, conclusion-oriented inquiry (Cronbach and Suppes, 1969).

Given this dearth of conceptual/theoretical research, this review has as its focus the identification of other substantive areas within the social science literature upon which a theoretical basis for the present study might be built. In constructing this base, the review serves three purposes: (1) to establish a broad conceptual perspective of the research phenomenon arising out of previous research in the related substantive areas, e.g., voluntary associations, labor unions, and other formal organizations; (2) to identify specific concepts and propositions potentially useful in organizing and analyzing the data collected in the study; and, (3) to suggest theoretical referents for the processes of model construction and theory generation.
The literature is to be brought to bear on three questions underlying the primary research problem. The questions are: (1) What about the nature of voluntary professional organizations is suggestive of their crisis behavior? (2) Out of what set(s) of conditions does organizational crisis occur? and, (3) What are the general antecedents and consequences of organizational crisis?

In order to accomplish the purposes outlined above, the review will be organized into two major sections: Part A, the literature on the nature of voluntary, "mutual-benefit," formal organizations; and, Part B, the social psychological research on organizational conflict, crisis, and disaster (including labor-management strike occurrences and international nation-state conflict and crisis). The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

PART A

The Literature on Voluntary Mutual Benefit Formal Organizations

The organizational literature on the type of formal organization known as the voluntary association or formal voluntary organization is reviewed herein. Included specifically in this review are the analytical writings and empirical research on two special types of voluntary organizations--the trade union and the professional association. Beyond this, the review will primarily focus on the implications these findings have for the crisis behavior of voluntary organizations.
Voluntary Associations

The voluntary association has been a frequent topic of writing and research in many academic disciplines. Beginning with de Tocqueville's well known observation about the extent of voluntary associations in colonial America, associations and associational life have continued to play an important part in contemporary society and in the interests of social science. That this familiar side of everyday life should become a matter of widespread academic curiosity is not surprising.

Amis and Stern (1974) and Smith and Freedman (1972) contend that this interest has basically taken three forms: (1) the examination of voluntary associations as primary subjects for analysis; (2) the social psychological investigation of the consequences of participation for association members; and, (3) as the basis of sociological inquiry and speculation about the role voluntary associations play in the broader society. Of the theory generated through these inquiries, Smith and Freedman (1972) write:

The term "theory" has to be applied to the study of voluntary associations with care, since very little theory, in the strict sense of the word, has yet to be developed in the field. There is no grand, all encompassing and generally accepted theory of voluntarism, or even a respectable middle-range theory (p. 1).

More typically, research has pursued the thrashing out of definitions, and the determination of the extent and composition of citizen/member participation through in-depth case studies, questionnaires, and inventories of associations at all levels of society. Attention has also been concurrently directed at the training and utilization of volunteers in both voluntary and involuntary organizational settings.
With less frequency have voluntary organizations been the subject of organizational analysis. An implicit assumption appears to have been made, perhaps with some plausibility, that voluntary and other types of formal organizations share similar structural characteristics and social processes. A good bit of this appears to be speculation, for Amis and Sterns (1974) observe that "the literature on formal organizations gives scant attention to voluntary associations" (p. 93), citing Merton (1952), March and Simon (1958), Blau and Scott (1962), and others as examples. Babchuck and Warriner (1963), in an earlier review, point the direction theoretical research should take:

When studied from this organizational theory perspective, the research problems become those of the structures of the association, the processes through which it operates, the internal effect of environmental changes or relationships, and the interrelationships of various structural, organizational, and ideological features (p. 135).

Attempts such as Glaser and Sills' (1966) move in this direction, yet fall short of actual analysis.

A number of structural and dynamic features of voluntary organizations are significant. Voluntary organizations arise out of shared sentiments, activities, and interactions (Homans, 1960). Rose (1967) describes this context:

A voluntary association develops when a small group of people, finding they have a certain interest (or purpose) in common, agree to meet and act together in order to try to satisfy that interest or achieve that purpose (p. 213).

The sentiments originating from this action eventuate in explicit and implicit organizational goals. Petersen (1975) suggests that of the wide range of stated [and unstated] goals, most can be
incorporated under the term "mutual benefit" (Blau and Scott, 1962). That is to say, the major goal activity of voluntary organizations is to protect and advance selected economic, social and political interests for the benefit of their members. Closely tied to these goals, if distinguishable at all, are related ideologies--socio-political programs and belief systems--delineating in a diffuse way the efficacy of the goals and the normatively acceptable means and structures for their pursuit.

Ideology also assists in the definition of the degree of organizational boundedness. Boundary definition is particularly problematic for voluntary organizations due to the high permeability of their organizational boundaries. Contributing to the condition of permeability are the absence of formal contractual obligations between individual members and the organization itself, and the almost unlimited choice members exercise in the extent and nature of personal participation, resource contribution, and time allocation.

Boundary problems are at once an antecedent and a consequence of the nature of participation. More so than other types of organizations, voluntary ones are affected by the segmental psychological involvement of their members [Allport's concept of partial inclusion]. That individuals allocate marginal amounts of their time and typically withhold total psychological engagement to organizational life is well understood. Due to competing demands on individual time and energy resources, involvement in voluntary organizational activity is often necessarily slighted. Competing demands not infrequently include multiple memberships in other voluntary and involuntary organizations,
both of whom may well espouse goals and ideologies similar to those of the voluntary group. Participation data indicate that as many as 80% of voluntary members are nominal participants (Smith and Freedman, 1972), implying that much of their limited participation is on the periphery of organizational activity. Therefore, in the absence of well-developed highly motivating reward and compliance structures, members feel psychologically and physically free to come and go as they desire. Coupled with the ideological and goal similarities of other organizational memberships, this freedom frequently has the effect of blurring the boundaries between voluntary organizations and their surrounding environments.

The problematic character of reward and compliance systems requires further elaboration. The degree of member involvement voluntary organizations are able to elicit is premised on organizational use of normative or, less frequently, mixed normative-utilitarian compliance systems (Etzioni, 1961). Well-established organizations, professional and religious groups for example, often have long and richly symbolic traditions and/or strong occupational norms as compliance inducing mechanisms. Over time, they have successfully substituted status rewards for economic remuneration. The nature of such member compliance is voluntary and morally based. Exclusive reliance, however, on normative means is difficult to sustain in most voluntary organizations, given (1) the typical condition of membership heterogeneity created in part by the permeability of organizational boundaries, and (2) by the frequent lack of selectivity in the admission and retention of members. This difficulty is further
compounded in normatively-based compliance systems by the relative absence of symbolic rewards, e.g., prestige, status, and esteem, in many voluntary organizations. Since voluntary groups are not in the position to allocate organizational space, physical space, or monetary compensation to members, they are severely restricted in the breadth and depth of a planned reward system.

In order to give form to the achievement of organizational goals and to administer the admittedly limited reward system, voluntary organizations possess role structures. The configuration of this structure is determined by member demands and by tradition, with the roles therein fulfilled through elective and appointive processes. The result in some ways mirrors the classical conception of the "line-staff" arrangement, with the elected officials fulfilling the line functions, and the appointed staff performing the staff function. This essentially static conception also depicts the internal distribution of legitimate power, the nature of formal communication networks, and the flow of the task structure of the organization.

With regard to the distribution of power, authority is constitutionally vested in legislative bodies, e.g., delegate assemblies, boards, and councils, and delegated to their elected functionaries, the officers. Unintentionally, this distribution is complemented by the aggregation of power by full-time, paid staff members through more than simply the rules and regulations promulgated by legislative bodies. In subtle ways, additional power accumulates due to strategic positioning in the activity and information flow of the organization. The staff accumulation of excessive power is an
unplanned process, a process some have equated with the natural growth toward the formalization of structure (Sills, 1968), and others to the rise of bureaucracy (Tsouderos, 1955).

The differentiation of role structure varies with the degree of formalization and size of membership. Speaking of voluntary organizations at the national and regional levels, relatively extended vertical differentiation is reported (Adams, 1970). On the local level, while vertical differentiation may be more limited, horizontal differentiation is quite pronounced, typically through the proliferation of committees, commissions, task forces, and advisory groups. The extent of the horizontal structure reflects several additional characteristics: (1) the diversity of organizational goals; (2) the subsequent degree of task specialization necessary to accomplish these diverse goals; and, (3) the deliberate attempt to increase nominal member participation. Taken together, the vertical and horizontal structures constitute the governance structure of voluntary organizational governance; the executive subsystem comprised of executive officers and full-time staff; and, the legislative subsystem including the policy making member delegate assemblies and supporting committees.

It is within this structural context that additional organizational features can be considered. Sills (1968) suggests four concepts useful in understanding four processes fundamental to voluntary organizations. These processes include: (1) institutionalization—"the process through which patterns of behavior and expectations of behavior on the part of others become established" (p. 367); (2) minority rule—the tendency toward governance by oligarchy;
(3) goal displacement—the transformation of original means into goals; and, (4) goal succession—the replacement of old goals by new for the purpose of maintenance and survival. Beyond Sills' own work, there is substantial evidence in support of these conceptualizations. King (1956), Chapin (1956), Wertheim (1975), and others have empirically documented stages of formalization or institutionalization, contending that in the final "stable" or "mature" form, bureaucratization and conservatism emerge.

The minority rule phenomena is perhaps the most widely studied aspect of voluntary organizational functioning. Michels (1949) describes in some detail his now-famous "iron law of oligarchy":

Organization implies the tendency to oligarchy. In every organization, whether it be a political party, a professional union, or any other association of the kind, the aristocratic tendency manifests itself very clearly. The mechanism of organization, while conferring a solidarity of structure, induces serious changes, in the organized mass, completely inverting the respective positions of the leaders and the led. As a result of organization, every party or professional union becomes divided into a minority of directors and a majority of directed (quoted in Sills, 1968, p. 368).

The most recent study of the minority rule phenomena is that of Edelstein and Warner (1975).

Goal displacement is a well-known phenomenon, particularly within voluntary labor organizations. The phenomenon of goal succession, too, has received ample documentation, most notably in Sills' (1957) case study of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, Pence's (1939) study of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), and Gusfield's (1955) study of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU).
Given these organizational processes, voluntary organizations typically deal with two major problems. As has been suggested, primary among them is that of maintaining internal democracy. Blau and Scott (1964) observe that ideally, the maintenance of democracy through contested elections, officer turnover, and majority rule would faithfully reconstruct the vigor and enthusiasm which characterized the organization's origins. The dilemma arises, however, in situations which customarily require command over resources and close coordination of members. These circumstances are typical in every day, large-scale operations, and in conflict/ crisis situations. Ultimately, the question becomes one of selecting between democracy or efficiency (Coleman, 1956).

A second problem concerns the manner in which voluntary organizations deal with conflict and crisis. For many organizations, engaging in conflict is an expected means of achieving organizational goals. Braun (1972) makes this point in a dramatic way regarding the American Federation of Teachers. Further, the pursuit of goals through conflict often takes the form of what Lewellen and Sturbaum (1973) term "ordered social conflict," with two parties assuming legitimated adversarial roles.

Other than the self-generated, goal-related conflict described above, one can routinely expect conflict in voluntary organizations from other sources. Sills' (1968) conceptualization of organizational processes provides an analytical cue. While institutionalization and goal displacement are unlikely in normal circumstances to be conflict creating, minority rule and goal succession are evident.
sources of frequent and prolonged disagreement. In the case of minority rule, oligarchical control can violate strongly held internal democratic norms. If the norms are pervasive and strong, and if the norm violation is severe enough, conflict is likely to occur. Goal succession, too, if not conflict creating, may develop into a crisis. The achievement of the organization's major goal activity—the raison d'être—brings about, in Tannenbaum's (1965) words, "the irony of organizations creating conditions leading to their own decline" (p. 715). New goals must be found and resources redirected. In the meantime, crisis conditions exist.

Conflict may arise from additional sources. Steinberg (1977) in a bibliographic review of the voluntary organizational literature, hypothesizes that "when participation increases, conflict emerges ...." (p. 21). Conflicts of interest among diverse reference groups are not uncommon. Additionally, Adkison (1978) contends that "loosely coupled systems" (Weick, 1976) contribute to the reduction of organizational conflict in a project organization setting. Voluntary organizations exhibit many of the characteristics of loose coupling. If, as Adkison implies, the organizational requirements for goal achievement are such that loose coupling reduces structural friction between disparate elements, then loose coupling is indeed a conflict reduction mechanism. Given a different (crisis) situation, however, and one typically faced by voluntary organizations where efficiency requirements are high, then loose coupling is likely to result in heightened rather than reduced conflict. Finally, cross pressures generated by a heterogeneous membership are likely to create intraorganizational conflict and to compel a perception of crisis.
Voluntary organizations are thought to respond in such situations in ways similar to other formal organizations. These responses include: (1) the establishment of decision making rules to narrow the potential range of internal conflict over how decisions are made; (2) the development of ad hoc role structures to temporarily assume conflict and/or crisis management functions; (3) the elaboration of permanent role features and role sets for conducting conflict and/or responding to crisis on behalf of the organization; and, (4) the expansion of ideological justification for engaging in conflict, accompanied by increased member socialization. Wertheim (1975) also suggests that voluntary organizations reacting to strain respond in ways remarkably similar to Sills' organizational processes. These responses embrace, in part, goal transformation or displacement, means/ends transformation, increasingly centralized decision making processes, shifts in sentiments towards conservatism, and placement of increasing emphasis on organizational survival and maintenance. Brager (1968), studying a voluntary urban agency facing severe budget cuts and challenges to its value base, offers similar findings.

In summary, an attempt has been made to identify through the use of organizational concepts the origins and consequences of crisis within voluntary organizations. The literature suggests a number of typical conditions--all related to conflict--such as minority rule, goal displacement, and member heterogeneity which are implicitly associated with crisis. Beyond the suggestion of antecedent conditions, however, the literature offers little in understanding crisis within voluntary organizations.
Professional Associations

Organizationally, professional associations parallel in structure, process, and function other voluntary organizations. Differences between professional and other types of voluntary organizations lie mainly in the distinctive composition of their membership groups. More so than in other occupational groups, the professional group is characterized by: (1) the use of the professional organization as a major reference; (2) a belief in the concept of service to the public; (3) a belief in self regulation by the profession; (4) a sense of calling to the field in the absence of extrinsic rewards; and, (5) a strong belief in the concept of professional autonomy.

The salient literature analyzing the governance structure of professional organizations has been succinctly summarized by Gilb (1966) and Moore (1970). Gilb (1966), in a wide ranging and insightful examination of the professions in America (their historical antecedents as well as their contemporary forms), discusses in detail organizational structure and processes in today's professional organizations. Gilb's contention is that these organizations in the historical sense resemble medieval guilds in both form and function. Primarily using the American Bar Association, the American Medical Association, and the National Education Association as examples, Gilb notes that the governance structure of each is representative in nature, and is directed by a governing Board of Directors linked to several executive-administrative bodies. There also exist legislative bodies at successively higher levels comprised of larger numbers of elected
members. Full-time paid staff members complement both the legislative arm and the elected executive branch. As an aside, Gilb asserts that with the exception of the American Medical Association, most large-scale professional organizations do not have an independent judiciary charged with the resolution of intraorganizational conflict.

In her concluding observations about governance, Gilb states that three paradoxical trends, similar to current tendencies in American government, have appeared. They include: (1) the thrust for more local independence, countered by the broad need for greater integration and regulation at all levels; (2) a corresponding need for greater bureaucracy, offset by sentiments for greater internal democracy; and, (3) greater stress on individual freedom in the context of more powerful forces involved in the socialization of members. Of the second trend particularly, Gilb notes that recent studies show higher levels of participation and broader representation in some professions, specifically among minorities and women. On the other hand, she pessimistically asserts that:

Clearly, Montesquieu's doctrine of separation of powers, has not significantly altered the governance of American professional associations. The Board of Directors operates in part like a legislative upper house, but they also function as the executive and possibly the judicial branches of the association (p. 113).

Moore (1970) takes an even stronger position vis-a-vis the trends in governance. Pointing out that professional organizations are only nominally voluntary, he goes on to score their failure to totally represent their constituency:

We shall note below that professional associations share some characteristics with other formal voluntary organizations; they are democratic in form and oligarchic in operation (p. 163).
Continuing in the same vein, Moore asserts that elected positions are "chiefly honorific" (p. 172), and that:

The principal source of continuity, and therefore a major center of power in professional associations rests with the salaried secretariat or administrative staff (p. 173).

Following these observations, Moore concludes that despite the presence of democratic norms contrary to the oligarchical rule, the time and effort required to shift to a more democratic form is generally prohibitive for most organization members, and, therefore, professional organizations tend to remain in the control of a few.

The governance structure described above and the relatively unique membership group have some influence over the degree of organizational conflict and crisis. Additionally, in the advocacy of member interests, there is considerable potential for overt conflict of interest between the organization's point of view and the concerns of others. Further, although government has been hesitant to intervene, there have been increasing restrictions arising out of litigation and statutory pressures. These, too, present conflict occasions and crises of autonomy for the professional organization. Internally, the homogeneity of membership in all likelihood reduces the amount of potential conflict, although the organization may still be subject to many of the same interpersonal conflicts that characterize other kinds of voluntary organizations.

In summary, although discussion of conflict/crisis origins and responses in voluntary professional organizations appears non-existent, one may surmise both the origins and responses are similar to those of other voluntary organizations.
Unions

One of a number of controversies in voluntary action research (as the field is currently called) has been whether or not to include labor unions within the purview of voluntary associations. Smith and Freedman (1972) and others exclude unions in their definitions of voluntary organizations due to the frequently involuntary nature of union membership under closed, union, and agency shop contractual clauses. At another level, segments of the education profession have most recently advanced similar arguments in court litigation (See Peters vs. Board of Education 506 S.W. 2d 429 [1974], and University of Missouri at Columbia-National Education Association vs. Dalton, DC, WD Missouri No. 76-CV-118, September, 1978). Wilensky (1956), Kerr (1958), Makofsky (1978), and others have, however, concurred with Moore (1973): "... the distinction between a labor union and a voluntary professional association is not sharp" (p. 157). Moore (1973) argues:

The basic type and form of union organization puts it in a class with clubs, fraternal orders, religious denominations, and a tremendous range of "interest groups." Although the structural consequences are not otherwise important, this basic type remains even if the membership is in fact involuntary in some degree (p. 122).

Viewed broadly within the literature, Moore's observation appears accurate--both unions and professional organizations as well as many other types of voluntary organizations share common functions, structures, and internal organizational processes. Focusing on the single element of "purpose" or "breadth of purpose" does not warrant a conceptual distinction.
Regarding organizational processes, Barbash (1967) asserts that a paucity of studies exists about the internal workings of unions. Schneider (1957), Tannenbaum (1965), and Edelstein (1975) suggest, however, that unions are formal organizations characterized by many of the same structural features as other voluntary organizations. Tannenbaum (1965) claims that "democracy is among the most prominent issues in the literature concerning the internal processes of unions" (p. 743). Numerous studies, including Lipset et al. (1956), Edelstein (1975), and Handelman (1977), for example, have focused on the oligarchy-democracy continuum in unions. This may be due to the public visibility of democratic norms in labor unions (Lipset, et al., 1956).

Of particular analytical interest here is conflict and crisis behavior in unions. Makofsky (1978) notes that "unions are a special case among voluntary associations. They are conflict groups . . . " (p. 57). Fisher and McConnell (1954) highlight intraunion conflict occurring between seniority groups, ages, work locations, crafts, the employed and the unemployed, and between leaders and members. Unions are also organizations which frequently face crisis. Of the origins of union crisis, Lipset (1960) writes:

It is impossible to list all the sources of crisis which may upset a union's stability, but some of the more important are: the [leadership] succession crisis . . . ; shifts in the business cycle . . . ; strikes or lockouts, especially prolonged and defeated ones; . . . changes in legislation . . . ; jurisdictional rivalry with another union (p. 230).

Unlike other voluntary organizations, strikes as a type of crisis are uniquely the domain of the labor union, and as such comprise
a distinctive crisis category. While strikes have been variously defined as:

A special type of protest movement . . . a collective action by a group to express their discontent and/or to promote or resist change (Lammers, 1969, p. 559),

or,

The concerted and temporary suspension of function, designed to exert pressure upon others within the same social unit (Hiller, 1928, p. 12),

there is the suggestion by Gouldner (1954) and reiterated by Batstone (1978) that conceptions may vary with the observer.

A variety of conditions are posited to facilitate the occurrence of strike crises. Batstone (1978) points to the nature of the bargaining relationship, the degree of collective social organization of work, and the technical arrangement of work affecting the distribution of power. Cole (1969), examining conditions antecedent to the 1961 New York teachers' strike, identifies: (1) dissatisfaction due to perceptions of relative deprivation; (2) the channeling of dissatisfaction into an action movement through the use of ideology and leadership; (3) the latent predisposition on the part of the rank and file to accept militant social action; and, (4) the absence of effective social control exercised by the employing organization. Bairstow (1973), summarizing research on professional unions, suggests that strikes occur: (1) in new bargaining relationships; (2) when unions are having internal democratic problems; (3) as a consequence of strategic mistakes; (4) due to ideological commitment to strikes as tactics; and, (5) within climates of rising expectations. Gouldner (1954) attributed a "wildcat strike" to management violations
of the plant social system's "indulgency pattern." Suffice it to say that strikes or near-strikes (Batstone, 1978), regardless of antecedent conditions, are profound events for voluntary labor organizations.

PART B

The Social Psychological Research on Organizational Conflict, Crisis, and Disaster

Three areas of the social psychological literature on organizations are examined as sources of theoretical models and explanatory concepts for understanding the source of crises and crisis related behavior. These areas include the literature on social conflict within and between social units (groups and organizations), on organizational and/or group crisis, and on community or organizational disasters.

Intuitively, one would suspect some conceptual relationships among these phenomena. However, despite frequent references to conflict, crisis, and disaster, particularly within the broad conflict and/or disaster literature, all three terms appear to be treated as unique processes or events, with the emphasis clearly on conflict and disaster. The drama of both appear to have overshadowed concern, in a research sense, for more mundane kinds of crisis events.

The distinction between the three may be unfounded. As Robinson (1972) points out:

Any appraisal of the current state of crisis concepts and theories would be incomplete without reference to the related terms stress, conflict, tension, panic, catastrophe, and disaster (p. 25).
Despite wide variation in definitions proffered for each term, there appear to be adequate definitional and contextual similarities in all three to link them together using the concept "collective stress situations" (Barton, 1969). All three terms are characterized by varying degrees of social system disruption and unstable internal states brought about by environmental changes or by internal social disorganization. Further, all three can be conceived either as antecedents or as consequences of each other, yet as distinctive events or processes. Arrangement of the three terms into propositional combinations of the stochastic form (Zetterberg, 1965) leads to a suggestion of an interdependent relationship, depicted graphically as follows:

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Figure 1. The Relationship Among Stress, Conflict, Crisis, and Disaster
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This manner of relating conflict, crisis, and disaster has particular importance in the present study, for these terms were used frequently
by participants and observers to describe the events under study. Stated another way, the situation examined in the research was defined by its participants and its observers in conflict, crisis and even disaster terms. Accordingly, an examination of prior research conducted in these areas structures this portion of the literature review.

Conflict

Luce and Raiffa (1957) have delightfully observed that throughout history "possibly only the topics of God, love, and inner struggle have reached comparable attention" (p. 1). The extent of this attention is as specialized as it is vast. Particularly within the past one hundred years, the study of conflict has focused on a number of specific social relationships, including but not limited to: (1) intrapersonal and interpersonal relations (e.g., Miller and Dollard, 1941); (2) intergroup relations (e.g., North, Koch, and Zinnes, 1960); (3) economic, political, and social class relations (e.g., Dahrendorf, 1958); (4) organizational (e.g., Kahn and Boulding, 1964) and industrial labor-management relations (e.g., Dubin, 1957; Walton and McKersie, 1965); and, (5) international relations and peace research (e.g., Withey and Kahn, 1965; Holsti, 1972).

These foci and others, according to Kriesberg (1972), have had two general evaluative orientations: (1) that conflict is inevitable, necessary and desirable; and, (2) that conflict is generally preventable, although when it occurs, it is disruptive, undesirable, and to be avoided. This dichotomy has evolved historically within social science thinking in the manner of a pendulum, with the initial position being reflected in the early writings of Simmel (1903) and
Carver (1908). The latter position appeared somewhat later, endorsed by the Human Relations school of administrative thought. More recently, however, a number of writers, including Coser (1956) and Thomas (1976), have again taken Simmel's original, conflict-as-constructive position, if not an even more balanced, situational approach incorporating both positions.

These evaluative orientations have had a decided impact on the empirical research and theoretical development on conflict in organizational settings. One direction research has taken has been to concentrate on the functions of conflict, particularly its dysfunctions. Identifying varied sources of conflict within and between organizations, research attempted to suggest ways in which conflict might either be "managed" or "resolved." A second direction, somewhat lesser in scope, has sought to assess the positive consequences of conflict in terms of relating conflict levels to group and organizational productivity. A third direction, assuming less of an advocacy position, has examined conflict without regard for its consequences to system participants, and has suggested that conflict exists simply as an empirical social phenomenon present in all social systems. This examination has been dominated by a wide range of scholarly concerns, several of which are of importance for the present study.

One concern has involved attempts to develop a clear conceptual definition of the term "conflict." Fink (1968) in an exhaustive review of the literature to that time points out, in Converse's words (1967), "the conceptual and terminological complexities of conflict theory" (p. 472). Fink's basic contention is
that complexities arise out of: (1) the widespread use of supposed synonyms such as "competition," "disputes," "quarrels," "tensions," "disagreements," etc. each with particularistic referents for respective writers; (2) ongoing arguments about several underlying assumptions about the nature of conflict, i.e., conflict as a state of affairs or as an interaction process, and whether or not conflict theory should include psychological/motivational determinants (motivation-centered theory) or overt behavior determinants (action-centered theory); and, (3) circular discussions about whether or not to proceed with efforts toward the generation of special or general conflict theories. What Fink has contended may be suggestive of the state of paradigm development in the field of conflict research. Pondy (1967), pulling many of these disparate arguments together, concisely summarizes the four general usages of the term:

The term conflict has been used at one time or another in the literature to describe (1) antecedent conditions (for example, scarcity of resources, policy differences) of conflictual behavior, (2) affective states (e.g., stress, tension, hostility, anxiety, etc.) of the individuals involved, (3) cognitive states of individuals, i.e., their perception or awareness of conflictual situations, and (4) conflictual behavior ranging from passive resistance to overt aggression (p. 298).

Usages (1) and (4) suggest conditions not infrequent in labor-management relations—conditions characterized by fixed sum competition, which, due to inherent philosophical and practical differences, eventually evolve into conflict situations. While an all-inclusive definition incorporating antecedent conditions and concommitant conflictual behavior is not apparent in the literature, a recent definition (Katz and Kahn, 1978) is helpful: "Two systems
(persons, groups, organizations, nations) are in conflict when they interact directly in such a way that the actions of one tend to prevent or compel some outcome against the resistance of the other" (p. 613).

A second concern has been the development of taxonomies for the classification of conflict behavior. Classification attempts have been made on the basis of numerous variables, including causes and effects, parties involved, contexts, levels, and domains. Fink's review (1968) is again exhaustive, concluding that attempts have in general not been productive in terms of adequately partitioning conflict variables to the extent necessary for use in the generation of special or general conflict theories.

Despite the absence of satisfactory taxonomies, the generation of special and general theories has proceeded with widespread interest, and as such, comprises a third concern in conflict research. While the development of special theories aimed at offering explanations of, for example, religious, ethnic and racial, and community conflicts has comprised the major theoretical thrust in the conflict literature, a number of efforts have also been made at developing general theory encompassing all variables in all situations. Both levels of theory have come under criticism in terms of explanatory adequacy, and a predominate theoretical concern has been how the research is to proceed--from special to general or from general to special. It was not long ago (1957) that general theory appeared promising, and investigators were optimistically exclaiming that "It is not too much to claim that out of the contributions of many fields a general theory
of conflict is emerging" (The Journal of Conflict Resolution, p. 2).
This optimism has been tempered although a number of general theories
have been advanced (March and Simon, 1958; Boulding, 1962; Pondy, 1967;
These general theories, as well as special theory in the substantive
areas of labor-management and international relations, are of particular
interest in the present study to the degree that they are suggestive
of crisis occurrence and descriptive of conflictual settings.

A related concern, both methodological and substantive, has
involved the application of mathematics ("game theory" [Von Neumann and
Morgenstern, 1947] and more recently, "catastrophe theory")
to the study of conflict phenomena. Primarily applied within the
social sciences by emergent fields such as "mathematical sociology"
and "social physics" (Rapoport, 1960), game theoretic approaches
utilize experimental designs involving bargaining (zero-sum; variable-
sum; mixed-motive; n-person games) and/or computer simulations to
investigate the interpersonal and environmental parameters of conflict
situations. Deutsch and Krauss' (1960) the Prisoner's Dilemma simu-
lation, and Richardson's mathematical model of an imaginary inter-
national disarmament race (1939) are typical of this approach.

Critics of game theory applications to conflict research have
raised several points, which, although distractive from the overall
utility of the approach, are of legitimate concern to the student
of crisis: (1) the necessary assumptions underlying game theory--the
existence of completely rational players, possessing complete knowledge
of well-specified outcome possibilities and opponent preferences--cannot
be met by participants within either laboratory or real world situations (Schelling, 1960); (2) the ability of the investigator to assign numerical values to player preferences, thereby representing subjective preferences quantitatively as objective utility functions, is questionable; (3) given the rudimentary state of conflict theory and the irrational elements of human nature, the ability of either the investigator or the participants to comprehensively anticipate and rationally account for all variables in even the most simple and/or controlled of situations, is also questionable; and (4) seldom is the condition of pure conflict (complete conflict of interest), a situation often structured into gaming payoff matrices, found in real world conflict situations; more frequently, the more familiar forms of conflict--limited war, deterrence, negotiations, and strikes--are premised on a condition of mutual dependence of parties (Schelling, 1960).

Luce and Raiffa (1957) also note that real world applications are severely limited by continuously changing situational parameters, including variable "strategy sets" employed by participants, and by the inability of controlled designs to account for time variations. Beyond these technical considerations, Schelling (1960) in particular raises ethical and moral questions about both investigator and participant behavior in experimental conflict research.

Despite these criticisms, game theoretic approaches have enabled theoreticians and experimenters to accomplish several tasks, and in doing so, have made contributions to the general study of conflict. Rapoport (1960) points to two of the more important contributions:
At present game theory has, in my opinion, two important uses, neither of them related to games nor to conflict directly. First, game theory stimulates us to think about conflict in a novel way [heuristic value]. Second, game theory leads to some genuine impasses, that is, to situations where its axiomatic base is shown to be insufficient for dealing even theoretically with certain types of conflict situations [the generation of anomalies] . . . . They [investigators] must therefore look around for other frameworks into which conflict situations can be cast (p. 242).

What, then, has been the contribution of thinking and research emanating from these concerns to a study of organizational crisis? There appear to be several.

At a conceptual level, organizational conflict research has advanced a number of terms which are provocative in a heuristic sense and insightful in their depth of understanding about conflict settings. While generally not linked together in propositional form, these concepts are useful referents in an exploratory study involving crisis in a conflict setting.

March and Simon (1958) describe conflict settings as essentially decision situations characterized by a high degree of "subjective uncertainty" (p. 119). These are situations where individuals-groups-organizations face the dilemma of sorting through potentially unacceptable, incomparable, or uncertain alternatives to reach decisions. Moreover, March and Simon suggest that past experience in decision situations, goal variation (homogeneity or heterogeneity), and organizational information processing are all factors which particularly affect intergroup conflict.

Walton and McKersie (1965) additionally submit that these decision settings contain mixed collaborative and conflictual agendas,
that is, agendas where some items are fixed sum "issues" and others that are variable sum "problems." In working through these agendas, Walton and McKersie have contended "party" and "opponent" use one or more social bargaining subprocesses: (1) distributive bargaining—"a joint decision making activity with inherent conflicts of interest and personal share maximization as the primary goal; (2) integrative bargaining—"parties attempt to increase size of joint gain without respect to the division of the payoffs" (p. 11); (3) attitudinal bargaining—"attempts made by either party to maintain or to reorient favorable attitudes toward each other; and (4) intraorganizational bargaining—the resolution of intragroup and interpersonal goal differences within an organization. Of these subprocesses, Walton and McKersie note that distributive bargaining comprises "the dominant activity in union-management relations" (p. 11).

In addition to his more encompassing theoretical contributions, Thomas (1976) offers several concepts which describe various aspects of conflict processes and styles. Following an examination of previous theoretical work, Thomas concludes that conflict occurs in the form of a series of cyclical episodes within a context of subjective and objective realities perceived by the participants. Within these multiple realities, certain events or behaviors have a "triggering" effect on future behavior. There is the suspicion that these triggering effects may be an artifact of conflict style. Reviewing Berkowitz (1962) (conflict response hierarchies) and Blake and Mouton (1964) (dominant response styles), Thomas gathers that parties to conflict have both dominant and backup conflict styles. One may speculate that this is also true of organizations.
The theme of conflict styles has appeared elsewhere in the literature. In addition to mention of escalation and de-escalation processes, Kriesberg (1973) discusses conflict modes as the ways social units carry out conflict. Rapoport (1960) uses a similar concept to describe methods employed in fights, games, and debates. Pondy (1967) asserts that how conflict is managed is somehow routinized into predictable patterns. Shepard (1964), using the term conflict rituals, described this type of routinization, while Boulding (1964) warns that these rituals may become conflict traps—patterned ways in which new problems fall. Finally, Katz and Kahn (1978) conjecture that these modes, rituals, and patterns may be a function of organizational structure, that there indeed may be conflict-prone organizational structures which are conflict oriented by design and by ideology. Given the typical goals and power positions of formal, mutual benefit organizations such as labor unions and professional organizations, one may infer that they, too, are of this type.

In addition to the contribution of conceptual renderings of conflict settings and styles, the literature has documented organizational conflict effects and responses. The most recent enumeration is by Katz and Kahn (1978) including: (1) the closing of member ranks around a position or a leader; (2) increased unity of organizational purpose; (3) the strengthening of existing organizational hierarchy and leadership; (4) the simplification of cognitive processes, often casting parties to conflict in a "we-they" dichotomy; (5) the reduction of intraorganizational communication; (6) the proliferation of conflict agendas beyond initial issues; (7) the adoption of an attitude of
"autistic hostility" (Newcomb, 1947) through the reduction of inter-organizational communication; (8) the influence of strong situational factors which tend to eliminate pre-existing personality differences within the organization; (9) the creation of the self-fulfilling prophecy phenomenon; and, (10) game theory terminology, i.e., the structuring of the situation most frequently as "win-lose" (zero sum), where "the aim of winning becomes the goal itself" (p. 634).

Shepard (1964) describes additional responses:

The possible responses of a group (or individual) to conflict range from suppression and total war, to limited war and bargaining, to problem solving (p. 127).

Shepard specifically points to changes in norms with the regression from belief in egalitarian relations accompanied by increased perceptions of injustice. Within the context of these norm changes, reports Shepard, is the sharpened image of group uniqueness through a reduced sense of common interests with one's adversary. "Loser" behavior is also described, including: (1) the denial of the reality of losing and attempts at rationalizing defeat; (2) an increasing concern for how to win next time; (3) the beginnings of group fragmentation into individual isolates, dyads, and subgroups; (4) the occurrence of scapegoating—resting responsibility for apparent defeat or loss within the group membership; (5) the presence of abundant rumor; (6) the loss of group attraction, followed by member departure and increased insecurity on the part of those who stay; (7) the increase of internal group bureaucracy in an attempt to deal with uncertainty; and (8) the decline of the capacity to positively respond to problems. In essence, by unwittingly projecting a defeated
self-image, the group, concludes Shepard, "is in a vicious downward cycle" (p. 136), reversible only by the active intervention of outsiders.

Coser (1956) parallels some of Shepard's findings. Increased group uniqueness (Shepard's term) is called "better group definition" by Coser, and is deemed an outcome of heightened boundary definition and increased group consciousness during conflict. Coser further suggests that conflict effects or responses are dependent upon the antecedent organizational or group condition of member consensus, for pre-conflict consensus is followed, after conflict activity, by greater group cohesion. However, if, as Coser observes, cleavages over major goal activities exist prior to conflict occurrences, then one of the effects of conflict will be to further widen existing cleavages, to make the initial lack of member solidarity more pronounced, and to even bring about group disintegration. In addition, Coser notes that during conflict conditions, groups are unlikely to tolerate high degrees of member dissent and can be expected normatively to cause the voluntary or forced withdrawal of internal dissidents.

A corollary to the presence of low toleration is the search, both externally and internally, for "enemies". Coser claims, as have Katz and Kahn, that in the group's search for and description of enemies, a fascinating yet potentially destructive phenomenon takes place:

Moreover, provoking the enemy by proclaiming his "dangerous intentions" may have the effect of a self-fulfilling prophecy: the enemy will respond and in this way actually become as dangerous to the group as it accused him of being in the first place (p. 105-106).
Speaking of organizational responses, March and Simon (1958) speculate that organizations typically use four decision methods in reacting to conflict. These methods are problem solving, persuasion, bargaining, and "politics." The selection of a method varies with the presence or absence of goal consensus and solution alternatives inherent in the situation.

A third and final contribution of the literature to the study of crisis is based on an assumption that conflict theory, through various schemes, can contribute to the identification of crisis points, origins, and processes embedded in conflict situations. Elsewhere it was observed that the term crisis frequently appears in the general conflict literature, not, however, as an explanatory concept linked systematically to other conflict concepts. One might legitimately surmise from the frequency of the conflict-crisis association in the literature that crisis as a concept should justifiably have analytic utility in understanding conflict phenomena. A strictly deductive determination of what that utility might be from conflict theory per se is questionable, for conflict theory at present is not predictive (in the direct sense of the word) of crisis occurrence. The more tenable approach may be to inductively speculate about conflict theory using other findings from the research.

A parsimonious way of applying this approach is to view the theoretical literature as Thomas (1976) suggests as presenting two general conflict perspectives: conflict as a dynamic process, or, conflict as a set of environmental and structural conditions. A variety of general conflict theories may be grouped and examined
accordingly. Thomas' (1976) process and structural models serve as prototypes.

Regarding the origins of crisis in these models, three major points arise out of analysis. Point One: using Thomas' process model (See Figure 2.) as an illustration, crisis conceptually may be conceived of as a set of conditions antecedent to the frustration step in a conflict episode. Miller and Iscoe (1963), in a review of the sociological and psychological literature on crisis phenomena, make this suggestion, reporting frustration as a consequence of crisis in a range of clinical studies. Point Two: there obviously exists a good deal of literature pointing to the importance of perception in the definition of social relationships. Broadly speaking, the total of individual or organizational perception may be thought to comprise

![Diagram](image)

Figure 2. Process Model of Dyadic Conflict Episodes (Thomas, 1976)
the sum of "subjective reality." Thomas (1976) reports Allport as stating, "The way a man defines his situation constitutes for him its reality" (p. 986). That is, individuals and/or organizations may, through perception, define situations in such a way as to create their own reality. Additionally, there is evidence (Mulder, et al., 1971) suggesting that crises, too, are similarly "created," emerging not so much from structural conditions surrounding crisis situations but as an artifact of subjective perception. Stallings (1973), in a comparative analysis of the crisis management process, gives an urban example:

Looking back on the decade of the sixties, one can easily suggest that this period launched the Era of the Urban Crisis. Not that social conditions existing in American cities . . . were new or even much different from those in preceding decades. Rather, what had previously been thought of as "problems" came to be labeled "crises" (p. 312).

Stallings goes on to suggest that this alteration was "not merely semantic," but indicative of other changes which a process theory of conflict would predict as changes in perception, or, in Thomas' terms, conceptualization.

A third and final point arises out of Stallings' (1973) distinction between crises and situational conditions:

The important point is that these events or conditions are not themselves crises but rather conditions seen as threats to accepted patterns of relationships among members of a social system or between the system as a whole and its environment (p. 313).

Events or conditions, suggests Stallings, are necessary but not sufficient in and of themselves for triggering crises. The critical element which must be present in given sets of conditions is the perceived presence of threat--potential disruption--to a social
structure at any level. As Stallings goes on to observe:

Theoretically, any event or condition has such potential, but the probability of crisis generation differs widely (p. 313).

Accurate prediction of crisis probability would entail the difficult task of assessing threat potential--difficult, for, as with other perceptual phenomena, threat varies "in the eye of the beholder."

Given wide variation in the crisis potential of any set of events or conditions, it can be concluded that structural conflict theory, including those proffered by March and Simon (1958), Megginson and Gullett (1971), and Thomas (1976), are sufficiently imprecise in their identification of relevant structural variables as to be of limited use in understanding the origins of crisis.

In summary, conflict theory offers a range of theoretical and conceptual explanations of conflict among social units. These explanations are useful to the extent that they explain and allow one to predict the structural conditions and the dynamic processes involved in conflict behavior. However, the incorporation of the concept of crisis has been absent from such explanations, nor are the explanations themselves useful in any more than a heuristic sense in the explicit understanding of crisis phenomena.

Disasters

Disasters have been the subject of intensely human and scientific interest. Much of the human interest has stemmed from the dramatic, almost captivating qualities of disasters, for in their captivation these events often convey symbolic meanings far beyond the actual impact of the events themselves. These meanings
are popularly reported as the subjects of folk ballads and fireside chatter (Barton, 1969). Within the social sciences, however, the topic of disaster has rapidly become a vehicle, a unique laboratory, for the scientific study of human behavior during and after stress, of broad systemic change, and--for the present study--of organizational crisis.

Attempts at conceptualizing these events have met with varied success. Quarantelli and Dynes (1970) note that disaster has evolved as a "sponge" concept, with four general meanings: (1) as an agent of destruction, e.g., a fire, an earthquake, a volcanic eruption, etc.; (2) as the physical impact of an agent, e.g., loss of life, structural destruction; (3) as a descriptive evaluation, e.g., a "disasterous" situation; and, (4) as a description of the social disruption created by the physical event, e.g., social disorganization (p. 328). Relating these kinds of events to other phenomena, Barton (1969) terms disasters as "part of the larger category of collective stress situations" (p. 38), including conflicts and crises of other types. The breadth of this conception suggests that a disaster, because of the inherent human element, can be conceived as a social situation possessing elements of patterned personal, group, and organizational behavior amenable to analysis.

Several distinctive features characterize the parameters surrounding these patterns. One is the general compression of time and social processes. Unlike other types of stress situations, excepting crisis events, disasters generally occur unexpectedly within relatively compressed time periods, and as such considerably
alter the decision parameters and social forces operant in normal situations. A second feature highlights varying degrees of environmental and social system disruption. At the extreme are death and destruction; to a lesser degree the endangered sense of integrity and continuity of social organization at all levels. Finally, as stated earlier, disasters have a symbolic character less prominent in other stress situations. Whether in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, or in successive post-disaster periods, participants attach a good deal of symbolic meaning to these events, often more so than to other eventful situations in their lives. This ascription frequently adds imagery and metaphor to the language, as well as major markers or referents within individual, group, and organizational histories.

Inspection of actual disasters has proceeded along several lines of inquiry. Early efforts by the Disaster Research Center (Ohio State University) and its forerunner, the Disaster Research Group of the National Science Foundation, have attempted to: (1) assess individual and organizational responses to disaster situations; (2) examine the incidence of mass behavior (convergence upon the disaster area); and, (3) suggest technical and policy considerations for civic and service organization planners. Contemporary research efforts have been broadened to multi-disciplinary, multi-method approaches emphasizing systems perspectives to these phenomena.

A variety of findings have emerged from these approaches. Fritz (1961) suggests that disasters vary on a number of dimensions, including predictability, probability, controllability, causal agent,
speed of onset, scope, and destructive effects. While disaster research has primarily concentrated on the unanticipated, destructive events of physical agent origin ("instantaneous-focalized disaster"), the typology Barton has constructed suggests that anticipated, less destructive events of other origins ("progressive-diffused disaster") also fall within the concept (Brouillette, 1970; Adams, 1970). The latter may include large-scale riots, mutinies, demonstrations, and strikes.

That disasters progress through a developmental process or "natural history" has been a second major research finding. Several sequences have been suggested. Fritz (1961), summarizing a variety of field studies, claims that a disaster sequence is comprised of: (1) an initial steady-state period; (2) a warning period of varying duration; (3) a short, overt threat period of impending disruption; (4) an impact period in which the causal agent enters the immediate environment; (5) an immediate post-impact period of recovery; and, (6) a longer range adaptive period of change and recuperation. More recently, Turner's (1976) study of conditions leading to the failure of organizational foresight preceding three disaster situations, identifies another sequence: Stage 1 - the starting period when established cultural beliefs and values exist about the likelihood of disaster and the availability of precautionary measures; Stage 2 - an incubation period when a series of apparently discrete events happen and go unnoticed (are either unknown or are less than fully understood); Stage 3 - the occurrence of the precipitating event; Stage 4 - the onset of awareness that a failure of foresight has
occurred; Stage 5 - the start of rescue and salvage attempts; and,
Stage 6 - full cultural readjustment to new beliefs and norms evolving
out of the precipitating event.

Turner's analysis goes beyond the notion of sequence.
Contending that a sequential process evolves in the course of organi-
izations facing uncertainty, Turner speculates that organizations in
their approach to "ill-structured problems" (typical of uncertain
circumstances), rely on habitual patterns and rules of thumb in order
to make such problems more manageable, and, therefore, the uncertain
more certain. Turner suggests that these patterns break down
primarily during Stage 2--the incubation period. Here the events
which are likely to happen can be conceived of, in general systems
terminology, as "system coding" (Katz and Kahn, 1978). According to
Turner, these coding processes are thought to include: (1) inhibition
of accurate perception through the development over time of a struc-
tured set of organizational beliefs and practices, which, in Simon's
terms (1957) comprises the organization's "bounded rationality";
(2) attention to "decoy" problems to the disregard of other salient
considerations; (3) reliance on stereotypical assumptions about the
nature of existing problem areas; (4) disregard of the often quite
accurate observations of other, non-members; (5) overload of information;
(6) failure of compliance with existing information processing regu-
lations; and, (7) underestimation or undervaluing of danger implicit
in the available information. Such coding processes create conditions
whereby disaster events which may have been preventable persist
through an observable sequence to the eventual demise of the
organization.
In addition to conceptualizing sequential crisis processes, considerable research effort has been devoted to determining the responses of individuals and organizations to disaster events. It is well to remember that in light of the depiction of disaster sequences, such responses are dependent upon the crisis phase or stage. Moreover, one should note that, by and large, these findings were arrived at atheoretically. Wolfenstein's (1957) and Withey's (1962) examination of the psychology of individual responses to disaster, are exceptions to this generalization.

The research results regarding individual and small group disaster responses contradict widely held stereotypes of human disaster behavior. Quarantelli and Dynes (1970) observe that these stereotypes often include: (1) the presence of personal and social chaos; (2) the existence of an interpersonal "jungle" where people selfishly pursue self-interest to the exclusion of assistance to others; (3) rampant panic, generalized aggression, and hostility; and, (4) the presence of the well-known "disaster syndrome"--a psychological condition of personal docility and passiveness.

Research, however, demonstrates that actual behavior contradicts popular conceptions. Following a brief period of initial shock, disaster participants are reported to adapt quickly to the newly-created adverse conditions in which they find themselves. Panic is particularly infrequent; when it does occur, it is typically limited in scale. The disaster situation is frequently orderly at an individual level, and constructive individual actions are soon undertaken within the normative structures existent in "predisaster social networks."
Fritz (1961) has also observed that collectivities of individuals quickly assume an almost primary group solidarity despite the disorganization of secondary groups (including formal organizations) under excessive stress demands. Additionally, both social class lines and community norms are temporarily relaxed, new frames of reference are adopted, and systemic changes—previously improbable—now appear possible. Concomitantly, there appears to be an immediate and widespread interest in the disaster phenomenon itself by people outside the disaster area.

Barton (1962, 1969) surmises that the predisaster social networks Quarantelli and Dynes have referred to are complemented by the appearance of an adaptive "emergency social system." Encompassing individuals, informal and formal groups, and formal organizations, this community-wide emergency system emerges to assume temporarily the resource allocation and system/individual integration functions normally performed by existing social networks. Of particular interest are the responses of organizations considered within the broad framework formulated by Barton and others.

A variety of organizations routinely respond to disasters. Research on these organizations is largely descriptive, and has primarily concentrated on organizations characterized by disaster response as a major organizational goal, by the presence of special subunits deliberately designed to deal with disasters, and by an ongoing state of disaster preparedness. The Red Cross and the Salvation Army are typical subjects of this focus. Another concentration has examined public service organizations such as police and fire
departments, rescue units, civil defense agencies, voluntary fire units, and to a lesser extent, the military. Paralleling in many respects the aforementioned special disaster agencies, the public organizations seldom have, however, disaster response as a major goal activity.

The variety of pertinent findings emerging from research on both types of organizations are again primarily atheoretical. Many can be grouped into the general category of changes in administrative functions of the sort described by Fayol (1916). Yutzy (1970), for example, observes that in disaster situations, organizations are faced with: (1) increased service requirements; (2) reduced capability to perform routine functions; and, (3) a shift in organizational goal priorities to that of restoration and maintenance of public services, morale, and order. Warheit (1970), examining fire department operations, contends that organizations face a series of additional administrative problems including altered routines, the cessation of some subunit operations, and an increase in the frequency of supraorganizational relations. Quarantelli (1970), investigating the post-disaster responses of a community hospital, observes that administrative functions such as resource mobilization, information processing, division of labor, and decision making occur as part of the larger disaster planning and recovery process. In general, these and other writers suggest that typically there is an increase in specific administrative functions during disasters.

Accompanying the increase in specific functions are a number of related organizational problems. In a study of hospital responses
to a tornado, Stallings (1968) found major intraorganizational conflicts. The primary conflict derived from competing principles of hospital organization—bureaucratic/employee and professional. This conflict was reflected in stress during the post-disaster period on the hospital authority structure, on priorities in goal accomplishment, and on role relations (professional versus employee).

The authority problem Stallings mentions has additional origins, according to Parr (1970). Reviewing eleven community crises for evidence of factors leading to group emergence, Parr found that leaders frequently do not assume the extent of leadership they should during disasters, resulting in a perceived ambiguity of authority. Although Parr did not elaborate on extent of leadership, one suspects he and the case study respondents were referring to the absence of a specific type of leader behavior.

Ambiguity of authority may be further enhanced by another condition Adams (1970) describes as being typical of voluntary (non-paramilitary) organizations with national, area/regional, and local divisions, such as the Red Cross. Despite a rhetorical emphasis on volunteer authority and participation at both the policy and operational levels, there exist inherent latent role conflicts between voluntary and professional staff members. One source of role conflict, notes Adams, is between two latent social identities—"cosmopolitan" and "local". To use Gouldner's analysis, the professional and volunteer staffs reflect differing commitments to the Red Cross organization, to professional skills, and to different reference groups.
Finally, beyond the occurrence of organizational problems, research has speculated about the emergence of new organizational structures during post-disaster periods. Drabek (1970), pursuing the investigation of organizational responses, conjectures that one typically finds in disaster situations the development of "synthetic organizations." These structures are temporary in duration and are designed to deal with the extraordinary service delivery problems associated with the post-disaster period. Such structures differ from the norm and are based on peak load service demands characteristic of disasters as an "expected condition" (Barton, 1969). Frequently, synthetic organizations simply coalesce about informal work groups and/or new combinations of formal organizations thrown together by the demands of the moment. There is the further implication that leadership task allocation and other situational requirements emerge in such arrangements out of a sense of convenience and urgency. Further, conventional principles of organization (often bureaucratic) may be temporarily suspended.

In summary, the contribution of the disaster literature to an understanding of organizational behavior in collective stress situations is uneven. A variety of useful concepts have been advanced, including the suggestion of a developmental process of related events through which disasters progress. However, these concepts are generally discussed in isolation without substantial attempts to organize them into more powerful propositional formats. Frequently when such attempts are made they take the form of flow charts depicting suggested sequences of administrative functions.
within "crisis-relevant organizations" (Kreps, 1973). However, the research does not address itself to organizations for whom disaster is not a customary expectation. Therefore, beyond describing the flow of probable factors comprising disaster situations, the explanatory ability of these concepts is somewhat limited.

Crisis

The study of crisis phenomena has paralleled in substance and in method much of the investigation of conflict and disaster, and as such, is frequently considered to be a special case of both. Research methods, often similar to those employed in disaster studies, have been primarily limited to the "detailed case history of a single crisis" (Hermann, 1972, p. 4), with a pressing concern for theory-oriented case studies and multiple case study comparison. This approach has found its greatest usage in two substantive areas: international relations and foreign affairs; and the sociology and psychology of individuals, families, and small groups under stress conditions. Additionally, direct applications, primarily of findings from the latter areas, have more recently been made by applied researchers and consultants in organizational development activities.

The dominant research issues in the field reflect the expected concerns of a small but growing research interest in the phenomenon. One primary concern has been definitional. Decision making orientations and a systems orientation prevail in international relations thinking, while social systems perspectives abound elsewhere. Several definitions are illustrative:
A situation which (1) threatens high priority goals of
decision making units, (2) restricts amount of time available
for response before the decision is transformed and (3) sur-
prises the members of the decision making unit by its
occurrence (Hermann, 1972, p. 13)

Crisis refers to situations which have important implications
for the stability for some pattern of interaction system
or subsystem . . . (Young, reported in Hermann, 1972, p. 8)

An international crisis is a set of rapidly unfolding events
which raises the impact of destabilizing forces in the
. . . system or any of its subsystems substantially above
normal levels and increases the likelihood of violence
occurring in the system (Young, 1967, p. 10).

The term is simply a label applied to certain types of
social situations. It signifies that existing ways of
doing things, existing patterns of social organization
are no longer accepted as appropriate. There is the
further implication that new guidelines for social
action must be worked out (Stallings, 1973, p. 15).

A human system is assumed to be in a state of crisis
when its repertoire of coping responses is not adequate to
bring about the resolution of a problem which poses a
threat to the system (Fink, Beak and Taddeo, 1971, p. 15).

Examining the same concern from another perspective, Robinson
(1972) points to the presence of substantive and procedural definitions.
Substantive definitions of crisis, writes Robinson, identify the
structure of a crisis event or the surrounding contextual elements,
while procedural definitions point out stress elements. In the
procedural vein, for example, Weiner and Kahn (1962) suggest twelve
generic dimensions to crisis:

1. a turning point in an unfolding sequence of events and
   actions;

2. the presence of high requirements for action in minds
   of participants;

3. a threat to goals and objectives;

4. important outcomes whose consequences and effects will
   shape the future of the parties to the crisis;
5. a convergence of events whose combination produces a new set of circumstances;

6. a period of uncertainty about assessment of the situation, and alternatives for dealing with it;

7. a period when control over events and their effects decreases;

8. a sense of urgency, creating stress and anxiety among actors;

9. circumstances when information is unusually inadequate;

10. unusually increased time pressures;

11. marked changes in relations among participants; and,

12. increased tensions among actors.

From these and numerous other definitions, Robinson critically concludes that existing definitions are either extraordinarily specific or are overly broad to the point of being indiscriminate.

A second concern envisions the need to extend the prevailing empirical and conceptual efforts. Of the current state of theory, Robinson (1972) "found little evidence that crisis plays a significant part in any existing formal theory" (p. 18). Continuing, he states:

There is no such thing as a theory of crisis or even theories of crisis. We have, however, the beginnings of theorizing about the phenomenon. Not only is crisis theory barren, but other social theories [i.e., conflict] rarely accommodate crisis (p. 27).

A final concern is methodological. Although the prevailing mode of analysis has been the case study, there is increasing use of non-linear political gaming simulations of the RAND-type (Hermann, 1972). Moving the study of crisis from the arena of international affairs into the laboratory, these techniques attempt to quantify and systematically vary selected crisis features including
expenditure, communication, and affective variables (Schwartz, 1972; Holsti, 1972). Unlike similar concerns in other disciplines, the concern for methodology utilized in the study of crisis has proceeded without the sharp conflict over the viability of either approach.

Amid these primary concerns, a substantial number of research findings using psychological and organizational (nation-state) levels of analysis have been generated. A number of these have been aggregated and reported by Hermann (1972) as the final report of a series of discussions held in April, 1967, at Princeton University's Center for International Studies. These findings and others are reported herein in the following order: (1) conceptually isolated findings generated in the course of individual, small group, and organizational stress and crisis research; (2) relevant propositions originating from organizational research; and, (3) models constructed from lists of established propositions and from existing case studies.

Holsti (1972), preceding an examination of the Balkan (1914) and Cuban Missile (1962) crises, has succinctly reviewed the psychological evidence of the effects of stress on policy makers. Holsti speculates that the contribution of psychological research raises legitimate questions about "conventional wisdoms" concerning policy making behavior. In presenting the research, he contends that under normal conditions several abilities are necessary for effective decision making. These include the ability to:

1. identify major courses of action;
2. estimate the probable costs and gains of each alternative course;
3. resist premature cognitive closure;
4. distinguish between the possible and the probable;
5. assess the situation from the perspective of other parties;
6. discriminate between relevant and irrelevant information;
7. tolerate ambiguity;
8. resist premature action; and,
9. make adjustments to meet real changes in the situation (and as a corollary, to distinguish real from apparent changes) (Holsti, 1972, p. 10).

As one might suspect, research shows that the above abilities are influenced to varying degrees by crisis-induced stress. For example, while qualitatively, decision performance increases to a point under stress conditions, perceptual behavior is disrupted and is accompanied by a reduction in the breadth of perspective. Tolerance for ambiguity is also reduced as is concern for the long range consequences of alternative courses of action. This reduction is frequently accompanied by goal displacement, that is, subunit and organizational goals are often set aside in preference for the goals of the moment. Further, time is perceived to be severely compressed, and the perception of time replaces the reality of "clock-time."

A major alteration occurs in communication behavior. Customary communication channels become quickly overloaded, resulting in an impaired ability to discriminate between accurate and inaccurate, important and trivial, information. The search for information regarding alternative courses of action is reduced. Holsti reasons that:
Unpleasant information and that which does not support preferences and expectations is most likely to fall by the wayside, unless it is of such nature that it cannot be disregarded (p. 19).

A companion problem occurs in that overall communication increases—communication, however, whose content is of irregular quality. Stereotypical assessments are made in an attempt to manage the extended volume of communication, often resulting in increases in decision errors. Ad hoc information channels by-passing overloaded routine channels are observed to emerge. Holsti states in conclusion that:

\[\ldots\textit{crisis-induced stress gives rise to certain changes in perceptions of time, definition of alternatives and patterns of communication. These, in turn, may reduce the effectiveness of both decision-making processes and the consequent policy choices . . . (p. 22).}\]

In other research, Hermann (1972) suggests that crises have positive and negative effects on decision making. On the positive side, innovation and collaboration are promoted, while on the negative side, conservative behavior becomes more likely and non-rational affective behavior increases. Presenting similar findings, Robinson (1972) also contends that crisis occurrence will compel issues to be brought to the forefront of decision making attention, often in a manner that allows the bypassing of cumbersome, routine decision making procedures. Moreover, decisions are customarily more value-based rather than data-based.

Other researchers present additional findings. Miller and Iscoe (1963) assert that crisis creates inefficiency, frustration, and scapegoating. Paige (1972) observes that crisis decisions display an apparent lack of involvement by legislative bodies, and that
parties have an increased readiness to engage in expanded conflict. He makes the further observation that frequently, crisis decisions tend to be made by small, ad hoc decision units comprised of influentials enjoying the personal confidence of the chief executive—witness Kennedy's fifteen member "ExCOM" decision group during the Cuban Missile Crisis. In continuing, Paige tenders a series of organizational, informational, and normative propositions synthesized out of a multiple case study comparison. Hermann and Brady (1972) have incorporated these propositions into a broader organizational response model.

Several investigators, namely, Mulder, et al., 1971; Hamblin, 1958; and Harmon, 1971, have pursued the topic of leader behavior in crisis situations. Mulder and his colleagues examined communication systems and influence relations (leader styles) in naturalistic crisis situations within the Dutch Navy. Speculating that Bales' task-oriented and socio-emotional oriented leadership concepts were inadequate to explain leader behavior in crisis conditions, the authors surmise that a third factor might account for leader crisis behavior. Several study findings are significant: (1) leaders consult less in crisis and are more objective interest oriented; (2) in crisis, leaders are less socio-emotionally directed, less positive in relations, and make fewer attempts at integration; (3) expert power is enhanced and is a strong source of power during crisis; and, (4) "powerful leadership" coupled with expert power and individual prominence was found to be related to effective leader crisis behavior. Mulder, et al. conclude that:
In crisis situations, a clearer exercise of power is the more adequate form of leadership. In non-crisis situations, a more mild relation between leader and others is called for (p. 37).

Hamblin (1958) provides experimental evidence in support of two leadership hypotheses: (1) leaders have more influence in crisis periods than in non-crisis periods; and, (2) groups tend to replace older leaders with new if the old leader does not have an effective solution to crisis. Harmon (1971), using a participant observation methodology, investigated crisis communication in an emergency medical situation. The study led to the generation of five hypotheses including: (1) leader behavior during crisis tends to be autocratic; and, (2) the group will change leaders during crisis to an individual possessing greater expertise (expert power).

Regarding relationships of parties to crisis, Williams (1976) reports that crises comprise relationship "landmarks," and have a substantial effect not only on the images that the parties to crisis hold of each other but on the images others have of the parties. Additionally, Parad and Caplan (1960) observe that "the crisis situation awakens unresolved problems from both the near and distant past" (p. 196), suggesting that the crisis agenda may be cumulative beyond items leading to the precipitation of the immediate event.

A small body of conceptual work has sought to organize isolated research findings into a more coherent description and explanatory framework. At an organizational level, the work of Fink, Beak, and Taddeo (1971) is illustrative. Extrapolating from an individual crisis model developed in a clinical setting (Fink, 1967), the authors attempt to construct an isomorphic model of organizational...
crisis. Four distinct stages are depicted: (1) shock; (2) defensive retreat; (3) acknowledgment; and, (4) adaptation and growth. However, criticism has been made of the assumption of an isomorphic relationship between the elements and relationships in "individual" and "organizational" crisis models. Moreover, beyond its suggestion of progressive stages of response, the framework does not address relationships between stages or the processes within stages. The model's redeeming characteristic, as Fink and colleagues have later suggested, lies in its heuristic utility; its challenging of others to begin understanding, conceptually, how organizations respond in crisis.

The question of organizational response is one of several crisis elements Hermann and Brady (1972) address. The authors offer four alternative response models abstracted from 311 bivariate propositions compiled by Brady from other research. The models focus upon: (1) individual stress; (2) organizational response; (3) hostile intent; and, (4) cost calculation. The organizational response model is of particular interest in the present study. That model emerges from a set of seven propositions and underlying assumptions, including:

1. Proposition: Participation in decision making regarding the treatment of an international crisis is limited to a small group of individuals.

2. Assumption: Individuals charged with the formation and conduct of foreign policy in contemporary nations are embedded in large hierarchically structured organizations.

3. Proposition: The more important to the nation a foreign policy problem is perceived to be by those in the government who detect it, the higher in the organizational hierarchy will be the individuals who consider the problem.
4. Assumption: International crises are defined by those in foreign policy organizations as extremely important problems.

5. Proposition: Therefore, in an international crisis, participation in the decision as to the treatment of the situation will primarily be limited to a small group of individuals from the highest levels of the government's foreign policy organizations.

6. Proposition: High level office-holders in government foreign policy organizations are more likely to be included in the crisis policy making group if they enjoy the strong personal confidence of the head of state; individuals who do not hold high-level office in one of the governmental foreign policy organizations will not be included unless the head of state has extremely high personal confidence in them.

7. Proposition: A government in which action is directed by a small group of men, whose complete attention and energy is addressed to the crisis and who are able to command all the available resources of the government, is less likely to permit an unintended or uncoordinated response than a government whose response is a product of bargaining between large bureaucratic organizations (pp. 286-291).

In another context, Allison (1969), drawing upon the Cuban Missile Crisis for examples, suggests three alternative models of crisis response. According to Allison, how nation-states are seen to respond depends upon the analytical perspective used by the crisis analyst. These perspectives are termed "conceptual lenses" or "analytic paradigms." Following Allison's argument, analysts typically approach crisis from one of three conceptual perspectives: (1) the Rational Policy model, depicting the national government as the primary policy actor purposively responding to strategic problems by the selection of reasonable policy choices given national objectives; (2) the Organizational Process model, viewing policy making as determined by previously established organizational routines or performance programs; and, (3) the Bureaucratic Politics model, delineating policy behavior as the outcome of "bargaining along
regularized channels among players positioned hierarchically within the government" (p. 707).

The inference implicit in Allison's analysis is that organizations [nation-states] are decision making structures (March and Simon, 1958), responding: (1) "rationally"—rational calculation of costs and benefits couched against an objective background of predictability and preference; (2) "bureaucratically"—ponderously working through a standardized system of offices, office holders, and procedures; or, (3) "politically"—resolving crisis among many competing agenda items through overlapping games of brinksmanship and exchange. Additionally, it may be inferred that organizations may behave in yet other ways during crisis than have been customarily suggested by crisis analysts. The ability to sense out these other ways, asserts Allison, is limited to the conceptual model employed in the analysis. Since the Rational Policy model appears to have dominated crisis response analyses, Allison's suggestion that other alternative conceptual models may be employed indicates that yet unexplained behavior still exists and awaits additional attempts at explanation and prediction.

In summarizing the contributions of the crisis literature, several points appear salient. One is immediately aware of the absence of conceptual exchange between researchers in the various substantive areas. Holsti's attempt (1972) at applying psychological stress findings is a notable exception. A broader question may be raised: Can organizational theorists usefully apply the findings garnered in macroscopic studies of nation-state, diplomatic crises to microscopic
examinations of crises within and between formal organizations? Stated more concisely, do nation-states in fact "behave" in a manner similar to that of smaller formal organizations? The common use of organizational concepts, frameworks, and theories makes such similarities likely. The dearth of empirical formal organizational crisis studies, however, leaves the question at this point in time without resolution.

The formal organizational literature is limited in its discussion of the responses of voluntary organizations to crisis. The absence is particularly pointed regarding voluntary professional organizations. In an effort to expand this discussion, the substantive areas of conflict, disaster, international affairs, and trade unionism were perused for concepts, conceptual frameworks, and theories to aid in explanation of the response phenomena. The review looked at considerable length for organizational indicants of crisis behavior, for organizational and environmental conditions leading to crisis, and for general crisis responses.

Several points within this expanded review appear salient. One, there is little to suggest beyond ideology, goal statements, and other expressions of intent that a voluntary organization's crisis or conflict behavior is structurally or procedurally predictable. Although voluntary organizations facing collective stress situations of all sorts exhibit more or less routine patterns of behavior, there are as yet unspecified organizational and environmental conditions that mediate this behavior. The explicit nature of both the behavior and the surrounding conditions, and the direction and magnitude of these
variables, is as yet theoretically unspecified. Two, the reasonably extensive literature on responses, however, is sufficient for the purposes of generating conceptual frameworks and theory which will hopefully incorporate behavioral, environmental, and response variables.
Chapter 3

THE CONTEXTS OF CRISIS

The Community

The city of Siringo\(^1\), the site of this study, sits as a major trade and transportation center for a vast portion of the Southwestern United States. In fulfilling this historic as well as contemporary role, Siringo's geographical location was not chosen by accident, for a moderate year-round climate and its strategic proximity to historic routes of travel and to natural resources have attracted settlement and commerce for the past 273 years.

To understand how these and other factors have influenced life in Siringo today, one is compelled to learn something of its ethnogeographic characteristics. One is a diversity of physical land conditions, ranging from fertile bottom land to rolling grassy hills, to forested mountains. A second includes a cluster pattern of population distribution, frequently grouped according to geocultural areas of homogeneous ethnic communities whose history as a community approaches antiquity. A third characteristic, a small absolute population with a relatively high rate of population increase, has also had an important influence. A fourth and final characteristic is a kind of unique racial and cultural diversity which,

\(^1\)A pseudonym. Proper nouns (names, places, institutions), with the exception of citations from the literature, have been coded where appropriate throughout the text.
coupled with a high rate of population increase due to in-migration, has resulted in both a mutual exchange and assimilation of cultural practices and beliefs, and a concommitant racial group resistance to cultural loss. Among these practices and beliefs are language, political institutions and ideologies, educational and religious attitudes. The overall result of these and other ethnogeographic influences has been the gradual development of an urban mosaic of diverse geo-cultural areas, and this mosaic is frequently reflected in a variety of local political beliefs and attitudes.

It is of importance also to mention that these ethnogeographic features are influenced by economic factors, many of which have had their origins early in the city's history. A condition of economic scarcity, for example, has historically characterized both Siringo as a city and its parent state, Nueva Loma. For over a hundred years, small scale agriculture and retail trade, as well as large scale ranching, mining, and railroad interests, have formed the backbone of both local and regional economies. The exclusivity of these traditional private sector enterprises has been offset in the 20th century by rapid growth in the public sector: in local, state, and federal government; the scientific-military community; and education.

Despite public sector growth and its stimulating effects on the private sector, major economic indicators such as per capita income for Siringo and the surrounding region have seriously lagged behind the national average. Other measures including the rate of economic growth and per capita education level have also lagged. For example, it has been reported that 1930 per capita income for
the state was 53% of the national average, rising to 89% of the average in 1959, but declining again to 77% by 1968. Moreover, due to its importance state-wide as a center of commerce, Siringo's economic well-being has paralleled that of the state and region. In both economies, long-term income stability has been encouraged by the relatively large amount of public sector employment, to the detriment of, however, responsiveness to substantial economic/income gains possible from large amounts of private sector commerce. One of the net effects of these economic influences has been, therefore, to provide highly stable but relatively low wages in many employment areas.

These unfavorable employment and general economic conditions might suggest a condition of worker economic deprivation in Siringo, hence frustration, relative to other geographical areas of employment. In other areas, this frustration is often manifested in unionization. Yet, the traditionally conservative orientation of the ranching-agricultural-business interests as well as a similarly conservative orientation of local ethnic groups, appears historically to have been a sufficient deterrent to the aggressive formation and support of employee welfare organizations. García and Wrinkle (1971) have confirmed this, noting that "union strength [in Nueva Loma] is slight" (p. 36), with the exception of several areas outside of Siringo, and the Siringo Chamber of Commerce has more recently reported that union membership as a percentage of total private sector employment in the middle 1970s stood at 13.2%, 46th among the states in the United States.

With limited private sector unionization and in the absence of permissive or mandatory public sector bargaining legislation, it is
safe to suggest that pro-labor attitudes in Siringo have not been present, and that existing attitudes have not been conducive to the formation and operation of employee organizations and/or their efforts to secure improved wages and working conditions for their members.

The School District

The city of Siringo has supported a system of free public education since 1891. Beginning with 660 students located in five separate school sites, the Siringo Public Schools (SPS) has witnessed astronomical growth, reaching 84,000 students in the early 1970s. The diversity of the student population has also increased. Reflecting local, state, and national changes in belief about educational opportunity, SPS has been faced with meeting more varied educational needs of an increasingly heterogeneous student population.

SPS responses to the problems of growth and heterogeneity have taken a variety of forms. One has been to increase, both in relative and absolute terms, the number of instructional and support staff. In 1910-11, for example, the District employed 40 teachers. By 1970, however, the teacher corps alone had grown to over 3600 teachers, while the addition in the late 1960s of paraprofessional help increased burgeoning school staffs by several hundred adults.

As teacher numbers increased to serve the growing and diversified student population, so did the complexity of the curriculum offered by teachers. This complexity was evidenced by the increased number of student course and program offerings, the multiplicity of
optional graduation tracks, and the wide variation in the scheduling of time. Both curriculum complexity and student population growth, of course, meant further increase in the number, size, and nature of school plants, and in the need for the acquisition of additional economic resources necessary to support this kind of expansion.

Growth in size (teacher and student), increased curriculum complexity, and increased heterogeneity of the school population gave rise to an associated phenomenon--the introduction of specialists organizationally positioned in staff roles between teachers and principals at the school site, and line administrators at the District's central office. As one might surmise, the specialist role was to be that of providing expert advice in curriculum or in instructional support areas. Their numbers, however, were too few to effectively provide continuous assistance and advice to any meaningful number of teachers, and the role was transformed from specialist to that of generalist, although the few generalists acquired and retained a good deal of control over the curriculum development process. The net effect, then, of the introduction of this group of employees at the mid-organizational level was to considerably lengthen the extent and complexity of the District hierarchy.

The central office, too, saw additional increases in staff. District expansion along multiple dimensions was heavily influenced by the increasing availability of Federal funds, and with the newly acquired monies came increasing reporting requirements at the teacher, mid-organization, and central office levels. Corresponding staff increases accompanied these new demands.
Beginning in 1969, in response to community concerns for decentralization of control in this increasingly hierarchically complex organization, a new Superintendent, at the direction of the Board of Education, organizationally decentralized the District into three area divisions, each with a complement of administrative, instructional, and support staff. A partial set of administrative and support personnel remained at the District's central office. A second phase of decentralization in 1974, however, added additional instructional support staff at both levels. These moves were in line with the stated goals of decentralization—more responsive instructional service delivery, restoration of some measure of control to culturally diverse elements of the city, and increased opportunity for parent participation in neighborhood school attendance areas. While these goals were achieved to some extent, i.e., the successful creation of area parent advisory committees, the net effect of decentralization in the eyes of many citizens and particularly of the instructional staff was to again increase organizational complexity by adding a third tier to an already complex hierarchy.

These gradual organizational changes were not, in a functional sense, without latent consequences, both for the organization as an entity and for its employees. One might reasonably surmise that as SPS school size approached or exceeded 800 pupils at the elementary level, 1200 pupils at the mid-school level, and 3,000 pupils at the high school level, a number of anticipated and unanticipated consequences would begin to appear. It could be anticipated, for example, that in terms of larger groups of employees, supervision would become
more difficult. Also, organizational ability to maintain adequate service delivery would be severely taxed by the rapidly increasing client population. In retrospect, it was not so apparent, however, that a series of negative and unanticipated consequences to the organization and to its employees were to occur.

In the case of the organization itself, these unanticipated consequences might be conceptualized as the problems associated with the dysfunctions of bureaucracy. The theory of the bureaucracy, in the Weberian sense, suggests a set of organizational characteristics which are thought to optimize organizational effectiveness. Found to varying degrees in all organizations, these characteristics in their most concentrated form have appeared to be associated with conditions such as size and environmental complexity. The characteristics are also found, however, to have gone beyond effectiveness optimization to a point of being dysfunctional in a range of circumstances.

As a case in point, SPS experienced a concomitant proliferation of written rules and regulations (e.g., a several hundred page "Administrative Procedures Manual"), and increased office specialization (i.e., an Employee Services section of a half dozen employees solely for the purpose of processing insurance requests). Also the idea of career within the SPS organization began to dominate many job categories, and it was not unusual for a staff member to enter employment, work, and retire within the school district. While neither the notions of rule proliferation nor career were in and of themselves dysfunctional, there did develop a point beyond which the
number of rules did not facilitate the conduct of work and the career pattern did not encourage the regular infusion of new perspectives and ideas. And, in that sense, these bureaucratic characteristics became dysfunctional for SPS.

Perhaps the most subtle yet devastating unanticipated consequence of the increases in the hierarchical nature of the organization, its office specialization, and rule proliferation, was the gradual growth of impersonality. It was organizationally possible as late as 1960 for all district employees to congregate annually, as they did, for a social gathering where a pervasive sense of organizational unity, individual warmth, and interpersonal interest could be felt by all. It was a time when chief administrators could successfully make personal calls for unity and renewal. It was both possible and probable for an individual at almost any organizational level to have worked with, on a personal as well as professional basis, virtually all other district employees. Post-1960, however, size, complexity, and increased bureaucratic features effectively precluded this type of contact and these kinds of relationships. Organizational impersonality became the norm.

The increase in size and complexity also became dysfunctional for individual employees. Greater numbers of employees spread already scarce financial resources even thinner, and given a condition of local, regional, and state inability to expand revenues, salaries and other benefits were depressed. Additional competition for these resources also stretched limited facility and supply budgets even thinner. Moreover, the increases in specialization and hierarchy
meant more decision review time, and the lag times built into
decision making increased accordingly. For employees, these lag
times frequently became a source of frustration.

While services to children and to the community continued to be
performed, the cumulative influence of these changing organizational
conditions began to have a telling effect on the quality of working
conditions and on employee work satisfaction. Out of this often
frustration evoking context emerged two groups toward which teachers
increasingly turned for assistance in affecting their workworld:
(1) the smaller Siringo Teachers' Confederacy (STC) originating
in 1964; and, (2) the older and larger Siringo Teachers' Organization
(STO), the subject of this study.

The Siringo Teachers' Organization

The Siringo Teachers' Organization (STO) was formed in 1934,
with the approval of the District Superintendent, by a group of local
Siringo teachers. It was from the beginning an exclusively teacher
group and the oldest of its kind in the state. Its parent organi-
ization, the Nueva Loma Education Organization (NLEO), had begun in
December of 1885 as a "meeting of gentlemen and ladies connected
with educational interests" (NLEO Convention Bulletin, 1976).

Johnson (1976) has pointed out the significance of the event in
Nueva Loma educational history, stating "the territorial Education
Organization was formed before the territorial government created
a public school system in the Act of February 26, 1891" (p. 19).
The NLEO's national affiliate had begun even earlier (1857).
At the time of STO formation, the Nueva Loma Education Organization included in its membership not only teachers, but all other educators as well, as did its national affiliate. Several years later, the STO and the Cueva Teachers' Organization (another early exclusively teacher group) helped create a state teacher organization, the Nueva Loma Organization of Classroom Teachers (NLOCT), which five years later joined a similar division of the national affiliate. The NLOCT operated from its start in 1937 somewhat independently, both financially and programatically, of the NLEO. Over the years, despite the common pursuit of, for example, increased school funding, programmatic differences between the two organizations became occasional sources of interorganizational conflict, largely as a function of differing value orientations.

For the most part, however, the structure of membership minimized overt conflict during the early years. A condition of joint membership existed between the NLEO and the NLOCT, that is, teachers purchased with their minimal dues (ten cents in 1937) joint membership in both organizations. A similar arrangement between the STO and the NLOCT was initiated in 1958. Additionally, the joint membership provided for a condition of interlocking directorates whereby NLOCT leaders gradually were able to serve on NLEO governing boards and committees. In fact, during the early 1960s, following the 1952 election of the first classroom teacher president of the NLEO, two other NLOCT leaders served one year terms as NLEO State President. There was, therefore, a circumstance in which conceivably, Siringo
teachers could belong to three somewhat separate but functionally related "educator" organizations, and many did.

This pattern had several implications for the Siringo Teachers' Organization. Comprising a disproportionately large share of the state-wide teacher workforce, Siringo District teachers also numerically dominated the NLOCT. Numerical domination meant control over the largest revenue source, i.e., member dues, and power accrued accordingly. While this was offset for some time within the NLEO by the historic pattern of control by school administrators, the STO became over time a dominant force within the state level teacher organizations. To this domination there developed a gradual resentment, an anti-Siringo sentiment among other local teacher organizations outside Siringo, and this weakened what might otherwise have been relatively strong interorganizational bonds.

A further implication for the STO was the progressive development of a defensive posture toward rising anti-Siringo sentiment. In a very real sense, the STO was the symbolic leader of organized teacher affairs in the state: largest membership, most resources, and the longest history. STO was, however, unique in almost every respect—unique in the scale of its problems, in its urban-cosmopolitan attitudes, in what it was able to influence collectively. And, its uniqueness formed the basis for resentment, a feeling not based on the general merits of its accomplishments, but quite simply because it was "Siringo." Toward this resentment, the STO became defensive and adopted a "we can go it alone if we have to" attitude.
What of STO activities during this time at the local level? Despite the sagacious development in 1935 of a teachers' credit union, the organization's functions were primarily social. Nominal dues revenue went for coffees and luncheons, and, as one long-time member recounts, "for many years, the STO was a tea and cookies, old ladies group" (Field notes, 10/76). Personal relations between administrators and teachers were cordial, political relations consensual, and, typically, leadership positions within the STO were viewed as a viable element of the career pattern into administrative positions in SPS.

The pattern of local activity was not atypical of similar teacher organizations nation-wide during those years. Despite negotiation of the first teacher collective bargaining contract in 1938 at Maywood, Illinois, and sporadic teacher strikes accompanying the general labor unrest following World War II, teacher organization activities were customarily apolitical, passive, and infrequent.

The onset of the 1960s, however, produced dramatic changes in the goal orientations, strategy, and tactics of teacher organizations across the country. Cole (1969) has documented the earliest and most influential of these changes--the 1960 and 1962 New York City teacher negotiations and subsequent strikes. Others followed quickly within a general societal context of concern for individual civil rights. The magnitude of these changes is evidenced in the numbers of their occurrence. The Research Division of one of the two large national teacher organizations reported in August 1970 that in school year 1960-61, three work stoppages, strikes, or interruptions of service took place. By way of contrast, in the 1969-70 school
year, 180 similar events took place, and during the ten year period (1960-70), a total of 500 stoppages occurred involving over one half million teachers.

Given this precedent, it became normatively acceptable since 1970 for teacher organizations to employ militant strategies such as closing down school systems and a variety of other means to attain their ends. Previous pejorative characterizations of such efforts as "unprofessional" and "trade unionism" were set aside. Stated another way, engaging in conflict became a legitimate professional activity.

Organizational goals and role structures changed accordingly. The traditional goals of strengthened tenure rights and reduced class size gave way to more strident economic demands for vastly improved salaries and general working conditions. Prior to these new goals, the typical executive-legislative organizational role structure, comprised of elected officers (President and Vice-President) and elected building-level representatives who together formed small Boards of Directors and larger Representative Councils, was supported by a limited number of ad hoc and standing committees. Emergent norm structures and goal orientations led to substantive alterations of this organizational pattern. Former ad hoc committees became institutionalized and critically important in such operations as negotiations and contract administration, professional rights and responsibilities. Similar changes occurred in standing committees. Moreover, such reconstituted committees became central in conflict initiation, conduct, and resolution, and assumed new importance in prospective leader socialization.
The addition of highly trained, well-paid staff specialists to local and state organizations represents the most recent piece of the role structure alteration. The specialist's manifest function is to provide straightforward technical assistance in complex budgetary, contractual, and legal matters. An NLEO news release, however, points to an equally important yet latent function:

Field representatives . . . generally speaking . . . have functioned in their role of "crisis managers." The meaning I apply to the term "crisis managers" refers to a mode of expectation that has placed the Field Representative in the role of a responder to local organization and/or individual problems or crises. (NLEO Reporter, 5/76)

What crises might a Field Representative in the role described above respond to? Throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s, the term "crisis" had been primarily although not exclusively operationalized as "strike," and consequently responding to local organizational crises had often meant assisting in the planning and conduct of strikes. The role description above communicates an organizational perception of this task focus: to help local units effectively create crises for local Boards of Education. This orientation is primarily external, and the crises the Field Representative helps to create are external to his/her organization. Further, this orientation suggests that in their creation, crises can indeed be anticipated and controlled, and as such, are logically the subject of rational planning processes.

One can also provisionally assume that crises, which by definition are non-routine in nature, must occur with sufficient frequency and regularity in organizational life to justify the creation of a crisis management role. Therein lies an apparent
paradox. On the one hand, a generally accepted definition of crisis is:

A situation which (1) threatens high priority goals of decision making units; (2) restricts the amount of time available for response before the decision is transformed; and, (3) surprises the members of the decision making unit by its occurrence. (Kerrmann, 1972, p. 13)

One might expect, then, that crisis phenomena by this definition are unforeseen, unanticipated, and are not the type of event for which one could routinely plan. On the other hand, however, in establishing a "crisis" role, an organization is acting as if crises are routine and predictable events for which one can plan and over which one can exert considerable control. This perception is obviously quite unlike the customary definition of the phenomenon.

Accounting for this paradox is a considerable task. One explanation may be that organizations whose environments are characterized by a good deal of uncertainty may constantly perceive threats to their survival, and act as if such threats are in reality crises although the definitional elements of restricted time and surprise may not objectively exist. As Merton (1957) reminded us, "Men respond not only to the objective features of a situation, but also and at times primarily to the meaning the situation has for them" (pp. 476-477). It is also logical to conclude that subsequent organizational responses are contingent upon this perception. It is, therefore, the more immediate theoretical task to speculate about the antecedents and consequences of this phenomenon, so that the paradox of objective reality and organizational perception may be more clearly understood.
Several antecedents are apparent in the historical data of teacher organizations. One lies in the nature of their organizational goal activities and strategies since 1960. The fundamental goal of teacher organizations in the 1960s, that of altering the power relationship in schools and thereby affecting wages, hours, and working conditions, involves a departure from status quo ante. Such a departure takes with increasing frequency the form of militant strategies involving: (1) an increased probability of venturing into previously unknown and unexpected areas of activity; and, (2) an increased commitment to activities where probable costs are high and the presence of threat implicit. Both conditions are descriptive of crisis events (Hermann, 1972). The comments of former STO President John Robbins, for example, provided a generalized crisis sentiment arising out of similar local conditions:

I guess it's [a crisis] . . . something out of the ordinary . . . we knew it was coming . . . something that would affect the membership and the organization. (Field notes, 3/79)

The utility of this sentiment did not go unrecognized by Robbins or other teacher leaders:

. . . if you want to have a strong membership in an organization, you have to have a crisis . . . in a crisis, the members can see that an organization or group of people can help. It can be positive or negative. STO works best on [a] crisis program. Something to get [the] group together, a common cause. (Field notes, 3/79)

According to Robbin's statement, a crisis can be more than a relatively indeterminant event; it can be indeed a deliberate mechanism designed and used to advance organizational goals.
A second antecedent to crisis may be gleaned by way of analogy from the practice of providing technical assistance to underdeveloped countries. Blood and Wiggins (1979) suggest that the provision of technical assistance is predicated on an assumption of value neutrality. In reality, however, they maintain that technical assistance is an expressly value laden activity and should be recognized as such. The scenario these authors present is analogous to that in a teacher organization, where the staff member providing assistance, in the enactment of a latent role function, brings a crisis oriented value set to an organization whose values may have not previously included that orientation. The result can be a change in the organizational value system in the direction of crisis acceptability.

A final antecedent is derived from member expectations. At the most general level, member expectations help define the relationship between the member and the organization, communicating to each what is to be the nature of the exchange between them. At another level, expectations specifically legitimate or sanction organizational goals and the means to execute these goals. Moreover, the expectations may vary with the maturity of the relationship.

One set of expectations, for example, tacitly communicates the mixed member motivation for initial entry into membership. The field notes provide several instances:

The teacher organization should (1) be the teacher spokesman concerning policy decisions at the district level; (2) come to my defense in legal matters; (3) keep me informed . . .; and, (4) listen to my concerns, feelings . . . [act as a] sounding board. (Field notes, 5/79)
Outcome expectations have received extensive attention elsewhere, i.e., Lortie (1975). In broad summary form, local expressions have suggested: (1) that collective action should produce more immediate and improved economic benefits than have previous individual efforts; (2) that better job conditions, security, and individual autonomy should result from collective efforts; (3) that the bureaucracy of the employing organization should somehow be more responsive as a result of teacher organization intervention; (4) that occupational prestige should be enhanced; and, (5) that more teacher participation in critical areas of decision making will take place.

Coupled with outcome expectancies has been a set of means expectations which suggest the parameters for what can be done organizationally to achieve desired outcomes. Again, a local teacher's comments are informative:

About how teacher organizations achieve goals, they should: (1) be open about [the] operation of the organization. [Each member should have the] ability to identify the people in charge; (2) [display] intelligent judgement based on [what] members tell them, and [should] not get involved in petty things; and, (3) be honest and above board, but skillful at the rules of the game. (5/79)

The antecedents, then, of teacher organization crisis roles originate not only from a general context, i.e., the community and the employing organization, but also from a more specific context of customary goal activities, value orientations, and member expectations. The STO's ability to successfully combine the salient sentiments and expectations from within this context was illustrated in 1968 by the complete mobilization of its members (and non-members) for a week-long strike. Atypical in its focus (the state's legislature rather than an
employing organization), the collective action represented the culmination of teacher frustration due to continually declining relative income. That frustration manifested itself in the near-unanimous member decision to withhold services. The organization's subsequent strike call was clearly within the means expectations of the membership. "If the leadership had not asked for a strike," reported a Board of Director's official, "they [the teachers] would have gone anyway" (Field notes, 1/79). Additionally, it enjoyed the tacit approval of the community and of the SPS District. The strike, then, was an instance when organizational, staff, and individual member expectations coincided within a supportive context. There was present a consistent sentiment about the seriousness and the immediacy of the threat—the crisis-like nature of the situation.

Normally, one might expect, given the widespread means/ends consensus and the success at getting the membership to act collectively, that successful termination of the crisis would reduce frustration. It will be provisionally suggested here that the resolution of the 1968 crisis was not in all respects satisfactory, and that the lack of complete satisfaction began what was to be a series of incremental shifts in the source of member frustration, one being its shift of focus from external to internal. The failure of the legislature following the strike to appreciably increase school revenue (therefore, relative teacher income), and later loss of income due to strike days docking, frustrated member expectations, despite the conduct of a successful strike, and began laying the groundwork for future perceptions of crisis events.
Chapter 4

THE CRISIS OF 1972

On the afternoon of April 27, 1972, the Siringo Teachers' Organization (STO) informed its members and the city at large that STO was in a crisis situation. The STO telephone "hot-line" tersely stated:

Please inform your faculty members that the organization has developed plans for militant actions affecting every teacher. The organization is on a crisis alert. It will be issuing further instructions to all teachers during the next few days. (Reported to the Siringo Herald Telegraph, Friday, April 28, 1972)

Shortly thereafter, STO President John Robbins called an "emergency press conference" to talk about what he termed an "impending crisis" (Siringo Evening Optic, reported April 28, 1972).

The perceived crisis involved the annual resumption of negotiations between the STO and its employing organization, the Siringo Public Schools. Negotiations had begun on February 19, and according to both parties, had proceeded smoothly in discussion of a range of non-economic matters. The STO team, comprised of several teachers and officers, was headed by veteran Staff Director Curt Brenner, while the SPS team was chaired by the new SPS Labor Relations Director, ex-principal Chuck Baker. A spirit of cooperation had to date characterized interaction between the two teams during the Spring talks. On April 26, however, both teams exchanged proposals covering economic items, including first bargaining positions on salary and benefits, and the nature of the relationship changed.
A series of acrimonious exchanges began to be aired, each provoking additional reaction, and it became rapidly apparent that the two parties had adopted fundamentally conflicting positions.

The "hot-line" quickly reported the STO position:

There was a negotiating session last night in which the Board of Education presented its first offer relating to salary and other economic items. The offer included a proposal for increasing the salary schedule across the board with a stipulation that all other unresolved issues be removed from the contract. Included were such things as class size limitations, allocation of teachers, adequate supplies and materials, and an improved discipline policy, plus others. In a blatant act of bad faith, the board declared that this was their final, non-negotiable offer. It appears as if the Board is dedicated to the destruction of the index salary schedule, teacher morale, and the Siringo Public School System. (Herald Telegraph, April 29, 1972).

Within two days, SPS Labor Relations Director Chuck Baker publicly refuted the content of the "hot-line" message. Baker claimed that:

The message and other recent publications of the STO accuse the board of dragging its feet on negotiations, an allegation . . . the teachers' organization knows is untrue . . . . Negotiations had been proceeding smoothly . . . until Wednesday, April 26, with tentative agreement being reached on the non-monetary items.

Baker additionally commented that:

Agreements had not been reached on class size limitations, allocation of teachers, and supplies, as these are money-related items, and as such would have not been discovered until Wednesday . . . . Furthermore, said Baker, the Board did not approach the teachers with a "final, non-negotiable offer." In any bargaining situation, you make a proposal, which is either accepted or rejected, or modified as a result of negotiations. That's what bargaining is all about. (Siringo Herald Telegraph, April 28, 1972).
Finally Baker also disclosed that at issue was the Board's offer of a six percent overall salary increase (averaging $575 per teacher), as opposed to the STO's proposed seven percent.

The public exchange of claims and counter-claims continued later that day. The evening paper reported further STO reaction to Baker's comments and to recent Board publications. Characterizing a school district newsletter article as a "savage attack," President Robbins contended the article "virtually called the officers and STO liars and distorters of truth." The President went on instead to portray the STO as trying to avoid deliberate confrontation with the Board and administration "in an effort to bring a fair and equitable conclusion to the negotiations."

The trading of accusations and allegations was but a part of a larger series of maneuvers. STO quickly attempted to increase the political costs of not meeting its demands. At a late afternoon press conference on April 28, the STO Chief Negotiator was quick to point out that "striking is the last thing in the world any of us wants to do, but we are running out of time . . ." (Evening Optic, April 28). Again, the issues in contention were listed as the seven percent salary increase, classroom size restrictions, and a new discipline policy.

Within four days other maneuvers became more apparent. In the absence of additional negotiations, Siringo teachers were given the opportunity to vote during the day of May 1 on the Board's original offer. Teacher sentiment appeared to be clear and cohesive,
as the offer was rejected by a 2,626 to 201 vote, a 10:1 margin.
Internal STO deliberations, although far from unanimous, concluded
that a call for a strike vote without relying on mediation was
imperative. STO President John Robbins stated that the vote would
be taken by secret ballot at a general membership meeting Wednesday,
May 3, and that "the STO will win a fair settlement if Siringo
teachers remain united in the next few days" (Evening Optic, May 2).
Again reiterating the central issues, Robbins reported that "other
matters to be agreed on by both parties include classload restrictions,
supplies and materials, and student discipline measures." The strike
sentiment, according to Robbins, was gathering momentum.

Simultaneously SPS was engaged in a series of maneuvers.
Despite STO admonitions about the costs of the SPS bargaining
positions, SPS presented a resolute, if not somewhat confused
appearance, given the recent turn of events. Chuck Baker, responding
again for the Board, suggested that "it appears again that the Board
has been given an ultimatum by the teachers . . . . Our offer is not
final, but theirs apparently is, and we will not bargain out of fear."
Baker went on to contend that "so far there has been no real bar-
gaining on the wage issue by either party" (Evening Optic, May 2).
Subsequently other SPS officials suggested that the teachers were
being "misled" and "misrepresented" by "precipitous" STO leadership.
Furthermore, teachers were warned that those who did not report to
work were in violation of the contract and faced termination and/or
replacement. Finally, SPS claimed to have been waiting for an STO
counter-proposal.
Maneuvers on both sides increased the number of issues.

Baker suggested that:

Teachers are being "seriously" misled in three areas: first with regard to the amount of new money available for teacher salaries, second on the matter of the board's attitude toward negotiations, and third, on the subject of increments. (Herald Telegraph, May 3)

Moreover, another issue surfaced publicly--the Board's desire to eliminate the current salary indexing system.

The Siringo Herald Telegraph, on the morning of the strike vote, reflected some of the community's uncertainty over the sudden turn of events:

The possibility that Siringo's teachers could be on strike as soon as Thursday morning must come as a shock to most citizens.

Because of the secret nature of negotiations it was only a few days ago that school patrons were let in on the stalemate which the opposing sides have found themselves in. And the first hint came in an exchange of rather heated words, sparked by charges made by the Siringo Teachers' Organization over their private hotline. Even at this point in time because of the propaganda-like nature of issued statements, the standoff hardly seems serious enough to warrant even a strike vote, much less the possibility that the teachers will approve an immediate walkout.

The odd part of the situation is that the Public School negotiator has insisted that the money offer made last week isn't the final one which could be made while the STO insists that it is. (Editorial, Herald Telegraph, May 3)

The respective parties, however, showed little uncertainty about their preferred courses of action. The STO, with the support of state and national staff, was prepared to carry out its announced plan of action, while SPS appeared equally ready to resist such a move.

The vote itself was held Wednesday evening in the Siringo Civic Center. A late afternoon resumption of negotiations had witnessed movement by SPS: addition of a much modified index system and additional money
in salary items—not, however, reaching the desired seven per cent. Subsequent review by the STO Board of Directors resulted in rejecting the proposal and preparation for an immediate strike vote. That evening, following an hour of speeches, the following resolution was presented to the membership:

Be it resolved that if a satisfactory agreement is not resolved by 7:00 a.m. Thursday, May 4, 1972, the teachers of Siringo will withhold services. (Taped resolution, May 3 meeting)

Several uncertainties appeared to exist in the minds of some members of the audience during the ensuing debate, indicating some ambivalence about the proposed course of action. One dealing with the size of the stakes involved in the recommended action, was raised thus by a member of the audience: "Why should we go on strike for only $300 increase in salary when we should be going on strike for a $7,200 base?" A second involved the propriety of striking before mediation: "What is the rationale that STO has chosen to use to deny that part of our contract with SPS which says there must be mediation following the failure of negotiations, which puts us in direct violation also?" A third inquiry questioned the clarity of issues. Staff Director Curt Brenner responded by raising yet other issues:

The effect of the SPS proposal is to reduce our index... now, it's not a lot of money, it's not a lot of money, that's not the question, that is not the point. The question is not whether you're striking for, you know, a five percent index or something such as that. It's a matter of the ability to bargain for the [teachers]. What we're looking at is the ability to sit across the table and negotiate. We don't want you to forget the issue of class size or supplies and materials nor your insurance program or your differential. The thing that's at stake is your ability to respectfully operate as an
organization of teachers. Now, the change in actual dollars is small. But if they can break your index schedule, they can break any cotton picking thing they want to, because you will have indicated to them your total inability to respond to their power play. (Tape, May 3 meeting; original emphasis)

A final query raised the issue of the factual basis for the crisis:

"with its usual speed and decisiveness, our STO team has again this year succeeded in putting us in the untenable do-or-die situation. On only two days' notice, they ask us to make a decision of great importance based on basically heresay and mass hysteria . . . ."

Shortly thereafter, the vote was conducted by secret ballot. After twenty minutes, President Robbins reconvened the meeting and read in a subdued manner the results to a suddenly quiet audience:

We do have the votes tallied at this time. Out of 2,421 votes cast, we have 1,189 voting "yes" to strike, 1,232 voting "no". The strike vote has been defeated . . . . [Raising his voice, he added] We are not giving up. We will try and will come to you again with the best possible contract. Thank you.

Clamoring voices and confusion swirled throughout the auditorium as members began filtering out, and local radio announcers began reporting the setback to the awaiting District and city. Snatches of radio reports could be heard amid the noise of a disintegrating crowd:

The Siringo Teachers' Organization by the just announced results . . . they have voted not to strike by a very narrow margin . . . there will be no teacher strike. That result just announced . . .
For many, the narrow defeat of the strike resolution was unanticipated. The local paper noted the unexpected nature of the reversal:

The no-strike decision came as a surprise to most observers at the Civic Center, which was crowded with about 2700 persons at the beginning of the evening . . . . It also apparently [sic] shocked leaders of the organization, since a strike action had been recommended by the Board of Directors and the negotiating team. (Herald Telegraph, May 4, 1972)

The STO planned for an event that ultimately did not take place. The inference can be made from the newspaper report that the no-strike decision had not been anticipated by the STO, was arrived at quickly, and left little response time to STO leaders. The event which did occur, the no-strike decision, had, in fact, all the characteristics of an actual crisis. Rather than being faced with an event of their own identification and involvement, the STO was now faced with a legitimate crisis.

Several questions may now be raised. How, for example, did this unexpected turn of events come about? What led the STO to become "crisis" oriented, and in so doing to equate a predictable event with a "crisis"? Finally, how did the STO respond when actually confronted with a crisis? The remainder of the chapter addresses these issues.

The Development of the Crisis Complex

The propensity to define situations as crises has its origins in the recent history of the teaching occupation and in the later development of teacher organizations. Recent history, for example,
indicates that the economic and social status expectations of teachers have gone largely unmet (Butts and Cremin, 1953; Elsbree, 1939). Also, the disparity between expectations and actual returns has become more pronounced following the tremendous increase in overall national prosperity in the post-World War II period. Teachers have wanted not only "psychic income" from teaching, but also economic rewards. That is to say, teachers wanted not only to share in the general economic prosperity of the times, but in the social status perceived to be commensurate with the importance of their contribution to society and with the professional nature of their work.

Despite gains in many areas, these expectations have been left unfulfilled. For example, absolute teacher income between 1930-1970 grew 500%; net relative income did not increase. Charters (1964) has additionally suggested that teacher social status has remained unchanged since World War II. Both conditions have led teachers to a perception of "relative deprivation." The inflationary nature of the post-World War II economy added substance to this perception.

Eaton (1975) has also suggested that factors beyond relative deprivation and uncertainty about occupational prestige contributed to a growing sense of teacher frustration. Cole's (1969) observation places Eaton's factors in perspective:

The sources of dissatisfaction of participants in a social system may be divided into those external and those internal to the system (p. 35).

Eaton identified a number of internal sources: repetitious work; isolation from other adults; lack of stimulation; the operation of schools; often inadequate facilities; few economic incentives; and,
little job security. External factors included the presence of a political system operative in staffing decisions, and the presence of normative constraints resulting in off-the-job social isolation. The community and organizational context described earlier suggests that for Siringo teachers these factors were quite similar.

Faced with these and other frustrating conditions, and a rising sense that expectations should be met, teachers increasingly turned to teacher organizations for assistance. The effect of this move, according to Cole (1969), was to channel teacher dissatisfaction into an action movement aided by an expanding teacher "class consciousness" and the emergence of teacher (as opposed to administrative) leadership. The channeling effect took place within a context of a changing organizational goal orientation. Teacher organizations, previously emphasizing a service orientation (providing client services and raising professional standards), now were being transformed into "mutual benefit" organizations which attempted to safeguard the economic welfare of their members.

There were several pronounced consequences of the emergence of aggressive and growing mutual benefit organizations. One was the origin and expansion of intense struggle for control of the school institution. The foundations of the struggle were both political and philosophical. As a fundamental political issue, the conflict was locally expressed thus:

We're not debating whether teachers should have a voice in education in Siringo. They should have a strong voice in their areas of professional competence and they do . . . . The real question at this time is, "who is going to manage the school system, the administration or the leaders of the STO?"

(SPS Newsletter, 7/3/71)
The issue could also be phrased as a basic philosophical conflict.

Again, a local example:

The conflict is whether there will be a totalitarian system or a democratic system. (Field notes, 5/71)

In addition to the struggle for institutional control, there existed an equally intense struggle between competing teacher organizations for control of the occupation. The struggle locally, although much more abbreviated in its history, parallels a similar struggle at the national level. Fundamental philosophic differences formed the basis of both competition and conflict during the 1960s between the two local teacher organizations, the STC and the STO. Typical practices stemming from the conflict included attrition of members from one organization to the other, filing law suits against the other, and discrediting each other publicly. At a later time, after the STO became the exclusive bargaining agent, the STC conducted annual petition drives to have the STO decertified as the teacher bargaining agent.

For the STO and its members in the present, however, two rather clear beliefs provided motivation to continue both struggles. One was that the STO could effectively control the basic working conditions of teachers and could in some substantive way affect entry into and exit from teacher employment within the District. A second was that the STO philosophy—the enhancement of professional status through collective action—would prevail over that of the STC. On both counts the expectations arising from these beliefs were frustrated to varying degrees, and those expectations which were met
were not always done so in a wholly satisfactory manner. For example, the STO had successfully included development of the school calendar in the master contract. However, in the Spring of 1971, following declaration of a bargaining impasse, the SPS administration adopted the 1971-72 school calendar unilaterally in violation of the contract (Field notes, 5/71). In other instances, the negotiated contract called for a three step grievance procedure. Resolution at the final step, however, was not final and binding upon the Board of Education, and the procedure, while satisfactory in its inception, resulted ultimately in a good deal of STO frustration.

The sense of frustration, resulting from varying degrees of unmet expectations, helped create a condition of organizational uncertainty. The world outside of the STO was uncertain because major contingencies such as district funding and the outcome of grievance hearings were beyond its direct control. Having little control was frequently threatening, and the uncertainty and threat appeared in a variety of contexts. During the impasse mediation following the breakdown of bargaining in July of 1971, Curt Brenner expressed the periodic sense of threat:

Curt blew his top and laid his position on the line that they [STO] represented all [teachers] . . . and he darn well advised that STO is not going to be decimated or sold down the river. (Negotiations notes, 7/71)

In a later example, he was equally adamant:

The Board must change its priorities. This is an administration attempt to neutralize the teacher's voice. (Negotiations notes, 5/72)
The threats persisted. As stated elsewhere, the 1969-70 negotiations had gone well for the STO, and SPS came back to the table in 1971 with a clear objective in mind: the retraction of management rights from the contract, i.e., the reconsolidation of management's right to run the schools. The SPS Superintendent phrased it this way on several occasions:

The Board wants to regain its right to manage in accordance with the trust placed in it by the people of the District.

The present agreement has some features that cause confusion because they have allowed the STO to enter the area of administration . . . . The administration negotiation team has continuously attempted to bring about clarification of the agreement in this area.

While teacher groups and organizations should have a great amount of influence in this area, the final responsibility for making decisions must be with the administration and the Board of Education. (SPS Newsletter, 5/24/71)

An additional internal threat began to loom noticeably. In 1969-70, STO membership totaled 2600 members. For whatever reason, however, members began to slip slowly away, while at the same time the total teacher workforce was increasing by several hundred teachers a year. Membership in the Spring of 1971 totaled 2550; seven months later, membership had declined to 2369 teachers (Board of Directors Minutes, 1970-72).

Eaton (1975) has noted that the similar cumulation of threats at the national level had dramatic effects:

By 1929, the AFT had become an institution of crisis. Such a crisis complex is easily diagnosed and understood. Born in an uncaring world, weaned on the controversies of the First World War era, raised in a hostile environment, the AFT developed as a child of the streets into an adult who thrived on crises (p. 170).
Eaton's additional claim is informative for the present study:

The AFT's whole cause for existence was based on the belief that crisis existed in the school system and that teachers needed to confront it. (p. 170-171)

Eaton's claim can be restated as follows: once a crisis complex or syndrome has developed through the operation of a variety of internal and external factors, the continued presence and identification of crisis becomes a teacher organization's cause for existence.

The culmination of the general uncertainty, the diminished sense of security, and the growing presence of threat locally led to the formation of a "crisis" complex or syndrome. Given this frame of mind, any threat could become critical. This developmental process is depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3 offers a conceptual basis for the process of crisis complex development. Stated in propositional form, the figure can be read as follows:

1. As teacher expectations are increasingly unfulfilled, the growth of "mutual benefit" teacher organizations is likely to occur.

2. The growth of "mutual benefit" teacher organizations will result in an intense struggle for institutional control between the teacher organization and the Board of Education/administration.

3. The growth of "mutual benefit" teacher organizations will also result in an intense struggle between emergent and traditional teacher organizations for control of the teaching occupation.

4. The outcome of the intense institutional and occupational control struggles will result in varying degrees of unfulfilled expectations for teacher organization members.

5. If expectations resulting from the control struggles are relatively unmet/unsatisfied, member frustration will result.
Figure 3. The Development of a Crisis Complex in Teacher Organizations
6. If increasing degrees of member frustration exist in a teachers' organization, there is likely to be a diminished sense of organizational security, and an increased perception of environmental uncertainty and threat.

7. A diminished sense of organizational security and the pretense of environmental uncertainty and threat is likely to lead to the development of a "crisis complex" or "crisis syndrome."

The enumeration illustrates seven propositions. Working from these propositions the number of theorems (Zetterberg, 1965) which can be constructed is twenty-four. For example, using a selected concept, "unmet teacher expectations," as the determinant, in combination with other multiple step concepts within the suggested framework, one might plausibly obtain the following theorems:

1. As teacher expectations are increasingly unfulfilled, there is likely to be an intense struggle for institutional control.

2. As teacher expectations are increasingly unfulfilled, there is likely to be an intense struggle for occupational control.

There are at least five other theorems which may be developed from this single determinant. Subsequent figures may be read in much the same manner.

The foregoing analysis presents a case for the development organizationally of a particular affective state, here termed a "crisis complex" or "crisis syndrome." Noting that a complex or syndrome is generically speaking a "group of repressed desires and memories that exerts a dominating influence upon the personality" or a "group of symptoms typical of a condition" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1979), it is important to spell out the recurring features of such an organizational condition. A number of these elements may be abstracted from the historical data prior to and during 1972.
The Elements of A Crisis Complex

The previous section suggests that by the 1971 school year there had developed a "crisis complex" within the active leadership of the STO. Moreover, the complex began to color the STO's perception of its world and of the significant relationships with important others within that world. Chapter 3 has already speculated about several antecedents leading to the creation of a general crisis orientation. Despite this, it is important to review local manifestations of these antecedents before outlining the element comprising the crisis complex. As they appeared locally, these antecedents included the hiring of a staff specialist, the influence of national and regional affiliates, and the press of member expectations.

The STO hired its first staff specialist, Staff Director Curt Brenner, in 1969. Brenner had come up through the ranks of the STO, serving as a school site representative, then as an elected Board member, and finally in 1966, as STO president. It is likely that despite this lengthy socialization process within the STO, Brenner, as Field Representative for the state's largest teacher organization, had external reference groups to whose norms and values he adhered. In his own words, he took "pride in being a professional negotiator" (Interview notes, 9/76). His Field Representative training had taken place out of state in the cosmopolitan urban centers of the east and west coasts, and his staff position was substantially funded by external monies. Moreover, the national affiliate which had created and funded his position had for some time equated "crisis" with "strike," had created Organizing/Crisis Assistance Offices for his support, and was heavily involved in
strike/crises around the country. The evidence suggests this orientation was communicated in the form of performance expectations at the local level.

In a way, the expectations were very direct. Sally Fox, a new Board of Directors member at that time recalls the expression of those expectations:

> There was some talk of strike in those times . . . . These interesting people from outside who had led successful strikes . . . a number of new people, too . . . . It would be fair to say that we were a little "hot headed" with lots of energy. (Interview notes, 3/79)

In another instance, following the successful conduct of the representation election in November of 1971, "the Crisis Leader" assigned to Siringo by the national affiliate to head the National Organizing Team stated afterward at the STO "victory party," "I'll come back in January to run your strike" (Interview notes, 3/79). Furthermore, a report filed two months later by the same team, recommended a "change to a more aggressive image" (Board of Directors minutes, 1/17/72).

These expectations, as direct or indirect as some of them might have been, became apparent to the most casual of observers. The media of that time could have reported, for example, that regionally between 1969 and 1971, five other locals conducted successful strikes involving 4,869 teachers. Nationally, in the same time period, 310 strikes occurred involving 207,651 teachers, and that kind of message was not lost on the STO or Brenner.

In addition to these role expectations for the Field Representative, Brenner possessed a set of personal characteristics and needs which coincided nicely with the role. Described frequently by
others as "cool," "aloof," "distant," Curt Brenner gave a constant impression that he was in complete control of his emotions, and often the situation. He had in all respects a "crisis" temperament, for his displays of emotion were generally calculated as tactically appropriate when situations grew tense, and Brenner appeared to enjoy such situations. He also possessed what others noticed to be an uncanny ability to assess a situation, abstract its salient features, and locate possible issues the STO could profitably act upon. Additionally, as one STO member observed, Brenner acted out his personal needs through the position:

Curt had one goal as Staff Director: that was to close the schools. You will never find a director that works as hard for classroom teachers. He believed that you needed to show power to the Board. (Interview notes, 3/79)

The combination of temperament and image lent Brenner a quiet air of authority, although few colleagues or clients knew him well, and his presence in the STO helped create a crisis orientation.

A third factor influencing the crisis orientation was the presence of member expectations. STO had begun bargaining in the formal sense of the term with the SPS in 1969. The arrangement was through the District's negotiating council, a group comprised of proportional representation from all teacher organizations. The STO had far and away the largest membership, and therefore controlled all seven council positions. The 1969-1970 written agreement was negotiated under this arrangement, and the general consensus within the STO and SPS was that the STO had done extremely well. The general feeling among many non-STO educators was, in fact, that the SPS negotiator had "given away the ship." There being some truth to the statement that past successes create high
expectations for the future, one can assume that with membership at an all-time high (2,600 members), the expectations of the membership for subsequent negotiations were generally high. The leadership, then, was expected to deliver, to make good on their public statements about the worth of STO membership.

If these influences encouraged a crisis complex, what were its actual elements? The data from 1970 to 1972 are again instructive.

The elements of the crisis complex appeared in three stages. The first stage involved a change in the ongoing awareness of, and attention and sensitivity to, perceived organizational survival needs. A second stage, periodically arising out of the first, entailed defining possible threats to organizational survival as crises. The final stage, also periodic in occurrence, consisted of developing a supportive belief system around the initial crisis definition.

Events as far back as eighteen months prior to the May 1972 failure of the strike vote provided data for the first stage. Customarily, the normal business of the STO was routine and generally uneventful. The Board of Directors minutes offer some typical examples:

The Scholarship Fund was turned into a fund to be used for the training of teachers. (4/15/71)

Mr. Smith also indicated interest in the letter regarding the tour services of the STO's business services committee is setting up. Free checking services for members has been looked into. (4/19/71)

The minutes additionally describe a discussion about an European tour and cancer care insurance program (1/14/72), tax guides for teachers (11/13/72), day care centers for teachers (11/27/72), and food discount services (12/11/72). Routine STO activities, then, were utilitarian in
their orientation, seeking to fulfill an organizational need (the continued satisfaction and participation of its members) through meeting member needs (their economic welfare).

Administration of the contract was another important routine matter. Staff Director Curt Brenner offered an example:

It doesn't make much difference whether or not you have a good contract because the most important thing is having a 'living' contract. We have averaged three or four grievances every day which is a good sign. (Representative Council minutes, 9/16/71)

These activities, coupled with ongoing member and leader recruitment and training, were directed at meeting perceived minimal organizational needs.

At the first stage of the crisis complex, however, several other factors--the organization's continuous external focus, its constant perception of threat to survival, and its preoccupation with these threats--altered that normal conception. Several examples illustrate the point. Grievances, for example, took place, were processed, and resolved outside the STO, actually within the SPS. Furthermore, financial resources in the form of member dues were collected and dispersed externally through the SPS. Employment policy, too, set by the Board of Education, and the additional economic services described above all came from sources outside the STO. The point may be made also that, theoretically, the function of the STO like other voluntary organizations was protective and integrative (Steinberg, 1977), and to perform both functions the STO was constantly compelled to direct its attention externally.

The presence of perceived threats, of course, increased that attention. As stated elsewhere, the threats appeared to be numerous.
For one, the STO was prepared to engage in a power struggle (as they perceived the move) for control of the school operation. Additional comments made during the 1971 negotiations again clearly indicate this attitude:

Mr. Priestley [Bill Priestley, SPS negotiator] emphasized the need to clean up the existing agreement and remove all information that relates to administrative procedure. (Negotiations notes, 4/71)

Later, Priestley's adversarial position toughened:

Bill laid it on the line, "The STO is out to take all the power away from management and do all they can to disrupt." (Negotiations notes, 7/71)

A number of other matters relate in some fundamental way to the power struggle between the SPS and STO. Not only was the possibility of losing hard-won gains threatening, but Priestley himself was seen as a threat, as implied in a brief Board of Directors motion of 4/71: "I move that a dossier be compiled of the SPS negotiators, especially one for Bill Priestley." Moreover, there had been bargaining impasses in two successive years, and the potential for disruption created by such events was also seen as threatening. Finally, there was some apprehension about the outcome of the bargaining election scheduled for November 1971. The apprehension was not so much about who would win the election, but as to the magnitude of the victory: "... something like only 60% to 40% for STO as the exclusive representative" (Board of Directors minutes, 2/71) was seen as possibly a no-confidence vote for the STO leadership.

A content analysis of Board of Directors minutes in the month preceding the anticipated crisis illustrate that preoccupation.
Conceptually, the Board customarily dealt with four types of issues: (1) economic services to members; (2) general member program and training activities; (3) matters of internal governance and operation; and, (4) events and issues relating to its dominant goal activity, the power relationship between the STO on the one hand and the Board of Education on the other. The latter constituted the dominant activity, and as Curt Brenner later reflected:

Collective bargaining has been it . . . . Bargaining became the total focal point of organizational activity.
(Interview notes, 9/76)

Moreover, examining the frequency with which items appeared in Board of Directors minutes, beginning in January 1972, and running through the STO-defined crisis period (April 10-May 4), and on to the beginning of the 1972-1973 school year, one gains a sense of the relative emphasis given to power relations issues in a perceived crisis period:

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As the Board of Directors approached a situation it defined as a crisis, its attention to matters other than power relations diminished. Both priority and agenda item placement (not shown above), and the crisis identification indicate that the leadership became increasingly preoccupied with threats arising out of the power struggles with SPS. Subsequently, the STO concept of organizational needs changed from economic services and program activities to the matter of surviving and winning the power struggle. Figure 4A depicts that sequence.

![Diagram](image)

Figure 4A. Crisis Complex Stage 1: The Changing Conception of Organizational Needs

The perceptual changes present in the first stage of the crisis concept led to a second stage, a redefinition of perceived threats as possible crises. The Board of Directors initiated the process, in part, by its creation of an ad hoc Crisis Committee. Later, the Field notes record:
The Crisis Committee had met three times to come up with some idea of how the Committee should function and what it should be doing. The Committee feels that its main objectives are to keep the membership informed during a crisis by being a source of authoritative information, a source to supply picket lines in case of a strike, and to work to push the actions of teachers. (Minutes, 3/71)

The Crisis Committee assumed a crisis identification function and went on to define three future crises:

The Crisis Committee has considered three possible crises. One would be a bargaining election, a strike, and the third, a possibility of not receiving a contract by the last day of school. (3/15/71)

A similar committee, assuming a similar role, emerged the following Spring during the conduct of negotiations:

Alfredo Nevarez moved "that a Crisis Committee be established to assess the crises and the feeling of the membership as a starting point, and then make recommendations to the Board of Directors for action." (Board of Directors minutes, 4/10/72)

At both points in time, the identified events were threats. There were however, no discernible elements of surprise nor of short response time in any of them. Yet, it can be assumed that given the nominal character of most voluntary organization member participation (generally about 20% of the enrolled membership) (Smith and Freedman, 1972), the definition of threat as "crisis" became functionally necessary for the STO. Its use of the term conveyed a message to the SPS, a message other mechanisms such as the application of external political pressure, the attempted election of sympathetic board members and the continual filing of grievances, had been unable to do. Beyond that, such a redefinition had the incremental effect of creating a much needed sense of urgency in the mind of STO members, thereby enabling
the leadership to coalesce member sentiments and increase member activity in the direction of leader identified goals.

In terms of its impact upon the state of mind found among the STO leadership, Figure 4B illustrates Stage 2 of the crisis complex.

Figure 4B. Crisis Complex Stage 2: The Redefinition of Threat as Crisis

The third and final stage of an emergent crisis complex arose out of the growing sense of urgency. The activities (termed herein "crisis routine") initiated as a result of the initial crisis definition enhanced the belief that what the STO perceived to be a crisis was both real and probable. Other beliefs supported this perception. The SPS had stated each year, in public and in private negotiations, that removal of items that the STO considered imperative from the contract was a priority. Merely the threat of their removal was translated by the STO to mean that the SPS intended to destroy the teacher organization, and its almost fatalistic belief gave credence to the belief in crisis probability. Acting on the basis of this belief, the STO leadership authorized creation of a special fund described thus in the minutes of the Representative Council:
... [A tremendous] financial burden on the STO is developing and the request was made for $5. member donations. This member donation is to be put in a crisis fund and distributed by the officers. (Minutes, 2/18/71)

By March 1 of that same year, the Crisis Committee and the Crisis Fund (already containing $3,000) were operative, and additional planning grounded in the probability of crisis occurrence proceeded rapidly. Within the same month, the minutes also report that Brenner communicated another belief to the Board of Directors:

Next Wednesday and Thursday, March 24 and 25, we are going to start our negotiations . . . . Mr. Brenner said that this April 1 deadline [for completion of negotiations] could not be reached. Most likely on April 1, the team will be in an impasse. (Board of Directors Minutes, 3/18/71)

The probability of crisis occurrence, it appeared, had in Brenner's mind, given way to a belief in its inevitability. Thereafter, the time between Brenner's private expression of belief within the STO and public crisis announcement was a matter of several weeks. Interim discussions of a strike and accompanying preparatory activities contributed to making the probable inevitable. As it turned out, the impasse did occur, later than expected (May 12), and the parties went to mediation. Most of the summer of 1971 found the STO and SPS locked in conflict. Issues were not even temporarily resolved until immediately prior to the 1971-1972 school year.

The emergent crisis complex was again present the following year. The crisis definition, however, came later in the negotiations process. The private announcement within the STO came on April 10, almost eight weeks into negotiations, at which time the STO leadership
perceived that its April 26 deadline for receipt of a satisfactory salary proposal would not be met. That likelihood was termed a "crisis."

One may conclude from the increasing frequency of meetings during April that there was indeed a changing conception of the likelihood of crisis. The normal pattern of biweekly Board of Directors meetings was altered following the formation of the Crisis Committee on April 10. Within four days, the Committee had convened. Its sketchily hand written notes are indicative of an evolving crisis state of mind:

Every secondary school has to close--Strike Task Force would organize. Recommend a strike task force . . . assess crisis . . . recommend pro decision. Recommend creation of strike task force--to include getting the commitment of members. (Undated committee report)

The three person committee was acting, although without unanimity, as if the crisis assessment for which it was charged was to be operationalized as a strike. Indeed, on April 14, the Crisis Committee Chairman recommended "that a strike task force be created to set up the mechanics and make preparations for a strike" (Board of Directors minutes 4/14/72). The recommendation was accepted and other preparations ensued. The Crisis Committee was dissolved, only to be reconstituted in larger form as the Strike Task Force. Once again, the STO was acting publicly as if a crisis was but one of several outcomes. Privately, however, the machinery was in place for a crisis action: hence, the April 27 hot line message--"The organization is on a crisis alert." Figure 4C illustrates the third stage of the complex.
The overall development of the crisis complex is represented in Figure 4D. However, several features of the overall complex require additional mention. One is the implicit notion of a stepwise progression in the representation. The assumption is made from the empirical data that each stage progresses linearly and is therefore dependent on the preceding stage. Propositionally, one can lay the progression out as a linear series of antecedents and consequences, whereby the final consequence is a state of mind which perceives the creation of crisis as inevitable. That kind of a representation is in a sense deceiving in its simplicity, for the subsequent acting out and transference of the crisis frame of mind bears a close resemblance to a second notion, the "self-fulfilling prophecy." One can abstract from Merton's (1957) discussion of the so called Thomas theorem (named after its originator) the elements of that prophecy. An initial false definition of a situation evokes new behavior guided by that definition, behavior which causes the false definition to become true. This definition is then viewed as having been accurate all along. The cyclical interaction between the crisis complex and the crisis routine appears to mirror this process closely. What was once a crisis possibility
Figure 4D. The Elements of a Crisis Complex
becomes a probability through a series of actions as the leadership begins to believe in the reality of its definition. Subsequent actions eventuate the probability of that definition into a belief of crisis inevitability. In the words of STO leaders, "snowballing" (Interview notes, 11/76) takes place. The strike vote had to be taken, in a sense, to fulfill the original prophecy. It remains to be seen what activities comprised the crisis routine, and how they communicated the crisis belief.
Activation of the Crisis Routine

During the Spring of 1971 and again in 1972, the crisis complex described in the previous section provided the impetus for activation of a planned set of organizational activities, conceptualized herein as a "crisis routine." The use of the concept "routine" is deliberate, attempting to convey a sense of regularity, established procedure, and repetitiveness. Moreover, in using the term, one has a feeling of certainty and predictability. This is consistent with the conflict literature where routine, or other similar terms ("styles," "modes," "rituals") have been analytically applied to explain recurring patterns. Pondy (1967), for example, asserts that the management of conflict is often routinized into predictable patterns, enabling an organization to successfully deal with conflict phenomena.

A parallel may be drawn for analytical purposes from Pondy's notion, suggesting that organizations may also attempt to develop "crisis routines," i.e., recurring institutionalized means for handling unexpected events, as well as conflict routines. A number of organizations, e.g., Civil Defense agencies, police and fire departments, and the American Red Cross come immediately to mind. To this type of organization, crises are an expected environmental condition, and crisis routines are typically employed following the occurrence of widely acknowledged crisis events. Moreover, these routines are in intent overtly quite unlike those developed and used by teacher organizations facing perceived crises, possibly of their own creation,
which objectively have yet to occur. But, there are functional similarities between the two types in terms of the unquestioned assumption of valued goals and objectives implicit in the routine, the relatively fixed sequence of directed activities, and in the reliance on the programmed features of the routine to carry the organization through crises. These and other functional similarities make the crisis routine concept useful in examining the sequence of STO activities leading up to the May 1972 no strike vote.

For the STO, the crisis routine had local and national origins. At the national level, the Organizing/Crisis Assistance Office had developed a crisis coordination manual for use by local affiliates and for Field Representative training. The manual laid out in considerable detail the necessary arrangements for the conduct of crisis--a local teacher strike. The arrangements included: (1) an organizational schematic which would supplant the normal decision making structure during the crisis period; (2) an elaborate set of role descriptions detailing an array of role assignments for local and non-local people; (3) a detailed work plan providing specific direction for organizational communications, expenditures, and time usage; and, (4) a carefully crafted plan for organizationally presenting itself to its members, adversaries, supporters, and the public-at-large. The plan was viewed as primarily "assistance," although in its conception and execution it was often controlling. The element of control was given added substance by virtue of the contractual/financial arrangement invariably drawn up between the national and the local. Despite this, there was latitude for local modification
in order to take local variables and requirements into account, and that flexibility frequently allowed locals to contribute to the plan.

In its local expression during the Spring of 1972, the crisis routine's most explicit statement was recorded in an April 18 memorandum developed by STO Assistant Staff Director Sam Bunker. Bunker presented his work nine days prior to the introduction of economic items at the negotiations table on April 26. Portions of the memo give the reader a flavor of the planned activities arising out of the crisis complex:

The Board of Directors of STO has instructed me to prepare and execute a public relations program geared to the creation of enough pressure to bring about a suitable salary proposal by April 26, 1972. I propose the items listed below:

1. I shall send to each teacher a flyer in which a question and answer format about negotiations is used . . . .

2. Preparing petitions for each school faculty to sign urging an early and equitable settlement of negotiations. These would be presented to the Board President.

3. I shall photograph the Negotiations Team and will publish this picture along with a paragraph from each team member about the way they view current negotiations. I feel this is necessary for teachers to know who is representing them and to begin to identify with the team members . . . .

4. Endeavor to get either or both of Siringo's newspapers to devote an editorial to urging the SPS and STO to come to an early and equitable settlement.

5. Meet with the Governor, the State School Superintendent, and the State Director of School Finance sometime between April 18 - 21. The purpose is to generate pressure for an early and equitable settlement.

6. Circulate flyers to several shopping centers this weekend urging the public to call school board members and to press for an early and equitable settlement in STO-SPS negotiations. Telephone numbers of Board would be on the flyer.
7. Meet with PTA Presidents on Monday, April 24, 1972. The purpose is to enlist their support in pressing for an early and equitable settlement.

8. President John Robbins to communicate with teachers via KSNL Radio on Monday, April 24. This would reach the teachers and create in them a feeling of a certain urgency and at the same time alert the public to the need for an early and equitable settlement in STO-SPS negotiations. (April 18, 1972 Memo)

While additional evidence supportive of the crisis routine concept is forthcoming, several preliminary points are apparent from an analysis of the memorandum. At first glance, there appears to be a departure from customary decision making methods. Take, for example, the statement contained in the first paragraph of the Memo: "The Board of Directors of STO has instructed me to prepare and execute a PR program ...." The cover sheet to the same memo also states:

I presented these proposals to President John Robbins, Staff Director Curt Brenner, and Negotiations Team Chairman, Chet Bronson. I received their approval for going ahead. (April 18, 1972 Memo)

Ordinarily, review and final approval would have come from the Board of Directors. Given that small group perception of an urgent situation, the normal decision making process was set aside, indicative of a trend found elsewhere in the data regarding the making of other decisions.

A second conceptual dimension of the crisis routine might be termed efforts at strengthening the internal organization. Stated in the words of one Negotiating Committee member, "basically, we had the job of getting the troops together" (Interview notes, 3/79). Through the distribution of individual flyers, the preparation of
petitions, and participation in the radio talk show, Bunker and the STO leadership expected to generate concurring member sentiments. There is explicit reference in the Memo to identity, urgency, and equity. In fact, the memo displays almost an obsession with equity and urgency. Bunker clearly understood the worth of identity, if not the other sentiments:

I feel this [publishing captioned pictures] is necessary for teachers to know who is representing them and to begin to identify with the team members. This will be very important as we go along. (April 18 Memo)

Other efforts were to follow.

Various other dimensions are also suggested in the Memo. The creation of external pressure, as evidence by the proposed meeting with the Governor and the solicitation of community support are two. Beyond the April 18 memorandum, however, there are stronger indicants of the routine.

A prominent feature of the routine were changes in the STO role structure. Described in Chapter 3, the role structure became horizontally more differentiated as the crisis routine expanded. The ad hoc committee structure, for example, was enlarged, first on April 10 with the creation of the Crisis Committee, again on April 14 with the appointment of the Strike Task Force, and finally, prior to May 2, with the formation of the Strike Task Force Steering Committee. The immediate task load was primarily shifted from the standing Negotiations Committee to these ad hoc committees, and the operation of other standing committees such as Business Services, Constitution, and Member Rights came to a temporary halt. Furthermore,
the traditional organizational chart was displaced by another created by the Strike Task Force. The April 27 special Board of Director's meeting minutes describe the action of that body in making the change:

Randall Duncan (Filmore Mid School) moved "that we accept the organizational schematic of the Strike Task Force . . . . Motion carried without dissenting votes." (Minutes, 4/27/72)

The schematic as depicted in the crisis coordination plan, spelled out a variety of crisis roles, and identified a "Crisis Leader."

Official positions and titles were generally set aside, because such criteria did not appear paramount in placement of people within the crisis role structure. President John Robbins, however, was designated later as the Strike Task Force Steering Committee Chairman, the equivalent of the "Crisis Leader."

In addition to role structure changes, there were also departures from or alterations in constitutionally based decision making procedures. The April 18 memo gave evidence that the normal decision approval procedure had been replaced by a more streamlined mode, ostensibly to expedite the implementation of the PR program. Also, the numbers of people directly involved in decision making had been successively reduced. One indication came at the April 20 Representative Council meeting:

President-Elect Fred Olson reported that "The Board of Directors . . . indicated that the Negotiating Committee's recommendations would also be recommendations of the Board of Directors." (Minutes, 4/20/72)

The wishes of the five member Negotiating Committee (which included Staff Director Curt Brenner) would automatically become those of the twenty-seven member Board of Directors. The smaller Strike Task Force,
at least partially comprised of the Negotiating Team, was further reduced in the formation of the Strike Task Force Steering Committee. That group also contained Brenner, Negotiations Chairman Bronson, Robbins, and a negotiations consultant from the national affiliate, Hal Ryan.

One important feature of decision making procedures did not change, and it is mentioned here only briefly, for later it will be argued that the lack of change in this feature had an important consequence for the STO's ability to objectively assess the parameters of the situation in which it found itself. One can infer from the minutes of the Representative Council that the Council's decision making had been influenced for some time by the presence of the Board of Directors' member at Council meetings. The Council itself was comprised of one school site representative from each school within the district. Its meetings were chaired by the STO President, who typically requested Board of Directors' members to attend. Such attendance encouraged the convening of representation from all levels of the organization. In a representative year the Council met four times, at which times it sat as the primary constitutionally vested policy making body, and as such formulated the broad goals and objectives of the STO. This constitutional intent, however, was often displaced by two processes. One was the practice of agenda control by the STO President and the full-time staff. Another may be observed from evidence on April 30 stated thus:
The President made opening comments regarding the negotiations situation with SPS.

Chet Bronson, Negotiating Committee Chairman, made a report on the Board's last offer.

Sally Fox [Board of Directors member] moved "that the Representative Council adopt the recommendations of the Board of Directors and the negotiations committee to reject the board's proposal of April 29." Seconded by Carol Gleason.

Charlene Grogan [Board of Directors member] moved the previous question. Seconded by Rita Burnette [Board of Directors member]. Motion carried.

Sue Conove [Board of Directors member] moved "that the original motion be declared an emergency." Jim Phillips [Board of Directors member] seconded. The motion carried.

(Minutes, Special Representative Council meeting, 4/30/72)

The above was the sum total of conducted business. The chosen course of action had originated out of the evolving committee structure described earlier and had been previously endorsed by the Board of Directors. The apparent approval of the primary policy making body, the Representative Council, had come in a meeting where the Board of Directors members, not Council members, had assumed the dominant and directive role, and the formal motions came from them. This influence on decision making was to have other implications elsewhere.

An additional feature of the crisis routine, briefly mentioned earlier, was efforts at strengthening the internal organization. In engaging in these efforts, the STO leadership was investing in what might analytically be explained as a "Homanian progression."

Homans, in his sociological classic, The Human Group, advanced a number of hypotheses linking the fundamental concepts of activities, interactions, and sentiments. Noting their interdependent nature,
Homans suggested that the elements could be arranged in a determinant-effect spiraling progression. Selecting sentiments as the conceptual point of departure, the progression might look like this: a set of shared sentiments among a group is likely to lead to the experiencing of common activities, the interaction therein will then lead to an increase again in shared sentiments, and the cycle will repeat itself at progressively more intensive levels. For the STO, the triggering of this type of progression was vital to the eventual achievement of its goals, and analytically speaking, organizational efforts comprising the crisis routine were predicated upon the progression's occurrence.

How did the STO go about triggering the progression? The process was initiated in early January of 1972 with the development of a negotiations survey to be disseminated among its members. The survey contained ten identified problems and ten corresponding solutions. Following its approval with modifications by the Board of Directors on January 17, the survey was conducted in member meetings at each school (an interaction opportunity). There, teachers were asked to rank each of the problem/solution statements according to perceived importance. After compilation of the responses, the results were published in the STO newsletter, Ahora, as the acknowledged goals and means for the annual negotiations effort. Member participation was to accord legitimacy to a structured set of goals/means, and the membership, it was expected, would offer greater support due to their involvement in the goal setting process. There was also opportunity for teacher input into negotiations through the content area representatives on the Negotiations Committee,
and it can be suggested that a likely consequence of these generally structured efforts was an increase in member expectations for the full realization of the identified goals.

During the beginning of negotiations, another series of efforts were made to keep members informed of progress (or the lack thereof) at the table. As an example, the February 19 edition of the Herald Telegraph published, at STO request, the major points of the negotiations goals under the headline "Siringo Teachers seek 7% salary hike for 1972-73." In addition to the periodic newspaper reports, the STO newsletter and issue oriented flyers--gauged to build member sentiments--frequently reported the STO perspective on the negotiations progress. STO Negotiations Committee member Sally Fox recollects the content of such communiques:

We reported . . . that things were going smoothly, that we were optimistic . . . the reports were beautiful . . . (Interview notes, 2/79)

The membership, given this kind of authoritative assurance, had adequate reason to expect that negotiations would be successfully completed in a reasonably short time, and these expectations formed the basis of member sentiments at that time.

It was sometime late in March when, recalling the presence at that time of the crisis complex among the STO leadership, it was revealed in internal discussions that there were to be changes in strategic thinking. A press would be made to have an equitable salary proposal (author's emphasis) from SPS on April 26, and in the minds of STO leadership the strategic change loomed as a crisis. An abrupt change in member sentiment was needed and quickly. The
earlier "beautiful reports," then, "became a real problem"
(Interview notes, 3/23/79). A redirection of sentiment, now involving
the transmittal of the crisis belief, was imperative, and analytically,
the STO again relied on the efficacy of the sentiment-activity-
interaction progression.

In order to transmit the crisis belief, the routine was
expanded in several ways. A member of the Crisis Committee suggested
boycotting a district activity on April 12, thereby providing an
opportunity for teachers to collectively engage in a common activity.
The boycott did not materialize, but other activities followed. One
involved a flyer sent to teachers:

Lucille Mitchell moved . . . "that the STO office
provide a paper which will show the effect of the
7% increase to the individual teacher in SPS."
(Board of Directors minutes, 4/14/72).

The flyer was part of the larger public relations program, whose
central purpose was "to include strong inference of the idea that
failure of such results [satisfactory salary settlement] would
necessitate crisis action . . . " (4/72).

As evidenced in the increasing numbers of newspaper articles
and flyers, two changes were noted. One was the gradual use of a
different language system, i.e., the language of confrontation.
Phrases like "intimidation and coercion of employees," "omnipotent
and omniscient management," "at the complete mercy of the Board,
"totally repressive in contract negotiations," and "our dignity is
not for sale," were used to express the formal sentiments. SPS
reiterated with similarly accusorial phrases, like "grossly deceptive,"
"rumors, half-truths, untruths," and accused STO of "usurping management rights." A good bit of this exchange was public posturing, but the growing use of such terms personified the conflict, assisted in the identification of the "enemy," and forced the perception of a "we-they" dichotomy in the minds of people on both sides. It also made the credibility of either side, in the eyes of many teachers and of the public, subject to question.

If the changing language system was the vehicle employed to demonstrate superiority over the other party, the growing number of issues became the substance of that demonstration. As the opening narrative in this Chapter attempted to convey, throughout the deployment of the crisis routine issues multiplied. A number were strictly economic in nature: the amount of the available monies (and subsequently the size of a reasonable salary increase); the structure of the salary schedule; class size; and, activity increments. Others involved non-economic working conditions: a discipline policy; the guaranteed presence of instructional supplies and equipment; and, the adequacy of physical education programs. Yet others involved governance of the schools: the role of the school site building committee; and, the procedures for pilot program implementation. A final set consisted of matters of individual principle and organizational integrity, phrased by the STO as: "preservation of dignity and respect," "receiving a fair share," "professional standing," "teacher willingness to hold to positions," and "organizational ability to bargain for teachers."
As May 3 approached, two trends emerged from the issue rhetoric on both sides. One quite simply was that the number of issues in the minds of members and the public increased. A second dealt with the manifest purpose of the proliferation of issues. It is less than clear from available evidence whether the proliferation was a deliberate STO tactic. However, conventional labor-management wisdom, in which the STO was well versed, suggested keeping issues simple, few in number, and economic in nature. However, the point can also be made that multiple issues provide multiple foci around which member sentiment can coalesce, and it appears that the STO's tactical change from strictly economic, utilitarian pleas in late April, to normative appeals in early May (witness Curt Brenner's response to questions at the general membership meeting) was calculated to generate substantial, unified membership sentiment for the STO's recommended course of action.

Forums, of course, had to be developed to generate such sentiments, and these were created in several ways. For the lower level leadership, two Representative Council (RC) meetings were held (April 20 and April 30). Four additional Board of Directors meetings, beyond the bimonthly gatherings, were also conducted. Strong efforts were made therein to encourage RC members to meet and talk with all teachers at each school, and a telephone campaign additionally increased interaction opportunities between leaders and members. Furthermore, the SPS proposals of April 26 and 29 were reproduced and disseminated to each member, and a general referendum was held May 1 on these proposals. The general membership meeting slated for May 3 was to provide the culminating interactive activity.
Two other dimensions of the routine were designed to influence the occurrence of the progression. One was specified in the April 18 memorandum: the creation of external political pressure. This was to be accomplished through the attempted enlistment of support from influentials within the city and the state. These influentials included the Governor, the State School Superintendent, and the State Director of School Finance. Others were approached, and the tactic met with some success as one high ranking official was later reported to have intervened on behalf of the STO (Interview notes, 1/79). President Robbins later recalled another attempt: "We tried to meet with the Board, but never did . . . " (Interview notes, 3/79).

The final dimension of the routine was the increase in external intervention by state and national affiliates. The data suggest that the STO made the initial request for intervention:

Martha Van Dyke (Pinon Elementary School) moved "that the STO's national affiliate be notified of the impending crisis and their advice and assistance be requested now . . . . Motion carried." (Board of Directors minutes, 4/7/72)

Shortly thereafter, several members from the National Organizing Team who had previously conducted the bargaining representation election in Siringo, returned "to help us with the strike . . . to write the contract" (Interview notes, 3/79). Subsequent Board of Directors minutes indicate that negotiations consultant Hal Ryan in particular began appearing before STO meetings at all levels to answer questions and offer advice. Ryan was also placed on the
Strike Task Force Steering Committee, and there the crisis routine, the "strategy . . . was worked out with the person from the National [Ryan]" (Interview notes, 3/79). Several NLEO staff were also brought in to assist with the conduct of the May 3 meeting--the culminating activity in the crisis routine. The Herald Telegraph reported their presence: Representatives of the STO's national affiliate and the Nueva Loma Education Organization were reported in town "assisting the STO and its efforts to obtain a fair and equitable agreement" (Herald Telegraph, May 3, 1972).

The routine then, had five conceptual dimensions: changes in the STO organizational structure; alterations in internal decision making procedures; efforts at strengthening the internal organization; the creation of external political pressure; and, the increase in external intervention and reinforcement.

The overall effect of the routine can be illustrated by use of a mechanistic analogy. The cyclotron, a subatomic particle accelerator, was designed for use in high energy physics experiments to examine the behavior of subatomic particles (primarily protons and neutrons) in electromagnetic fields. A typical experiment involves the gradual acceleration of a particle, propelled by means of alternating electrical fields, within a constant magnetic field inside the cyclotron's circular structure. When sufficient velocity along this circular path is reached, the particle is discharged through an opening, and is frequently "aimed at" another "target" particle, with theoretically predictable results.
The physics experiment is analogous in a sense to the STO's organizational utilization of a crisis routine. The crisis complex provides the initial motivation (propulsion), and the various elements of the routine propel the probable crisis event toward inevitability. The mechanism, as in the cyclotron, is alternating, for action on the part of the STO invariably provoked an SPS counter-reaction which reinforced the STO's initial beliefs and elicited yet another and stronger STO reaction. One SPS official termed it "trading one missile for another missile" (Interview notes, 12/78). The alternating exchange continues over a period of time, gradually increasing in intensity until one party forces the issue, believing it can accurately anticipate and control the results. There, the analogy weakens, for in the cyclotron experiment, the consequences of experimentation are highly predictable. In the crisis situation under consideration, however, this apparently was not so, for there appeared to be a series of unanticipated consequences resulting from the implementation and usage of the routine. Further, these consequences were in some respects negative and not clearly understood by the STO. The discussion of these phenomena follows.

An immediate consequence of the crisis routine was that member outcome expectations spiraled, but not entirely in the manner desired by the STO. One can infer from the data that usage of the negotiations survey and the repeated communiques had separate but similar effects on the members and the leaders. For the members, the effect was to incrementally raise their estimation of probable achievement of identified goals (the 7% salary increase, for example). On the other
hand, the effect of widespread member participation in these survey efforts was to independently raise leadership confidence in their own ability to achieve those goals. The frequent expressions of leader confidence reinforced these expectations. Coupled with the generally optimistic reports delivered repeatedly by the Negotiations Committee, these effects encouraged members to reasonably expect that goals could be quickly reached through conventional bargaining means prior to the end of the school year.

As these expectations increased they demonstrably created an increased press on the SPS. The May 2 negotiations notes illustrate the form that press took:

Baker: We are unable to meet your demand in your salary offer.
Brenner: Is that it?
Baker: That's the picture.
Brenner: We told the teachers to accept it or reject your offer. They rejected it. (Negotiations notes, May 2)

The rejection encouraged the STO leadership to press harder for their demands. It also communicated a sense of member pressure to the SPS, and two days later, May 3, the SPS negotiator in attempting to avert a strike made some movement at the negotiating table.

Not only were expectations rising relatively with respect to goal achievement, but absolutely as well. This was evidenced by one supporter's statement on the evening of May 3:

You haven't really told us about our other priorities. But I want to take the risk for richer stakes. Let's throw in a little more into the pot. I think we have to set the stakes a little higher . . . . (Tape transcription, May 3)
The STO neglected to foresee that a likely consequence of the carefully developed building process was a rapidly rising potential for frustration of member expectations, and therein lay one of several future conditions for the development of intraorganizational conflict.

A second consequence may have been less apparent, for there is no mention of STO awareness in the available data. There is the available fact that the STO leadership had identified crises in each of the two preceding years, 1970 and 1971, and again in 1972. The fact was not lost on at least some members, one of whom raised the issue during the strike vote meeting:

With its usual speed and decisiveness, our STO team has again this year succeeded in putting us in an untenable do-or-die situation . . . . (Tape transcription, May 3)

Others in the same meeting received the comment with applause, indicating similar sentiments. Analytically, the suggestion is made herein that as similar crisis beliefs and accompanying routines had been developed in three consecutive years, the term "crisis" lost its extraordinary, motivating character, and members displayed open disbelief as to whether a crisis actually existed. The disbelief was acknowledged during the strike vote meeting thus: "... just who's telling the truth has been questioned on both sides" (Tape transcription, May 3). The crisis had been routinized to the point that the extraordinary became customary, and the things the STO could ordinarily count on following a "crisis" announcement, e.g., the legitimate suspension of conventional norms sanctioning means/ends, failed to occur. There was no longer an element of surprise, as the
tone of the earlier quotation indicated. One can conclude, therefore, that the long term consequence of annual activation of the crisis routine was the loss of the affective import of the term "crisis," and subsequently, the suspension of member belief in the existence of a true crisis.

The most pronounced consequence of activation was the surfacing of intense conflict, not only between the STO and the SPS, but most dramatically within the STO. The conflict between the STO and SPS, of course, had been gradually increasing, having been carried on over the negotiations table, through the newspapers and letters to teachers, and in grievance hearings. Several portions of the negotiations notes, taken immediately prior to the May 3 strike vote meeting, illustrate the conflict's mounting intensity:

Brenner: If you can't come to the table and explain the figures, it's pretty ludicrous. I'm debating the issue of every dollar you gave us. There's no way to respond to such gobbledygook. We want to bargain with people who know what the hell they're talking about. . . . When you give us a dollar figure, we can't give it any credibility at all. We made a bona fide salary offer based on figures Tellez gave us. We have communicated with state officials and legislators. You have presented us with double talk. . . . I want to negotiate with the person who knows the figures. . . .

Baker: We have indicated a willingness to negotiate these issues as well. . . . This is not our last offer on salary. We have indicated we can pay what you're seeking. . . . Right now, it's a one way street. We're not dragging our feet. You have made only one proposal. . . .

Brenner: We made a counter to your proposal, to your offer, the other day. Your priorities are all screwed up! (Mention is made of using a thirdarty) I'm leaving now. I'll be in my office. (Negotiations notes, May 2, 1972)
The following day, May 3:

(Baker presents another proposal.)

Brenner: Not good enough, Chuck.

Baker: No way you'll accept it?

Brenner: Destruction of our salary schedule. Not a fair settlement. It's not equitable.

Baker: I suggest we seek mediation.

Brenner: The Board will soon see how much it will cost. I will request through you to go to mediation. Your offer is unacceptable. We'll take it to the teachers--strike or mediation.

(Negotiations notes, May 3, 1972)

Publicly, SPS Superintendent Frank Lassiter emphasized the District's intent to keep the schools open and threatened that "failure to report for work . . . can result in termination and replacement" (reported in the Herald Telegraph, May 3). That same day, the STO leadership announced its intent to ask for a strike vote the following evening "if the Board has not come up with a better offer" (also reported in the Herald Telegraph, May 3). The conflict had reached a level where both parties felt differences were irreconcilable and continued interaction both unpleasant and unproductive. Late on the afternoon of the 3rd, Baker served the STO team with a letter to go to mediation.

During the gradual escalation of interorganizational conflict, there had simultaneously been an increase in conflict between groups and individuals within the STO. Some of these conflicts had their origins several years prior to April 1972. The growing antagonism, for example, between the NLOCT, of which many STO teachers were prominent members/leaders, and the NLEO was one such conflict.
In the early 1970s, the NLEO was going through the throes of executive succession. There was at that time reportedly "great division among the State staff" (Interview notes, 1/79). Several staff contracts were not renewed, and the NLEO President's contract was bought out, only to be renewed later in a special NLEO Board of Directors meeting. The Staff Director resigned and assumed a position with the national affiliate. A screening committee was established by the acting Director, and the NLOCT appointed two of its members to that committee. The STO and the NLOCT endorsed an in-state candidate, while other NLEO leaders endorsed an out-of-state contender, Bill Brum, who was subsequently hired.

The new NLEO Staff Director's conception of the NLEO was somewhat unlike his predecessor's. Perhaps promoted by a lack of NLOCT political support for his own candidacy, and/or reflecting a national trend, Brum attempted to develop a unified organization incorporating all teacher groups. However, the rift between the NLOCT (which wanted to maintain its separate identity) and the NLEO widened. Brum later went on to publicly attack the "pure classroom teacher organization (NLOCT)" (Field notes, 1973) and the rift became permanent.

The separation also became apparent within the STO. Two STO leaders, Jack Snyder and Lucille Mitchell, were NLOCT Presidents--Snyder in 1971 and Mitchell in 1972. Both had been active in the NLOCT and NLEO for quite a number of years, and there were other STO members who had similar histories of involvement. Snyder's and Mitchell's allegiance to the NLOCT appeared in the eyes of other
STO leaders to transcend their loyalty to the STO. Staff Director Curt Brenner was one who took a dim view of this allegiance:

I joined the Jack Snyder alliance early. But his allegiance was to the NLOCT, and we parted company over this. [Snyder] pushed hard at the NLOCT at the expense of the STO. In 1965-66, Snyder was cut out [of the STO in-group]. . . and in 1966-67, the STO began to develop bad relations with NLOCT. (Interview notes, 9/76)

Two years later, with the announced resignation of the STO's first Staff Director, Brenner and Snyder again clashed, this time over the vacant position. The interview notes describe how the position was eventually filled:

A group decided that Curt Brenner was the candidate . . . an ad hoc committee selected Brenner one night at an informal meeting . . . had the vote majority. Brenner would accept if offered . . . not a good start, but necessary. (Interview notes, 9/76)

An uneasy compromise was struck, and Snyder, who had been elected as President-elect, became the STO's first paid President. The means of selection and past clashes, however, were not forgotten by Snyder nor his numerous followers.

As Snyder was leaving office in the Spring of 1969, he initiated merger talks locally between the STO and the STC. Snyder later commented on their outcome:

I got merger talks going with STO and STC. I thought they were close, [but] the remark was made that STO wasn't really serious, and wanted to keep the STO off . . . and the talks failed. (Interview notes, 1/29/79)

The failure of the talks resulted in a permanent separation of the two teacher organizations, a separation which was also to affect the May 1972 strike vote.
Relations between NLOCT and STO were not appreciably better. Attempts were made within the STO to begin disassociation from NLOCT. President-elect Fred Olson, then a Board of Directors member, made one such attempt:

I move to delete from the Bylaws, Article XVIII, "Dues shall be payable to the NLOCT, Incorporated for all members who qualify." Mr. Olson explained that all that was being done is the NLOCT dues will no longer be paid from STO dues. (Board of Directors minutes, 2/18/71)

Despite his efforts at rationalizing such a move, the bottom line of Olson's suggestion was the removal of dues deduction, the single most important means of maintaining NLOCT membership. This and other successful attempts left a division between the two organizations—a division that several years later was to eventuate in their complete separation.

What started as an organizational conflict between the STO and the NLOCT progressively became a philosophical and personality conflict within STO. That conflict surfaced prominently in the months preceding the strike vote attempt. It was acknowledged, for example, that there were conflicting philosophical positions regarding: (1) the necessity of hiring full-time Field Representatives; and (2) the adversarial tactics which had evolved in the conduct of local negotiations. It also appeared that sides on these issues were drawn corresponding to NLOCT membership. In analyzing this the literature suggests that within organizations, conflict customarily results in: (1) the closing of member ranks around a position or a leader; (2) increased unity of organizational purpose;
(3) the strengthening of existing organizational hierarchy and leadership; and, (4) the influence of strong situational factors which tend to eliminate pre-existing personality differences within the organization (Katz and Kahn, 1978). The evidence indicates that this was not the case within the STO. Rather, the pattern of conflict which did exist more closely parallels the findings of Coser (1956). Coser suggests that conflict effects are dependent upon the antecedent organizational or group condition of consensus, for pre-conflict consensus is followed after the occurrence of conflict by greater group or organizational cohesion. However, if as Coser observes, fundamental disagreements over major goal activities exist prior to conflict occurrences, then an effect of conflict will be to further widen existing differences, to make the initial lack of member solidarity more pronounced, and even to bring about group disintegration. That this was more typical of what went on within the STO is demonstrated in a series of key decisions made by the Board of Directors during the Spring of 1972.

In February 1972, a motion was made to adopt the report made by the National Organizing Team (recall earlier mention of its suggestion to STO to assume a more aggressive posture), and to implement its recommendations. The Board of Directors minutes attest to the conflict inherent in the move:

Rita Burnette moved "that we adopt the report of the OTR [Organizing Team Recommendations] that included:
1. a 15-man Board of Directors (including Past President),
2. nine District directors elected by each High School area, an appointed grievance representative and an appointed public relations representative in each school area . . . ."
Lucille Mitchell moved to "table the Olson report. Olson had chaired the in-house analysis of the OTR report and recommendations from the Organizing Team." Seconded by Alfredo Nevarez. Motion was tabled. (Board of Directors minutes, 2/7/72)

Within two weeks, the tabled motion was reconsidered. It failed again.

Several months later, on April 10--the date on which STO internally announced the presence of crisis--disagreement arose again, this time over an activity within the crisis routine. The minutes again mention the lack of consensus:

Betty Bigelow moved "that STO boycott the Wednesday, April 12th meeting, 'Operation Involvement.' The reason for this motion is to call attention to our dissatisfaction with our crisis in negotiations ... " Juanita Hawkins moved to table the above motion. Seconded by Rita Burnett. A motion to table failed 6 to 10. Original motion failed. (Board of Directors minutes, 4/10/72)

Sally Fox recollects other disagreements at the time, particularly on the issue of striking: "It had become more apparent during Board of Directors deliberations that Lucille Mitchell [NLOCT President] was not in favor of striking" (Interview notes, 3/79).

As the STO's immediate Past President, Mitchell, with the support of others, became more determined in her opposition to striking. At an April 30 special Board of Directors meeting, she proposed an alternate course of action:

Lucille Mitchell moved "that we suspend further action for three weeks and that the Negotiations team go back to the table and negotiate the best contract possible." Seconded by Juanita Hawkins. Jack Snyder moved to table the motion .... Motion failed 9 to 11. There was further discussion of the negotiations report. Jim Davidson moved to amend by substitution "that the Board of Directors be adjourned to the Council and that no recommendation be made to the Council." Seconded by Rita Burnett. Motion withdrawn by a vote of 10 to 13. The original motion failed.
The anti-strike sentiment increased in intensity over the next several days. President Robbins recalled the emotional tenor of the May 2 Board of Directors meeting thus:

The Board of Directors made the decision to call for a strike vote in a very long and drawn out, emotional type meeting . . . [A number of members present] didn't think teachers should strike. It was against the code of ethics . . . unprofessional to strike . . . . We tried to get a unanimous decision from the Board, but I don't think we did . . . . (Interview notes, 3/79)

Indeed, the ultimate 13-7 vote was far from unanimous.

The conflict spilled over into the strike vote meeting.

Two thirds of the way through the meeting, Lucille Mitchell raised a series of questions from floor microphone #1. Her questioning of President Robbins and others on the podium was sharply worded:

Mitchell: Would you please read verbatim the guidelines from the State Board of Education that were given to Boards of Education as directives in the event of teacher strikes?

Robbins: No, I do not have them with me.

Mitchell: May I read them to you? (applause from the audience) (Mitchell reads from a prepared statement.)

Robbins: I wish you would go on to the next question. (Tape transcription, May 3 meeting)

Mitchell raised other questions—all of which Robbins and others had difficulty in fielding. Mitchell, however, appeared to be well prepared. Sally Fox, who also sat on the podium that evening later recalled:

You know, a lot of teachers believed her . . . she was a pretty strong force . . . old and established . . . the people on the platform could not answer her adequately. (Interview notes, 3/79)
Beyond the incidents arising out of the rift between the STO and the NLOCT, there were additional sources of intraorganizational conflict. There had been growing conflict for the past year, for example, between the STO and its state and national affiliates. In large part, the conflict stemmed from the conduct of the local representative election held in November 1971. Interview notes again illustrate the dimensions of the conflict:

There was not a small amount of friction between the Organizing team and the NLEO and the STO. Curt Brenner took a second seat to the team. Mike Badsgard [the national team leader] ran it in a very heavy handed way. The people from the outside made recommendations to the organization . . . and they were discarded . . . thinking "people from the outside don't need to tell us what to do."

The sources of friction were (1) the [external] handling of the money; (2) Badsgard was Black and was heavy handed—he called himself a "benevolent despot"; (3) perceived sexual misconduct by outsiders; and, (4) the questionable use of STO funds in renting a hotel hospitality suite. (Interview notes, 3/79)

The same interviewee later stated, "I asked at some point if the team was coming back." Curt or John said, "We're going to run our own show. We don't want those SOBs here" (3/79). Despite the obvious conflict, both state and national people were asked to return. Several STO leaders later felt, however, that neither wanted the STO to strike, and it is likely that their reception in Siringo was less than welcome.

The proliferation of issues discussed earlier also became a source of intraorganizational conflict. What were originally several primarily economic issues (the salary increase and the schedule index), expanded with the introduction of a number of secondary
issues, and this expansion was followed on the evening of May 3 by a suggestion from the leadership that one should also consider issues of individual principle and organizational integrity. The continuous bombardment of printed information from three sides—the STO, the SPS, and the media—regarding the substance and veracity of the issues, resulted in information overload in the minds of many members. The ensuing confusion and frustration were represented by queries such as "Just who's telling the truth?" (Tape transcript, 5/3). Member searches for issue clarity promulgated further outpourings of letters, flyers, and press releases, which frequently added to the original confusion and frustration. And, fueled by rampant rumors such as the Board's supposed plan to do away with salary schedule step increments, members in increasing numbers ceased their searches for clarification. Some expressed general disbelief, as indicated retrospectively in a June 2 elementary school resolution directed at the STO leadership:

... there exists a serious credibility gap between what the STO Leadership tells its members and what members believe. (Resolutions for Progress, June 2, 1972)

These added consequences resulting from the proliferation of conflict issues created additional intraorganizational conflict, and are illustrated in Figure 5.

Mention must be made of one final antecedent which influenced the escalation of intraorganizational conflict herein conceptualized as the cumulative effects of the organizational past. The salient event from the STO's past was the 1968 strike. Jack Snyder describes its importance thus:
Figure 5. The Consequences of Issue Proliferation
To me, it's like talking about the Civil War without talking about the Missouri Compromise. (Interview notes, 1/79)

Snyder went on to summarize a sentiment among members which four years later divided the ranks of the STO:

In 1968, we were on strike against the state legislature. In 1972, we really didn't know why we were to walk out. In 1968, there were meetings with the Governor . . . the agreement reached was not acceptable to many Siringo people [teachers]. A lot wanted to stay out, a lot wanted to go back. A lot felt that the leadership had sold them out. People were finished striking in Siringo . . . . People lost a day's pay . . . we didn't find out about losing pay until May or June. [The feeling was] we never gain anything if you don't stay out long enough. We won't go out again. (Interview notes, 1/79)

It was apparent that by May 3 there was, for a variety of reasons, an antecedent condition of intense intraorganizational conflict present within the STO, and this at a time in which the STO was deadlocked in an interorganizational conflict with SPS.

Figure 6 depicts the crisis routine activation and its consequences. One can speculate about the proportionate intensity of the two simultaneous conflicts and their effect upon the created crisis. It will be provisionally suggested here that had the intensity of the conflict between the STO and SPS dominated the attention of STO leaders/members and had it been greater in magnitude than the conflict within the STO, the so-called "crisis" the STO had created, believed in, and planned for, would have occurred. However, the strike resolution was defeated, and there is reason to speculate that other antecedents were in part responsible for the STO's failure to foresee its own involvement in an actual crisis.
Figure 6. The Anticipated and Unanticipated Consequences of the Crisis Routine Activation

* Anticipated Consequences

Unanticipated Consequences
The Antecedents of Actual Crisis

Many of the decision making protocols of the STO were the product of non-crisis organizational processes. These included leader socialization practices, the conduct and character of annual elections, the structure and operation of internal policy making bodies, and the relative influence of the full-time staff. In a word, existing protocols were a reflection of the extent of "union democracy" (Lipset, Trow, and Coleman, 1956).

The process of leader socialization within the STO was, of course, a process which evolved to obtain predictable and knowledgeable leaders. An aspiring leader had to spend an appropriate amount of time as a school site representative, in committee work and, finally, as an elected member of the Board of Directors. A young Board of Directors member at the time of the strike vote describes another part of the process:

You come into the thing as a new officer . . . . You've run for office cause you feel you can do a good job, so you want to find out how the thing works, what sort of things you're supposed to do . . . and you go to someone who's been around a long time and that person is Curt Brenner. He became, in a lot of people's eyes, "the expert" (original emphasis) and everybody knows you don't question the expert. (Interview notes, 1/79)

Leader socialization was invariably tied to the character of annual elections. At the building level, the STO, like other teacher organizations, had frequent trouble getting an elected school site representative from each building. For example, the amount of activity and time required to do the job adequately caused many faculties to vest the responsibility by fiat in the most junior
teacher in the school. Moreover, beyond the building level there was often difficulty in getting a full, competitive slate of candidates.

March of 1971 was such a time:

Lucille Mitchell (Nominations and Elections Committee) reported that there are no candidates for any of the positions. She asked that each member of the Board look among the membership for candidates to these positions. (Board of Directors minutes, 3/1/71)

These conditions, plus a constitution which allowed former officers to run after a one year lapse, creating a set of recurring influentials, described thus:

There's always been an in-group in the STO . . . changes from time to time . . . there's a lot of people who've been in it for many years, although people come and go. (Interview notes, 1/11/79)

Absent vigorous competition for elected positions, members within the set of influentials typically played the role, as Lucille Mitchell implied above, of sponsoring potential leaders through the election process. The culmination of this and the other conditions was the evolution of a relatively small, attitudinally homogeneous group in STO leadership positions.

There was the further influence of the structure and operation of the policy making bodies on decision making. The socialization/election processes created a relatively small pool of potential members for these bodies, and in relation to the paid staff/officers, these lower level representatives typically had little investment in the activities of the STO beyond periodic meeting attendance. The large Representative Council with over 100 members was apparently influenced, as described earlier, through external agenda control and
by the presence of Board of Directors members and officers. Under those conditions, one could expect that the Representative Council was not independently making substantive policy decisions. From the evidence at hand, neither was the next higher policy making body, the Board of Directors. The practice, authorized in the Bylaws, of retaining the immediate Past President on the Board, coupled with the presence of the President Elect during the year prior to assuming the Presidency, resulted in a kind of pervasive executive influence. And, there was, of course, the continued, year in/year out presence of the paid staff, whose access to information, expertise in organizational activities, and personal investment in the organization contributed to their growing influence on decision making.

These influences, coupled with the recurring membership in the standing committee structure, shaped the nature and process of decision making within the STO, and this shaping became apparent in the April 1972 crisis planning. Andy Logan, a young Representative Council member, recalled the consequences of that influence:

They [the leadership] didn't tell the people what was going on . . . . All those nice little blurbs didn't say much . . . . At that time, I was pretty active, too, and I didn't know until right at the end. Jack Snyder was a Vice President at the time. I can remember one telephone conversation. He would tell me everything he knew about negotiations. Then, there was a long blank. Then he said, "that's all I know." I would assume that the Board of Directors wasn't being completely open with the Representative Council members. I know they weren't [with me], and certainly not with the teachers. (Interview notes, 1/79)
Snyder also recalled:

I was Division 2 Vice President in 1972. There was no school in Division 2 favoring the strike. [At the] Board of Directors meeting, seven or eight people voted against calling for a strike vote. I talked to Curt and told him one girl voted for striking when her school wouldn't go. He called it "leadership"; I called it "foolishship." There were many leaders who were not listening to the members. (Interview notes, 1/79)

The evolving crisis oriented decision process also had consequences for the consideration of alternatives to striking. Under normal circumstances, the last offer of the SPS (the late afternoon proposal of May 3) would have gone to the general membership for acceptance or rejection, with a recommendation either way from the policy making bodies. The Board of Directors, by now operating out of its belief in the crisis and within the crisis organizational schematic, however, decided to reject the offer on its own, and opted to ask for a strike vote that evening. The mediation offer by SPS appeared to have been set aside. Snyder later claimed:

The leadership from the podium never brought up this letter [the letter requesting mediation dated May 3, 1972, to Curt Brenner from SPS Superintendent Frank Lassiter]. I think this is why they, the people began to wonder, "what else are they not telling us?" (Interview notes, 3/79)

Robbins, however, rejected that claim:

[What alternatives considered?] Definitely, there were discussions of alternatives before. There was no alternative [however] presented at the general membership meeting. (Robbin's interview notes, 3/79)

Hal Ryan, the national negotiations consultant--also on the podium on May 3--confirmed this, stating:
Well, many of you have questions—why strike? What does a strike do? Why now? But, I think I've answered that. Everything else has been considered and tried at some time or another. Those things have been considered... now your leadership... has come to you for a vote of confidence, for a demonstration that they have credibility with you. (Tape transcript, May 3)

One can conclude from such data that by the evening of May 3, the altered decision making protocols had resulted in an unwarranted belief in the certainty of an affirmative strike vote. Robbin's recollections of that evening reflected that certainty:

I really don't think as far as I felt that there would be any doubt that we would strike. The mood was really neat... the people were going into the Civic Center that evening, they would have struck if the vote would have been taken right away... If you've got an excited group of people... they would have hit the bricks and we'd have closed the schools the next day. (Interview notes, 3/79)

SPS officials, too, had privately made similar statements, and many STO leaders, members, and other educators within the district believed that on the morning of May 4 the schools would be closed.

The unquestioned belief in the certainty of their predictions prevented STO leaders from accurately assessing the importance of the profound intraorganizational conflict taking place within the STO. Structurally, no part of the crisis routine was designed to deal with internal problems (other than logistical matters), and there were no plans developed to counter the devastating criticism levied at the strike strategy by influential critics within the STO. This appeared particularly true regarding criticism which surfaced during the strike vote meeting. The lack of planning was grounded in an assumption that what leaders perceived to be a rising tide of supportive teacher
sentiment (witness the 10:1 rejection margin by teachers on May 1) for the strike action would be adequate enough to counter the substantial criticism raised by Mitchell and others. That assumption was found later to be erroneous, and the failure of the STO leadership to assess accurately the impact of the internal conflict upon its crisis strategem resulted in an actual crisis for the STO. It was, in the best sense of Merton's (1957) phrase, a latent and unintended consequence of activating the crisis routine. This sequence of events is portrayed in Figure 7.

At this point in the analysis, the research theoretically takes a different turn. The antecedents of a crisis have been laid out, and the subsequent description and analysis now focuses on several questions. How, for example, did the STO respond to a crisis for which it had not planned? What consequences did the crisis have for its relations with the SPS? What impact did the crisis have on organizational processes within the STO? Finally, what effect did the crisis have upon the STO's crisis complex and accompanying routine?

Crisis Aftermath: Immediate and Extended Interorganizational Consequences

To the dismay of STO leaders, the strike vote had failed, and what had been planned for and expected to be a resounding display of STO power had unanticipatedly turned into a crisis. The immediate consequences of this dramatic turn of events were not long in coming. For one, there were, as one might predict, immediate consequences for the relationship between the STO and the SPS. These consequences were
Figure 7. The Antecedents of Actual Crisis
to subsequently affect how the STO reacted internally as an organization to the crisis in which it found itself. Moreover, the consequences were to remain in the collective memories of both organizations through the years that followed in a pervasive way that turned interorganizational consequences in 1972 into antecedents of other events at future stages in the relationship.

The first indication of the consequences came early the following morning, May 4. The Herald Telegraph began its report of the eventful membership meeting by announcing what it saw to be as the first in a series of consequences:

By a handful of votes, Siringo teachers put down a strike bid Wednesday night, sending negotiations between the Siringo Teachers' Organization and the Siringo Public Schools to the mediation table. (Herald Telegraph, May 4)

Previously, there had been a good deal of uncertainty and ambiguity about the exact nature of the power relationship between the STO and the SPS. Much had been stated in the media regarding what each side was willing or not willing to do vis-a-vis the other. A considerable number of these statements constituted mere rhetoric, and many teachers, administrators, and others had an imprecise idea of where the power actually lay in the relationship. Mediation had been requested initially by SPS prior to the strike vote meeting. However, SPS could not compel the STO to seek mediation, and uncertainty existed about the STO's willingness to participate in mediation. The negative strike vote provided that motivation, and in doing so narrowed STO's available alternatives to those within a range specified by the SPS. Hence, without the support of its members, the STO could do little more than agree to future procedural steps determined by the District.
The reduction of uncertainty about the power relationship clarified its superordinate/subordinate structure. Its parameters became more apparent to each party. The Herald Telegraph reported a typically pessimistic STO perception of the new parameters:

A veteran STO officer, Abel Montano, said the result of the vote means, "We negotiate from a position of weakness, that's all. There goes our future." (Herald Telegraph, May 4)

An SPS official later concurred with that perception:

The next day, they were whipped . . . [saying] "We'll take whatever you've offered." (Interview notes, 9/78)

Superintendent Frank Lassiter put STO's alternatives more gently, but with unmistakable clarity:

Lassiter said the board and the administration called for mediation assistance Wednesday afternoon "after the Staff Director of STO rejected our latest proposal and refused to present a counter-offer for our consideration. We would encourage the STO to join us in seeking third party assistance as the contract provides, from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, in order to expedite settlement of these issues." (Herald Telegraph, May 4)

Knowing that the STO could no longer use the strike threat as a weapon, the SPS was in a position to control the relationship. The inferences and polite suggestions now had considerably more force than a week ago. The STO appeared initially to accept that reality:

It is obvious that when we do meet again, STO will be working from a position of weakness. The administration is in the driver's seat now," Negotiations's Committee Chairman Chet Bronson said. (Evening Optic, May 4)

Moreover, the STO stated publicly its willingness to follow the SPS lead:

The STO also indicated that they would do the same [seek mediation assistance] following teachers' rejection . . . of an STO recommendation that they strike today. (Evening Optic, May 4)
Privately, however, the leadership had decided to attempt to set aside the mediation request and to continue regular negotiations. That position was clearly taken in a letter to Labor Relations Director Chuck Baker:

As you know, the assembly of teachers on May 3 voted to send us back to the negotiating table and bargain for the best possible contract for the next year. Pursuant to that motion, I called you and indicated that we requested to set aside the mediation request since the effect of that resolution removed any impasse and directed us to negotiate. (Letter, dated May 8, 1972)

The final paragraph of the letter represented a major change in strategic thinking:

We are ready and able to bargain with you at any time. We respectfully request that you notify us by May 10 of your intentions to either negotiate or retain the original position of seeking mediation in which event we request that, on May 10, the parties meet and select a mediator.

The STO had, within the framework of its crisis routine, been pursuing a strategy termed by game theorists as "maximin" (Luce and Raiffa, 1957), more commonly known as "going for broke." The letter's final paragraph, however, in language quite unlike that used in the crisis routine of the preceding week, indicated a change from "maximin" to "minimax"—a strategy of "cutting one's losses." While politely requesting negotiations continuance, the door was left open for mediation and the avoidance of further confrontation.

The request was to no avail. SPS was resolute in its determination to go to mediation. Superintendent Lassiter attributed the determination to feelings the Board had repeatedly expressed prior to the strike vote:
Lassiter said that later Monday he had canvassed members of the Board of Education on the question of returning to negotiations or seeking mediation and the board had indicated "we should proceed with mediation as quickly as possible."

Lassiter said the board feels it "has proceeded in a responsible manner throughout negotiations and in compliance with the contract, and that a third party would help stop the deterioration of relations between the Board and the STO leadership."

He said the Board gave as one of its reasons for its decision "the precipitous action of the STO leadership in calling for a strike in defiance of the contract . . . ." *(Herald Telegraph, May 9)*

Later the same day, "both chief negotiators petitioned the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service for assistance" *(Evening Optic, May 9)*. The request was made reluctantly by the STO, for Curt Brenner continued to publicly contend "[We] still felt that we could go back to the negotiating table without an impasse and reach a quick and fair settlement without mediation" *(Evening Optic, May 9)*. The SPS, requesting mediation all along, had therefore been able to procedurally determine the subsequent course of action for both parties, and both began meeting with the mediator on June 12.

Negotiations were quickly wrapped up by the end of June without further incident. There was no mention, for example, of their completion in the minutes of the STO Board of Directors. The *Evening Optic*’s headline, "Everyone Happy About Teacher Pay Pact" *(June 15, 1972)* infers that there had been a temporary resolution of conflict issues. The article went on to report:

Negotiations disputes over salary increases, that nearly resulted in a strike by SPS teachers a month before the end of the school year, have ended . . ..
"We are reasonable [sic] happy," said Curt Brenner, Chief Negotiator for the Siringo Teachers Organization.

Chuck Baker, Chief Negotiator for Siringo Public Schools echoed the same sentiments. (Evening Optic, June 15, 1972)

While increasing salary by an average of $675 per teacher, adding steps to the salary schedule, and increasing increments, the new contract at the same time did away with the salary indexing system. The agreed to increases, moreover, did not total 7%. Despite these STO losses, the intensity of conflict diminished, and the members of the STO ratified the contract on September 1, 1972.

The crisis aftermath—its immediate and extended inter-organizational consequences—is depicted in Figure 8.

Crisis Aftermath: Immediate Intraorganizational Consequences

There were additional crisis consequences beyond those involving the STO-SPS relationship. Primary among them were those affecting the internal operation of the Siringo Teachers' Organization. As previously described, an elaborate crisis routine built upon extensive planning had been developed. The planning had been accompanied by an intense level of internal activity during the month of April and into early May—activity geared toward insuring the success of the strike vote on the evening of May 3. That objective abruptly and unexpectedly failed to be realized, leaving the organization internally mobilized and poised for a non-existent event. What then, were the consequences for the STO?

The following day, leaders and members alike displayed a range of personal, psychological responses to the aborted crisis—responses
Figure 8. Crisis Aftermath: Immediate and Extended Interorganizational Consequences
which affected the subsequent behavior of the STO as an organization. Many felt a deep sense of betrayal, resignation, and anger. Hard feelings were reported, and Sally Fox recalled briefly an early consequence of these feelings:

Fury! A lot of analysis about why the vote failed . . . collective analytical opinions . . . (Interview notes, 3/79)

Others appeared to resign themselves to the apparent setback (recall Abel Montano's public statement, "There goes our future" (Herald Telegraph, May 4). Still others felt that the setback was only temporary, that the basic credibility and integrity of the leadership and the STO had not been harmed. The costs, too, it was felt were not irretrievable, and recovery could be accomplished relatively quickly. Moreover, as it was later revealed, while the index was lost, salaries increased more than they had for years, and members and leaders alike were pleased with the results. While differential personal responses to the strike failure were expressed, there was nonetheless a generalized negative sentiment directed toward the leadership.

The climate within the STO collectively reflected these personal feelings, and quickly influenced the development of three related phenomena. One was the temporary surfacing of past conflict issues within the STO. A second, also short-lived, was the development of a pattern of organizational avoidance behavior. Yet a third involved the STO's deliberate search for failure explanations. Temporally speaking, the three phenomena occurred concurrently. For analytical purposes here, however, the avoidance pattern will be examined first.
Avoidance, in the classic psychological sense of the term, is the response of an organism to environmental features which are painful, disagreeable, or are otherwise unpleasant. The STO, in the days following the loss of the strike vote, organizationally exhibited several behaviors which can be characterized collectively as an avoidance pattern.

The avoidance pattern was predicated on several assumptions about the predicted behavior of the SPS before and after the evening of May 3. President Robbins proffered one of those assumptions in his observations about the SPS' behavior in the early 1970s, stating "The Board always gave in . . . gave a concession or two here and there" (Interview notes, 3/79). The assumption that the STO was very much in control of the relationship was made the night of May 3 by Negotiations Committee Chairman Chet Bronson. Bronson pointed out to the assembled teachers:

And I say tonight we are not going to let them get away with it [playing games] and we've got the team, we've got the people and they know it and they are on the run and we are not going to let go until we get what is a fair and equitable settlement. (Tape transcription, May 3)

Bronson continued to make a similar assumption the following day, claiming:

I'm sure that if the majority had voted to strike our teachers would have had their priority demands met before the 7 a.m. deadline . . . . We had the Board of Education right where we wanted them before last night's vote—ready to come across with what is right for our teachers . . . . It's funny how they did manage to better their previous wage increase offer yesterday afternoon when the pressure was on . . . (Evening Optic, May 4)

Believing that it was still in control even after the defeat of the strike vote bid, the STO could continue its denial of the reality of that defeat.
The pattern had internal and external features. Internally, to teachers, a disclaimer was advanced, stating that the ability of the STO to represent them, despite the strike bid defeat, was not impaired. Externally, the attempt was made to maintain conflict, suggesting to the community and to the SPS that the power relationship between the two parties had not been substantively altered. Both features essentially denied the reality of the strike bid defeat, and resulted in the immediate aftermath in the STO leadership's refusal to confront itself with the responsibility of defeat.

These features were manifested in several ways in the days and weeks following that defeat. The Herald Telegraph reported on May 4 that STO President Robbins, when asked if he considered the action a repudiation of the leadership, said, "No. I feel they're just not ready to strike." He was later to justify leader behavior leading to the strike bid request in a departing letter to STO members:

As I began my term, I was convinced that teachers expected from their leaders positive and specific recommendations that might be necessary to deal with crisis situations. I have endeavored to deal in specifics and concrete recommendations. Today, I am equally convinced that teachers still want this in their leaders. (Letter, dated May 22, 1972)

Such convictions were not limited to the STO's chief officer. Within the Board of Directors, too, the actions of Robbins and other key crisis figures were praised and thereby reinforced:

Jim Davidson moved the following: "Be it hereby resolved that the Board of Directors commend, congratulate and in all manner praise the staff for their extra work and devotion in our time of crisis. As a token of our appreciation we do hereby invite them to lunch at our expense." Seconded . . . . Motion carried. (Board of Directors minutes, 4/72)
Inasmuch as there is no mention of leaders' shortcomings, it can be inferred that, internally, the STO leadership, in order to sustain its viability in the eyes of its membership, avoided public and private acceptance of responsibility for the strike bid defeat.

A more public manifestation of STO's avoidance behavior was its attempt to sustain the previous level of conflict. The attempt was undertaken in several ways. One was to set aside the SPS mediation request and to act as if the strike vote had not impaired the STO's ability to achieve its goals at the negotiations table. The strategy had been created through the altered crisis decision making protocol still operative within the STO. The Task Force and Steering Committees were apparently inoperative, but Hal Ryan had stayed in town, and the Negotiations Committee continued to meet regularly. The Board of Directors minutes acknowledged the creation of the strategy:

Chet Bronson, Negotiations Committee Chairman, reported on the assessment of his committee and recommended that the Board of Directors deal with the problems which had recently surfaced [the internal criticism] so that the negotiators would have backing at the negotiating table. He also recommended that we seek to set aside the mediation request and go directly to the table to negotiate. . . . [Moments later] Susan Conove moved "that the Negotiations Committee initiate negotiations immediately rather than go to mediation." Seconded by Rita Burnette. Motion carried. (Special Board of Directors meeting minutes, 4/72)

The Board of Directors, acting on the advice of the smaller decision making group, decided to sustain the conflict by sending the negotiators back to bargain again. Curt Brenner served the Board of Education with a letter to this effect May 8, several days after the strategy was announced in the local press.
Other strategies were undertaken through the media. President Robbins resumed the conflict by calling for the movement of conflict issues away from negotiations and into the public arena:

In the meantime, John Robbins, STO President, issued a statement Monday saying he is convinced that remaining negotiations should be open to the media and the public at large . . .

Under terms of the present contract, negotiations sessions are closed.

Robbins also called again for public debate "to bring before the citizens of Siringo the issues still remaining to be resolved" between STO and SPS. (Herald Telegraph, May 9)

The effect of the move would have been to move the issues outside of the contractual framework of bargaining in an attempt to elicit additional community sympathy and support for the STO position and increase pressure on the SPS.

A third and final attempt was made by retaining an attorney to represent substitute teachers who were not members of the bargaining unit which STO claimed "had been told by SPS that they were being dropped from the substitute rolls because they had indicated they would not cross picket lines in the event of a strike" (Herald Telegraph, May 9). Gauged to develop support from other groups, the strategy would have created additional pressure and conflict for the SPS.

These attempts at public displays of power were collectively unsuccessful. The public debate failed to occur in any organized form. the substitute teacher difficulties were quickly resolved, and the STO agreed to mediation on May 9.

Internal and external avoidance behavior was paralleled by an internal search for failure explanations. The psychological sense of
betrayal, anger, and resignation was felt particularly strongly among those members of the Board of Directors who had worked intensely for the success of the strike vote. On the day following the negative strike vote, those feelings were visibly present. A special meeting was convened on the evening of May 4, its purpose reported in a brief set of minutes:

The President declared the meeting to be an informal consideration for the purpose of assessing the meeting held May 3, 1972 at the Civic Center . . . . (Board of Directors minutes, 4/72)

Although the minutes list all but one Board of Directors member as being present, several members years later pointedly recalled that at the beginning of the meeting Past President Lucille Mitchell was not in attendance.

The anger and sense of betrayal of the moment intensified the search during the meeting for explanations of failure. John Robbins, presiding over the discussion, later recalled several of those proffered:

1. We should have had people on the floor lined up to speak, those would persuade those who were uncertain.

2. 1968--the strike failed. The Governor called a session, but nothing came of it. [People thought] the Staff Director sold us down the drain by saying we'd go back even though we didn't get the money.

3. The main thing [teachers ask] in a strike is "What am I going to do?" This question was raised from the floor from an outstanding leader, from a member of the Board of Directors, from a Past President. The question was "Can we be fired if we go on strike?" She knew the answer. [Interviewer: Had you planned for such questions?] Robbins' answer: No, not from her.

4. The NLEO and the national affiliate didn't give us the right type of leadership. (Interview notes, 3/79)
Appearing during the search for explanations was a belated realization of the importance of the organizational past, of the internal conflict that appeared so prominently as an antecedent to the crisis. The sentiments shared among the Board of Directors, however, seemed to focus solely on one explanation for the failure—the role played by Lucille Mitchell. Sally Fox, present as a guest at the meeting, reported on the focus dominating the informal discussion within the meeting:

There was a move to get Lucille out of STO membership. It was mostly against her. (Interview, 3/79)

Fox retrospectively played down Mitchell's role later, stating:

I don't recall what she said at the May 3 meeting, but she put the nails in the coffin . . . (Interview, 3/79)

The implication was that the vote's outcome was already fairly well determined, and Mitchell played a minor role in its defeat. At that time, however, that sentiment was not widely shared. Andy Logan, also present at the meeting, was more specific:

A lot of people thought it was Lucille Mitchell's fault . . . scapegoat . . . what happened and why she became the figure that you blame for this monumental failure was that she stood up and asked some questions . . . like "Can we lose our certificates?" No one addressed them in all of the presentations. I think Curt was afraid to bring it up because he knew there was no good answer. (Interview notes, 1/79)

With the perceived betrayal of one of its own as the preferred explanation, the Board of Directors proceeded to systematically scapegoat, to assign blame to Past President Mitchell. One interviewee recalled that although Mitchell was not initially present at the meeting, she was called by phone and asked to come down to the STO office, little knowing perhaps that she would be there to face hostile colleagues.
The Board of Directors minutes again sketch out what took place:

Susan Conove moved that the Board of Directors go into executive session. Seconded by Rita Burnette. Jim Davidson moved "that the newly elected Board of Directors members, STO staff, and Hal Ryan be permitted to remain during the session." Susan Conove seconded the motion. (Minutes, May 4)

No formal evidence remains of the discussion which transpired after Mitchell's arrival. Robbins recalled it as "a really gross scene" (Interview notes, 3/79). Others recollected that Mitchell sat with the Board of Directors around her, fending off attacks for over an hour. Logan, for one, later stated:

She became the scapegoat. It was all her fault. That's attributing a tremendous amount of power to one person . . . . [The Board] unified together against Lucille looking about for blame. (Interview notes, 1/79)

The intensity and sensitivity of the discussion can be surmised from the minutes of the meeting:

The Board of Directors reconvened into regular session.

Jim Davidson moved "that the discussion carried on in executive session be considered confidential." Seconded by Fred Olson.

Beverly Crofts moved to amend by stating that the tape of the session be erased. Seconded . . . . Motion carried. Original motion carried as amended. (Board of Directors minutes, 4/72)

While the general membership of the STO had publicly questioned the credibility of existing leadership, the Board of Directors had privately settled upon a satisfactory explanation for failure. Logan and others later recalled that the scapegoating episode had been relatively short. After Mitchell's departure from the
May 4 meeting she never returned. Six weeks later she severed her formal ties with STO:

Fred Olson [President Elect] moved "that we accept the resignation of Lucille Mitchell from the Board of Directors and that a letter of appreciation be sent to her." Seconded . . . . Motion carried. (Board of Directors minutes, 6/72)

Within a year, Mitchell left Siringo completely. The scapegoating was complete, and Mitchell was pushed out of the STO. The STO, again avoiding responsibility, could then say, as Logan later observed, "It wasn't the organization's fault, it was this one horrible person and the organization was o.k." (Interview notes, 1/79). Years later, when approached by this investigator, she refused to comment on her involvement with the STO (Personal letter, dated May, 1978).

At the same time the STO was engaging in avoidance behavior and in a search for failure explanations, the negative feelings created by the failure of the strike bid also influenced the surfacing of conflict residuals--past conflict issues which had continued over time without resolution. For one, the ongoing means/ends conflict between the STO and the state-level organizations was intensified in the crisis aftermath. Those between the STO and NLOCT were temporarily resolved as far as the STO was concerned through the involuntary departure of Mitchell and through the eventual "burn out" or voluntary departure of a number of NLOCT sympathizers. Additionally, the original conflict between the STO and the NLEO surfaced again, as the NLEO leadership received part of the blame for the strike bid defeat (recall Robbins' listing of failure explanations). Curt Brenner was later to call to the attention of the Board of Directors the "strained relations developing between the STO and NLEO" (Board of Directors minutes, 8/72).
The primary conflict residuals were the issues between the STO and the SPS which were left unresolved by the strike bid defeat, and which in time surfaced as sources of continued frustration. The unsatisfactory conclusion of negotiations resulting in the removal of the salary index and the maintenance of standards and facilities clauses from the contract added still other sources. Andy Logan sometime later expressed the frustration resulting from the conflict over the index issue:

[The index] removal cost a tremendous amount of money. The Board decided it [the index] wouldn't be there . . . . A couple of decent salary increases [over the next few years] took some of the bite off losing the index. It didn't seem like losing it was such a big deal. Then, there were a couple of years in which increases were less and people began to realize they were losing lots of money . . . (Interview notes, 1/79)

Over time, the frustration contributed to member "burn out" or voluntary departure:

You are very busy, constant meetings, flying around the country [as a leader] . . . quite tiring . . . you leave just to get out of the rat race. (Interview notes, 1/79)

Others chose to stay in the STO and lived with the frustration resulting from these unresolved issues. However, there were consequences, too, for continued participation given the ongoing frustration. As suggested elsewhere, over time the frustration led to a pervasive sense of external threat, of organizational insecurity, and of the necessity to tenaciously hold on to the remaining organizational rights and benefits. In time, the continued perception of threat regenerated the crisis complex and its operational manifestation—the crisis routine.
What appeared to be a reduction in intraorganizational conflict was illusory. The letters of appreciation to expelled leaders did little to reduce friction. Other indicators, as well, suggested that the conflict was not easily eliminated. For one, neither the STO nor the departed leaders were so generously forgiving. What survived became the latest in a continuing accumulation of salient features of the organizational past. The ever present Logan observed:

For quite a long time after that [Mitchell's departure], you'd still hear comments about that blankety-blank Lucille Mitchell. (Interview notes, 1/79)

Robbins made similar observations:

A lot of hard feelings was in the Board of Directors the next day [May 4], and I think they're still around. People still feel, you know . . . you tell them that and they are still pretty deep seated. (Interview notes, 3/79)

Similar statements about the STO were made by Mitchell's supporters, both within and without the STO.

These, then, were some of the intraorganizational consequences of the crisis occurrence in its immediate and extended aftermath. Their evolution is portrayed in Figure 9.

Crisis Aftermath: Extended Intraorganizational Consequences

With the successful scapegoating and departure of Lucille Mitchell, the negative feelings resulting from the strike bid defeat were largely expended. The STO was able then to attend to the other issues which appeared in the crisis aftermath. Following the temporary resolution of the internal conflict, a reunification sentiment became apparent. One respondent expressed it thus:
Figure 9. Crisis Aftermath: The Immediate and Extended Intraorganizational Consequences
Once she [Lucille Mitchell] quit, people at least openly said, "Let's get it together. Let's get together and find out what went wrong and how we can fix it."
(Interview notes, 1/79)

The crisis frame of mind receded, and the crisis routine was all but set aside. The Board of Directors minutes, for example, make no further mention of additional work by the Crisis Committee created before the May 3 meeting. The Negotiations Committee, however, continued its work through the completion of negotiations in June. After a brief stay, the NLEO and the national affiliate people left Siringo. Within the extended period following their departure, however, other intraorganizational consequences became apparent.

Several weeks after the strike bid defeat, pressure developed to revise the STO Constitution and its Bylaws. Two primary revisions were suggested. One involved lengthening the term of the Presidency from one to two years. John Robbins was one official suggesting the revision. He offered this rationale:

A two year term for the President without having to run again the second year [was what I suggested]. The reason is from Lucille's administration [1971]. The bargaining election was hers completely. But in the Spring Convention in Las Huertas, I had to present the strike vote. Carry over—that was the basis for the constitutional change.
(Interview notes, 3/79)

Despite this rationale and some support for the revision among top STO leadership, the suggested amendment was never passed by the Representative Council.

A second revision was brought by the Constitution Committee (Rita Burnette, Chair) before the Representative Council for review on May 18, two weeks following the strike bid defeat. The intent of the measure can be gathered from a portion of the report:
Article I

"Section 2. Any person joining the STO shall agree to subscribe to its purposes and objectives and to abide by the provisions of these Bylaws. An application for membership shall be subject to review and may be rejected by the Board of Directors."

"Section 3. Adherence to the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession adopted by the STO shall be a condition of membership."

Article VIII

Section - present language "(1)"
add "(2) The Board of Directors shall have the power to censure, suspend, expel, or reinstate a member for cause, after due notice and hearing pursuant to procedures adopted by the Board of Directors."

Article VII Recall

"Section 1. Any officer, Board of Directors member, or individual elected by members of the STO to represent the STO may be recalled from office according to the following procedures:
1. Recall proceedings shall be initiated upon petition of fifteen (15) percent of the members of the constituency of the official whom petitioners seek to recall."

[Other procedural steps followed.] (Representative Council minutes, May 18, 1972)

The intent of the proposal was clear—to provide the necessary Constitutional sanctions for control of internal dissidence. The proposed revision also vested this administrative authority in the Board of Directors, a group over whom greater control could be exercised. Such a move was predictable, for as Coser (1956) has noted, during conditions of intragroup conflict, groups are unlikely to tolerate high degrees of member dissent and can be expected normatively to cause the voluntary or forced withdrawal of the dissidents. Within the STO, the withdrawal had already been accomplished, and now the STO
leadership was attempting to legitimate prior and future actions by creation of a sanctioned mechanism for member removal. There was the final implication that rather than choosing to confront and deal with internal criticism, the STO was opting for statutory control.

These revisions were presented to the Representative Council May 18 for initial review only. Three months later, at the first meeting of a new Council (1972-73), Board of Directors member Alfredo Nevarez [also Chair of the Constitution Committee] attempted to secure passage of the suggested revisions. Former NLOCT President Jack Snyder, in a meeting typically dominated again by Board of Directors members, spearheaded a move to postpone action "until further research can be conducted" (Representative Council minutes, September 21). Action on all revisions was then set aside. One month later, following research and minor procedural changes to the original amendments, all Bylaw revisions were passed. The control mechanism was now in place.

Other revisions were also mentioned. Sally Fox, for example, recalled that:

There was talk about lessening the Board of Directors to a more workable size, but I don't think it ever got approved . . . . (Interview notes, 3/79)

Logan later suggested that the failure of this and other proposed revisions reflected STO's fear of change, stating "Some constitutional efforts were successful, if they didn't make any major changes (Interview notes, 1/79).

In the final analysis, the net effect of both suggested and approved constitutional changes was to further restrict internal
democracy within the STO. The crisis routine had already accentuated that trend. Decision making as the May 3 meeting grew closer had concentrated in a small group of officers and staff. Moreover, a paradox of member participation had occurred: as committees grew in number, the same faces kept appearing among their active participants. More opportunity, then, did not result in more member participation; it resulted in less. Had the passage of the amendment permitting multi-year Presidential terms been successful, as a number of leaders wanted it to be, the desired continuity would have been assured, but more power would have accrued to the Presidency—a position in which at that time considerable power had already accumulated. Finally, the possibility of the active curtailment of the free exchange of opinion, a benchmark of a democracy, loomed prominently with the formalization of controls embedded in the new Bylaws.

The pressures for constitutional revision were accompanied by other calls for restructuring the organization, particularly its decision making protocols. Several school faculties formally proffered recommendations for change:

WHEREAS, issues of the school site representatives' position should be that of representing their faculties to [original emphasis] the STO leadership rather than the recent reversed position of representing the leadership to the faculties;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT any question or problem brought before the full membership should first be presented to the faculties of each school by the school site representatives or other qualified STO leader after [original emphasis] such persons have had a clear informative session themselves. Following the faculty meetings, the school site representatives should then take their results of discussions, unanswered questions, and the wishes of the faculty to the Representative Council. The school site representatives should then return to their respective faculties with the consensus results of the Council
and answers to questions not handled earlier. If necessary, this procedure should be repeated in order to assure clarity of meaning and purpose and to give the Siringo Teachers' Organization leaders the true wishes of the members. False and/or misleading assumptions will not be made by either group if this communicative process is strengthened... (Directives for Progress, June 2, 1972)

In short, the directive outlined the existing constitutionally authorized decision making procedures, and the combined faculties submitting the document called attention to what they discerned to be a major discrepancy between the constitution and the manner in which key policy decisions had been made during the Spring.

Robbins and others later recalled that there were no major structural changes subsequently within the STO. The Board of Directors minutes following June 2 make no mention of review and/or official discussion of the above Directive, and it may be surmised that the Directive never reached the Board or the Representative Council—the locus of the suggested reform efforts. The review and amendment of STO leadership job descriptions did occur (Board of Directors minutes, July 17), but beyond that, no major changes were undertaken, and the STO was able to resume near-normal operations. Portions of the June and July minutes reflect the return to normalcy:

Jim Davidson moved "that the Board of Directors of the Siringo Teachers’ Organization go on record as supporting the passage of the upcoming $23+ million dollar bond election." Seconded... Motion carried.

The Division Vice Presidents reported on their plans for Division organization. Division 1 Vice President Andy Logan handed out his phone tree.

Fred Olson moved "that Business Services conduct a trip to a Dallas Cowboy game at no expense to the STO." Seconded... Motion carried.
Wilma Morales moved "that the STO file a class grievance on the alleged violation caused by the make-up day which involved the days of May 22-26, 1972." Seconded . . . . Motion carried.

The Chairman of the Membership Committee reported on plans for a membership workshop to be held on August 22, at 2 p.m. (Board of Directors minutes, 6/72 and 7/72)

It must be noted, however, that operations were normal only up to a point, for one of the little noticed consequences of the suggested restructuring involved some STO re-thinking of the relationship between it and state/national affiliates. The STO had relied on, as part of its crisis routine, financial and technical aide from the NLEO and the national affiliate. President Robbins was publicly critical of that assistance, stating:

The strategy was worked out with the person from national. That was a mistake. We thought that the person from national would know more about what should be done. (Interview notes, 3/79)

Continuing, Robbins expressed his displeasure to the national President, and made an observation about a future alteration in the crisis routine:

I still feel like [they didn't want us to strike.] [I] talked to the President and was very upset with how they had directed us. I think up until Curt left, the STO was a little more hesitant about asking them [for help]. We were damn sure about what we asked for. (Interview notes, 3/79)

With that exception, then, the operation had returned to normal.

The consequences occurring in the extended crisis aftermath are represented in Figure 10.
Figure 10. Crisis Aftermath: The Extended Intraorganizational Consequences
Crisis Aftermath: The Extended Consequences of Membership Decline

The decline in membership due to the voluntary and involuntary departure of members has been alluded to in an earlier section. There were several causes, and the decline itself was neither immediate nor dramatic, but taken together there were several long term consequences for the STO. Robbins noted the gradual decline:

Membership stayed about the same, losing fifty to a hundred members gradually over time. Departures? . . . A veteran negotiator left; Lucille Mitchell, too. (Interview notes, 3/79)

Others followed, and figures from Board of Directors reports through January of 1973 confirm Robbins' observation.

The decline in membership had meaning beyond the sheer loss of numbers. Members meant dollars, and the recent execution of the crisis routine had been expensive, although expenses had been shared with affiliated organizations. In June, Curt Brenner:

Reported on the projected financial situation for the summer months. The officers and staff will meet to study in detail cash flow, etc. but at this time it appears [that] a loan may be needed to end the fiscal year. (Board of Directors minutes, 6/72)

The Board took Brenner's assessment of the situation seriously. Rita Burnette quickly moved adoption of Brenner's three accompanying recommendations:

Recommendation No. 1
That the Staff Director with the approval of the President be authorized to create indebtedness and pay bills within budget limitations.
Recommendation No. 2
That the President be allowed to borrow money in the name of the STO up to $5,000.00 dollars to pay summer expenses.

Recommendation No. 3
That the Staff Director and President be authorized to approve expenditure of funds against the 1972-73 budget.

Seconded . . . . Motion carried. (Minutes, 6/72)

The departure of members throughout the Fall aggravated this condition, and budgets and programs alike were slightly scaled down. The later entry of new members softened the loss of human resources somewhat, but, despite the admittedly strained relations between itself and the state/national affiliates, the STO was reluctantly forced to rely more heavily on them for financial and programmatic assistance.

The departure of members had other consequences. Among them was the gradual enhancement of the power residing in the paid staff, most notably in Staff Director Curt Brenner. Brenner had emerged personally untainted by the "monumental failure" (as Logan termed it) of the strike bid. Sally Fox recounted the paradoxical effect it had on Brenner's reputation:

The membership did not go down [dramatically] as we had anticipated. It did not. SPS made a $500 increase and people thought we did it. People couldn't understand what an index was. I didn't myself for a while. We lost the index and thought it would be the end of the world. But, the salary raise [came], and Curt's image was heightened as a result. (Interview notes, 3/79)

The internal explanations advanced for the strike bid defeat all pointed away from Brenner, externally toward older leaders, to events of an earlier time, to other organizations, but never to Brenner.
New, young and aggressive leaders like Logan, Fox, Bachus, and others were elected, slowly replacing the older members of the Board of Directors, and in time assumed officer positions. Responsibility for their socialization fell upon Brenner:

You go to someone who's been around for a long time and that person was Curt Brenner. He became in lot of people's eyes the expert [original emphasis] . . . . (Interview notes, 1/79)

The succession of Fred Olson as President contributed to Brenner's accumulation of influence, as evidenced in these remarks:

I think that in the next year with Fred as President, Curt was able to really solidify power. Fred was a weak leader and none of us were really excited about him as leader. (Interview notes, 3/79)

Others observed how Brenner wielded that growing power:

You would make a proposal or resolution at the Board of Directors or the Representative Council, and [say] Curt didn't approve of it. He would speak against it . . . at times, he would have somebody else do it . . . he would call somebody in and he would list all the horrible things that would happen, and then you'd get up and speak against it. (Interview notes, 1/79)

Finally, one Board of Directors member summarized the overriding sentiment of the times:

Curt was the center of it . . . the valuing of his opinions . . . we were all Curt's people . . . . (Interview notes, 3/79)

A final noteworthy consequence of the decline of membership was the development outside of the STO of an increasing number of influential ex-STO leaders. There had been a tendency within the STO for leaders who came out on the losing end of internal conflicts to leave the STO or to withdraw from active membership. Following their departure, they frequently would flirt briefly with membership in the rival STC, or
would remain a teacher advocate outside of formal organizational membership. To some, they became known as the "in-house outsiders". The "burn-out" phenomenon contributed to this tendency, for the desire for respite from the intense participation levels experienced during conflict also influenced their departure. In time, there developed a loose alliance of these ex-leaders, who, connected only through their common bond of interest in and advocacy of teacher welfare matters, comprised an experienced and influential core of people to which teachers could and did turn. They knew how the STO worked and where its secrets lay, and as such, were perceived often as threats.

Coupled with the tensions created by resource shortages, the growth of the "in-house outsiders" provided another piece of the generally threatening external environment. Despite having put the 1972 crisis behind them, the STO was confronted within this environmental context with the very real possibility of additional crises in the future.

The extended consequences of the decline of membership are diagrammed in Figure 11.
Figure 11. The Extended Consequences of Membership Decline
Chapter 5

THE CRISIS OF 1976

On April 29, 1976, four years after its dramatic crisis announcement, the Siringo Teachers' Organization again brought to the attention of its members the presence of crisis:

"STO FIGHTS TO SAVE AGREEMENT"

Besides the filing of lawsuits, STO is calling an emergency meeting of all Siringo teachers to present a Crisis Course of Action aimed at showing the Board of Education that Siringo teachers will not tolerate the refusal, on the part of the Board, to live up to the terms of the Agreement it has with its teachers.

CRISIS MEETING

(all teachers)

Gonzales High School Auditorium, Thursday,
April 26, 1976 at 7:30 p.m.

(Document: undated STO flyer)

The crisis announcement was among a series of actions taken following the annual resumption of collective bargaining between the STO and SPS. The problems involved in the bargaining were profound as the Herald Telegraph observed in a later analysis:

But the disagreement between the Board and the STO goes much deeper. It extends to the basic issues in the total relationship.
(Herald Telegraph, June 11, 1976)

The basic issue, as it had been four years earlier, was control over the STO-SPS relationship. In its latest form, the issue focused on the locus of authority--the negotiated Agreement versus the
Board's Labor Relations Policy. As might be expected, the STO argued for the primacy of the former Agreement in resolving disputes, while the Board equally reasonably based its stance on the latter.

This fundamental disagreement was manifested in a series of critical events immediately prior to the April 29 Crisis Meeting. For example, on April 8, the Board of Education rejected the three decisions rendered by a third party neutral while ruling on three STO-sponsored employee grievances. The Board, in rejecting the awards (found in the employees' favor), contended that:

The Agreement requires the Board to accept, reject or modify the third party neutral's recommendation(s) [original emphasis]. Therefore, the District has the responsibility to decide for itself the merits of each individual recommendation. The third party neutral has no way of knowing or assessing the full impact of the recommendation of the school district or the Staff. The decision rests with the Board [original emphasis].


The STO immediately charged the Board with "callous disregard of the grievance process" and, the following day, the Herald Telegraph Headlined "Teachers Opt to Try More Talk":

Teachers adopted a proposed bargaining resolution that includes a call for renegotiating the entire contract with SPS . . . "we have everything to gain and nothing to lose." (Herald Telegraph, April 9)

By reopening the negotiations beyond interim wage discussions, the STO believed it could remediate the perceived problem of SPS non-compliance with the grievance procedure.

Within a week, SPS reacted strongly to STO remarks reported by the local press. A surprising and major decision was reached by the Board of Education:
Chuck Baker, Director of Labor Relations, announced that STO has served notice that it will compel SPS to reopen the entire agreement when negotiations begin next Wednesday evening. The Board of Education has agreed therefore to open negotiations to the public...
(Board of Education minutes, April 21)

STO reaction was immediate and hostile. The strident language of a prepared statement read immediately after the Board meeting by STO President Rita Burnette reflected the STO's anger:

I condemn the action of the SPS Board of Education when it adopted a policy of public negotiations for upcoming talks. STO, in philosophy, believes that public negotiations are in the community's best interest. However, the SPS Board in taking this action, violated the existing Agreement between the STO and SPS...

In the action taken by the SPS Board, the Agreement was totally disregarded and I tell you that we cannot tolerate this behavior. No teacher is safe under these conditions.

You need to realize that we are dealing with a Board of Education completely without integrity. When this occurs, the teacher's only course of action is to exhibit power which will cause the SPS Board to realize its errant ways and to change. I will outline a course of action to you at STO's meeting of all teachers to be held in the gymnasium of Gonzales High School on Thursday, April 29, 1976 at 7:30 p.m.
(Prepared Statement, April 21, 1976)

The conflict escalated rapidly. Actions on the part of one party resulted in reactions on the part of the other. Within ten days following the SPS decision, the STO assisted the three unsuccessful grievants in filing law suits against the Board of Education.

Additionally, STO general membership meetings were held, at which time plans for increasing the pressure on the apparently recalcitrant Board of Education were unveiled. The plans included a system-wide work slowdown scheduled for May 3-7, and a short period of informational
picketing at the District's central office. The plans were executed on schedule, but opinions varied as to their success. The STO contended that the widespread teacher participation was indicative of growing teacher sentiment in support of STO activities and of rampant dissatisfaction with SPS administration. Statements in the *Evening Optic* reflected these beliefs:

Support for a teachers' work-to-the-rule week is growing . . . . Teachers seem to want to do more than we prescribe for them . . .

(*Evening Optic*, May 5)

A differing SPS perspective, however, was reported in an *Evening Optic* headline, stating "Teachers' Limit of Work Week Has Little Effect, Board Told" (*Evening Optic*, May 5).

Within this context, negotiations opened on schedule and under the scrutiny of the public. The negotiations sessions were broadcast on the District's radio station, KSPS, and hence, teacher attendance was relatively small despite the STO's active encouragement of members to attend. Needless to say, their presence did not discourage the continuation of the conflict at the negotiating table, as illustrated by a portion of the recorded dialogue during the second round of talks:

Brenner: Under Dues Deduction, there is no proposal at all. I assume that this is an honest offer on your part and something that the Board directed you to do since you're representing the Board. Assuming that this is a legitimate offer, would it be correct to assume that the Board's position is that the teacher employee organization that represents the teachers should not have dues deduction?

Baker: Every proposal you have is an honest one, and it is made with our intent and you can assume what you like. We have reasons for not proposing dues deduction and that's why we did not propose one.
Brenner: Your contract with the other bargaining unit, and I know we don't negotiate for them, it would seem to me that if the Board is being fair, reasonable, and honest, and that [if] the proposal you've proposed to us would have no dues deduction for our organization, [it] is incumbent upon the Board to reopen the contract for this other agent and make a similar demand on those parties. But the Board has not reopened the contract as I understand it with the Maintenance Workers Union to remove the dues deduction clause.

Baker: That's true. We have not asked to reopen nor do we discuss bargaining proposals with one unit when they're designed for another. And you are correct that you don't represent those other units. (Tape transcript, May 6)

Both parties continued to parry over these and other issues. The intensity of conflict increased as each side attempted to increase pressure on the other. The dialogue again illustrates the mounting intensity:

Brenner: We had a very curious concern whether or not the District is abiding by the open meetings law. We made some checks with respect to what had occurred and we received a signed statement by one of the members of the Board . . . . It is going to be our job to make sure that the responsible public officials are apprised of our view points, and hopefully they will take whatever action is necessary to correct this matter.

Baker: I am surprised at your unwillingness to involve the parents in this matter [determination of the school calendar] for the next year.

Brenner: The only purpose for this whole business is for the Board to try to show the community and the teachers they can muscle people around . . .
(Tape transcript, May 20)

Accordingly, little progress on issue resolution was made during these sessions. A week later, in the fourth general meeting to be held in two months, the STO leadership presented its members with the following resolution:
The issues to be voted on will affect your professional lives.

1. the latest SPS Bargaining Proposal.
2. Whether to convene in August to evaluate STO-SPS negotiations.
3. Whether to adopt a no contract-no work stance.

(Document: undated STO flyer)

Although the STO later argued that the "the action was not a strike vote," the 750 to 1,000 teachers present at the meeting approved the STO-endorsed resolutions, and teachers were later reported to have left the meeting believing that the STO wanted to carry out a strike.

The hostile exchanges between the District and the STO continued over the Summer. A barrage of flyers, letters, and press releases besieged teachers and the public, and what had initially appeared to be a few contested issues mushroomed into countless points of conflict. Moreover, an impasse in negotiations was declared by STO, but the Board of Education declined to honor an accompanying request for mediation until early August. By August 14, the existing agreement had expired, and when mediation convened several days later, more than fifty issues were without resolution. The two mediators assigned to the situation were unable to affect more than a few compromises, and on the afternoon of August 22—the designated day for the STO's general membership meeting—the STO Negotiations Committee rejected the latest SPS offer. Subsequently, the STO Board of Directors called for a vote that evening on the proposed "no contract-no work" position.

In much the same fashion as a similar meeting four years before, the session was held at the Siringo Convention Center. With
music playing, stacks of prepared picket signs in evidence, teachers
organized and sitting in faculty groups, local television reporters
arranging lights and cameras, the gathering had something of a festive
atmosphere. The plan for the evening was simple: to develop and
encourage the belief that teacher rights and organizational security
were in serious jeopardy and that without a successful strike vote
all would be lost.

In leading off a carefully orchestrated set of speakers,
STO President Hawkins sobered the festive mood of the audience with
her opening remarks:

We have a choice to make. We can bow our heads and
capitulate or we can take a stand to fight. To fight
for the retention of a process we have fought for and
enjoyed for more than five years; and if we capitulate,
I can assure you we are on a short road that will return
us to where we were at the profession prior to
the 1970s . . . . What’s at stake tonight is collective
bargaining. Negotiating our terms and conditions of
employment, and input into the practice of our pro-
fessions. If we capitulate tonight we lose collective
bargaining . . . it’s as simple as that.
(Tape transcript, August 22 meeting)

Others spoke, including the local President of the Maintenance
Workers Union, which due to a separate conflict with SPS had voted to
strike that afternoon. A brief block of time was set aside for member
questions and debate, and the questions posed by the members again
reflected the uncertainty among the rank and file teachers:

Microphone #4:

I’m very confused, and I think I have other people in
the audience who share my confusion. All this Summer,
I have been getting letters from STO and from SPS, and
I have heard all kinds of things said by one side against
the other, and now tonight we had a man come and tell us
that at that meeting that you had this afternoon, that
the Board was so intransigent that it offered absolutely nothing—just said "no." Now, my question is this: Is there anyone who could tell us objectively? A reporter? Anybody? . . .

Microphone #3: (Another question)

All right, without getting too terribly involved in this, I've heard tonight interpretations of the law which it seems to me should best be left up to a judge. That's what finally counts. I've heard a lot of heresy [sic]. We haven't had a neutral or anyone tell us what happened at SPS' meeting. We've heard it from you all up there who, as I understand it, are generally in favor of this work stoppage or strike. And actually, I would like to know why, in everything I have read, since before school was out, STO has only been asking for a strike. I think the negotiations have been generally mishandled and all I've heard from the word "go" is STRIKE [original emphasis]. My question is: Why have you, before negotiations even really got underway before school was out, why were you yelling strike back then, rather than letting it come down to the wire and then ask for this last ditch effort? . . .

Microphone #4: (Another question)

My staff wishes me to ask this question and the gentleman behind me got tired of waiting and asked me to ask the second question for him along the same line. The first question is: Since we have had a valid contract through 1978, if we are not looking for a fight, why open the contract completely for new negotiations? . . .

Microphone #3: (Another question)

The non-tenured teacher has very little rights. What happens if he goes out on strike? . . .

Microphone #2: (A final question)

So what you're saying is, if there's a strike and if you get to negotiate on reprisals, that the non-tenured teacher wouldn't be in any worse position than the tenured teachers. What if you don't? Are we all in the same boat then? (Tape transcript, August 22)
As the leadership on the podium attempted to answer these and other questions with varying degrees of success, several events confounded the chances for a smoothly conducted meeting. Time limitations, for example, placed on floor debate resulted in some speakers being arbitrarily cut off, thereby arousing the democratic sympathies present in the crowd, and the debate was testily allowed to continue. Problems, too, with parliamentary procedure made member participation difficult. Finally, an attempted use of a signaling system (a blinking light) to control discussion (an artifact resulting from problems encountered in the 1972 meeting) aroused additional ire among the members. To outside observers, it became increasingly apparent that as time went on, the members present grew more irritated with the general conduct of the meeting causing them to lose sight of its substance. The result was the departure of the meeting from its pre-planned course into a condition later described by the media as "chaos."

Despite a last minute attempt by a supportive secondary school group to defer immediate strike action until additional mediation could take place, President Hawkins proceeded with the strike motion. The motion read:

We move that if there is no contract settlement by August 22, the Board of Directors recommend to the teachers [that the] No Contract-No Work vote be implemented and that the teachers' strike begin August 23. (Tape transcript, August 22)

Following a confused parliamentary exchange, the vote was taken by secret ballot. Some time later the outcome was announced:
Would you turn on all the mikes for us please to facilitate this process? . . . [Hawkins]: I have the final count for you: 934 yes, 1997 no. The motion has failed. (Tape transcript, August 22)

Amid the clamor which suddenly broke out, there was an immediate challenge to the leadership, stated in the form of a motion:

Microphone #1: I have a motion.

Hawkins: Please state your motion.

Microphone #2: For a house divided vote of No Confidence for existing STO leadership, and that the leadership be replaced by the 15th of September, 1976.

(There was additional confusion and noise.)

Hawkins: Is there a second to that motion? [A voice vote was taken hastily.] All in favor say "aye," opposed "no." The motion fails, and thank you very much. Is there any other business to come before the house? This meeting is adjourned. (Tape transcript, August 22)

As a now disheveled membership exited into the carpeted corridors of the expansive Civic Center, the television crews packed away their cameras and lights amid the now forgotten piles of picket signs. There would be no crisis story that night in the City of Siringo.

Yet, an actual crisis had occurred, one which the STO leadership appeared to be unable to anticipate or avert. Not only was the strike bid defeat unanticipated, but the magnitude of its setback came as an added surprise as well:

The figures surprised most of us in the news media, who thought it would be much closer. It seems like most of the noise was coming from a couple hundred pro-strike teachers, while the others were biding their time waiting to vote no.

(Las Noticias, August 23, 1976)
As had its precursor in 1972, the defeat again had all the features of an actual crisis. In the course of several hours, a dramatic threat to the STO had quite surprisingly developed, much to the dismay of the leadership. Rather than being gratifyingly confronted with a crisis of its own creation, the STO was suddenly faced with a legitimate crisis.

As in the description and analysis of the 1972 crisis, several questions may now be raised. What, for example, led to the apparent re-emergence of the crisis complex? Moreover, how did this unexpected turn of events again come about? Following the strike bid defeat, how did the STO then respond when confronted with an actual crisis? Finally, what were the consequences for the STO in the extended post-crisis period? The remainder of this chapter addresses these and other questions.

Antecedents to the Reactivation of the Crisis Complex

Between the start of the 1972-1973 school year and the Fall of 1975 much had transpired within the Siringo Teachers' Organization. The Siringo Public Schools had grown in numbers of pupils and numbers of teachers, and the potential for sizable growth in STO membership was present. Despite the unsuccessful strike bid attempt in 1972, the STO accrued additional support from the state organization, the NLEO. Staff cars had been obtained and a full complement of office support staff were available to assist STO President and Staff Directors. Moreover, the national affiliate had continually expanded its Field Representative [Staff Director] program, adding both financial
and training assistance. Also, inroads were made in the political
and policy making arena. A well known STO member, Juanita Hawkins,
was appointed by a new Governor to serve on the State Board of
Education. Furthermore, prominent STO member Abel Montano had
successfully run and served on the Board of Directors for the national
affiliate, and STO leaders also became dominant in NLEO positions as
it changed from an administrator-dominated to an almost exclusively
teacher operated organization.

During the same time services to teachers were expanded.
The STO and the NLEO, for example, worked untiringly in support of
school finance legislative reform in Nueva Loma, and the successful
passage of reform legislation in 1974 considerably benefited teacher
salaries. Within the STO, an increasing variety of economic services
to members were provided, the most impressive of which was the
long hoped for development of an Educator Housing Corporation,
established to plan and build a teacher retirement center.
Additionally, at the negotiations table, much improved salary and
benefit increases were successfully obtained, as well as the first
multi-year contract (1975-78) in the history of the District. Overall,
then, it was because of these efforts that the STO could look upon its
accomplishments with considerable satisfaction.

Not all that occurred in the same time period, however, had
been as satisfactory. Some of the undesirable crisis consequences
from 1972 had continued to persist over the intervening years. Moreover,
in terms of community beliefs, the influx of thousands of new residents
into Siringo had not appreciably changed its previously lukewarm support
for labor organizations. In fact, some observers suggested that these beliefs had become even less favorable.

It was within this context that several factors became important determinants of the re-emergence of the crisis complex within the STO. These factors include: (1) the continued external growth of numbers of influential ex-STO leaders; (2) the continued intraoccupational competition between the STO and the STC; (3) a persistently unfavorable media image; (4) the lingering, strained relationship between the STO and the SPS; (5) the periodic emergence of other crisis situations; and, (6) the gradual waning of the popularity of Curt Brenner, and subsequently, of organizational security. These factors will be discussed in the above order.

As mentioned elsewhere, there had been a tendency within the STO for leaders who came out on the losing end of internal conflicts to withdraw from membership or to considerably scale down their level of organizational activity. That trend had not diminished by 1975. However, a core of influentials outside the formal STO organization grew by one or two a year. Several actively worked on political action at the state level. Others worked in elected regional and state offices. Still others limited their teacher advocacy to opinion leadership within the SPS teacher subsystem. Although it was all outside of the STO, the impact was felt. As Curt Brenner wryly observed:

Informal leaders, occasionally formally active in politics . . . didn't like employing Field Representatives, opposed to employed staff persons, regardless of person. [Opposition] intensified when lobbying efforts changed to move them out . . . . Past leaders got pushed out, set aside . . . imagined or true wrongs added up.
A group who felt that the organization was not militant enough ... moved toward the STO; conservatives [whom Brenner suggested held the belief that "collective bargaining doesn't have to be an adversary relationship ... love and kisses ... STO's positions are too hard"] moved away. Their constant complaining created a credibility problem over the last five to ten years. (Interview notes, 9/76)

The contacts between these ex-leaders were neither formal nor frequent; yet, a brief phone call from one of them was often enough to renew the single bond of teacher advocacy which bound them loosely together.

As these influentials were drifting away from organized STO activity, some joined the rival STC for a short time period. Despite its perennially small but outspoken membership, there continued to exist frequent conflict between the STC and the STO. The conflict essentially centered on control over the SPS teacher workforce. Being of a particularly virulent nature, the conflict occurred primarily in public as each tried to discredit the other. Portions of the STC Newsletter reflect that virulence:

There is an old saying, variously ascribed to such people as the late Will Rogers and Mark Twain, that there are liars, damned liars, and statistics. The recent salary increase, so proudly proclaimed as a great financial gain by the STO negotiators, demonstrates one of the horrendous examples of statistical legerdemain ... In most fields of endeavor, persons are rewarded with an increase in their standard of living as they gain more experience; the opposite seems to be true in the case of SPS teachers. This continual blatherskite by the STO negotiators proclaiming such fantastic financial gains for teachers should be continually exposed to all.

(StC Newsletter, September 1973)

"PSYCHOSIS STRIKES AGAIN"

The leadership of the STO has indeed introduced a new dimension in the art of collective bargaining ... By way of the press, the STO has published an ultimatum to the school board on its 1974-75 salary demands ...
By publishing the strike ultimatum in the press [prior to the start of negotiations] the STO has nullified any possibility of real collective bargaining and additionally, it has publicly placed itself in a position from which it cannot retreat without eating crow. (STC Newsletter, 10/73)

We deplore the inept bargaining performance of the STO leadership . . . . Bargaining is not possible when the independent image of one party is destroyed by an unalterable ultimatum delivered months in advance of negotiations. In other words, the STO leadership through ignorance of bargaining procedures is solely responsible for the failure to achieve its declared goal. (STC Newsletter, 8/74)

While the STO was seldom as publicly blatant in its counter-thrusts, there were equally devastating statements made in private by STO leaders regarding the lack of viability of the STC as a representative of teachers. Private or public, the comments were keenly felt by the STO, and their occurrence kept relations between the two organizations at a level of considerable hostility.

A bargaining position adopted by the STO in 1974 was a particular point of conflict. In the Spring 1974 negotiations, after a public announcement five months earlier, the STO asked for a "fair share" or "representational fee" from all non-member teachers in SPS. The proposed language read thus:

All teachers represented by the STO who have completed sixty (60) calendar days of service and are not members of the STO shall be required, as a condition of employment, to pay the STO each month a proportionate share of the cost of the negotiations process and contract administration. (Proposal Section 1.06 Fair Share, 3/74)

The STC reacted quickly, calling the arrangement a "closed shop" (STC Newsletter, 12/74), and claimed that "STO Violates Own Agreement." Although inaccurate, the claim was also made that the arrangement already existed in practice:
Yet within the past six months, the STO leadership has charged fees for grievance representation . . . . In short, the closed shop objective of STO is an attempt to legalize existing discriminatory practices. (STC Newsletter, 12/74)

The proposed fee was eventually traded away in subsequent negotiations, but for a time it represented one of a series of conflict issues between the two competing teacher organizations. Coupled with annual STC attempts at decertifying the STO, it created a constant irritant to STO leaders.

There were other irritants and perceived threats. The STO leadership perceived that they were continuously being given unfavorable coverage by the Siringo media. The local media, it was felt, either did not print or air many of the releases the STO forwarded to them, or displayed only that which showed the STO or teachers in general in an unfavorable light. Later, in the Spring of 1976, Curt Brenner was to make the claim to a teacher group:

That the Telegraph's Tuesday editorial dealing with negotiations and planned picketing at Wednesday's SPS Board meeting was an attempt by the Telegraph "working with the District to intimidate you." (Herald Telegraph, May 7)

The continued threat of unfavorable coverage and resulting distrust was to eventually culminate in the media's complete exclusion from STO meetings.

Despite these troubles, the STO made a concerted effort to continue its press on the SPS through the media—much to the continued irritation of SPS. Relations between the two adversaries had continued to be strained despite the fact that in 1973 negotiations for the first time had not relied on mediation. However, in 1974 and again in 1975,
negotiations had continued on into the Summer and had ended only
with the assistance of a mediator. The language at the 1974 negotia-
tions table is indicative of the conflict present and the frustration
felt by the STO negotiators:

STO will show that SPS is consistently inaccurate
in their projections of average teacher salary . . .
the increment is no longer adequate, and Siringo is
off pace with the rest of the country. All average
statistics [national] show Siringo is behind in most
salary categories. (Negotiations notes, 5/1/74)

We have been involved in negotiations with the District
and their tactics stink. (Negotiations notes, 5/1/74)

SPS officials invariably countered in the same vein:

Brenner has to look at motives--why use the
SPS Newsletter to tell everyone that no money
is available. STO looks like a ding-a-ling.
(Negotiations notes, 7/11/74)

I was sorrowed by your assault on the integrity of
the Board of Education in a recent matter of a
typing error in letters of explanation which
were forwarded to our teachers from my office . . . .
Your action in putting your name to the press
release was an extraordinary act of bad faith . . .
(SPS Personnel Department Letter, dated June 1, 1973)

Mr. Baker has provided me with a copy of your letter
of May 14, 1973 concerning Sabbatical Leave . . . .
At the very least, I must say that I am disappointed
in the attitude of the STO leadership.
(SPS Personnel Department Letter, dated June 1, 1973)

Events of the following year exacerbated the hostility evident
between the two parties. The STO took a hardline position in
anticipation of Spring 1975 negotiations:

For many years now teachers [sic] economic needs have
not been met in Siringo and Nueva Loma. Teachers'
salaries have not kept pace with inflation in the
economy. Teachers were dealt a severe blow with the
sharp and sudden increase in the cost of living in
the last few months, which quickly wiped out any gain
salary increases might have made . . . . A critical need now exists. We can no longer tolerate the downward plunge, and an immediate reversal in this trend is imperative . . . . We cannot afford to delay in letting it be known what our highest priority [sic] is for the coming year, how strongly we feel about it, how long the road has been that has brought us to this point, how strong our determination is that our needs shall not once again be shunted aside as of no consequence. The rhetoric bandied about on the importance of good teachers to a program of quality education loses all meaning in the face of salary schedules that do not reflect that importance [original emphasis] The Siringo Teachers' Organization, therefore, has adopted one [original emphasis] goal of the highest priority: obtaining a substantial increase in teachers' salaries for 1974-75 . . . . Our salary position is a specific, unalterable, minimum salary schedule . . . . Our position will remain unalterable, regardless what the state provides or fails to provide . . . (Prepared Statement, October 15, 1973)

The following Spring, the SPS countered with an issue it felt to be equally as annoying:

It is extremely disturbing to again read about a grievance in a Siringo newspaper. On April 13, 1974, the STO violated our Agreement by reporting a grievance through the news-media. During the hearing on April 26, 1973 . . . Mr. Sam Bunker, the responsible party, assured me that it would not happen again. Now it occurs again. On April 9, 1974, the STO's Staff Director, Curt Brenner, shared a grievance with the press . . . . Thus as the Superintendent's designee, I am notifying you that the administration will not accept any grievance unless the grievance procedure is followed to the letter of the intent, and furthermore I am requesting that the STO take appropriate action to censor the Field Representatives in their relationships with the personnel of the Siringo Public Schools.
(Labor Relations Department Letter, dated April 11, 1974)

The SPS was so annoyed with this and other activities, that five months later, the Superintendent formalized the STO-SPS relationship even more by declaring that all STO inquiries of the SPS were to be channeled only through the Labor Relations Director, Chuck Baker. Other formal points of access to the system, including those at the school level,
were effectively closed to STO staff by the move. Furthermore, additional formalization occurred in February 1975 when the Board of Education adopted a revised, comprehensive, and controversial Labor Relations Policy, known in the local parlance as the "3.1 Policy."

The conflict over this policy and other issues followed a predictable pattern. Beginning in the Fall of each year, the adversaries, having bargained throughout the Summer, would come to some resolution of their differences and announce that an accord had been satisfactorily reached. For example:

In a joint statement issued by Chuck Baker, Director of Labor Relations of the Siringo Public Schools, and Curt Brenner, Staff Director of the Siringo Teachers' Organization, it was announced that a tentative agreement was reached this morning (Friday, June 20) on a replacement agreement between the Board of Education and the STO. The Siringo Teachers' Organization, representing over 3600 teaching personnel, has been negotiating with the Board of Education since December 1974, for a replacement agreement. Details of the agreement were not released pending ratification by the parties. (SPS News Release, 6/20/75)

Public expressions of satisfaction by both parties invariably followed in the local media, and the agreement was ratified and signed in short order.

These few moments of tranquility seldom lasted more than several weeks. Invariably, the STO began each year with the filing of numerous grievances against either the District or building principals whom the STO had reason to suspect were failing to follow the letter and intent of the agreement. Class grievances, involving all teachers within a particular job category, were also filed, as were periodic court suits typically involving wages, alleged instances of discrimination, and
movement of personnel. This pattern continued each year during the Fall and into the Spring. SPS characteristically responded in kind by administratively making such things as access to information more difficult for the STO staff, thereby hindering STO efforts.

The frustration arising from these and other actions by either side were frequently conceptualized in conflict terms and led to conflict behavior. Conflict behavior, such as the denial of a grievance, for example, stimulated a conflict reaction from the other, and this cycle of behavior/reaction continued for months, reaching its annual intensity during the Spring negotiations. At this time, the conflict culminated in talks within the STO of a possible strike or crisis. The Board of Directors minutes illustrate such discussion:

It was moved "that preliminary crisis plans be established during the Summer in preparation for introduction in the Fall if necessary." (Board of Directors minutes, 4/74)

Jim Davidson moved "that the Board of Directors instruct the Negotiations Team, getting the best possible deal in insurance and increments, and bringing it back to the members for their vote either for or against. The understanding will be that a no vote will be a vote to strike." (Board of Directors minutes, 8/74)

The eventual outcome of the conflict cycle most frequently was last minute crisis aversion through the use of an outside mediator and hence no strike. Characteristically, a subsequent outcome was a temporary reduction in public conflict; however, unresolved issues were carried over into the next year to become renewed sources of frustration. In general, then, the conflict between the SPS and the STO during the period 1972 to 1975 followed closely the conflict episode model suggested by Thomas (1976) and illustrated elsewhere within this study.
Finally, mention should be made of another factor, the waning influence and popularity of the Staff Director, Curt Brenner, among teachers. One of Brenner's few close friends, John Robbins, made mention of this:

He [Brenner] was going downhill as a Staff Director. I guess his popularity was going down. People didn't like him when I was President. They wanted him to help them, but they didn't like him. Personally, though, he sure did speak a strong classroom teacher voice down at the central office. (Interview notes, 3/79)

Another leader, making a similar observation, stated what tactically was necessary for the recovery of Brenner's popularity.

I had the impression that he wanted something bigger, that he felt that a strike was necessary. (Interview notes, 2/79)

Brenner's influence apparently reached its zenith in 1972-73 and after that declined gradually. Furthermore, both Brenner and Bunker had a personal stake in the recovery process. The allocation of Field Representatives by the national affiliate followed a simple formula: 1,200 teacher members per Field Representative. Recall that the STO membership had dropped below 2,400, yet it had been allowed to continue employing two Field Representatives. One STO leader later recalled the other portion of that allocation formula:

The national affiliate said [for two Field Representatives] STO must have 2400 members or a problem. One must have a crisis or a problem to hire on Field Representatives. (Interview notes, 11/76)

The staff's mandate was clear.

The aforementioned factors, coupled with Brenner's own declining popularity, resulted in what was perceived to be a steadily worsening contract relationship vis-a-vis the school district. That
perception was exemplified in portions of the Negotiations Committee reports disseminated to teachers prior to the start of the 1976 negotiations:

Item: Board policy was at one time a large part of our Contract. Of late, however, Board policy has reentered the Contract; witness Section 1 regarding Board policy 3.1, once again weakening our Contract to that extent.

Item: Contract language in early agreements was of a subjective, often loose, paternalistic nature. Terms often included great detail in the areas of teacher facilities, and working conditions. Later contracts have expressed a more restrictive employer-employee attitude . . . .

Item: The attitude of the Board to work with and mutually develop acceptable directions in the area of curriculum, was greatly changed. This may be witnessed by the recent withdrawal of the total section on Elementary Physical Education from the 1975-78 contract.

Item: The survey has shown a steady decline suffered by teachers in money areas . . . . (Ahora, 3/25/76)

It was apparent, by the STO's own analysis and admission, that its influence in its primary interorganizational relationship was diminishing, and coupled with a declining membership, these trends were perceived as definite threats to organizational security.

In the Fall of 1975, then, the STO leadership was very much preoccupied with a variety of very real external threats. This preoccupation led to a re-emergence of the crisis complex, i.e., a perception that a crisis was again deemed necessary to draw the existing organization back together, to recover lost membership, and to regain its former prominence in the continuing power struggle with the SPS. The antecedents of this re-emergence are summarized in Figure 12.
Figure 12. Antecedents to the Re-emergence of the Crisis Complex
The Transformation of Staff Roles

Among the events taking place within the STO, several stood out as particularly significant. One of those events was the gradual transformation of the role structure within the STO, specifically the set of staff roles. The entry of Curt Brenner and later that of his assistant, Sam Bunker, into staff roles has been documented elsewhere. It also has been previously noted that Brenner's influence had incrementally increased following the unsuccessful strike bid in May 1972, culminating in changing leadership patterns within the STO. How did these changes come about?

Three antecedents appear to have been influential. SPS, for example, in its response to increasing numbers and kinds of students, employed as many as several hundred new teachers per year between 1972 and 1976. In 1974, for instance, 3,597 teachers were employed; the following year, there were 3,712; and in 1976, a total of 3,791 teachers were under contract (Herald Telegraph, August 22, 1976). In order to serve the growing numbers of teachers, the objectives and activities of the STO multiplied concurrently. During the early 1970s, when the State moved into the area of Early Childhood Education, the STO quickly initiated its Day Care Center for Early Childhood Development plan. When student discipline became a local and national concern, STO fielded its Discipline Problems Task Force (1972), and its Organizational Problems of Secondary Schools Task Force (1973). Other concerns were likewise pursued and publicized.

Simultaneously, however, there was both an absolute and a relative decline in paid membership and this added a discordant note
to the program expansion pattern. The Herald Telegraph later described the dimensions of decline:

The fact is that the organization which teachers flocked to join ten or fifteen years ago, today represents only slightly over 55 per cent of eligible teachers in the city's public school system. . .

The drop in membership . . . has been steady over the past few years.

Despite the steady hike in the number of eligible teachers--those employed by SPS--the actual organizational membership has dropped.

For instance in fiscal year 1974 the number of eligible teachers in the system was 3,597. Of this number the schools were withholding dues from 2,230 pay checks [61%] . . .

In fiscal '75 the eligible total went up to 3,712, and the dues paying members dropped to 2,130 [57%]. And in 1976, the fiscal year just ended, eligibles went to 3,791, and dues were deducted for 2,086 [55%].

(Herald Telegraph, August 22, 1976)

The growth reflected in these numbers was occurring at the secondary level, while the broad foundation of STO membership remained in the elementary ranks as it had for many years. However, the STO was unable to make substantial inroads into greater secondary teacher membership (Interview notes, 11/76).

Taken together, the growth in SPS, the expansion of organizational activity, and the loss of membership had the effect of increasing the organizational task demands placed on its paid, elected, and volunteer staff. The tasks were formidable, requiring much time, talent, and effort. Meeting increased work demands progressively became the responsibility of fewer and fewer people, and given the inherent limitations of time and expertise, the logical alternative for the membership and the lower level leadership was to assign
increasingly more work to Brenner and Bunker. Years later, Brenner gave his own perceptions of that trend:

The result had been, even though [I was] hired as Staff, over the years, the organization put more responsibility on me to do things for the organization . . . accruing debts and ending up making political decisions . . . . Power and influence way beyond what it should be. [Finally] it got to the point where teachers became antagonistic . . . (Interview notes, 9/76).

Other conditions aided in the incremental increase of Brenner's responsibilities and authority. For one, Brenner became highly adroit in management/human relations skills through periodic attendance at out-of-state corporate training programs. The Board of Directors minutes report one of several trips for such purposes:

Sam Bunker, Assistant Staff Director, informed the body that application has been made by himself and Curt Brenner to attend an NTL Workshop in consultation skills beginning March 18, 1973, and requested authorization to attend if the applications were accepted.

Andy Logan moved that Curt Brenner and Sam Bunker go to the training session in Carmel, California. Seconded . . . . Motion passed. (Board of Directors minutes, 1/8/73)

Back at the office, Brenner and Bunker handled the majority of the budgetary, grievance, and public relations work. Both the specialized training and experience considerably enhanced their performance abilities beyond those of others around them. Brenner in particular was ascribed expertise and his influence grew accordingly. The comments of several members are illustrative:

Until this minute [Fall 1976] Curt has had enormous power, largely on access to information—being in the office, local-state-national ties, [the proximity to] the SPS Labor Relations Office, the important people . . . (Interview notes, 4/77)
I have a lot of respect for Curt's ability to handle people and himself, but not for Juanita [STO President] or Sam. (Interview notes, 11/76)

Most knowledgeable?--Curt Brenner. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Curt and Sam in grievances were so far ahead of Chuck Baker. They could tell him what to sign . . . (Interview notes, 10/76)

This organization could not survive without Curt. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Several other factors enhanced Brenner's influence. One already alluded to was the frequent turnover of elected leadership. A second factor was the recurrent perception of weak elected leadership within the organization. Such perceptions were described thus:

[In an evaluation of the leadership since 1969]
Fred Olson [President, 1972-73] was an existing body . . . nice . . . a classic case of thinking he could make the decisions without understanding the decision making process. (Interview notes, 4/77)

Andy Logan? [President, 1974-75] . . . he's not a decision maker. He wasn't any great shakes and he wasn't [physically] well either. (Interview notes, 3/79)

Given perceptions of the top elected executive and the presence of frequent turnover at all leadership levels, more and more organizational tasks were assigned to staff.

The increased staff workload was not without consequence. Brenner appeared before the general public and the membership with increasing frequency on behalf of the organization. His growing visibility in the public eye was typically reported as "Brenner, in a late afternoon news conference, issued the STO's position on . . . ." In doing so, Brenner frequently appeared as the sole spokesman for the STO, and his statements on issues were the only formal organizational comments. One could infer from reading such statements that
the role boundaries between Brenner's staff advisory position and that of an elected leader were becoming blurred. Again retrospectively, Brenner commented on this phenomenon:

I acquired through default things from the political arena. Business Services fell down. We organized, and advertised for everything. The newspaper was not published for six or eight months. Grievance processing ... lobbying ... [There was] a mesh between the political and the staff areas. (Interview, 9/76)

The cumulative result of this role transformation process was a change in the pattern of organizational leadership. Brenner, and to a lesser extent, Bunker, assumed a general line leadership role. For those who in Sally Fox's words were "Curt's people," the transformation was natural, comfortable, and desirable. One such supporter emphatically stated:

I went to Curt and Sam more than the elected officers. All my interaction has been with the paid staff ... always there, stable. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Others were not so inclined. As Jack Snyder was later to observe, "We went from an administrator dominated organization to a staff dominated organization" (Interview notes, 1/79).

Snyder's observation about the STO parallels a similar evolution in other types of voluntary organizations. Herzberg (1943), for example, outlined this process in British trade unions, stating:

Obviously an institutional setup such as this [clearly demarcated legislative and executive/administrative functions] could not last. As the operation grew and its [the union's] functions expanded, the bureaucratic potential began to assume formidable proportions. A striking shift in the seat of the executive power took place. The legislative power gradually passed from the membership meeting, first to the executive board, and then by a further remove, to the paid officials...
"the office"). Simultaneously, the administrative functions of the executive board also passed over to the paid officials. But the paid officials had themselves completely changed in status and character. They were no longer "outside clerks," serving as functionary agents of the executive board, they were leading members of the union, responsible authoritative executives. Whatever technical and professional functions had to be performed, were relegated . . . to hired clerks and specialists without official standing or independent executive power (p. 407-408).

This process as it took place within the STO is depicted in Figure 13.

Reactivation of the Crisis Routine

It has been argued that a series of events culminated in the re-emergence of the crisis complex in the minds of the STO leadership by the Fall of 1975. In looking about for possible crises, the leadership focused its attention more narrowly than it had four years before. Privately the term "crisis" was synonymous with "strike." Several STO members outside the leadership circle later reported sensing this:

As early as October 1975 it was felt that in order to turn things around . . . somehow, some way, we needed a strike. (Interview notes, 2/79)

I had heard that a commitment to a strike had been made in November 1975. (Interview notes, 1/79)

An ex-STO leader reported similar sentiments:

Their minds were made up a year ago [1975]. They felt they had the macho. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Others who were part of the elected leadership, yet on the periphery of decision making, expressed a similar feeling:

We were gearing up for a strike in October 1975 . . . .
You decide early to go with a hard or soft line.
We went with a hard line, because of (1) the number
Figure 13. The Transformation of Paid Staff Roles
of dissatisfied people; (2) the declining number of members; (3) maybe the national affiliate decided it was time for Sirlingo to have a strike; and (4) people just thought it was time.
(Interview notes, 4/77)

Bringing about the crisis required the reactivation of the organization's crisis routine. Procedurally, there were several possible courses of action. For example, the leadership could again draw upon the established Crisis Coordination plan of the national affiliate with its crisis organizational schematic, action charts, and operational plans. Alternatively, the STO could implement a new scheme developed by the national affiliate, a multi-phase arrangement known as the Consolidated Teacher Advocacy Program (CTAP). In the words of several STO leaders, the manifest purposes of CTAP were threefold:

(1) to train teachers about the organized teaching profession and about collective bargaining;

(2) to organize and develop activities leading to the start of actual bargaining; and,

(3) to prepare teachers and their local organizations for the possibility of a strike if the bargaining process was not successful in achieving desired outcomes. (Interview notes, 10/76, 11/76)

While the public emphasis was always on the first and second purposes, the third purpose was implicitly assumed by the leadership to be the logical final phase of the program. STO President Juanita Hawkins expressed that assumption thus:

The strike is always the ultimate weapon. It is the threat of the strike that you count on.
(Interview notes, 9/76)
Months later another leader was to state:

The possibility of strike looms in every collective bargaining relationship.
(Tape transcript, August 22)

Moreover, it was also assumed that if teachers agreed with the first phases of CTAP they would also agree with the third. And, if the bargaining process was not successful and an organizational crisis arose, the Crisis Coordination plan could always be activated.

Events at the national level were also partly responsible for the re-emergence of the crisis routine. Since the early 1970s there had been a continued push within Nueva Loma for state-wide public employee collective bargaining legislation. The national affiliate, because of a sharp reversal in its legislative effort due to an unfavorable U.S. Supreme Court ruling in National League of Cities v. Usery 426 U.S. 833 852 [1976] rebated a sizable amount of money to the states to promote bargaining legislation at that level. Four states were to be targeted and Nueva Loma was one of those four. The Consolidated Teacher Advocacy Program, then, was one of several promotional components of that broader effort.

Viewed locally, the purposes of the CTAP program coincided nicely with the crisis routine strategy invoked by the STO. The suggestion is made here that the routine, fully implemented in 1972 and intermittently and incompletely during the 1972-75 interim period, was reactivated with but minor adjustments. Two changes in the routine which occurred as a consequence of the 1972 crisis can be identified: (1) exercise of greater caution in requesting state/national assistance; and, (2) greater specificity in making these requests. Given these
adjustments and the presence of several broad planning alternatives, the STO proceeded to implement the routine.

Conceptually, the crisis routine appeared to have been comprised of several elements. A prominent one was changes in the STO role structure. Following the crisis identification in the Fall of 1975, the STO embarked upon the first phase of its overall program—the training of its membership. Accordingly, the role structure again became horizontally more differentiated as the routine slowly gathered momentum. Both ad hoc and standing committees were created or revived, gaining visibility and importance in organizational affairs as events unfolded. In November, the standing Legislative Commission, with outside assistance, organized and conducted a series of political persuasion training sessions for teachers. Additional membership and leadership training was also conducted following formal adoption in January of the CTAP plan. Concurrently, an ad hoc Negotiations Planning and Development Committee comprised of influential STO leaders and Negotiations Team members undertook what was to be the STO's central program thrust throughout the year—negotiations—as Ahora later reported:

Your Negotiations Committee has been involved in an extensive contractual study. This process has been ongoing since October 1975. The process has involved each member on the Committee in detailed hard work, consisting of hours of contract critique. Individual members of the Committee were assigned a contractual area, i.e., Conditions of Employment, General Provisions, Differential and Salary, etc. Their task was to search through the contracts from 1970 to the present and track negotiated details affecting their assigned areas . . . . This undertaking was extensive and required great devotion to completion. (Ahora, March 25, 1976)
At the same time, a Membership Committee aggressively sought to increase membership, initially reporting a roster of 2,051 teachers (Board of Directors minutes, 9/76).

Greater differentiation took place in later phases of the routine. In late January 1976, for example, a formal Communications Committee was revived again with outside assistance to publish Insight, a negotiations newsletter for the membership. As conflict between the STO and SPS increased over the Spring and the school year came to an end, the Board of Directors unconsciously made a key decision which was to result indirectly in still further alteration of the role structure:

Rick Simons moved that the officers of the organization have the authority to run the business of the organization for the Summer months with the approval and concurrence of the Board of Directors. Seconded . . . . Motion passed. (Board of Directors minutes, 5/76)

The motion was a routine event, made every May. In order for the organization to continue Summer operation, authority had to be officially delegated. With most Board of Directors members away or involved in other endeavors, their "approval and concurrence" was generally difficult to obtain. Hence, the staff and President had a considerable amount of decision making latitude during the Summer months.

The motion legitimated additional differentiation--the shift from the conventional operational structure to the crisis organizational framework. The move was made in early June. New committees such as the overarching Crisis Coordination Committee, the Field Operations Committee, and several others were activated. Additionally, Hal Ryan, consultant from the national affiliate, rather than the STO President,
assumed the all important Crisis Coordinator role. Other division-level coordinator roles were created beyond those of the elected Division Vice President and school site representative.

A second element of the routine was closely related to the first. As in the 1972 routine, the role structure changes were concurrently reflected in major departures from or alterations to constitutionally based decision making procedures. One STO leader described the structure of existing organizational decision making within the STO thus:

There are underlying decision makers behind the leaders. I was one of those people at one point on the Board of Directors . . . . The actual decision making process looks something like this: (1) ideas begin at the top with decision makers; (2) the ideas are talked about among people at the top (probably about five people); (3) then, they are presented to the Board of Directors and talked up simultaneously to a middle kind of leader at the middle level; (4) later, the ideas are brought back for discussion with the Board of Directors; (5) a decision is made, in fact not a decision, but an o.k. for an idea; and, (6) then, implementation by the hired leadership. (Interview notes, 4/77)

The same leader went on to outline the official procedures:

The decision making process should be: (1) ideas starting at the bottom (classroom teachers on up to the President); (2) or at the Representative Council (which is less likely); (3) then refined (potentially) by others including the Board of Directors; (4) back to the Representative Council for the final decision; and, (5) to the hired leadership for implementation. (Interview notes, 4/77)

The sense that the emergent and informal procedures prevailed over the official ones was present in the minds of more than a few STO members, and the activation of the crisis routine further enhanced that feeling.
Evidence for this claim is available from a variety of sources. For one, the extensive committee proliferation, despite its latent purpose of generating participation opportunities, had not resulted in any great increase in member participation. There was, after all just a limited number of active members; hence, a condition of interlocking membership generally developed among the committees.

Moreover, a major committee task was the collection of data for decision making, and the ad hoc committee structure under the direction of the Negotiations Committee was so charged. Three methods of data collection were employed: (1) telephone surveys of membership samples; (2) school site administered paper-pencil questionnaires; and, (3) informal contacts with school site representatives. The reported use of survey data reflected the broader changes taking place in decision making:

[We had] a good method of surveying, then transferring the information to a bargaining proposal. [However], when the information was changed from the survey to the bargaining resolution, much was dropped . . . . The information was interpreted by the Negotiations Committee—a committee not representing the body of teachers. (Interview notes, 11/76)

Elsewhere, additional evidence pointed to the Negotiations Committee's evolving influence in organizational decision making. In part, the influence resulted from its composition, as indicated by one former leader:

It was always a closed little group that did the negotiations . . . same people every year to a large extent, little turnover . . . . (Interview notes, 1/79)

Still others commented on the Committee's influence:
That's exactly where the power is in the organization. In past years, it was a major informal decision making body. (Interview notes, 4/77)

The Negotiations Team [in 1975-76] did the strategic planning. (Interview notes, 10/76)

The Negotiations Committee has the potential for being powerful at all times, because of their expertise and their mystical quality. (Interview notes, 4/77)

Some time later, however, the Crisis Committee supplanted the Negotiations Committee as the major control agent over organizational activities. The influence of the Negotiations Committee, however, continued to be felt, largely because of overlapping committee membership.

Other decision making alterations were noted. The state and national affiliates had informally begun assisting the STO as early as October 1975. However, when the Board of Directors officially adopted a locally modified version of CTAP, external assistance became formalized. In June, again at the STO's request, "a tripartite [local, state, and national] crisis coordination agreement and legal assistance program" (Board of Directors minutes, 6/76) contract was drawn up and signed, with a matching local contribution of $3,000.

The agreement legitimated state and national influence in local decisions. In the days immediately preceding the strike vote bid, the visibility and influence of the outside, strike-experienced staff became conspicuous. The Evening Optic noted:

George Roark [of the national affiliate] acting as communications coordinator for STO, questioned the statement: "There are literally hundreds of teachers involved in the organization of the strike," he said. "Every detail that's been possible has been taken care of," he said, including the training of picket captains for every school ...
Roark also said Teamster Local 605 has agreed not to cross STO picket lines and leaders of the Food Services Union have suggested cafeteria workers honor picket lines. "We have left no stone unturned. Everything is completely planned," he said.  
(Evening Optic, August 21, 1976)

Despite changes in decision making as a result of the growing influence of select committees and external staff, other customary but unofficial decision making protocols were reinforced by the crisis routine. The Representative Council, as in years gone by, was influenced in its deliberations by the presence of staff, officers, and the Board of Directors. The crucial May 20 meeting illustrated that influence:

Mrs. Burnette reported that there would be three motions at the May 26th meeting: acceptance of the latest SPS proposal, consideration of an August meeting, and acceptance of the no-contract, no-work concept . . . .

Helen Barlow [Board of Directors member] moved that the Representative Council endorse and support the proposed August general meeting and the no-contract, no-work concept. Seconded by Tim Stearn [Board of Directors and Negotiating Team member]. Motion carried.  
(Representative Council minutes, May 20, 1976)

As Stearns himself later recalled, an intent of the Consolidated Teacher Advocacy Program was to reverse this sort of influence:

The CTAP plan was generated to re-involve school site representatives into decision making roles . . . .

(Interview notes, 10/76)

As late as early Summer in 1976, that aspect of the plan had apparently fallen short.

There was, finally, the continued influence of the Staff, notably Curt Brenner, on organizational decision making. Despite his decline in general popularity, Brenner's influence on decision making
remained substantial. His continued sway was the subject of numerous, not always favorable, remarks:

Time was [until September 1976] you'd better get straight with Curt if you wanted to move things.
(Interview notes, 4/77)

Curt pretty well ran the show . . . you have to understand, Curt was a dictator.
(Interview notes, 1/79)

In sum, some aspects of organizational decision making were altered while others remained constant. The claim is made here that the character of decision making within the STO was to have important and unanticipated consequences.

A third prominent feature of the crisis routine, paralleling a similar ingredient in 1972, was efforts at strengthening the internal organization. These efforts were predicated on the sentiment-activity-interaction progression. Analytically speaking, these efforts were directed at successfully transmitting the crisis belief broadly to the membership and thereby affecting collective action—a strike. How did the STO once more go about triggering the progression?

The process began paradoxically with an attempt to avoid the crisis. The occasion was a social gathering for the officials of the Siringo Public Schools, the Siringo Teachers' Organization and the Commissioner from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

SPS Superintendent Frank Lassiter later reminisced about the affair:

[There was] a dinner meeting between us and STO. I credit Curt for trying to put his best foot forward. It was an attempt to get a harmonious relationship going. Wayne [FMCS] was there, too. There was a meeting at Picacho School, followed by a dinner-dance.
(Interview notes, 12/76)
Both parties later recollected that the congeniality of the evening occasion was fleeting:

Lassiter: The hawks said, "What are we doing this for?" The good feeling didn't last very long. (Interview notes, 12/76)

Burnette: We soon had the feeling that the District had been putting us down, [was] not negotiating in good faith. We needed clout. (Interview notes, 10/76)

The Teacher Advocacy Program was an effort to obtain that "clout." One of its stated purposes, repeating the words of STO leaders, was the training of teachers in "the organized profession" and in collective bargaining (Interview notes, 10/76, 11/76). For the STO, the task was considerable. The organization was faced, at best, with mixed sentiments about the set of strike issues implied in the training program. The leadership clearly perceived existing teacher sentiment as negative:

People [teachers] aren't labor/management oriented. (Interview notes, 10/76)

[Teachers make] no labor/management distinction. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Teachers are not striking people. (Interview notes, 11/76)

The whole state is a non-union state. (Interview notes, 10/76)

The immediate task, then, was the generation of positive, pro-collective bargaining sentiment.

The task was pursued in several ways. One Board of Directors member recalled that the strategy "began with grievances" (Interview notes, 10/76). A large number of grievances, involving such items
as safety conditions, scheduling, leave procedures, teacher transfer directives, and pupil/teacher ratios, were filed with the District's Labor Relations Office. A number were resolved at the school site, while others progressed through the grievance procedure. Another method of generating sentiment was through the series of political persuasion training sessions held in November. The training, consisting of political action awareness, familiarization with the collective bargaining process, and contract writing, was held in conjunction with twenty-one other teacher organizations from within the state. The opportunity for interaction between members and leaders was extensive.

The generation of sentiments was pursued in other more controversial ways. A document later compiled for a grievance panel by the District's Public Relations Office illustrated one such method:

During the school year 1975-76, the Siringo Teachers' Organization initiated a campaign under the slogan "Let's STRIKE a Bargain," to prepare for the end-of-year negotiations in such a way as to achieve the outcomes that the organization desired. (Appendix, Grievance Review Committee Recommendation, FMCS No. 77K/17367, February 3, 1978)

The campaign was highly visible, with the slogan "Let's STRIKE a Bargain" imprinted on campaign buttons and distributed widely among the membership. The buttons later became a focal point for conflict between the District and the teachers organization, but for the moment they served as a symbol around which teacher sentiment could rally.

The strike sentiment received implicit reinforcement through other means. Much of the monthly literature sent to teachers carried the strike possibility theme. After the start of the year the newsletter was distributed more than once a month to report on negotiations,
and by the end of school teachers were receiving printed material on a weekly and often bi-weekly basis. Additionally, the Negotiations Planning and Development Committee began monthly surveys of the membership. Ahora reported some of the early results:

The contract is so vague ... there are extensive violations [occurring]. (Ahora, October 1975)

In addition, an attempt was made to extend the strike sentiment beyond the boundaries of the organization into the broader Siringo community:

As possibilities, it was felt that the schools [faculties] may wish to embark on a neighborhood petition campaign with respect to the SPS' very anti-labor policy. (Board of Directors minutes, 3/76)

Forums were developed to provide opportunities for member interaction thus strengthening the strike sentiment. "Let's STRIKE a Bargain" seminars were held throughout the Spring. The leadership reported these and other occasions to be successful:

[We had workshops] in February [the CTAP Membership Training Program and Leadership Training Workshops]. Several sessions, held Saturdays and after school. Two or three teachers attended from each building. The training was comprised of: (1) relationships [labor/management]; (2) how to work for objectives through collective bargaining; and, (3) how the organization is affected at each level by bargaining. Three hundred teachers attended, officers, staff, Negotiations Team, Board of Directors, volunteers, and school site representatives. It was effective. Feedback was favorable. A better understanding resulted. (Interview notes, 9/76).

A random sample telephone survey conducted later in March further persuaded the STO leadership of its success in generating union sentiments. Ahora reported:
Teachers strongly agree that collective bargaining is an effective method for teachers to participate in determining the terms and conditions of their employment.

Most teachers surveyed tended to or strongly tended to agree that collective bargaining is the only way for teachers to limit the unilateral authority of the school board . . . .

The issue of strikes as an undesirable and/or necessary aspect of collective bargaining was evenly divided by strongly agree, tend to agree, and tend to disagree.

Teachers who strike violate professional ethics and trust as high in strongly disagree, closely followed by tend to disagree. (Ahora March 25, 1976)

Feelings of gratification following the disclosure of these results were only temporary. Jolted shortly thereafter by the Board of Education's rejection of three STO sponsored employee grievance recommendations and the Board's unilateral reopening of negotiations to the public, the STO leadership perceived that it was faced with a crisis. The crisis perception quickly and deliberately became public knowledge by way of the announced April 29th "Crisis Meeting." With the start of annual negotiations but a few days away, a renewed effort at generating supportive member sentiment was imperative, and as in 1972, the STO relied on the effectiveness of the sentiment-activity-interaction progression to strengthen itself internally.

In order to transmit the crisis belief, the routine was expanded in several ways. The bargaining resolution, formulated with direct teacher participation under the guidance of the Negotiations Committee, was distributed to each teacher. Faculty meetings were held at each school during the week of April 8-11 for final review of the document. Moreover, for the first time since 1972, general membership
meetings were held, one on April 29 and another on May 26, with nearly 1,000 teachers in attendance at the latter. In all, between April 1 and June 1, five major membership or Representative Council meetings were held in addition to numerous division and/or building level gatherings. In these meetings there was ample opportunity for interaction with the leadership, and it was at this time (April 29) that whatever ambiguity had existed about the meaning of the term "crisis" was dispelled. One Board of Directors member recalled:

Teachers first heard strike on April 29. They wanted a contract before the end of school and were unsettled by the strike talk. The talk expressed own [the leadership] ideas, not those of teachers. The attitudes were reinforced and nurtured by the officers. (Interview notes, 11/76)

The reinforcement came on other occasions. A work slowdown was declared at all schools for May 3-7, and picketing of the District's central office was conducted on May 5 with several thousand teachers participating. "STO-SPS" lesson plans found their way into classrooms. A letter system was implemented to carry updated crisis information to teachers throughout the Summer.

At the risk of belaboring the point, the claim can be made that through a systematically designed program of internal and external communications, meetings, and other kinds of activities, numerous interaction opportunities were orchestrated for the development of member sentiment. The opportunities were more numerous than they had been in 1972. For one, the difference in preparation time--ten months in 1976 compared to twenty-three days in 1972--allowed for greater interaction opportunities. Also, the situation in 1976, as it has been illustrated, was somewhat more urgent, and the sense of urgency helped
sustain the intensity of the progression over the Summer months. Finally, the culminating activity was to be the August 22 general membership meeting.

There were several other dimensions to the crisis routine. One was the creation of external political pressure on the SPS Board and administration. Early on, the State Director of School Finance had been encouraging:

[The Director] indicated that substantial raises were possible and that teachers should go after their share. If they were being shorted, they should do something about it. It was pointed out that excess funds are concealed in many portions of the budget and that teachers should be especially watchful of increases for transportation beyond that financed by the state. (Ahora, March 25, 1976)

An SPS official also claimed:

The STO leaders were working with one of the Board [of Education] members. You could see her with Juanita Hawkins [STO President] going into Board meetings together. The Board member also participated in the May 5 picketing. (Interview notes, 1/79)

Later, Hawkins, with the assistance of the NLEO, approached the State's Governor who informally contacted SPS Superintendent Frank Lassiter and encouraged him to settle the differences with the teacher group.

A final dimension of the crisis routine was the increase in external intervention by state and national affiliates. Instances of intervention have already been mentioned. The animosities of the past were apparently set aside. It can also be noted that although the formal request for assistance came at the end of the Spring activities, state and national staff had been heavily involved for some time. National staff members had directed the Fall and Spring training sessions. The staff had appeared and participated at meetings and
rallies. During the Summer NLEO staff worked closely with local leaders, particularly in the creation of external pressure on SPS. In a word, the outside help began to assume greater control over the crisis routine.

In summary, the routine was conceptually comprised of five dimensions: (1) changes in the role structure; (2) alterations in and/or enhancement of existing internal decision making procedures; (3) major efforts at strengthening the internal organization; (4) the creation of external political pressure; and, (5) the increase in external intervention and reinforcement by state and national affiliates. With the exception of the length of its duration and its breadth of activity, the routine closely paralleled its 1972 precursor. Moreover, the data suggest that the routine worked well, perhaps too well. Several participants in its construction and execution later talked about its effectiveness:

The strike vote was inevitable. (Interview notes, 11/76)

It snowballed. (Interview notes, 1/79)

The strike position was taken a long time ago. We strapped ourselves in. We could have delayed, but people said we were committed and must follow through. (Interview notes, 9/76)

Everything was established, mapped out. (Interview notes, 11/76)

From these and other data the inference can be made that there was a series of consequences, many of them negative, resulting from utilization of the crisis routine. And, in the press of the routine, as in 1972, these consequences did not appear to have been fully anticipated nor clearly understood by the teacher leadership. A discussion of these consequences follows.
An anticipated and desired outcome of the routine was the spiraling member expectations of the STO membership—expectations for salary and fringe benefit increases, for expansion of participation in decision making, and for guarantees of additional individual rights. What the STO hadn't counted on was that member expectations also increased relative to its own ability to meet these expectations. For example, the extensive surveying efforts, the dissemination of the bargaining resolution, and the general meetings all encouraged members to believe that the demanded 12% salary increase (as one example) was fully achievable. Also, the open-ended "shopping list" approach to the bargaining resolution encouraged members to set high expectations. However, high expectations were desirable to the STO leadership in order to justify their creation of a crisis, and the sentiments typically expressed within the surveys reinforced the leadership's confidence in its ability to fulfill the expectations. The Herald Telegraph reported such reinforcement:

Brenner indicated that contacts from teachers indicate at least 80% support for organizational actions and reiterated the STO does represent teacher feelings. (Herald Telegraph, June 8)

As member expectations progressively increased, they visibly contributed to the increased press on the SPS. The widespread participation in the work slowdown and central office picketing plus the considerable attendance at the various membership and Representative Council meetings demonstrated organizational solidarity and encouraged the leadership to press their demands before the Board of Education and at the negotiating table. The virtually uncontested endorsement of the
Board of Directors' resolutions augmented that press which was taken up by the local media and Headlined thus:

"SPS Teachers Fighting Back"  
(Herald Telegraph, April 13)

"SPS Teachers Eyeing Contracts"  
(Herald Telegraph, April 14)

"Teachers Upset Over Open Contract Talks"  
(Evening Optic, April 22)

"City Teachers Discuss Vote on Fall Strike"  
(Herald Telegraph, May 27)

Such publicity moderated leader confidence. Frustration began to displace optimism. The sources of frustration, however, were distinct from each other. For the leaders, frustration mounted as SPS continued to thwart STO moves with opposing tactics. This frustration found an outlet in increased press on the SPS, and eventually, in the escalation of interorganizational conflict. For the membership, the frustration was less immediate. The goals which were being frustrated by the SPS were not necessarily those of individual members, and the frustration was generally not felt in personal terms. Yet the activation of the crisis routine with its abrasive strategies and multiplicity of points of view contained the potential for frustration of member expectations regarding the ethical character of the teacher-administration relationship. In fact, it was to provide a latent source of intraorganizational conflict.

Again, as in 1972, the salient consequence of the activation of the crisis routine was the escalation of both intraorganizational and interorganizational conflict. The STO-SPS conflict was, of course, anticipated and desired. From its most recent origins in the Fall
of 1975, conflict incrementally increased from event to event. Each event appeared to influence events which followed, and the conflict mounted accordingly.

Take, for example, the matter of grievances. Elsewhere it has been noted that an early internal effort to strengthen the STO was the filing of grievances. In March of 1976, Ahora reported:

As a Committee of the Siringo Teachers' Organization the Teacher Rights and Responsibilities Committee was created for many functions, one of which is to process grievances. Because of the heavy workload of grievances this year, work on the Committee has been more challenging and rewarding. It would appear that for this 200th Anniversary year, teachers are doing their part by filing 200 grievances, at least. (Ahora, March 25, 1976)

There were conflicting interpretations of the Ahora statement. A comment by Staff Director Brenner reflected the STO's official perception:

The Board is reinforcing bad management when they throw out arbitration awards. There are more cases going to arbitration [through the grievance process] this year because the District is making more mistakes. (Herald Telegraph, April 13)

The District, months later, took an opposing view, expressed in a letter to the public from Superintendent Lassiter:

This well-intentioned bargaining privilege [the grievance procedure] has been turned into a most destructive tool to impede the administration of our schools, to create mistrust of our Board and to lower morale of our employees at every turn. Just one illustration: this 200th anniversary year, STO established as a goal, and have urged the filing of at least 200 grievances against the Board or administration. There is documentation [produced above] to prove this. The goal was set, and then they proceeded to find grounds. During the past year these grievances cost the district nearly $20,000 in attorney's fees and an astronomical number of administrative man hours. (Letter to SPS patrons, dated July 20, 1976)
The STO quickly denied the allegation:

The one illustration SPS gives of the "destructiveness" (original emphasis) of the collective bargaining process is a preposterous lie. We are accused of playing on the "200th anniversary year" then by going out to look for 200 teachers to file grievances.

Grievances are numbered in sequence and our documentation shows 51 formal grievances filed in the 1975-76 school year . . . . It is to the credit of the STO operation that, through a negotiated grievance procedure, the bulk of these [hundreds more instances of violation] were amicably handled, and in only 51 instances did matters progress beyond the first step of the grievance procedure. (STO letter to SPS patrons, August 9, 1976)

By the time this late Summer exchange of letters had taken place, the grievance matter had already expanded beyond a single issue into a set of issues. For example, there was the matter of the April rejection of the Level Three grievance recommendations. The local news media reported the rejection as a controversial break with a past pattern:

Three consecutive cases were decided in favor of teachers by an arbitrator and rejected by the Board this year. Since 1970, when arbitration began, four cases have been decided in the school board's favor and accepted. (Evening Optic, April 13)

A controversy has developed between the SPS Board of Education and STO over Board rejection last week of arbitration awards in two [sic, three] grievances brought by the STO. (Herald Telegraph, April 14)

Not only was the right to reject third party recommendations disputed, but also whether arbitration even existed. SPS steadfastly contended that third party neutral review was distinctly different than arbitration while STO pressed an opposite opinion. With each side clinging to respective positions there was no resolution of the inherent conflict of opinion. The rejection was perceived by STO as added
threat to the integrity of the negotiated agreement and to the security of the organization.

When it became apparent that the Administration was not to be dislodged from its position, STO pressed the issue further. One means was to file lawsuits on behalf of the three grievants. A second avenue is illustrated in an excerpt from the following letter to Superintendent Lassiter:

This is to inform you that I am charging the SPS Administration with engaging in unfair labor practices in its issuance of two special editions of the SPS Newsletter dated May 5 and May 6, 1976 . . . .

The May 6, 1976 edition of the SPS Newsletter discusses a grievance which was filed by Mr. Sammuel Larkin, and in particular, an arbitrator's award which was the culminating step of Mr. Larkin's grievance. By singling out Mr. Larkin, and conveying the information relative to the arbitration award in a distorted way, the SPS Administration has interfered with, restrained, and coerced employees within our bargaining unit from filing future grievances. The harm done to Mr. Larkin as an individual is irreparable . . . .

SPS Administration certainly has the right to communicate with the public in the public media. However, it does not have the right under Board policy to communicate propaganda filled with innuendo, half truths, and deliberate omissions of fact to members of our bargaining unit. This action, Mr. Lassiter, can only be construed as an attempt to destroy the unit.
(Letter from STO President Rita Burnette, dated May 10, 1976)

Concurrently, teacher negotiators bore down on the issue at the bargaining table. The strategy was directed at the source of the conflict--control of the SPS-STO relationship. The STO offered changes in contract language, stipulating: (1) that the negotiated agreement would supercede the Board's 3.1 Policy in case of agreement/policy conflict; and, (2) that the decision of the third party neutral would become final and binding upon the Board. Conversely
position was that Board policy controlled the relationship and that the sovereignty invested in the Board as an agent of the State could not be compromised by a neutral third party. Moreover, the Board's negotiators claimed that the entire issue was moot—Board policy was a non-negotiable item. The control issue was without apparent resolution, and was a recurring theme throughout the remainder of the summer.

The growing intensity of the conflict evolved into fixed sum, win/lose terms. "Acrimony marred the third bargaining session," proclaimed the Herald Telegraph (May 14). Thereafter the Herald Telegraph reported Brenner as saying:

It's [the Board adopted school calendar] completely to the detriment of teachers and to the benefit of management. (Herald Telegraph, April 29)

On another negotiating session occasion, Baker admonished:

Before you recess, two things: First of all I want to call your attention to the fact that when we negotiate an agreement, you seem to be operating on a premise that what you have in here [the expiring agreement] is a given, and it is not. It is not a given, none of it is. (Tape transcript, April 29)

At yet another, the exchange went thus:

Brenner: It is not the Board's advantage and it is a very stupid move for anybody to make in a responsible bargaining relationship. Now, if the District can get its stuff together and spend its time on this paper [the SPS proposal]--by the way, a lot of schools could use that paper. . . .

Baker: Would you like to recess until we have a bargaining proposal on economic items, Mr. Brenner? If you'd like that, I'd be happy to do that.

Brenner: If you think that will help the bargaining process . . .

Baker: (breaking in) I'm asking you, Mr. Brenner, is that what you'd like? (Tape transcript, May 12)
Final mention should also be made of a particularly acrimonious incident that occurred during the Summer months. On June 29, the STO formally requested the Board of Education to join it in submitting a number of disputed contractual items to outside mediation. "Our idea was to go to mediation," recalled President Hawkins, "If there was any hope at all, it was through mediation. We wanted to break [the] impasse . . . . The mediator could exert the necessary pressure" (Interview notes, 9/76). However, before mediation could be gotten underway, another event occurred which directed the Board's and the STO leaders' attention away from the mediation issue. The STO as part of its internal strengthening efforts had pursued the formation of alliances with other employee groups, notably the teacher aides, maintenance and custodial workers, and substitute teachers. It was revealed at the July 7 Board meeting that somehow private discussions with Aide Association leaders about proposed strike support had gone askew. The Herald Telegraph disclosed that Aide Association President Ann Rickover, in an appearance before the Board:

Alleged that STO leaders made statements about "bodily injury" and "blowing up a car" in connection with the aides lack of enthusiasm about the proposal. (Herald Telegraph, July 8)

STO leaders vigorously denied such allegations; however, the SPS Board immediately: (1) ordered an investigation into the alleged incident; and, (2) tabled any consideration of the STO mediation request until the investigation was completed. One Board member, much to the additional ire of the STO leaders, bluntly presented a possible third step:
"If these charges are proven, I think we're not talking about mediation, we're talking about possible decertification" as the bargaining [agent] for SPS teachers. (Herald Telegraph, July 8)

STO leaders sensed an early presumption of guilt. Rita Burnette later described the incident and offered some speculation about its handling:

Curt, Sam, and I met with the Aides' Cabinet to help them organize an election to be able to bargain as associate members of STO. In June, the possibility of a strike was advised. We suggested a poll be taken by Rickover [of her members]. The next meeting was attended by Juanita, Curt, and Sam. The supposed intimidation took place here. I wasn't in attendance. Someone [from the administration] must have gotten to Ann. (Interview notes, 10/76)

While the investigation dragged on, other alliances were attempted:

We met with the labor people--AFSCME, the Central Labor District Council. Anyone who were thought could help us. (Interview notes, 10/76)

STO also turned to substitute teachers for support. President Hawkins plaintively wrote:

As you are aware, there is an excellent possibility that the STO may be forced to conduct a strike against the school district . . . .

For the duration of this crisis--this fight to improve our teaching conditions and to make educational improvements--I urge you not to make substitute assignments as a scab against a fellow professional . . . .

We are engaged in a truly noble fight, and it is indeed regrettable that the SPS has chosen to force a strike rather than deal with us in good faith at the bargaining table. Please help us. (Document: undated STO letter)

The investigation was concluded and reported to the Board on August 4th. The following motion concisely summarized the findings of the investigation:
That the Board find that there was no direct evidence that the STO leadership actually intended to threaten or coerce these education aide leaders, but the aides reasonably interpreted the remarks alluded to in the summary and in our attorney's analysis as coercive and threatening in the context of the meeting. They were there to discuss strike plans and questions were raised as to what would happen if they did not comply with those requests, and to that extent, the statements were coercive. (Board of Education minutes, August 4)

"We were absolved, but not absolved," concluded STO President Hawkins (Interview notes, 9/76), and the aides and substitutes declared their intent not to support the possible strike.

It appeared that rank and file teachers and members of the community had some difficulty in making sense of all this. The grievance issue blossomed into an entire set of conflict issues. Among them were the "200th anniversary" matter, the arbitration or third party neutral awards, the lawsuits, the unfair labor practice charges, and the controversy over the infamous "3.1 Policy." This scenario was to establish a pattern that was repeated in other relationship areas. Single issues were expanded into multiple ones by both parties. Other issues, such as a proposed citizen recall of four Board of Education members and an unpopular administrative decision to transfer an elementary school principal, were caught up in the general fray as the STO attempted to press the crisis creation.

With fifty unresolved items on the bargaining table by August 18, the addition of peripheral issues clouded the central issue and generated a considerable amount of confusion. Weekly barrages of printed material besieged teachers and parents. Expressions of public confusion about the content of such surfaced in a Southwestern University
opinion poll taken several days prior to August 22. The pollsters later reported their findings:

A teacher strike would have won the approval of about half the Siringo residents questioned recently by a Southwestern University team.

Fifty-one per cent of the 305 people telephoned between August 16 and 21 answered "yes" to the question "If the teachers were to withhold their services and not work, would you support them?"

"The issue in dispute was poorly understood by many of our respondents," [Director] Ralph Turley added. Sixty per cent of those called thought the dispute centered on teachers' demands for higher pay, while only 16 per cent correctly identified the main issue: the school board's policy on employee relations. (Community Attitudes: Teacher Strikes, Southwestern University Field Research Division, August 30, 1976)

Teachers appeared to be equally confused. It was difficult to discern who was telling the truth as the broadside of weekly flyers and letters poured forth from both organizations. Attempts at issue clarification simply resulted in the issuance of more ambiguous claims and counter-claims. The ambiguity became a credibility problem for the STO. A school site representative (and former officer) gave one such instance:

At one of the school meetings a woman got up and read something. Juanita got up and said that wasn't true. The woman replied that it was information the STO itself had put out. (Interview notes, 1/79)

The final days of the interorganizational conflict were marked by a number of the same features which had repeatedly occurred over the previous months. Many had reinforced and intensified the crisis complex existent in the minds of the STO leadership, and subsequently led to the escalation of conflict. Intensification, it seemed, led to escalation, which was followed in turn by added intensification, creating
a seemingly endless spiral. The mid-August entry of other ad hoc
teacher groups, such as the People's Educational Resource Center,
and of various interests in the business community, fueled the process.
Moreover, a successful alliance with the local Maintenance Union,
who, overriding the advice of their business agent, prepared to strike
the schools, did little to ease tensions. Indeed, the conflict was
advanced to a degree that persuasive attempts by a distinguished law
professor from Southwestern University and by the local Ministerial
Alliance were of little avail in easing tension.

Superintendent Lassiter frankly warned employees of strike
consequences:

I am sure that you are aware of the leadership of the
Siringo Teachers' Organization has undertaken measures to
plan a strike of teachers and other employees against the
Board of Education. The Board of Education has agreed
to go to mediation, and I am hopeful that these efforts
will prove fruitful in resolving the differences which
exist. I am well aware that most of our teachers would
not consider striking. However, I would be negligent if
I did not inform all employees of the consequences of
striking and the measures we must take to continue operation
of our schools . . . .

A strike against the Board of Education is a prohibited
practice under our Labor Relations Policy . . . .

Striking employees will be suspended without pay and in
addition, face the possible revocation of their certificates,
loss of insurance coverage, and dismissal. The bargaining
agent may be decertified and the Board may seek damages and
other court relief from the bargaining agent and its
members . . . .

It is the obligation of all employees to perform the services
for which they were employed. I am hopeful that a strike
will not occur . . . . With your cooperation, I do not
expect to close the schools. (Letter to Fellow Employees,
Superintendent Lassiter, August 16)

The STO immediately retorted:
Siringo teachers are warned to be on the alert for rumors, half truths, and untruths from the SPS Rumor Mill. SPS officials in their efforts to prevent teachers from assuming responsibility for their own destiny are engaged in a vicious campaign to frighten and intimidate Siringo teachers from making a stand, including a strike if necessary, for meaningful collective bargaining and a fair and equitable contract. Through initiating personal contacts and delivering public statements, SPS officials seek to create turmoil and an atmosphere of hysteria. They want teachers to believe they will lose their jobs, their teaching certificates, their benefits, their retirement, and their professional standing . . . .

REMEMBER: SPS can buy our services; our dignity is not for sale! That's what this whole thing is about!

(Document: undated STO flyer)

Several days later, the Superintendent repeated his warning and made a normative appeal to the teaching staff of the District:

Sunday, August 22, is a day of utmost importance to all SPS teachers. On that day at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium, Civic Center, the STO leadership has called a meeting of all SPS teachers. The most important subject to be brought up at the meeting will be a vote whether or not to call a strike against SPS . . . .

Recently the STO leadership initiated a propaganda campaign including mailings of printed materials and meetings between SPS teachers and so-called "truth squads" which, through the employment of half-truths, distortions, and outright lies, is designed to distort the SPS position at the bargaining table, drive a wedge between SPS and its professional staff, and, worst of all, create the false impression among SPS personnel that no harmful consequences could flow to the teacher from participation in a STO strike. They simply are not telling you the truth. Striking could well jeopardize both your position and your certification . . . .

Experience has shown that strikes rarely benefit either teachers or schools and in this case could result in serious hardship to the City of Siringo and especially its children. I am confident that despite deliberate attempts to mislead you, the members of our professional staff at SPS will give careful consideration to the possible consequences to all of us and to the community.
before making a final decision to strike. I sincerely hope each of you will attend the meeting on Sunday and vote your responsible convictions. (Letter to Colleagues, August 19)

While similar exchanges were carried on through the media, mediation had meanwhile resumed. However, by August 19, an impasse had again been reached and the FMCS Commissioner Wayne announced:

The SPS and the STO have reached impasse on several issues. STO will report the final offer of SPS to the teachers on Sunday at 7 p.m. Any further meetings will be held at the discretion of the FMCS based on any change of position and of the parties. Both committees have worked very hard to reach agreement in the past several days. Progress was made and agreement reached in several areas. (Mediation notes, 8/19)

On the evening of August 21, STO, in an effort to determine if any movement was to be made by SPS, called the Commissioner. At 1:30 p.m. the following afternoon, STO's Chief Negotiator, Curt Brenner, offered to drop his organization's objection to the 3.1 Policy in exchange for a binding arbitration clause. SPS adamantly refused to change its position vis-a-vis arbitration. Other issues were discussed. After a lengthy late afternoon caucus, the Commissioner at 5:20 p.m., an hour and a half before the general membership meeting, reconvened the session and announced that positions were deadlocked. The Mediation Service retained the right to reconvene the parties at such time it deemed necessary. The stage was therefore set for the culminations of the interorganizational conflict—a strike vote by the STO.

The activation of the crisis routine and its consequences are laid out in Figure 14.
Figure 14. The Anticipated and Unanticipated Consequences of Crisis Routine Activation
The Latent Consequences of the Crisis Routine Activation

Although the interorganizational conflict publicly appeared to be the dominant phenomenon, there was, as in 1972, a good deal of conflict present within the Siringo Teachers' Organization, and that conflict achieved a prominence of its own. While largely latent between 1972 and 1975, by the Summer of 1975 the intraorganizational conflict gained particular salience.

Elsewhere (Chapter 4) there has been discussion of the non-crisis organizational processes at work within the STO. Briefly, these processes included leader socialization practices, the conduct and character of annual elections, the structure and operation of internal policy making bodies, and the relative influence of the full-time staff. Moreover, data have been presented regarding the enhancement of the staff's power and the assumption over time by the staff of a conspicuous leadership role. The suggestion, too, was made that these processes affected the character of decision making within the STO.

At this point, it is also important to note the normative context within which these organizational processes were operant. As one might suspect, norms governed the behavior of members and leaders vis-a-vis organizational means (activities) and ends (goals). Throughout its long history, norms of "democracy" prescribed acceptable means behavior, e.g., how one went about arriving at organizational decisions. Democracy, as one of the prescriptive cornerstones of the organization and its affiliates, continuously pervaded much of the organization's written and oral communication. A restatement of the democracy norm was illustrated thus:
The STO since 1934 has represented teachers. It was founded and operates, in the truest sense, under basic democratic principles which make this nation strong. As the bargaining agent for the city's ... teachers, STO affords every teacher directly or through elected representation, the opportunity to vote on all critical issues. (STO Letter to Members, dated May 28, 1976)

Norms governing ends were less stable and consequently were less well accepted. As suggested elsewhere, it was only during the latter 1960s that striking, for example, was normatively acceptable teacher behavior, and acceptance in Siringo lagged behind other areas of the country. While local sentiments regarding the propriety of adversarial relations were mixed, a strong belief in organizational democracy was possessed by most if not all STO members and leaders. Accordingly, attitudes regarding organizational processes and goals must be analyzed within this context.

By the Spring of 1976 it had become apparent that the changing character of organizational norms governing ends and the presence of selected organizational processes were profoundly affecting the nature and composition of the STO leadership, and hence the character of organizational decision making. The activation of the crisis routine in the preceding months had merely intensified several processes already at work. These processes included those involved in the evolution of the decision making group which was to guide the organization toward the creation of crisis. How did that evolution take place?

It will be recalled that between 1972 and 1975, Staff Director Curt Brenner had assumed a highly visible and potent leadership role within the STO. His influence on socialization and decision making had been and continued to be considerable, despite a decline in his general popularity.
In order to protect the influence which he had accrued, Brenner engaged in a series of role maintenance activities. One was the exercise of control over new leader socialization. Another was through vesting responsibility for key administrative functions within the organization, such as budgeting and program development. In these matters Brenner was acknowledged as the virtually indispensable expert. A Commission Chairman and Board of Directors member later recalled a third maintenance activity:

Curt got surrounded by a group of people that were very protective . . . . He surrounded himself . . .
(Interview notes, 1/79)

Other factors influenced the development of the protective group around Brenner. Primary among them was the development over time of a relatively homogeneous group within the STO leadership—homogeneous in terms of organizational experience, time in the District, proximity to Curt Brenner, and acceptance of organizational norms prescribing both means and ends.

The homogeneity evolved in several ways. The character of annual elections was one. Generally, the choice of candidates was limited, and the likely available candidates were former incumbents. For example, during the Spring of 1975, three teachers ran for the position of President-Elect: Juanita Hawkins, John Robbins, and Sally Logan. Hawkins had been an active member of the Board of Directors each year between 1965 and 1975; Robbins, of course, was STO President in 1972 in addition to later holding other elected STO offices; and, Logan was the wife of current STO President Andy Logan. Competition for the Vice President's position was equally limited.
Two applicants applied for each position in Divisions 1 and 2. In each case both applicants were former elected leaders. In Division 1, one Board of Directors member ran uncontested for the Vice Presidency (Board of Directors minutes, 3/75).

There were also few issues of substance debated in such elections. Whatever issues existed were typically ideological rather than substantive in nature and involved advocating positions of moderation or militancy vis-a-vis the STO-SPS relationship. Not surprisingly, voter participation was nominal due to the paucity of issues and to the absence of opportunity for incumbent defeat (the President could not run for concurrent terms). One young Board member drew several conclusions about elections and how one stayed in office:

How does the elite keep in office? (1) Uncontested elections. "You mark it [the ballot], asking, 'Who should I vote for?"' (2) Low interest in the membership. It's a function of their independence; and, (3) No challenge to the leadership. (Interview notes, 11/76)

There were occasions when the sorting process (socialization and election practices) failed to insure homogeneity. For some time a recurring source of intraorganizational conflict was the ongoing rift between the present leadership (including the successful survivors of past struggles) and ex-leaders who had voluntarily or involuntarily withdrawn from active membership. The occasion of annual elections provided a legitimate arena for the resumption of that conflict. There typically was extensive sponsorship of candidates by Brenner and his supporters.

Ex-office holders, too, more or less covertly sponsored other candidates. The Spring of 1976 was one such instance:
There were lots of factions at the time. One of the big factions we started seeing was one with George Bachus. I just didn't feel comfortable [with George's candidacy]. He was one of the ones who could destroy the STO. Bachus was Curt Brenner's choice . . . One of the things we did to screw him [Brenner] up was to get Tim Stearns elected [as President-Elect]. Stearns was not Curt's candidate. (Interview notes, 1/79)

This type of internal strife inevitably created a widening of factions and differential support for the winner.

The make-up of the Board of Directors in 1975-76 reflected partial failure in the achievement of homogeneity. STO was moving in a well established direction, but there was a lack of unanimity among the Board of Directors both about the propriety of that direction and the process involved. Stated another way, there was a condition of normative heterogeneity relative to both means and ends. Some saw the normative differences as being divided along age lines, with the older members being less enthusiastic about the rapidity of the strike planning than the younger members. Fortunately or unfortunately, the differences were resolved in large measure by the Spring election: "In May and June, the old timers on the Board of Directors got out, and were replaced by a new group" (Interview notes, 9/76).

The militant sentiments apparent among the replacements were reinforced by an emergent set of means controlling norms within the Board of Directors. Again, Brenner's observation:

The national affiliate staff stated that if people didn't do the work [specified in the crisis routine], get them out. Whenever you spoke, you had to reinforce existing positions. Don't question . . . "group think" . . . all very loud. The use of time to frustrate debate . . . fast meetings, fast decisions . . . (Interview notes, 9/76)
The norms created within this context placed several rather explicit behavioral expectations upon the Board as it wrestled with the major decision now confronting it: whether or not to recommend implementation of the no-contract, no-work concept.

Disregard of dissonant information was one such expectation. It was reported in several ways. One new Board member recalled that "Nobody could discuss the opposite side" (Interview notes, 11/76). Even Brenner, on whom others later placed responsibility for the creation of such expectations, stated:

We isolated ourselves by eliminating people who didn't fit the mold ... . It was a time of hard decisions, and diverse viewpoints were not there. There had been a surgical slice-off of other viewpoints ... . The consultant from the national affiliate played a consulting role which was "take them where they want to go." (Interview notes, 9/76)

Andy Logan's comments were supportive of this viewpoint:

Sam Bunker asked me to be a picket captain for the central office. I'd been listening to the people ... no one individual would say, "Yes, we need to strike," but others in the buildings would say "No way." Input like this was ignored or lost in the shuffle. (Interview notes, 1/79)

The most dramatic instance of the operation of this expectation occurred on August 21. Following their resignation several weeks earlier, ex-Board members Leo and Beth Morgan conducted a personal telephone opinion survey among teachers. While the survey was not random in its design, it represented a wide variety of teachers with whom the Morgans conversed occasionally about various political issues and who might be considered opinion leaders. The results indicated that out of 150 teachers called, 110 (73%) would not support a strike.
Although this information was in the hands of the leadership by Saturday, August 21, it was disregarded as the Board of Directors proceeded to recommend unanimously the no-contract, no-work concept.

A second expectation concerned the unquestioned acceptance of an entire set of assumptions upon which a number of strategic decisions were based. The data illustrate several:

We had indications that the District would open up the whole contract for negotiations because of the political structure . . . . (Interview notes, 9/76)

It was apparent to the leadership of the STO, reported President Burnette, that we are doing the right thing since the SPS Board has decided that they have to fight back even to the extent of making their SPS newsletters their propaganda worksheets. It is obviously hurting the Board's position. The Board's position is obviously tenuous. (Representative Council minutes, May 20, 1976)

[They read 3.1 and binding arbitration] as gut issues at the time because the Spring survey had indicated they were important and in doing so, operationalized them as gut issues. (Interview notes, 10/76)

[The leadership] assumed that an organizational base existed when one didn't . . . . (Interview notes, 1/79)

They felt . . . they thought they could win it. (Interview notes, 1/79)

A final expectation was the mandatory reliance on stereotypical views of its adversary, the SPS administration and Board. The dominant view, in a phrase, was described as a "bad guy characterization of SPS" (Interview notes, 11/76). The expectation arose out of the STO leadership's propensity, as one member claimed, toward "adversarial relationship structuring" (Interview notes, 10/76). While this view allowed the STO leadership to focus teacher sentiment, it was also over-characterized to the point of diverting attention from serious internal problems and flaws in its own planning.
Taken together, these expectations created a curious paradox. The crisis organizational schematic, on the one hand, had explicitly taken into account the need for extensive communication, vertically and horizontally, throughout the organization. Ironically, on the other hand, the leaders and members were implicitly (although often and painfully explicitly) discouraged from attending to the data generated and channeled through these communication structures.

Despite the strength of the norms governing means and the influence of the sorting process, there was still internal dissent. The dissent centered on the current goal of striking in August. One of those who dissented later recalled the systematic process by which dissent was at first discouraged and later suppressed entirely in the months before the strike vote bid. His comments went something like this:

I talked to a number of legislators about the planned strike. They said, "No way you're going to get a strike." I told Sam Bunker, Curt Brenner, and the Division 1 Vice President. They told me, "Your legislators are out of it."

Later in July they called us in one morning. It was an emergency meeting. Having been on the Board before, I knew their emergencies were not always emergencies. They were passing out materials and assignments for strike captains. It was really very frightening. Things were extremely well organized. I asked them [again] if they knew how legislators felt. I knew they couldn't get people to go out for something to be decided in the legislature. We had not been asked to vote on the strike course of action. They said it was the decision of a previous Board.

Once they knew I wasn't in favor of the strike, I wasn't given any more notification of meetings. I know the pattern. No phone calls about meetings. Rita Burnette was once one of my friends . . . but, communication stopped.
It wasn't democratic. We wrote letters of resignation toward the end of July. I don't think Leo and I were alone... (Interview notes, 1/79)

Several other long-time members followed these departures.

By August 22, Brenner's role maintenance activities, the homogenization of the elected leadership, and the suppression of dissent had resulted in the development of a homogeneous, consensus-oriented Board of Directors who adhered to norms prescribing both organizational means and ends. In the words of a member new to the Board of Directors in August, "It was a very homogeneous group at that time" (Interview notes, 11/76).

With the Representative Council effectively controlled by the upper echelon leaders, and with convergent thinking dominating the Board of Directors, it was relatively easy to consolidate power within the leadership elite. There were, however, acknowledged problems at the time with the school site representatives:

Communications went through cluster coordinators. Getting back to the schools... phone calls. It broke down at the building level. School site representatives were not informed. They should have been at the meetings. There were linkage problems between themselves and the leadership. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Retrospectively, "linkage problems" inadvertently contributed to the consolidation of power in the leadership elite. Rob Evanson of the Negotiating Committee once commented about Curt Brenner, "Rather than have something done inadequately, Curt would take things over. Some people called it 'usurpation' when it hasn't been at all" (Interview notes, 10/76).
However, paralleling 1972, the key decisions to be made were either pre-programmed by the crisis routine or were consciously made by a small number of influentials--the Negotiations Committee, Hal Ryan, the STO Staff, and President, and the few other members of the Crisis Committee. The Board of Directors was typically involved in the decision ratification process--affirming decisions already reached in the main by a select group. Others were later to depict this consolidation process as isolating the leadership from the membership. Several pieces of data are illustrative:

The national affiliate came in and ... set out this plan of action (strike document if that's what you want to call it). A lot of comments I heard were that [the leadership] seemed to be moving right along according to the plan instead of listening to the people. A lot of people said they're not going about this legitimately. A breakdown is not your goal. It seems like STO is working toward each step in the process that ends in a strike .... it was more planned than was necessary. (Interview notes, 1/79)

The leadership would just not listen to anyone who did not push the party line. (Interview notes, 1/79)

The people in 1976 weren't listening to the majority of the members. (Interview notes, 3/79)

From data such as these, the inference can also be made that the top leadership of the STO became increasingly isolated from the legislative bodies within the STO as well as from its general membership. Moreover, data from one member of the executive elite suggest that "Top leadership was isolated from the Board of Directors" (Interview notes, 9/76) as well.

In the waning days before the strike vote, the trend toward executive isolation had the effect of escalating intraorganizational conflict. The conflict was not focused on the current goal of the STO,
for by then there was homogeneity of sentiment on striking in August. It was the means of reaching key decisions related to the strike action that were at issue. Several norm violations occurring on August 19 and 21 were particular sources of conflict. As reported earlier, the decision was made late on Saturday, August 21, to call the Federal Commissioner in order to resume mediation. Apparently the decision was reached without the participation or consent of the Board of Directors. Members of the Board reacted negatively. Some later recalled:

The officers and Staff called back the Mediator. The Board of Directors was angry that it had not been contacted. (Interview notes, 11/76)

There was some conflict August 21st. A decision had been made at the top without Board of Directors' approval. (Interview notes, 3/77)

Alfredo Nevarez quit because no meeting was called on August 21st. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Board members had already been upset about a related matter. Two nights earlier, a strategy meeting was held in the private home of a Board member. At the meeting, the leadership made the following disclosures:

Our 3.1 objection is not really as strong as we have made it out to be to teachers to get them to strike. (Interview notes 10/76)

Hal Ryan told the assembled group that he and other leaders were willing to bargain away the 3.1 position. Several Board members were quite vocal in their opposition to the suggestion, claiming that it would be public admission of a weak position. The reactions of other Board members varied from dismay, to betrayal and disbelief, to tears. One Board member later recalled it was a time that "the Board of Directors began to see manipulations by others" (Interview notes, 11/76).
The conflict surfacing in the eleventh hour before the anticipated crisis was the latest in an accumulation of previous conflicts emanating from the STO's "organizational past." One member claimed that the internal dissent in 1972 was "the beginning of the big crack" (Interview notes, 11/76). Others indicated that during the 1975-76 school year, the "Let's STRIKE a Bargain" campaign polarized people within the STO to a high degree. Moreover, the failure of the STO leadership to actively endorse and support the candidacy of a veteran Siringo teacher (an "in-house outsider") in her bid to become NLEO State President also contributed to the conflict. Further, other veteran members reported that even eight years after the 1968 strike, "the feeling still was that we'll never strike again" (Interview notes, 11/76). Other instances could be mentioned. The point here, however, is that there were a set of latent and unanticipated consequences to activation of the adjusted crisis routine. The development of a highly cohesive decision making group and the consolidation of power within that group resulted in its subsequent isolation from the broad membership base of the organization. The isolation violated the strong democracy norm, and, when added to the crisis aftermath of its "organizational past," a condition of escalating intraorganizational conflict was created. The unfolding of these consequences is displayed in Figure 15.

The magnitude of the intraorganizational conflict, however, was apparently not so great as to disrupt the goal consensus of the executive elite. After all, the norm violations centered primarily on the issue of organizational democracy, and the strike goal was left
Figure 15. The Latent Consequences of the Crisis Routine Activation
intact. Hence, in late afternoon of August 22, the strike vote 
recommendation was unanimous. Abiding by the recommendation, 
STO President Hawkins asked the general membership for an affirmative 
vote that evening. It failed by a surprisingly large margin, 
1,997 to 934. Had it succeeded, the Siringo Public Schools would have 
been confronted with an actual crisis for which the STO had planned and 
worked and hoped for over the course of the past ten months. Instead, 
the positions were reversed as they had been in May 1972, and the STO 
was faced with another crisis for which it had neither planned nor 
anticipated. Conceptually, the crisis was presaged by a series of 
unanticipated and latent consequences—leadership isolation, 
inaccurate assessment of intense internal conflict, and defective 
decision making. Out of these, the STO leadership had developed a 
distorted sense of its own efficacy and the certainty of the strike. 
As late as August 19, the Herald Telegraph headlined the certainty 
belief, "Teachers claiming support" (Herald Telegraph, August 19, 1976). 
Data to the contrary were systematically disregarded. Hence, as depicted 
in Figure 16, the leadership failed to heed danger signals and an 
actual crisis occurred.

Again at this point, the research changes directions. The 
preceding narrative has described in considerable detail the antecedents 
to crisis. The following description and analysis focuses on the 
consequences of an actual crisis. Several questions similar to those 
raised regarding the 1972 crisis focus the analytical task. For 
instance, how did the STO respond in the immediate and extended after-
math to an unanticipated crisis? Moreover, what consequences did the
Leadership Isolation
Defective Decision Making
Inaccurate Assessment of Conflict Meaning

Distorted Sense of Outcome Certainty

Actual Crisis

Figure 16. The Antecedents of an Actual Crisis
crisis have for STO relations with SPS and with other organizations? Also, what impact did the crisis have on organizational processes within the STO? Finally, what effect did the crisis have on the STO's crisis complex and accompanying routine? The continuation of this chapter addresses these and other questions.

Crisis Aftermath: Immediate and Extended Interorganizational Consequences

The defeat of the strike vote had been devastating to the STO leadership. The certainty reflected in thought and action until the dramatic end of the crisis routine had precluded any serious conception of defeat. On the other hand, many members thought that the vote would be close, and later were not surprised that the motion was indeed defeated. What came as a shock to both members and leaders was the margin of defeat. An unofficial count later showed that within the District, eighty-nine school faculties voted heavily against the strike motion; nine faculties voted for; and, five faculties split their votes evenly. The final numerical count was 1,997 to 934. The long months of planning had apparently been for naught, and now the STO was confronted with what one member termed "an A-1 major crisis" (Interview notes, 10/76).

The strike planning had been done in anticipation of a crisis occurring for the Siringo Public Schools. One member later stated that the possibility of an STO crisis had apparently not been planned for:
It's obvious from the vote last night that those people at the bargaining table are not representing the desires of teachers. This whole thing could have been averted if they had a positive attitude at the bargaining table. Baker said the SPS offer is "on the table" and it's up to STO to pick it up. (Evening Optic, August 23, 1976)

The determination of issues by SPS had varying effects upon the more than fifty issues left unresolved. Of the member benefit issues, such as wages and compensation, leaves, and teacher rights, many were temporarily resolved or were no longer contested. Teachers, for example, received SPS' last offer, an annual pay raise of $875 (or an average of 8.5%) per teacher. Public assurances were also made by the administration that the District would continue to provide benefits, rights, and privileges with little change in working conditions. A booklet enumerating such items was published to that effect in the absence of a master agreement. A consequence of the latter was a temporary reduction in interorganizational conflict.

There appeared, however, to be little or no resolution of the fundamental relationship issues which had so dramatically characterized the friction of the past months. An ex-leader noted the Board's handling of these issues:

The Board after the opening of the three year contract did away with the provisions that gave them trouble . . . . I would have done the same thing. (Interview notes, 1/79)

The provisions which were left in the agreement were signed, albeit reluctantly, by the STO on August 30. In the document, all language related to the Board's formal relationship with STO was deleted. The controlling 3.1 policy remained intact. In addition, the major source of organizational security for the teacher organization—dues deduction—was removed.
Other STO leaders also indicated an understanding of the parameters:

Chuck Baker, the Board's negotiator, said, "This is it. Last best offer. Take it or leave it." Obviously, the Board won at that time. (Interview notes, 1/79)

Furthermore, there had been the concurrent exhaustion of interorganizational conflict resolution mechanisms. Federal mediator Wayne again made the point:

Siringo Teachers' Organization (STO) members back in the classroom today, have passed the point of mediation, the federal mediator said . . . .

Wayne said STO's decision not to strike means "STO's people have told us the ballgame is over--there's no point in any more meetings." "Mediation can't help any more under those circumstances," he said . . . . (Evening Optic, August 23, 1976)

Despite the efforts of Wayne and various attorneys, the STO leadership pressed the point that the mechanisms were not, in fact, exhausted, and that productive negotiations could again resume. It was some six weeks later, on October 6, that the flamboyant Wayne reiterated his earlier conclusions before a standing-room-only audience in the SPS Board room:

On August 21, positions of the parties were generally the same, from a professional point of view. A strike vote was taken, however, before a vote to accept or reject the Board's contract offer . . . . The media indicated that negotiations were over . . . . Not taking the contract offer to the teachers was unusual. Additional bargaining would be an exercise in futility. Any more bargaining would be fruitless. (Field notes, 10/76)

With the relationship now clarified and conflict resolution mechanisms exhausted, the procedural determination of existing issues could now be directed by the SPS. Chuck Baker made the point eminently clear following the strike vote:
Do you know how little contingency there was? People were waiting after the vote, asking, "What should we do now?" Juanita said nothing but "you can all go home now." (Interview notes, 1/79)

There were, as one might expect, a series of consequences which followed the onset of crisis, some more apparent than others. Some were quite like those which followed the 1972 crisis. Others differed, perhaps due to the magnitude of defeat in 1976. It will be suggested here that the consequences appeared to be immediate and extended in both appearance and duration, and that the organization's ability to perceive and cope with either varied considerably.

Among the most obvious and immediate of these consequences were those affecting the STO-SPS relationship. Prior to the evening of August 22 there had been a certain amount of ambiguity about the precise distribution of power in the relationship; hence, there was a great deal of jockeying for power positions. An immediate consequence of the vote was that the ambiguity was dispelled. There was a rather exact delineation of the superordinate-subordinate power relationship. The Evening Optic the following day spelled out those new parameters:

Ted Wayne, the federal mediator, said that STO's rejection of a strike for higher pay means that Siringo Public Schools (SPS) will prepare a contract for STO to sign . . . .

In other actions:

--Curt Brenner, STO's Staff Director, said, "I guess it's go back to the table to sign."

SPS's normal complement of teachers apparently showed up for the first day of work today. (Evening Optic, August 23, 1976)
The removal of these items in no sense solved the tangled relationship questions; it merely set them aside for the moment. They remained a manifest source of present antagonism and an antecedent of future conflict. To teachers, administrators, and the public, there remained an uneasy sense that something was indeed wrong with the relationship. Indeed, the aftermath of the crisis boded future ill. These antecedents and consequences are depicted in Figure 17.

Crisis Aftermath: Immediate Intraorganizational Consequences

The crisis had internal as well as external consequences for the STO. In a fundamental way, the strike vote defeat sent psychological as well as political shock waves through the organization. Even before the vote, the Morgan survey had reported fear, consternation, and fright among the teacher membership. Similar sentiments were prevalent within the Board of Directors following the vote. One member reported the negative psychological responses present at an afternoon meeting the day after the defeat:

There was general bewilderment, in some cases, real sadness. Several members shed tears. (Interview notes, 11/76)

Another member reported:

There was an identity crisis. Egos were individually and collectively shot. The noise level had dropped to zero. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Yet another reported that "people were wiped out or furious" (Interview notes, 10/76). These feelings were pervasive and permeated the thinking of the leadership for months to come. The pervasiveness was appropriately summarized several weeks later, idiomatically speaking, in the statement, "Things look pretty bad at Alamosa" (Board of Directors minutes, 9/76).
Figure 17. Crisis Aftermath: Immediate and Extended Interorganizational Consequences
Out of these and other negative psychological responses there emerged broad questioning by members and leaders alike of organizational purpose and operation. In a sense the STO took its cue from the local media which repeatedly ridiculed the leadership for its actions:

The manufactured crisis involving the Siringo Public Schools started several months ago with a tactical error in judgment on the part of the leadership of the Siringo Teachers Organization.

Holding a pat hand in that they had a three year contract with two years to go, a contract which could be reopened this year for salary talks, the STO leaders decided to "go for broke."

Actually, had they stuck to wages the situation wouldn't have gotten so terribly involved and they would have been home free. (Herald Telegraph, August 26, 1976)

Amid these comments, the Board of Directors individually and collectively reached out for viable explanations for the failure of the vote. A wide range were proffered over the next several months.

One class of explanations concerned itself with the failure of the teacher membership:

Board of Directors member: It was a problem between the leadership and the rank and file. The rank and file may not have understood the purpose of leadership. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Board of Directors member: The explanation of the Board's offer was not clear to the teachers. (Interview notes, 11/76)

Board of Directors member: Teachers didn't trust the negotiators enough to accept their word. Why? for fear of losing their jobs, even their tenure. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Officer: People [teachers] were not processing or personalizing the information they were receiving. The responsibility was on them. They chose to ignore it, and didn't know how to feel, think, and act on August 22. They couldn't get it together as a faculty. (Interview notes, 9/76)
Another class of explanations directed itself at leadership problems:

Board of Directors member: The problem has been that we have had no great leadership, no group willing yet to stand up and be counted. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Board of Directors member: The leaders assumed that an organizational base existed when it didn't. Also, that mobilization occurred within the formal ranks, but not in the teacher ranks. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Ex-Board of Directors member: Curt made a mistake by letting people be heard at the strike vote meeting. (Interview notes, 1/79)

Still another claimed that it was the ex-leaders who were responsible:

Staff: The leadership credibility reason was that twenty or thirty former leaders had hatred or strong dislike for an "individual," Curt Brenner. Until they are neutralized or brought back, nothing. (Interview, 10/76)

A set pointed to the general climate of the times:

Staff: There was a whole movement of people being against group action. There was also a society-wide feeling of group disinterest, much internal conflict. Future shock response . . . . The interest in individual identity is good, but individually people are not used to dealing with multiple viewpoints. (Interview notes, 9/76)

Added arguments centered on the organizational past:

Staff: We had an easy time earlier. There were flaws in organizational plans, programs, that were not obvious. It was relatively easy to sustain members, but our strength was sapped, and no one saw it very well. (Interview notes, 9/76)

A final set pointed to external organizations:

Staff: There was the advent of consciousness on the SPS Board, pointing to the development of skills and expertise to balance teacher power. (Interview notes, 9/76)

Ex-Staff: The national affiliate would come in, hit hard, and leave. They misread the situation and gave bad advice. (Interview notes, 10/76)
At no point, however, did the leadership (Board of Directors, officers, and Staff) suggest that the responsibility for failure was its own. One Board of Directors member confirmed this observation in his discussion of the August 23 meeting:

The Board of Directors broke into groups to determine what was wrong. There was blame passing . . . little talk of leadership . . . the failure of teachers . . . a lack of communication . . . didn't use the media. (Interview notes, 11/76)

In the course of the continued search for plausible explanations, there was a dawning realization by leaders of the meaning of several pre-crisis events. Stated another way, leaders were able to understand retrospectively that indeed the problems of internal divisiveness, issue complexity, and the absence of alternatives, for example, hindered the success of the planned crisis. Moreover, the extent to which several key individuals had directed activities during the crisis routine was also realized.

The assignment of blame to these individuals, or "scapegoating" became a more noxious outcome of the search for explanations. Assignment of blame was problematic, for unlike the crisis aftermath of 1972 there was no focal person on whom the onus of responsibility could be placed. Yet, as time progressed, it was apparent that none of the proffered explanations were entirely satisfactory, and the tendency was to shoulder specific individuals with the responsibility.

Several individuals were so identified. The media had publicly suggested that Hawkins and Brenner were responsible, although at least one source speculated that "she [Hawkins] was merely following the guidelines of the national organization and the team of coaches sent
in for the game" (Las Noticias, August 23, 1976). That speculation coincided with that offered by the top STO leadership. Brenner himself placed the responsibility on one set of shoulders--those of Hal Ryan:

Ryan was not candid with the Board of Directors. The Board took the ratification element off the August 22 agenda to streamline the meeting. Ryan assumed a consulting role--"take them where they want to go."
(Interview notes, 9/76)

Despite Brenner's comments it was clear that the membership viewed the matter differently. Abel Montano, whose reputation emerged unscathed from the vote failure, mentioned three insiders:

The teachers are placing the blame on three sets of shoulders. [Juanita Hawkins, Curt Brenner, Sam Bunker]. Others are suggesting, "She [Juanita] led us down the path."
I think that was the path we all went down.
(Interview notes, 10/76)

What little scapegoating that took place was short-lived and lacked the May 1972 virulence. As such, it became one of a host of competing failure explanations.

Taken as a whole, the explanations provided an underlying justification for various organizational recovery efforts. However, since there was widespread disagreement over crisis antecedents a good deal of conflict ensued. An early instance was the plan for handling the "last best offer" of SPS in late August. Excerpts from the field notes taken at the September Board of Directors meeting illustrate this:

When negotiations are completed and the tentative agreement signed, it should be distributed to the membership for ratification. It has been studied by the Negotiations Team and officers, and they cannot recommend it . . . .

Recommendation: send proposal to building teachers, and give direction to Negotiations Team whether to sign agreement or not.
But there's no precedence for this step.

Teachers don't want to do this! They are happy with the contract already. We should respond to leadership from the bottom, not from the top. The only decision we can make is no comment--teachers are adults.

Teachers have two choices: accept or reject. We cannot negotiate further. No bargaining position. No power or direction. We cannot get school site representatives or teachers to read the contract. Not sophisticated . . . .

(Field notes, 9/7/76)

Official minutes of the same meeting verified these field observations:

President Hawkins explained the recommendation of the officers and Negotiating Team regarding the processing of the SPS Contract Proposal and signing of the tentative agreement. Full discussion followed of the recommendation and alternatives to that recommendation. It was moved that the Board of Directors recognize the environment of the Negotiating Committee's decision and of STO's officers i not allowing some recommendation be given the teachers in the ratification of the proposed agreement tendered by SPS. No recommendation indicates a lack of trust in teacher decision making faculties. Now is the time for leadership. The President of STO has the prerogative to make a proper recommendation and should do so, with endorsement by the Board of Directors. Seconded . . . the motion failed.

(Board of Directors minutes, 9/7)

The full gamut of disagreement was present--negative views of teachers, conflict over the operation of governance, the extent of leadership.

"No power or direction"--that insightful comment by the Board of Directors member summarizes the pervasive sense of uncertainty about organizational direction. The explanations dilemma had resulted in what Sam Bunker termed "group grope" (Interview notes, 9/10/76). The field notes about the same time report the presence of "uncertainty about what the August 22 vote means" (Field notes, 9/7/76). The observations of several Board of Directors members confirm the field data:
The response after August 22 was that the people were unsure of the function of the organization, about the course of future action. (Interview notes, 11/76)

There is a seeming lack of direction on the part of the group Board of Directors now. People can't agree. The "we/they" split . . . (Interview notes, 10/76)

As the search for explanations continued into the Fall, questioning of leader credibility persisted. The point has been previously made that the leadership had generally gone unscathed in the tendering of failure explanations. Yet from the beginning (actually minutes after the strike bid defeat) the credibility of the leadership had been suspect. Recall, for example, the August 22 motion:

For a house divided vote of No Confidence for existing STO leadership, and that the leadership be replaced by the 15th of September, 1976. (Tape transcript, August 22)

A telling remark by a teacher in a later building meeting was equally indicative of criticism: "Why is it that we feel we are always fighting the enemy?" (Field notes, 9/9/76). Such sentiments continued to be strongly expressed throughout the Fall:

When you are in a position to talk for teachers, you have to reflect the teachers' thoughts. Some teachers have asked for replacement of the Head Negotiator, Curt Brenner. (Field notes, 9/7/76)

People have said, "Let's get rid of Curt."
(Interview notes, 10/76)

I heard it expressed yesterday that Juanita Hawkins should resign. Maybe not Curt Brenner.
(Interview notes, 10/76)

Further, the local press candidly stated what apparently was on the minds of many--there needed to be a search for new leadership:

No doubt the non-union will have to dredge up some new leadership before they try it again.
(Las Noticias, August 23, 1976)
Pressed by insistent threats to their credibility, the elected and staff leadership attempted to reassert themselves as viable leaders. An initial effort was made to sustain the interorganizational conflict between the STO and SPS, an effort which was justified as being in the best interests of the membership. Several means were employed. The Board of Directors, for instance, endorsed STO participation in a local Board of Education member recall movement and an STO Recall Petition Committee was established. Moreover, on September 30, with the implicit encouragement of the STO leadership, SPS teachers rejected the SPS Contract Proposal by a vote of 1,844 to 1,308.

STO quickly insisted that the 3.1 Policy required a return to negotiations and, if need be, to mediation. Additionally, the STO in conjunction with the Nueva Loma Education Organization attempted to bring economic sanctions against the City of Siringo, namely, the business community, by threatening to pull the 7,000 teacher annual state convention out of Siringo. A September 21 letter to teachers typified such conflict maintenance efforts:

SPS, by innuendo and distortion of facts, is obviously out to discredit and destroy your bargaining agent, STO . . . .

STO will continue to resist SPS attempts to manipulate the feelings and emotions of Siringo teachers in regard to their bargaining agent. (Letter to all SPS teachers, dated 9/21/76)

Conceptually speaking, the continuation of conflict beyond the devastating defeat of August 22 comprised part of a more general pattern of avoidance behavior. Expressions of denial took a variety of forms:

August 22 is not a vote reflecting on the organization. (Field notes, 9/7/76)
The rumblings may not be that widespread. (Interview notes, 9/76)

During the year, there will develop a ground swell as people realize what's left out of the contract... Teachers had too much placed on them. They backed down with all the information. There is some feeling that the negative feelings will bottom out when teachers have lost a number of benefits. (Field notes, 9/7/76)

There were also what later appeared to be exaggerated claims of general optimism, also denying the reality of a bad situation.

We are finding... happy to hear from us. (Field notes, 9/16/76)

People appear to be getting themselves together.

I see a tremendous thirst for attention, lots of hidden leadership. (Field notes, 9/15/76)

There is some talk of having the strike vote again. The feedback after the contract rejection is substantially different than before. (Field notes, 9/15/76)

In the eyes of some, the strike vote defeat was only a temporary setback. Moreover, it was hoped that in the absence of an agreement conditions in the schools would become so bad that STO membership, which by this time had dropped from 2,300 to 700 teachers, would rapidly recover. The data indicate that this sense of optimism obscured the actual sentiments of the majority of the members.

The leadership was simultaneously offering disclaimers of responsibility of what had happened in August. Explanations for failure tendered by the leadership contended that the fault lay with the Board of Directors, for they "refused to accept the facts" (Interview notes, 9/76). Moreover, as Hal Ryan reappeared periodically at the STO office, Brenner caustically remarked:
Ryan floats in and out to keep his hand on the pulse. Let's face it, he didn't run a successful program and he still feels an obligation. (Field notes, 10/1/76)

In sum, under a growing threat of replacement from within the organization, the leadership engaged in a variety of avoidance behaviors, including conflict displacement, outright denial, and disconfirmation of responsibility. These behaviors did not go internally unnoticed:

We have a fear of mistakes, or admission of mistakes. The teachers want something positive. We will have to eat crow. The leaders will have no choice. (Interview notes, 10/76)

The persistent questioning was not limited to the area of leader credibility. There were also inquiries into organizational decision making procedures. The media had been particularly harsh in their perception of how decisions within STO had been reached, calling the strike decision in particular "manufactured" and "railroaded."

There was also internal concern. Existing procedures appeared to be premised on a rather negative view of teachers:

We cannot get school site representatives or teachers to read the contract. Not sophisticated . . . . The teachers apparently cannot get excited about organizational problems. (Field notes, 9/7/76)

Organizational decision making was reflected in this view. As outlined in Chapter 4, decision making was concentrated within a small group at the top of the organization. A September decision reflected the absence of the constitutionally mandated broad decision making base:

One of the problems has been forced leadership. I've been against us pushing the recall position, after I [a Board of Directors member] first heard it on television. How much should the Staff concur with major policy statements? The Board of Directors develops the program and the Staff executes. (Field notes, 9/15/76)
Another member took a stronger position:

Teachers want to retain all the autonomy for themselves. We teachers should set priorities and programs. I am very frustrated. (Field notes, 9/15/76)

There were several consequences of the questioning of decision making. The overall consequence was a developing sentiment for general organizational change. That sentiment was aptly stated by a teacher in an October Representative Council meeting: "Has anyone ever considered a complete reorganization of the STO?" (Field notes, 10/14/76). This sentiment was comprised of three interrelated elements. One was a growing concern for tighter control over paid Staff and elected officers. On September 15, it became operationalized in the form of suggested constitutional revisions. The move was reported in the minutes of the Board of Directors:

Tim Stearns moved that the Constitution Committee be directed to formulate a constitutional and bylaw reform recommendation based on research of local organizations similar in size to STO. Seconded . . . . The motion carried. (Board of Directors minutes, 9/76)

The motion legitimated the reactivation of the dormant Constitution Committee, which quickly and aggressively pursued the reformation task. An early area of examination was the Staff Director's contract and job description. The Committee, despite the protests of the STO President, looked into the possible incorporation of the job description into the bylaws in order to bring the position under the purview of the legislative bodies. Before its work was interrupted five months later, the Constitution Committee went on to thoroughly review Staff/officer control concerns and to develop a large number of suggestions for organizational and decision making reform.
The comments of the Constitution Committee, as well as those of numerous other individuals, were, in fact, thinly veiled cues directed at the staff and top elected leadership. Reacting to these rather explicit signals, both Staff and elected leadership took it upon themselves with much fanfare to redistribute their own workload, bringing it into closer correspondence with the newly perceived needs of the membership. The redistribution became apparent within a week after the strike vote defeat:

After the 22nd, we decided to go into a different mode of operating. The old way was top down directives. We need to broaden the base of participation . . . . We have been zeroing in on service needs of members and communications. (Field notes, 9/15/76)

You are seeing it [a strong organizational structure] in operation as we reach out to include you as we move into a creative approach to finding solutions to our problems with SPS. The process has been underway from the moment you made your decision on August 22. Our energies are being refocused towards establishing the personal contact with each one of you that will enable us to deal more effectively with providing for your needs. (Ahora, September 1, 1976)

The language in the above data is indicative of an apparent role change as well as an organizational change of direction. Prior to the strike vote the Staff conducted most of its business at the STO office or at the SPS district office. Infrequent visits to schools were made in response to specific teacher-initiated requests or to reported individual crises. Two changes in that pattern are apparent above. One was the role change from pedantic to supportive and receptive. The leadership had previously been pedantic, using oral and written statements to "educate" an unsophisticated and unaware membership. Evidence
presented above such as the phrase "reach out to include you," and "Providing for your needs" were indicative of that transformation.

A second change placed staff/officers in the schools on a daily basis. The accompanying fanfare was a deliberate attempt to restore credibility and the appearance, if not the actuality, of responsiveness. "STO goes to Schools," trumpeted Ahora (October 12, 1976). The goal set in early September was to visit all one hundred and twenty schools by October 15. Work left at the office, such as conducting the organization's formal communications program, was to be turned over to teacher volunteers.

By October 1, the Staff and President were busily spending a vast amount of time in daily face-to-face contact with teachers, before and after school in an attempt to persuade the membership that general organizational change was indeed taking place without the need for complete restructuring and leader replacement.

The matter of communication itself had also come under serious questioning. Paralleling 1972, there existed an uneasy sense that both members and lower level leaders possessed incomplete information about the internal and external operations of the STO. The feeling emerged in several comments by Board of Directors members:

People were uninformed down the hierarchy. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Communication had broken down at the school site level. School site representatives were not informed. (Interview notes, 10/76)

Renewed formal communication efforts were appropriate ways to address both the changed sentiments and the communication criticism. As such, they became part of an overall organizational recovery effort.
The recovery efforts covered several important areas. Calls for organizational unity were foremost in the minds of the Staff and officers:

The single most important thing now is to bring all teachers together under a single purpose. This keeps hitting me from all over. (Field notes, 10/1/76)

A monthly column by Juanita Hawkins illustrated the public expression of the unity need:

We are 4,120 teachers facing a challenge. It is the challenge to unite 4,120 voices into one single voice. It is the challenge to channel the efforts of 4,120 teachers into determining and achieving one single objective. We need 4,120 teachers committed to that kind of unity. That kind of unity is a powerful force. The channel for that force is STO. (Ahora, October 12, 1976)

An integral part of the development of unity was the recovery of membership. The absence of dues deduction had in a matter of days reduced membership from 2,300 to 600 or 700 members. A Membership Task Force was quickly convened under the direction of President-Elect Tim Stearns. Moreover, Project Payday--an effort at eliciting membership at the school site level on or about teacher pay days--was initiated. Finally, a volunteer group headed by Sally Robbins was put together and with the assistance of a telephone bank attempted to call each teacher within the District to encourage membership.

Beyond the actual solicitation of membership, attempts were made to recover the lost momentum of the organization. Earlier, it has been suggested that the STO leadership had attempted to sustain the inter-organizational conflict prevalent during the Summer and early Fall. This momentum maintenance effort was unsuccessful. The Board cast about for others:
Coolidge Middle School reports that the office is sending back newsletters because STO can no longer use the mailboxes. This is a possible rallying point. (Field notes, 9/7/76)

Other efforts included the pressing of grievances to higher levels in the grievance procedure, and the attempt at resuming routine organizational functions such as leadership training and legislative awareness training for members.

The recovery of both membership and momentum required a mending, a re-establishment of existing intraorganizational and interorganizational relationships. This was perhaps the most difficult aspect of organizational recovery, for the earlier conflict within and without had been intense and personal and the bitter feelings it generated were not easily forgotten. But, the imperative was unmistakably present, as a conciliatory sentiment was widespread among the general membership. An antecedent to the crisis had been the cessation of informal, cordial relations between the formal STO leadership and some ex-STO leaders and between selected SPS administrators. While the need to renew these contacts was evident in the minds of both Staff and officers, there was a hesitancy arising out of some feeling that integrity (face) had to be maintained. The interview notes illustrate this hesitancy:

Less than two years ago, Frank Lassiter decided to channel all communications through Chuck Baker. The relationship became formal. [Now], we will attempt to establish informal relations, but it has to be reciprocal. (Interview notes, 9/76)

A more subtle means was envisioned for mending internal relations:

The Contract Committee needs to meet soon. We've appointed Linda Swenson, Helen Mills, Rita Burnette, James Hope [former President and Staff Director], Ruth Harrison [ex-STO Board member], and Mary Bell [ex-STO Board member].
We are trying to get people who have been fighting us to help us . . . If we kiss off Mary, we'll lose a lot of people. (Field notes, 10/1/76)

Embracing all recovery efforts at individual and organizational reflection and introspection was a turning inward to come to grips with the events of the preceding months. Such attempts went beyond the search for failure explanations. There was, in some fundamental sense, a search for some stable core, some foundation upon which to rebuild the organization. Normally, the foundation was established in the form of annual goals and objectives formulated well before the start of the school year. At this time, however, an almost after-the-fact effort was made to establish "goals, strategies, and action plans" (Field notes, 10/15/76) for the organization. The planning format was simple: the Board of Directors was to identify and list perceived problems and then relate problems to possible goals. Goal setting, it was hoped, would provide definite direction to the recovery efforts and to the apparently random activity taking place within the organization. It was to reverse once and for all the negative psychological sentiments and the incessant questioning that continued to create internal divisiveness. This and the other immediate intraorganizational consequences of the crisis event may be illustrated as in Figure 18.

Crisis Aftermath: Extended Consequences of Continued Conflict

Despite sustained efforts within the immediate aftermath of the crisis to return to some semblance of organizational normalcy, there continued to be conflict within the Siringo Teachers' Organization. The sources of conflict continued to be varied. For one, there was lingering
Figure 18. Crisis Aftermath: Immediate Intraorganizational Consequences
uncertainty about organizational direction. Moreover, desired changes in internal operation and constitutional reform had not progressed satisfactorily, and the rampant questioning of leadership and governance continued unabated. Out of this troubled context emerged a number of extended organizational consequences.

As new issues and problems confronted the Board of Directors, Staff, and officers, the tension created thereby enhanced the re-emergence of past internal conflicts. Prominent among them was the abiding tension between conflicting sentiments—organizational democracy versus organizational efficiency. The conflicting sentiments were fundamental to the recovery of the organization, and the tension between the two reappeared at virtually all Board of Directors' meetings during the Fall. The Board of Directors minutes indicate one such instance:

d) What's wrong! The Board of Directors doesn't feel responsible for membership . . . . doesn't care anymore . . . .

e) Board of Directors hasn't worked hard enough . . . not good and/or enough contacts—get members involved—anti-STO record—want tangible results—lack of persons to talk to teachers . . . . Board of Directors is not convinced about STO.  
(Board of Directors minutes, 9/28/76)

The field notes from another meeting report a similar example:

Thirteen people [out of twenty-seven] indicated that they will attend the planning retreat. Who will get compliance from these others? Our desire and commitment reflects that of teachers. They won't put anything in.  
(Check complete silence for ten seconds)

(Another member speaks)  
The thrust is not here from the Board of Directors. The push is from the officers. Besides, the division idea is wrong.
(Another member)
But, so many of us need help!

(Officer)
We need a roll call vote for a show of commitment
for November 6 [the planning retreat].
(Field notes, 10/18/76)

The officers were attempting to provide some direction to the Board,
but were apparently doing so in a way that violated the democratic
norm present in the group. Board member Phil Gleasoner concisely
summarized the point later in the same meeting:

Table the motion [to establish informal relations
with SPS] until a broader sample of teachers has had
input. It has been the same forty people that have
been running this organization for the past ten years.
(Field notes, 10/18/76)

These and other disagreements created a good deal of leader
frustration. An excerpt from a Board of Directors meeting illustrates
the point:

Bunker: The grievance filed last Spring on prep time in
Mid Schools is now a dead horse, inasmuch as language
has been removed from the new SPS contract . . . .
We're staying within the facts, it is not sensible
to proceed because there's nothing to be won.

Gleasoner: We don't have the power to force any issue, anywhere!

Swenson: Can we raise it as a public relations issue?

Brenner: Not according to the attorney.

A.D. English: Has consideration been given to the Rights and
Responsibilities Committee? Here is the STO backing
down on anything that has to do with the front line
teachers. The least little bit of resistance is good
public relations. What teachers don't need is
crawfishing. What have you done for the teachers?
(Field notes, 9/15/76)

For English and others, the frustration was particularly severe.
During meetings, English would take candid and unpopular positions in a
manner that alienated others in the group, and brought about added tension. The mounting personal frustration and the accompanying tension culminated in November with English's voluntary departure:

President Hawkins reported that Ruth Harrison had submitted her letter of resignation and, in a verbal commitment, A. D. English had also indicated that he had resigned from the Board of Directors.
(Board of Directors minutes, 11/15/76)

The loss of leaders like Nevarez (weeks earlier), the Morgans, and now English and Harrison, contributed to a growing loss of organizational resources. The resource loss was magnified by other external events. There had been little if any resolution to external relationship conflicts. A portion of the Board of Directors minutes is indicative.

Curt Brenner reported to the Board of Directors on the anticipated changes in administrative policy in view of the rejection of the last tendered offer of the Board. According to Chuck Baker, the new policy will have no reference to the STO in it and any relationship that the STO has with the District will be determined by Board Policy 3.1 . . . (Board of Directors minutes, 10/18)

In accordance with its new administrative policy, SPS, on August 30, notified its Data Processing section to stop withholding STO dues from member checks. From that point on, STO had to manually collect all dues, and, due to the inconvenience to members plus other factors, membership plummeted from an August figure of 2,300 to a reported 972 in early November.

The dimensions of the accompanying resource loss were staggering. To the STO, the loss of 1,328 members was translated into approximately a loss of $52,000. Furthermore, the loss was felt elsewhere, for out of the $115 per member annual dues, the state and national affiliates received $74 per member, an anticipated total
in 1975-76 of $98,000. The magnitude of loss was enhanced by the deceptiveness of the reported membership figure. Later, in a subsequent search for resource clarification, an external audit revealed that the 972 figure represented signature cards only, not actual dues payments, and in the final analysis, the receipted dues came from somewhere in the vicinity of 700 members.

The consequences of the dramatic resource loss were immediate in appearance. On the one hand, members and leaders alike became keenly interested in the financial operation and status of the organization. Comments made at a teachers' meeting were typical of the former:

Teacher: Do you have a breakdown of how the money is spent?

Brenner: Being a service organization, 80% of the budget is for program. About 20% is for facilities. Would a pie chart for all teachers help? (Field notes, 9/9/76)

Beyond membership concern for financial operation, the Board of Directors quickly activated an Internal Affairs Committee to examine the current budget in light of the rather grim revenue picture. By October 18, that Committee presented its findings to the Board of Directors. It was apparent from the report that the organization as a whole was faced with selecting between two distasteful alternatives:

STO Budget: This item needs to be discussed by the Board of Directors on November 1st. Curt Brenner distributed to the members of the Board copies of the adopted Budget for this school year with two additional columns. One, based on the borrowing of $25,000, one based on the borrowing of $50,000 for the purpose of continuing the organization's program with a membership of approximately 1,000. (Board of Directors minutes, 10/18/76)

Following either option, two internal operations would have to be concommitantly pursued: initiation of resource recovery efforts;
and, cutbacks in current expenditures. The former was undertaken with considerably more publicity than the latter, its focal point being a massive Membership Drive. At least one former leader was pressed back into service to head the drive. Juanita Hawkins spelled out the nature of the Membership Task Force's imperative:

The prime purpose is to follow up the membership drive. The suggestion has been made that the phones be hooked up again, and call every single person. Keep a record of what you learn. Follow up with a visit by a cluster coordinator. Get people to help who are really good ... a political job. (Field notes, 9/39/76)

Despite problems in manning the phone bank, the Task Force began its work in early October. In terms of collecting information regarding current teacher sentiment, the drive was an overwhelming success. As an attracter of members, it was less than promising. Other measures, including breaking with long-established practices such as full dues payment from all part-time teachers, were urgently pressed into service in order to bolster membership.

Cutbacks in expenditures accompanied the revenue generation attempts. One clerical office position was eliminated. The Board of Director's retreat location, typically held in a local hotel, was shifted several times to avoid rental and other service fees. Out-of-state trips by officers and staff were temporarily terminated.

The cutbacks in expenditures inevitably resulted in curtailed membership services. Sponsorship of several pending court cases was reluctantly withdrawn as the stakes involved became abruptly higher. "We are throwing money away when we can't win," argued the President-Elect (Field notes, 9/15/76). Training sessions for members with the
STO picking up the luncheon and rental tab were not planned, and other services disappeared as the budget was progressively pared.

As the curtailment continued and resource recovery efforts were deemed marginally successful, the STO was compelled to rely on state and national affiliate assistance to a greater degree. The shifting relationship was an uncomfortable one. The field notes suggest that discussion throughout the Fall was decidedly antagonistic against both affiliates. Yet, there was little local choice. One instance of the gradual reliance is noted in the Board of Directors minutes:

The Board of Directors briefly discussed the new system of payment of dues via pre-authorized checks. Cost to the organization is $1.75 per member per year. The state and national affiliates have agreed to share one-third of this cost. (Board of Directors minutes, 11/15/76)

Later, as the affiliates assumed greater responsibility for local staff costs, the reliance increased. This process of progressively developing reliance on external affiliates is diagrammed in Figure 19.

Crisis Aftermath: Extended Intraorganizational Consequences

The negative feelings prevalent in the immediate crisis aftermath had given way to the marked enthusiasm and bustling activity that characterized earlier attempts at organizational recovery. The Staff and officers had energetically thrown themselves into rebuilding the once formidable organizational image, focusing their efforts around the slogan—"Now is the time for unity" (Field notes, 9/30/76). The detailed organization of the Membership Drive, the emerging responsiveness to members at the school level, and elaborate training plans (when
Figure 19. Crisis Aftermath: Extended Consequences of Continued Conflict
affordable) all gave an appearance that the unanticipated crisis was indeed over. Recovery, it seemed, was just around the corner.

Yet, there was the lingering suspicion in the minds of many that the crisis had not run its full course. The surrounding environment was still troubled. SPS Superintendent Frank Lassiter had observed of the crisis aftermath that community sentiment continued to prescribe "a pox on both your houses" (Interview notes, 12/78), and that despite the cessation of overt hostilities, there was a profound sense among employees and the public "that something was really amiss" (Interview notes, 12/78) in the District and in the STO-SPS relationship. The STO leadership, attempting to put its own house in order, had made a determined effort at resuming normal operations. For example, a November 6 Board of Directors planning retreat belatedly focused on the generation of organizational goals. Several goals emerged from the development process, here reported verbatim:

(1) that the STO participate in the SPS School Board elections;
(2) that the STO reaffirm and utilize organizational functions within a democratic structure;
(3) that the STO should institute positive relationships with the SPS administration;
(4) that the STO should seek a strong negotiated contract;
(Field notes, 11/6/76)

The goal generation process became more than simply the collective development of ideas. Through the generation process, a number of pent up emotions and frustrations were released. There was even the hesitant admission on the part of some in attendance of leadership responsibility for the strike vote failure. It was, in short,
a brief moment of purification, of laying to rest the past, and of attempting to resurrect the organization so as to continue unburdened in the future. That afternoon, the Board of Directors members departed with a renewed sense of direction, commitment and community. Weeks later, the goals were assigned to committees for implementation, and the organization as a whole appeared to have set behind the August defeat. Unfortunately, the appearance was illusory for there were yet other latent consequences to occur.

Mounting state and national affiliate dissatisfaction with recovery efforts was one. Following the strike vote defeat, both affiliates pulled back to pre-crisis routine assistance levels. Occasional visits by staff by and large comprised the sum total of external involvement in local matters. As it became increasingly apparent, however, that recovery would not be immediate, the state and national organizations began to pay greater attention.

President-Elect Tim Stearns, for example, reported:

[That there was] prodding from the state and national. Meetings were held with the State Director and Curt Brenner before Christmas.
(Interview notes, 5/3)

Telephone conversations with regional and national staff were also reported.

The mounting dissatisfaction was accompanied by local acknowledgement of the failure of the short-run organizational recovery efforts. The acknowledgement was made privately, and was typically expressed in statements such as:

It's true, we've been hurt rather badly from this process . . . .(Interview notes, 10/14)
Unpleasant reports reinforcing this sentiment appeared literally from all sides. Among the more unpleasant was the final report of the Membership Task Force:

Sally Robbins, interim chairwoman of the Membership Task Force, reported to the Board of Directors that the Task Force had called all non-members in the SPS or attempted to call, and had asked those who answered reasons why they did not join the STO and/or whether they intended joining the STO in the future. The most prevalent reason given for not joining was "leadership" [original emphasis]. Other items included economic reasons, no reason at all, or political endorsements (these were major items). The Task Force is making no recommendation to the Board of Directors but it feels that the situation is very grave. Motions were made at the Task Force meeting to change negotiators, to change the Negotiations Committee, to change the negotiations approach, and to evaluate these changes. On each occasion the vote was tied. (Board of Directors minutes, 12/6)

Another Task Force member reported that 185 teachers suggested restructuring the entire organization. Additionally, the two month Task Force effort had failed to appreciably increase membership. Moreover, efforts at soliciting school site representatives had fallen woefully short of projected needs.

Other recovery problems continued to plague the STO. Dues payment from those teachers who had joined the organization again was erratic and unpredictable, causing a good deal of anxiety among the Staff and officers. With dues payments dramatically down, the STO was forced in early January to sign a $30,000 line of credit with a local Management Corporation. Another member recalled yet another problem:

The November 6 plan didn't go. There were many resignations on the Board of Directors. (Interview notes, 3/22)

External problems also were prevalent:

Our legislators are not listening at all . . . cut off teachers. They don't have any concern for the power of Siringo teachers. (Field notes, 3/7/77)
An NLEO news article later dramatized the severity of the recovery effort failure:

About this time last year a crisis developed in Siringo which was major in impact on the local organization and of serious consequence to all of the Nueva Loma Education Organization.

The crisis resulted in a loss of over 1,200 members in Siringo. Naturally this also meant a loss of over 1,200 members of NLEO.

Even elementary arithmetic will show that the loss of this many members almost totally destroyed the STO budget and was a disaster to the NLEO budget. Over 12 per cent of the funds budgeted were not available to NLEO. Over 50 per cent was lost to STO. (NLEO Today, October 1977)

While the STO leadership was acutely and painfully aware of the gravity of the situation, the membership remained in a condition of sustained uncertainty. Rumors routinely circulated around the District about the pending collapse of the STO, or about the STO's denial of representation for certain employee groups. "[Formal] communication had come to a standstill," observed one Committee Chairperson (Interview notes, 2/4/77). "There was a great deal of apathy," reported another member (Interview notes, 3/31/77). "Day in, day out people haven't done anything without direction," lamented still another (Interview notes, 2/24/77). Other excerpts point to the disorganization generally present at the time:

People are so out of it, so beaten down, that anybody who is loud and vocal will be listened to . . . .

Leaders are looking for positions outside of STO and teaching. Olson, Logan, Hope, Robbins--all looking at other Staff Director's positions. (Interview notes, 3/2/77)

Now there is floundering around to see where the power lies. (Interview notes, 11/8/77)
With general uncertainty rampant, accompanied by the acknowledged failure of recovery efforts and mounting external dissatisfaction, the press for general organizational change intensified. The Constitutional Committee was particularly insistent. Observations made at the Committee's third meeting were candidly indicative:

Comments were made . . . to the effect of having heard comments that maybe we don't need to change the constitution, but might need a complete restructuring of the organization. Some even said that might need to let the organization die and begin again. (Constitution Committee minutes, 12/1/76).

Subsequent minutes indicate that from that point on the Committee devoted itself to a wide ranging examination of organizational structure and governance—the final product of which was to be a "Restructure Report" forwarded to the Representative Council members.

Other groups emerged to add to the press for change. Informal, ad hoc groups of newer Board of Directors members began to meet independently to discuss the organization's dilemma. One group later known informally as the "December group" met immediately prior to the issuance of the Membership Task Force in early December. The interview notes report the content of the meeting:

Decided to someway get rid of [some officers and staff]. Recall petitions, new elections, phone calls to members, support to other leaders . . . . We tried to be covert. The following Monday, the officers met. Something shocking was to happen in the Board of Directors meeting. The Membership Task Force was going to recommend Curt be fired. The December group dropped its efforts at this point. (Interview notes, 4/26/77)

The growing expression of change sentiments was not limited to such groups. The Board of Directors minutes had, in fact, earlier reported similar membership opinion as well:
Terry Bates moved that a general membership vote, by secret ballot, be taken on December 1 on the issue of the retention of Curt Brenner and Sam Bunker as the Staff Director and the Assistant Staff Director, or their release at the end of their present contracts. Rita Burnette moved that the previous motion be referred to the Staff Negotiating Committee for study with a recommendation to be presented to the Board of Directors after the study has been completed. Seconded .... The motion carried. (Board of Directors minutes, 10/4)

Bates contended that half of the schools she represented instigated the move, and that the Staff's continuation should be decided by the membership, not by the Board of Directors or by a committee. The discussion and subsequent motion had the effect of moving informal discussion about change into the formal arena.

In addition to the sentiments expressed by groups and by the membership within the STO, even the state and national increased their pressure on the STO leadership. Several officials reported the pressure thus:

January telephone conversations [with regional and national staff] .... They said, "You are going to have a meeting." (Interview notes, 5/3)

The stated purpose [of the meeting] was to find out what difficulties we were having. For this size school system nation-wide, we had the lowest membership and they wanted to know why. (Interview notes, 3/2)

The meeting marked the beginning of direct and immediate intervention by external affiliates. The local leadership was apparently ready for such intervention. A Board of Directors member later expressed the sentiments present at the meeting:

We expected direction giving. [However], we were told that we should have respect for each other as we sat together at the table, that we should follow parliamentary procedure more closely. We were also told that we should present a unified front when we left the room whether we agreed or not. (Interview notes, 3/2)
I have an idea that the national affiliate called and wanted to come. People went there thinking they'd help us. (Interview notes, 3/22)

The close of the meeting did not mark the end of external intervention; the data indicate that it was merely the beginning.

Within several weeks it became apparent that several major changes were being planned. The planning process, typical of that employed on other major decisions, was reported thus:

Tim Stearns [President-Elect] and I went out of town on February 5. A meeting was held that Saturday. We went from the airport to the meeting. Curt was in the office. We were told the meeting didn't concern the Board of Directors .... The plan was told to us. Juanita, Curt, maybe Sam were going to leave. "Economics" [original emphasis] was to be part of the plan. (Interview notes, 3/22)

Formal announcement of the Recovery Plan, as it later was described, was made to the membership and Board of Directors two days later. A February 7 internal news release stated:

The Board of Directors on Monday, February 7, 1977, adopted a comprehensive plan for the operation of the organization for the remainder of this school year and for the 1977-78 school year. Changes in operation were dictated by financial and other considerations related to reduction in membership as well as by recommendations developed in response to concerns teachers have expressed in regard to the organization. The plan includes reduction in staff as well as a change in the Staff Director position, as Curt Brenner and Sam Bunker announced a change in their career plans. President Juanita Hawkins may return to the classroom in April, as a money-saving measure, if there is a position available.

Staff and elected leadership have been involved for a long period of time in development of the adopted plan, in cooperation with the national and state staffs; so that the plan represents general agreement at all three levels on the approach taken. (STO flyer, February 7, 1977)

The extent of external intervention was later found to be more than mere agreement about the approach taken. In fact, greater external control of internal STO operations from that point on was only one of a
series of later consequences. The control took several forms. A major component of the Recovery Plan was staff transition. The field notes report the internal delegation of responsibility for this component:

(1) Staff transition (with NLEO)

(2) National designated interim staff to serve until April 15

(3) NLEO interim staff to serve between April 15 to June 15

(4) The Field Representative program will become state-wide program. Budget to be state directed

(5) NLEO can veto local selection of Field Representative [Staff Director]. [But], it hasn't ever been exercised

(6) Salary to be paid from state from state-wide assessment

(7) National to provide training program model.

(Field notes, 2/7/77)

The assumption of control was apparent weeks later:

State Staff Director: I've been working on the STO Staff Director assignment. The national field representative coordinator will submit names to this group [the officers] for review and discussion in the next week or so . . . .

As soon as the legislature finishes ... I'll send one of my staff for training . . . . There are training alternatives available from the national [also] . . . .

I had intended to meet with your Internal Affairs Committee to develop the budget, if that's not objectionable to the group . . . . (Field notes, 3/7/77)

The control was also financial, as other field notes indicate:

We are cutting $106,000 out of the budget with the state assuming a portion of it.

Last week, I [the national interim staff member] was in Washington. I explained to the national our situation and asked if there was any way they could provide any relief for us. The financial picture looks rather bleak about the 15th of the month.

They would consider an interest free loan due August 31 of about $31,000 in order that we can get our financial data together . . . . The national will recommend to
the national Board of Directors May 1 [that the loan be extended]. They also gave us a check for $12,000 if we want to accept it. Our President needs to contact the national President tomorrow. (Field notes, 4/11/77)

There was little choice. The 15th was four days away, and a local bank had of late turned down an STO loan application for $46,000. The Board voted to accept the loan, and implicitly, external control. An additional consequence of direct external intervention was the certainty of major personnel changes. Teachers accepted the imminent departure of Brenner, Bunker, and Hawkins as economically motivated, but other leaders suggested other explanations:

It's [the process] as democratic as its leaders let them think it is. I know that the bodies [just] started piling up. (Interview notes, 1/79)

Regardless of the reasons, the departures took place quietly. In its final form, the transition plan specified that the national interim staff director would assume the STO position on April 12, with Brenner and Bunker taking extended leave until May 16, their final date of employment. Moreover, President Hawkins did not return immediately to the classroom, but quietly allowed President-Elect Tim Stearns to assume direct responsibility several months before the constitutionally designated date of June 15.

The state and national affiliates also prescribed a moderate number of immediate programmatic changes. A variety of state and national specialists in communication, political action, and collective bargaining were brought in to implement a pre-programmed package, entitled "Make A Case for Membership." Program areas included: (1) economic and professional security; (2) teacher/community relations;
(3) Board/teacher organization relations; (4) teacher involvement in curriculum planning; (5) legislative action; and, (6) membership generation. For the STO, whose [by its own admission] entire program thrust had previously been collective bargaining, the package represented a departure from the past. Moreover, the program reflected for the first time in years widespread participation of the membership and school site representatives.

A final direct consequence of external intervention was a move to moderately change organizational governance and decision making. The Constitution Committee had made a substantial number of important changes designed to enhance organizational democracy. These changes included: (1) eliminating Board of Directors influence from the Committee structure; (2) bringing staff positions under direct control of the Representative Council; (3) limiting the length of elected terms and incumbent opportunity to succeed himself/herself; and, (4) Board of Directors size reductions. There were others, and they collectively provoked resistance from current staff and officers. A portion of the February 7 field notes illustrates the magnitude of resistance:

Stearns: The Constitution Committee . . . has said that hiring will be by them [the Representative Council]. The Council will handle hiring and firing of Staff.

Burnette: The Constitution Committee says school site representatives will have a vote after the approval of the Board of Directors. They aren't asking for the representatives to have the say-so on hiring. They will listen to the Board of Directors . . . .

State Director: This would scare the hell out of me! In any organization, you have to have a management level. School site representatives can't get the necessary information to make an evaluation. I hope you will take a position that the new employee will not have a direct line of management responsiveness.
Bunker: It would also be very unpredictable. You would have bedlam.

Johnson: Wouldn't the body have the same control over Staff as they do now?

State Director: The authority would be so thoroughly diffuse that the Staff could control . . . .

(Field notes, 2/7/77)

Despite the apparent unwillingness of many Board members, Staff, and officers to risk investing additional authority in the basic policy making body, there were other minor indications that more care was being taken to involve the Representative Council and the general membership in decision making. The notable example was the adoption and ratification of organizational goals in the late Spring of 1977.

Assessing the overall consequence of external intervention—the personnel, programmatic, and decision making changes—it can be concluded that there resulted a differential reduction of intra-organizational conflict. On the one hand, the interim staff, in its attempt to understand and deal with the organization's present condition, uncovered a number of serious, yet unknown internal problems.

One significant problem disclosed in early April was irregularities in the matter of the line of credit extension with the Management Assistance Corporation. Brenner, acting on an Internal Affairs Committee recommendation (apparently not at the official request of the Board of Directors or Representative Council), embarked upon a funds search. He later explained his actions to the Board:

We need to back up to some actions of the Board of Directors. When we first decided to make changes, Internal Affairs recommended we borrow $30,000 for one year. I checked with a couple of banks. I checked with Management Assistance Corporation and talked about getting a loan for less interest than at a bank . . . . Management
Corporation took a lot of risk a bank would not have taken. Internal Affairs looked again and recommended we look at a long term note. We did encumber those funds on April 1. [Earlier], on December 7, 1976, a formal agreement was signed. (Field notes, 4/11/77)

The signed agreement did not appear before early Board meetings, and Board members were apparently unaware of its existence. Interim Director Paul Sackett immediately asked for examination by the STO attorney, and after some difficulty and cost, was able to legally extract the organization from the line of credit arrangement.

Several other financial matters also surfaced. The NLEO became concerned as the school year ended that the STO dues rebate to the state, a sum of $16,000, was behind schedule. An external audit conducted by a contracted auditor plus an NLEO investigation showed that as many as two hundred members had incompletely paid dues, and hence, sufficient monies had not been rebated to the state organization. Moreover, there were additional difficulties in accounting for all organizational expenditures.

Several Board of Directors members began to closely examine building costs and rental receipts, and concluded that the STO had been running a deficit in its facilities management. Finally, it was revealed in August that the Educator's Housing Corporation was also in financial trouble. Under management by Management Assistance Corporation additional capital had not been acquired, and the much-touted project was in danger of immediate collapse.

The revelation of these embarrassing matters created the conditions for renewed intraorganizational conflict. While there was general agreement about the dimensions of the problems, conflict ensued
over their solutions. A new, younger Board of Directors, for example wanted to sell the STO building. This suggestion met with great resistance from older Board members and the officers. One older member concisely summarized sentiments about younger members:

Young people cannot appreciate the past and the struggle the STO has gone through to represent teachers.
(Interview notes, 3/77)

Over this and other matters there was internal conflict.

On the other hand, the organization seemed to respond positively to the changes implemented by the state and national affiliates, and there appeared to be a reduction in internal conflict regarding non-financial areas. Membership increased just beyond the 1,000 teacher mark. Leaders at the local, state, and national levels began to display a guarded optimism which had been missing for months. Local President-Elect Abel Montano asserted:

A new STO is emerging for the service of Siringo teachers. Not only is a new kind of leadership developing within the organization, but also attitudes are changing among many who have long been active in the organization.

These changing attitudes are a direct response to the new demands that teachers are making of their organization. They are wanting leadership in which they can have confidence, a leadership which they know will be responsive to their needs.

Over two thousand teachers responded to a questionnaire distributed in February by STO . . . . Rest assured, we intend to keep you informed of our continuing achievements. But we also need your financial support and your personal involvement in the affairs and activities of the STO. It is your organization. Please join us and help us help you. Together we can, together we will! (Ahora, May 11, 1977)

The NLEO State President, long an ex-STO leader, also spoke positively:

I would just commend everyone involved in getting the organization back on a positive thrust. I am very pleased with the membership drive. Keep it up! (Field notes, 5/31/77)
In summary, the data indicate that the conflict which had earlier surrounded governance, program, and personalities had indeed subsided. With the dramatic internal changes taking place, there arose other conflicts, primarily of a financial nature, which offset to some degree the expected conflict reduction. The extended intraorganizational consequences of the crisis are displayed in Figure 20.

Crisis Aftermath: The Re-emergence of the Crisis Complex

The point was made earlier that the general organizational changes occurring during the Spring of 1977 had the effect of reducing intraorganizational conflict. The reduction, as one might suspect, was not complete, particularly in one specific area--the substantive changes in governance and decision making proposed by the Constitution Committee. The Committee itself became the center of continued controversy and conflict.

The initial member composition of the Committee was indicative that conflict was to occur. Its chairman, Rob Turner, was a young high school teacher experienced in teacher organization affairs, however, outside of Siringo. Also on the Committee was the controversial Margo McDonald. Since 1974, McDonald had switched memberships from the STO to the Siringo Teachers' Confederacy (STC) and back to the STO Articulate and ever outspoken, she saw an opportunity to affect substantive organizational change through the vehicle of the Constitution Committee, and she eagerly seized it. Others on the Committee, while not as flamboyant, also shared Turner's and McDonald's reform sentiments, and the Committee approached its task with a sense of eager determination.
Figure 20. Crisis Aftermath: Extended Intraorganizational Consequences
Elsewhere, the recommendations for structural and procedural changes proffered by the Committee have been listed. The Committee timetable designated the February 17th Representative Council meeting as the date for presentation of recommendations to the STO's primary policy making body.

As the recommendations became known to the leadership of the STO prior to the 17th, controversy began to develop. Both Juanita Hawkins and Tim Stearns had met with the Committee several times to share their thoughts on proposed changes. Curt Brenner also met with the Committee on one occasion. As the recommendation date approached, Hawkins claimed that the Committee had not adequately sought feedback from others. Turner later talked about the accusation:

In the last Board of Director's meeting, Juanita said we asked for no help and no interference. In actuality, we asked for information we were never able to get, like Curt's contract. There was nothing in the Constitution about the Staff Director, hiring or firing. The so-called "Field Representative Package" we haven't gotten. Juanita might have withheld some information. The Committee was isolated, but the Board of Directors and staff knew what we were coming up with. There was no doubt in our minds that others knew what we were talking about.

(Interview notes, 2/77)

Data presented elsewhere in this Chapter confirms the Committee's contention that not only were the officers and staff aware of the proposed changes but had discussed them at length. The expressed concern of the leadership at the time was the conduct of annual elections, for should the Constitution Committee's recommendations pass the Representative Council, the elections would be postponed for some time until a general referendum could be held.
Other controversial events surrounded the February meeting.

Chairman Turner described several:

We [the Committee] were expecting opposition. Rita was giving me hell about the school site representatives having hire/fire say-so. We were told about a phone call to a representative the night before suggesting that we were doing really dumb stuff and that there were a bunch of crazy people on the committee. Officers were giving out information about the members of the Committee. We decided that we would ignore it and present it as our best thinking. (Interview notes, 2/77)

Another non-Committee member, also an officer, corroborated Turner's claim:

At the last meeting before February 17, we had been hearing that [selected] staff and officers had been calling people saying to vote this way or that. They were telling that the Constitution Committee was going off half-baked and that they were all screwed up. The Committee said that they had been asking for help. I got the impression that Juanita and Curt were displeased with the Committee's work. (Interview notes, 3/77)

The opposition at the Representative Council failed to materialize. The changes were discussed by those members in attendance, and the minutes reported the disposition of the recommendations:

No action was taken at the Representative Council on the Constitutional changes since a quorum was not present. (Representative Council minutes, 2/17)

A month later a similar circumstance was also reported:

There being no quorum, no action was taken on Constitutional and Bylaw amendments. (Representative Council minutes, 3/17)

The elections proceeded as scheduled amid the other activities of the Recovery Plan. The governance structure was left constitutionally intact.

Turner and other Committee members were irate, and suspected the legislative body had been manipulated:
Maybe not having a quorum was part of their plan. This is the first time [February 17] that we didn't have a quorum. No quorum—no constitutional changes, ever. (Interview notes, 2/77)

The conflict created over the Constitutional reform incidents led to additional ill will between Committee members, their sympathizers, and the formal STO leadership. Many saw the Constitutional effort as the last hope for organizational reform, short of massive personnel removal. As a consequence of the demise of the Constitution Committee, leaders such as McDonald voluntarily left off active membership in the STO. Others began to show an interest in a new teacher organization rumored to be in its formative stages. Former STO President Andy Logan was one such person:

After the horrible failure of the strike, STO was no longer the voice of teachers . . . . Several of us [ex-STO leader McDonald, and other ex-office holders] put out a flyer when COST (Coalition of Siringo Teachers) was first organized . . . . It had four purposes, one of which was to become the bargaining agent for teachers, which was in direct conflict with the STO. (Interview notes, 1/79)

Later, Logan's loyalty to the STO was brought under scrutiny, and he was eventually encouraged to leave the organization.

The next day [in April at the state's Spring Convention] I was told that Juanita and Tim would like to get together. We did so, and then they laid into me. I was being unloyal to the STO. How could I work for an organization whose announced purpose was to be the bargaining agent?

I didn't quit at that time. I was irritated and went on working with COST. Margo McDonald put in a consent form to run for office in STO [in a COST attempt to establish a multi-organization coalition] and was turned down.

I called up the STO office and said, "Cancel my membership and send back my dues." I was told that because I was unloyal, my membership was not an asset to the organization. (Interview notes, 1/79)
Out of McDonald's voluntary departure, Logan's involuntary resignation, and the renewed interest of other ex-STO leaders, a competing teacher organization was formed on March 16. A parking lot discussion between several prominent, long-time teacher leaders provided an initial impetus. A steering committee comprised of many former, as well as several current, STO and STC members was formed. The steering committee, headed by Margo McDonald, determined that its first goal would be to campaign for a bargaining agent election.

The campaign was announced on April 11, and the petition drive got underway shortly thereafter amid a good deal of fanfare. The Herald Telegraph headlined, "City Teachers Forming New Organization" (April 12, 1977), and went on to confirm the COST membership and petition efforts.

The STO responded quickly, viewing the competing organization as an external threat. STO leadership attempted initially to downplay the seriousness of the threat:

Starting a rival organization will not accomplish anything.
You're dividing your resources . . . (Interview notes, 3/77)

Other attempts were made to dissuade COST leaders from pursuing a bargaining election:

(Conversation with COST people)
(1) You don't have a representation election until the end of a contract. That's standard practice.
(2) You are neutralized for two years [with a contract you didn't negotiate]. (Interview notes, 4/77)

The threat presented by the emergent organization later was taken seriously, and as the STO responded to the threatening situation, it began to again take on the features of the crisis complex of 1972 and 1976. Margo McDonald reported one such instance:
The Steering Committee invited STO and STC to a joint meeting. At the last minute, Tim Stearns called to say they [STO] weren't coming. They had a feeling they were being pulled into a trap . . . . Thought they were being pulled in and then we would go to the press and tell the press that we were forming a coalition. The STC came . . . listened . . . were skeptical at best, questioning, but willing to talk . . . (Interview notes, 10/77)

STO leaders initiated other meetings, however, and brought state and national affiliate staff with them. The interview notes again describe the content of several meetings:

At some point, I heard from the interim director. "Come have a drink and let's talk." "Fine." He asked me whether or not our steering committee would be willing to get together . . . . We talked philosophy and about the changes that were going on in the STO. I could only tell him what I was doing . . . . In the next week, he called again. He asked to meet . . . . brought Tim Stearns, the national Field Representative Coordinator, and a NLEO Staff member. STO made the recommendation that we drop the petition drive, that there had been some real changes in STO, that COST could stay in existence for several years then call an election if the changes weren't forthcoming. They didn't indicate the changes. Haven't you seen the changes? "No," I answered . . . . It was an uncomfortable meeting. I remember trying to explain what the COST philosophy was and being told that I was fantacizing. I was annoyed . . . . What the meeting turned out to be, and what I thought it would be, were different. It just went badly. We felt attacked and put down. (Interview notes, 10/77)

Shortly thereafter, relations between the two organizations were severed. The internal disclosure of added financial difficulties, coupled with the looming COST competition for control over the teacher workforce, enhanced the STO's general perception of threat. Organizational security, too, appeared to be noticeably diminished as the threat and uncertainty of the possible bargaining election increased. Private meetings were held that summer, excluding the press, this author, and all but a few elected officials. The Staff, now including a new Staff
Director, Sam Nelson, had become security conscious, and with the addition of a Bargaining Election Task Force, once again began planning for an anticipated crisis.

The re-emergence of the crisis complex, paralleling similar states of mind in the STO past, is depicted in Figure 21.
Figure 21. Crisis Aftermath: The Re-emergence of the Crisis Complex
Chapter 6

TOWARD A MIDDLE RANGE THEORY
OF ORGANIZATIONAL CRISIS

Cremin (1977), in his Merle Curti Memorial Lecture at the University of Wisconsin, raised a series of "educational problematics" for historiographers of American education. The thrust of Cremin's remarks centered on the need for investigation into what he termed "educative institutions," i.e., organizations other than the traditional instructional institutions which are also engaged in educational endeavors.

While voluntary professional organizations were not included in Cremin's brief enumeration, other social scientists including Charters and Bidwell have contended in the same spirit as Cremin that considerable research needs to be conducted on the numerous organizations which influentially interact with educational institutions. Prominent among these tangential groups are the voluntary professional organizations at the local, state, and national levels. Despite their influence, these professional organizations remain among the least studied aspects of American education. Consequently, there appears to be little theoretical work done to date in this substantive area. Babchuk and Warriner (1963) suggest that this perspective raises a unique set of research issues:

The research problems become those of the structures of the association, the processes through which it operates, the internal effect of environmental changes or relationships, and the interrelationships of various structural, organizational, and ideological features (p. 135).
The present study has attempted to begin filling that void by investigating the antecedents and consequences of organizational crisis.

The study focused on two instances of organizational crisis, i.e., two unsuccessful strike bids by a voluntary teachers' organization. Major research tasks included an historical reconstruction of the events which preceded and followed the unsuccessful strike bids, and the subsequent development of a theoretical explanation. The resulting middle range theory is modeled in Figure 22.

The theory identifies four main categories of salient variables: (1) individual and collective psychological factors; (2) collective behavioral factors; (3) general environmental/contextual factors; and, (4) general organizational factors. The theoretical arrangement of these variables follows a general chronological sequence, illustrated here along the horizontal axis of the model. As such, the model can be read from left to right as an interrelated chain pattern of propositions (Zetterberg, 1965).

The theory initially proffers a set of conditions antecedent to the incidence of crisis. Among them is a surrounding environment which may be characterized as unstable and unfriendly (Thompson and McEwen, 1958). The data revealed that the "organizational past" of the voluntary professional organization under study was particularly troubled and had experienced considerable intraorganizational and interorganizational conflict. Within the focal organization, conflict typically occurred over substantial means/ends (activities/goals) changes which reflected broader changes taking place within its external and professional environment, i.e., its state and national affiliates.
Figure 22. The Antecedents and Consequences of Organizational Crisis
The virulent interorganizational conflict frequently found in primary
ternal relationships in their formative stages (Bairstow, 1973) was
typical of conditions in the broader social/political/economic environ-
ment. Organizational perception of extraorganizational competition and
threat, of public image unfavorability, and of waning organizational
security, compounded by a troubled past, all added to a persistent sense
of instability and unfriendliness.

As the surrounding environment becomes progressively less stable
and more unfriendly, the existing sense of organizational control over
that environment diminished. The organization incrementally perceived
more and more threats to its existence. Existing conditions, i.e., nomi-
nal membership participation (reported elsewhere by Smith and Freedman,
1972), delimited available alternatives for the recovery of control. In
order to overcome nominal membership participation and the disadvan-
tages of a loosely coupled system (Weick, 1976), concerted, dramatic, and
collective action became imperative. The operationalization of threats
as pseudo crises served that function, confirming the Mulder et al.
(1971) contention that "top leaders . . . were sometimes reponsible for
the occurrence of the observed crisis situation" (p. 30). Within the
ranks of the relatively few active members, typically the leadership,
the crisis orientation formed the psychological basis for a persistent
state of mind, theoretically conceptualized as a "crisis complex."

In order to perform its manifest function, the crisis complex
must be successfully communicated to the broad base of membership. To do
so requires systematic crisis planning which the data suggest took the
form of a standardized crisis routine. The routine was comprised of
several elements, including changes in organizational structure alterations in existing decision making procedures, efforts at strengthening the internal organization, and increased external intervention and reinforcement. Collectively, these elements were to operate in a manner similar to the sentiment-activity-interaction progression formulated by Homans (1950).

The systematic nature of these efforts structurally and normatively encouraged close adherence to the prescribed routine. In both crisis instances, the organization possessed a written plan containing a sequential set of activities to be followed closely. The reliance on the plan coupled with an emergent norm structure that discouraged deviation eventually resulted in a condition of dogmatism, a narrowing of toleration for those who questioned the efficacy of the routine. The dogmatic attitude assumed by the top leadership prevented its attending to the latent and unanticipated consequences of the crisis routine activation and utilization. The irony was that in doing so, the leadership was, as Tannenbaum (1965) earlier observed, "creating conditions leading to their own decline" (p. 715). Turner (1976) suggests, and the data here confirm, that unconditional reliance on a routine leads to a failure of organizational foresight, hence to events more critical than pseudo crises.

The consequences of the type which accompanied reliance on the crisis routine were latent and unintended (Merton 1957). Moreover, they were dysfunctional to the organization. Member expectations which spiraled beyond that which had been anticipated, and the dramatic increase in intraorganizational conflict were several of these.
Additionally, the data suggest that the organization had overused the term crisis in order to regain environmental control, and its cavalier use in these two crisis instances lost much of the affective import customarily associated with the term. Hence, the membership failed to believe that their organization was indeed in a condition of crisis. It was the accumulation of these dysfunctional elements of the crisis routine which eventually offset its manifest and functional elements.

The failure or inability to foresee the dysfunctional consequences resulted not in the planned pseudo-crisis but in a situation (the strike bid defeat) which conceptually possessed all of the elements of a "true" crisis (Hermann, 1972). The organization found itself confronted with a new series of consequences for which there had been no planning. The incidence of crisis itself led to an outpouring of a number of negative psychological responses in the immediate crisis aftermath. The data report, for example, expressions of shock, dismay, betrayal, even tears. Moreover, the crisis occurrence meant the further loss of environmental control inasmuch as the voluntary organization's adversary was able to impose its own resolution of the interorganizational conflict which had precipitated the crisis. The crisis routine, then, rather than enhancing control further reduced it, and did so in a dramatically negative manner.

The presence of sustained negativism and the pressure of present and future threat resulted during crisis aftermath in what Shepard (1964) has termed "loser behavior": member departure, leaders departing to become centers of opposition, group unattractiveness, insecurity among remaining members, and internal conflict. All were
present in the study, and parallel Shepard's characterization of this cyclical and self-reinforcing behavior. Shepard additionally contends that outside intervention is necessary to reverse these self-defeating tendencies. The data again confirm this observation. After months of progressively worsening intraorganizational conditions, spiraling expressions of discontent, and the explicit intervention of external affiliates, a press for substantive organizational change was created. Despite its substantiveness, the press actually resulted in nominal changes, such as executive succession, limited structural reorganization, and minor electoral reform. However, since the character of the changes failed to completely address the fundamental expectations of the organization's perennial critics, members and leaders alike found themselves in a relatively unchanged position vis-a-vis their environment. Further, in the minds of many, the organizational changes were perceived as but the most recent dissatisfying elements of a troubled organizational past. Hence as in Figure 22, the cyclical nature of crisis oriented organizational behavior is illustrated.
EPILOGUE

On April 1, 1979, after almost three years of continued internal strife following the failure of the strike vote in August of 1976, the Siringo Teachers' Organization's national affiliate abruptly replaced Staff Director Sam Nelson. The move had been made with the explicit approval of the STO. NLEO officials simultaneously assumed key STO staff functions until a replacement, named and salaried by the national organization, could arrive. The agreement between the national, the state, and the STO was simple: NLEO officials and the new Staff Director would remain until the STO could recover its former external influence and again be in a financial position to hire its own staff.

The general circumstances of Nelson's departure were as troubled as had been his tenure. Never more than peripherally included in the circle of STO influentials, Nelson, despite his pivotal position, was regarded as a sort of "marginal man" (Merton, 1957). He had finally tendered his resignation in March, effective July 31, 1979, but the STO elected leadership, not wanting to prolong an already tension-filled relationship, purchased the final three months of his abbreviated two-year contract with financial assistance from the NLEO.

Much of the dissatisfaction and frustration throughout the twenty months Nelson served as Staff Director was related to the STO's inability as an organization to set aside the problems of its past. Continuously troubled by the spectre of past image, personalities, and attitudes, the STO could not make substantial inroads into the
recovery of lost influence. Competing teacher organizations had come and gone; yet, the STO, for example, while increasing membership two-fold over 1977, nevertheless had failed to reach previous member levels. Although Nelson and other leaders clearly identified themselves with aggressive recovery efforts, they never seemed to translate these efforts into a new sense of direction for the teachers of Siringo. Nor were he and the elected leadership able to work together in forging cohesive teacher sentiment in support of STO goals and activities. Continued conflict within the organization was also present. In the Spring of 1978, it resurfaced during the annual resumption of negotiations. At other times, it was evident within the meetings of the Board of Directors. The resulting low level of trust between Nelson, the elected leadership, and voluntary committee members hindered badly needed healing efforts essential to the full recovery of the STO.

Ironically, Nelson's departure came at a time in which the relationship between the STO and its perennial adversary, the SPS, again had all the evolving features of the crises of 1972 and 1976. After two months of discussion, negotiations broke down, and there was once again private discussion of going to mediation over unresolved issues. Similarly, the issues were numerous, and the exchange of claims and counter claims reminiscent of the crisis routine of earlier years had already begun. Mass meetings, attempts at creating external pressure, and press conferences were the STO's planned responses to a re-emerging perception of crisis.

There were other threats. The Siringo Teachers Confederation, it was rumored, was rapidly increasing in membership, and there was new talk of another petition drive to decertify the STO.
Despite these threats, the STO continued to be optimistic about its future recovery. In response to questions about the current atmosphere within the organization, outgoing STO President Montano commented:

There was no sense or renewal or optimism, but I think he [the new Staff Director] can generate that. Training hasn't been conducted. People haven't had that feeling of success, and people haven't had that for years. [He's] going to be damned good in negotiations . . . organizational structuring, organizational training, and things of that nature. He's going to be good. (Interview notes, 5/79)

In Montano's mind, the STO's success hinged on several contingencies:

I think that if people do manage to overcome this phobia of looking to problems of the past, and, to this new leadership from the new Staff Director . . . and if they succeed in getting a good negotiated agreement, next year they will be able to overcome the effects of the Siringo Teachers Confederacy--we have reason to believe that they will call for a representation election. We will then be able to consolidate . . . and [recover] the integrity of the organization . . . (Interview notes 5/79)

One can infer from Montano's parting comments that the probability persists of yet another crisis occurring in the near future:

We must fight to the end with honor, exhausting our last resource, our last ounce of organizational effort. We will surrender only with honor, and that is the message we must bring to this organization, to the community, and to the Board of Education. That's the philosophy of the new Staff Director, myself, and others in this restructuring effort . . . (Interview notes, 5/79)
APPENDIX A

Methodology

The present study was an investigation of two crises faced by a voluntary teachers' organization. Within this study were three specific purposes: (1) to describe as fully as possible the antecedents and consequences of organizational crisis in a voluntary professional association; (2) from this description, to draw upon concepts from the related literature in order to develop a "grounded theory" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) of this same phenomenon; and, (3) at a higher level of conceptualization, to generate a more expansive "middle range theory" (Merton, 1957) of general organizational crisis. Focusing these efforts has been a research question: How does one account for the antecedents and consequences of crisis within a voluntary professional organization?

As Schumacher (1972) and others have noted, the selection of methodology has as its basis the nature of the research question. The use of traditional, experimental-empirical methodologies arising, as Bruyn (1966) has observed, out of the naturalistic epistemological tradition, has met with conceptual and operational difficulties in research involving investigation of social processes in non-laboratory settings. Rather, such phenomena lend themselves more appropriately to qualitative approaches to disciplined inquiry (Cronbach and Suppes, 1969). Among these approaches, the ethnographic and the historical have been selected to form the methodological bases for this study.
Lipset and Hofstadter (1968), Schumacher (1972), Tyack (1974), West (1977), and Smith (1979) have discussed at some length the simultaneous use of the ethnographic and historical research styles. These authors and others have described the historical style of research as concerning itself with the accumulation of evidence about, and the subsequent interpretation of, past events. The historian, through the use of document collection and analysis, by interviewing former participants (if still available), and by the collection of other "trace" evidence (Webb, et al., 1966), attempts to describe historical events sensitively. Reflecting personal commitment to varying schools of historical research (Schumacher, 1972), the historian may go on to fashion this account in a richly descriptive, yet atheoretical manner. Tyack (1974) has recently noted, however, the importance of going beyond simple historical description:

While most historians still enjoy, as I do, the colorful, complex reality of specific episodes, the explanatory models of social science theory help us to distinguish what is general and what is particular in historical events--and sometimes even why (p. 5).

And, as Schumacher has additionally observed, again depending upon individual adherence to particular schools of historical thought, the historian may also advance different levels of generalizations suggesting explanations for those events.

Ethnography is also a multi-method research approach. The ethnographer uses a variety of data collection techniques in collecting information relative to numerous variables from a variety of sources in a multitude of contexts. The approach may draw primarily upon
participant observation, a process which McCall and Simmons (1969) have characterized as involving

a characteristic blend of techniques . . . involving some amount of genuinely social interaction in the field with the subjects of the study, some direct observation of relevant events, some formal and a great deal of informal interviewing, some systematic counting, some collection of documents . . . and open-endedness in the directions the study takes (p. 1).

Webb, et al., (1966) have described this type of research as "multiple operationalism," while Smith and Pohland (1969) described the nature of the approach as a "multi-method, multi-person, multi-situation, multi-variable matrix." Lipset, Coleman, and Trow (1956), for example, in their qualitative study of the International Typographers Union (ITU), utilized exploratory and semi-structured interviews, participant observation, document collection and analysis, and survey questionnaires to collect data from numerous union members across the United States.

The intent of this research is not totally dissimilar to that of historical inquiry. The ethnographic style also concerns itself with the accumulation of evidence, but about present rather than about past events, although evidence of the past may assist the ethnographer in interpreting the present. Depending upon personal interests and orientation, the ethnographer, like his historian counterpart, may go beyond description to proffer theoretical explanations about the events under study.

Naturalistic research styles combining the ethnographic and the historical approaches possess several advantages over other methods. Diesing (1971) observed that the naturalistic/qualitative
approach is holistic, capturing the totality of the phenomena and its complex setting. In offering "patterned explanations" (Kaplan, 1964), naturalistic case studies have the advantage of reducing threats to validity. Stated another way, the plausibility of competing alternative hypotheses is minimized by the naturalistic approach. Perhaps most importantly, naturalistic approaches have the advantage of generating not only explicit knowledge—a written record of words, maps, and numerical formulae, but also tacit knowledge—intuitively held, pre-verbal conceptions of human experience (Polanyi, 1958). The need to acquire both kinds of knowledge is a methodological imperative for the ethnohistorical researcher, whose work must withstand substantial criticism from the more traditional methodologists. In an attempt, then, to acquire both explicit and tacit knowledge about the research problem, both historical and ethnographic research styles were employed in the present study.

The naturalistic setting for the study consisted of a voluntary professional teachers' organization of 2400 members—all of whom were employed by a single Southwestern urban school district of 84,000 students. As one of the nation's early classroom teacher groups organized under the aegis of the National Education Association of the United States, this association represented the professional interests of its exclusively classroom teacher membership to the district administration and to the community at large throughout its forty-two year history. At the point of study, the association had, reflecting a decade of increased member participation and militant activity nation-wide, become a far more visible force in district
and community affairs, and as such, had undergone a series of organizational crises. Two of these became the subject of this study.

The initial research design was conceived to include participant observation (Bruyn, 1962) within the organization's governance structure, complemented by extensive interviewing of organizational leaders, review of third party accounts of organization activities, collection and content analysis of association documents, and attention to a variety of unobtrusive measures (Webb, et al., 1966). The collected data, subsequent analysis, and resultant theory generation were to be compiled into an ethnohistorical case study.

The field work was divided into three distinct phases: (1) initial entry into and work within the teacher organization during the Fall of 1976; (2) additional study within the teacher organization during the year 1977; and, (3) entry into and work within the central office of the local school district in the Spring of 1978.

Entry into the teacher organization for the first phase of the study was gained in September of 1976. Participant observation in the role of observer-as-participant (Gold, 1958) was conducted through early November of the same year. During that time, seventeen (17) meetings of varying lengths were attended, twenty-five (25) interviews with organizational leaders were conducted, newspaper accounts and organizational documents were collected, and a large number of informal conversations and office visitations took place. Although the interviews were largely unstructured, several leaders were reinterviewed explicitly for the purposes of data verification.
and informal hypothesis testing. These interviews were directive to the extent that the majority of questions were generated prior to the interview situation rather than during the course of the interview itself.

Additional mention might be made of the interviews. During the initial phase of study, the attempt was made to interview the entire teacher organization leadership: six elected officers; two full-time, paid staff; and the twenty elected Board members. As the study progressed, all officers, staff, and all but four of the Board members were interviewed, some several times. Conducting these interviews away from the organization office proved unexpectedly valuable for the interviewer. The context of member homes, school classrooms, and teachers' lounges was most amenable to candid conversations, data were collected in the form of written notes rather than tape recordings. A similar restriction existed during formal meetings of the organization.

The second phase of the research began in early January of 1977, following a period of writing, reflection, and reconceptualization of the initial research question. Field work was again conducted within the association, lasting from early January to late December of 1977. During that time, additional participant observation was conducted in a variety of contexts including committee and subcommittee meetings, at formal dinners, district school board meetings, and in formal discussions. Additional unstructured interviewing was also conducted, guided by the concept of "theoretical sampling" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) rather than by strict probability sampling.
in the selection of interviewees. The process of theoretical sampling led to the interviewing of members of a competing teachers' organization. In all, sixteen (16) meetings were attended, twenty-seven (27) interviews were conducted, and large numbers of documents were collected. Following hours/days of sifting through the contents of the organization's library in late December, the research relationship with the teacher organization came to an end.

The third and final phase of the investigation began unexpectedly in January of 1978. A fortuitous internship in the school district's employee relations office provided the opportunity to assume a participant-as-observer role (Gold, 1958) in the teacher organization's employing organization. Several weeks into the experience, the investigator realized that the internship could provide an important validity check upon data collected within the teacher organization. The role eventually provided access to personal correspondence and to district documents relative to the succession of crises experienced in recent times by the teacher organization. Interviews were also conducted with seven key district administrators, all of whom played decisive roles during the 1972 and 1976 crises. This third phase of the study was concluded after five months in June of 1978.

The assumption is often made by traditional empiricists that analysis follows completion of data collection. That assumption is

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1Glaser and Strauss have defined theoretical sampling as "the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges" (p. 45).
untenable in ethnohistorical research, for the data collection and analysis processes are ongoing and interrelated. In the present study, analysis took place during all phases of data collection—in the form of summary observations, "interpretive asides" (Smith, 1979), and frequent returns to the literature in the substantive areas of voluntary associations, organizational conflict, and organizational crisis. This type of analysis provided the initial generation and discovery of appropriate explanatory concepts. Following the conclusion of data collection, deliberate attempts at systematic analysis were conducted using general content analysis and what Glaser and Strauss (1967) have termed "the constant comparative method of qualitative analysis." The result of these analytical procedures was the generation of "grounded theory," and later of a middle range theory of organizational crisis.

Despite strenuous efforts, the research design did not totally eliminate threats to the validity of the theoretical explanations. A comprehensive listing and discussion of validity problems has been developed by Webb, et al. (1966) and others. Important to consider for this study are role selection, interviewer effects, "changes in the research instrument," and as this investigator would suggest, the phenomenon of symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1962). The following paragraphs deal with these threats briefly in order to make the reader aware of potential sources of bias in the reporting and analysis of findings.

The researcher who seriously attempts to be an ethical and objective reporter and interpreter of human affairs encounters a
particular set of problems if the phenomenon under study is proximate to the researcher's life experience. Such was the case in the present study. Thirty years of varying degrees of involvement in education leaves one with deep feelings about the actors and events in the field, and these feelings admittedly impact on the selection and interpretation of data. In order to counter this source of bias, deliberate attempts were made to corroborate testimony of informants, and other third party perspectives about events were actively solicited. The overall effect of these efforts was to achieve a degree of "triangulation" (Campbell and Fiske, 1959), multiple perspectives about the activities under study.

The selection and acting out of roles constitutes another threat to validity. Inasmuch as the feelings and experiences of the observer were continuously present as a perceptual screen they impacted on role selection. Entering the field as a complete observer was impossible, and as stated earlier, the initial research role was that of observer-as-participant. However, as time was spent in the field, and the organizational secrets of the teacher organization were learned, it became increasingly difficult not to move along the complete observer-complete participant continuum. The motivation to intercede in the association's affairs became increasingly difficult to suppress. It was controlled in part by taking leaves from the field work for extended periods of time.

The interviewer effects and changes in the research instrument were common sources of variation and were difficult to control. The interviewer simply did not approach each of the 52 interviews
with the same attention and enthusiasm. Other data collection procedures generated additional data which helped verify data collected by interview techniques, and control was sought in this manner.

A final threat to validity is the very nature of the human participants in the study—the investigator, the members of the teachers' organization, and the staff of the school district's employee relations office. In attempting to reconstruct the events of the past and to depict accurately the behavior of individuals and groups in the present, the research relied extensively upon the recall and interpretations of organizational leaders and school district staff members. Reliance on such data is subject to sharp criticism from advocates of experimental-empirical methodologies. Such criticism, however well-taken, can be successfully countered by the application of rigorous rules of evidence and by the use of multiple comparisons of groups and events. These attempts, coupled with designs borrowed from the experimentalists, can be carried to the extreme, and in doing so, can ignore what Blumer would consider to be the "real stuff" of human organizations, "the peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings."2 That interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, personal meanings and interpretations, and as such, is part and parcel of the immensely complex reality of involvement between individuals, between groups, and within organizations.

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This complexity is simultaneously the reality of the research setting and a source of bias in the data. A naturalistic event occurs, such as a crisis within a voluntary professional association. Both individuals and groups within the association do not simply respond to the event; they interpret it in terms of self and the likely responses of others. Then they respond. The investigator can obtain third party (also admittedly subjective) accounts of the event, can construct a reasonably factual depiction of the event, and can symbolically reconstruct the interaction which has taken place.

The correspondence between the actual event and the reconstruction of the event can be close, but there remains an inevitable margin of error. The investigator may choose to accept the margin, just as his psychometrician counterpart does with his degrees of "error variance." While the nature of human interaction, symbolic interaction, poses a legitimate threat to validity, it simultaneously adds a dimension of understanding, a completeness to the account in a manner which experimental-empirical measures are unable to achieve.
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