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VOLUNTEERISM IN DISASTER SITUATIONS

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### ABSTRACT

The effects of a natural disaster extend beyond the visible and tangible damage caused to the physical surroundings, and also involve a qualitative change in the nature of society. There is a change from a Gesellschaft-style society to one where relationships and interaction between people are based on Gemeinschaft-style sentiments. An analysis of the reaction of volunteers in such situations must accordingly take account of this transformed nature of society.

Modern impersonal society normally provides little reason or scope for voluntaristic or altruistic actions. Inasmuch as there is volunteerism, it is generally channeled through some organized or organizational means. In contrast to this, disaster often evokes many and varied instances of volunteer activity, part of it in terms of previously planned organization, much of it spontaneous on a group or individual basis. Such a response, different from normal social life, is a consequence of the transformation whereby the basic sentiments shift from Gesellschaft to Gemeinschaft.

Since even those organizations geared to disaster activities reach their maximum response through the utilization of volunteer activity, an awareness of transformation, coupled with a judicious utilization of volunteers, would contribute to the overall effectiveness of such organizations.

## VOLUNTEERISM IN DISASTER SITUATIONS

### Introduction: The Volunteer and His Social Environment

That man's conquest of nature has not ended his contest with nature is illustrated most dramatically by his response to disasters. In particular, the sudden and rapid nature of natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods and hurricanes, elicit important social changes. The social changes which occur as a result of disasters is the concern of this paper--an examination of the reactions of individuals overtaken by the consequences of a natural disaster.

Although the paper will examine the behavior patterns of individuals who act as individuals and as members of organizations, understanding the structure of behavior patterns will be the primary focus. The patterns of behavior emerging from disasters may be diverse and totally inconsistent with regular conduct; they may be oriented toward self (panic reaction) or toward others (volunteerism); they may be useful or harmful; they may be emotional or rational; but they all result from the particular social circumstances at the time of the disaster.

A phenomenon frequently observed during disasters is the readiness of individuals to make themselves and their resources available to others in the community with no regard to personal interest and often to the detriment of personal interest. Altruistic behavior of this type may be termed volunteerism. This study will examine the role of volunteerism, its motivations and manifestations in a disaster situation. Such an analysis is predicated on an understanding of the overall nature of modern society, and the changes undergone by society following disasters. Often, the impact of a disaster disrupts the facade of society and removes the props which sustain it, and brings men face to face with their environment and with one another without the mediating

influence of artificial social factors. The finer niceties of social intercourse may no longer be relevant; the functional advantages of normal social procedures may be called into question. The community undergoes a deep traumatic experience, exposing itself to itself and to the world. To this new situation, and within this new environment, the members of the community must react. Their reactions may negate many fundamental aspects of modern life and accentuate those aspects of life which originally characterized society.

Turner<sup>1</sup> attempted a sociological conceptualization of this process. He notes two basic phenomena characterizing disaster situations: (1) an intolerance toward outsiders (even the well-meaning) and, (2) a heightened solidarity experienced by members of the community. Turner contends that the cause of the first phenomenon is a function of the in-group/out-group distinction formulated by Sumner, and which is more typical of primitive communities. The second, a heightened solidarity, the "manifestation of a common--a uniform--sentiment,"<sup>2</sup> Turner explains as being a reawakening of Durkheim's mechanical solidarity. He suggests that a disaster destroys the division of labor and organic solidarity and renders necessary a transitional stage of the resurgence of mechanical solidarity in order for organic solidarity, rooted in the division of labor, to be reconstituted.

Durkheim<sup>3</sup> had sought to explain how society derived its social cohesion, and to clarify the paradox of men in an increasingly atomized and individualistic society becoming increasingly dependent on their fellow men. "Why does the individual, while becoming more autonomous, depend more upon society?"<sup>4</sup> Durkheim saw social life deriving from two different aspects: the likeness of individuals, and the division of labor. In the first instance the resemblances between persons, the things they hold in common, create a collective consciousness (or conscience); in the second instance the dependence of people on each other, a

result of the division of labor, underlies the collective consciousness.

Although Durkheim indicated that social life was an evolutionary progression from societies based on mechanical solidarity to those based on organic solidarity, he allowed that vestigial aspects of mechanical solidarity existed along with organic solidarity, although they were less visible. Turner expands on this notion by asserting that the two are closely interwoven. Not only is mechanical solidarity a necessary prior stage in the evolution of society, but it is also a constant and essential foundation for organic solidarity.

" . . . Mechanical solidarity is viewed as a continuing requirement for the development and maintenance of organic solidarity. Organic solidarity cannot replace mechanical solidarity. Instead, organic solidarity requires, in addition to the division of labor, an effective substratum of mechanical solidarity. And the division of labor fails to operate without a working mechanical solidarity."<sup>5</sup>

According to Turner, when organic solidarity and division of labor break down, as it may do in a disaster, mechanical solidarity persists and provides the basis for group cohesion in the new stress situation. Through mechanical solidarity the community is able, in a process similar to the gradual and overall historic process outlined by Durkheim, to reconstitute the organic solidarity of the community and its accompanying division of labor. "The reinstatement of organic solidarity after failure in the division of labor, either because of external crisis or internal breakdown, requires a period of enactment of mechanical solidarity, to recreate the continuous assurances upon which organic solidarity depends."<sup>6</sup>

Zurcher<sup>7</sup> supplies some degree of empirical evidence for this thesis in describing, as a participant observer, the stages through which a spontaneous volunteer work group in a disaster passed as it groped its way into a socially

cohesive, functionally effective entity. From the haphazard strivings of motivated but unorganized individuals, each attempting to be comprehensive in their activities and independent of the others, a group perspective emerged with each contributing, by calling upon his own pre-existing and individual preferences and capacities, to the effectiveness of the whole undertaking. Through the gradual development of this division of labor, the group was enabled to discharge its functions more effectively and efficiently.

Turner's analysis has some validity, particularly his stress on the heightening of social solidarity. Yet, in seeking a causative factor for social solidarity, Turner has placed undue emphasis on breakdowns in the division of labor. He maintains that, "the conduct of rescue operations from within the disaster area is a product of largely undifferentiated labor. Apparently, when the division of labor which supports organic solidarity breaks down, there is often a resurgence of mechanical solidarity, based upon the vital sense of shared sentiment among the victims and other persons directly or indirectly involved in the disaster."<sup>8</sup> Turner posits an almost essential functional need for this resurgence of mechanical solidarity in order to reestablish "the pre-condition to the activation of an organized division of labor."<sup>9</sup>

Although Turner cites no empirical evidence to support his assertion that disasters cause breakdowns in the division of labor, Zurcher's subsequent presentation provides an almost tailor-made retroactive example. Additional data is available from various disasters on examples of community disorganization accompanied by the disintegration of the division of labor. Nevertheless, that the collapse of the division of labor is an inevitable, or even a likely, result of a natural disaster is very doubtful. In most cases the division of labor does not disappear; in some cases it may even increase. People in key positions in the community continue to fill their specialized occupational

roles--policemen, firemen, municipal workers, Red Cross officials, doctors, nurses, undertakers, workers in public utility companies providing essential services. All of these exploit to the utmost their specialized skills and knowledge--and often do so immediately, before there would be time for the "organic solidarity" underlying division of labor to be reconstituted. Many people performing their regular tasks tend to specialize in those specific aspects that are most pertinent to the disaster. Thus a general practitioner may forego his regular (and diffuse) practice and concentrate exclusively on emergency treatment; a newspaper reporter assigned to general reporting may for several days devote all his time to covering the disaster; a mother may neglect many of her ordinary duties in order to concentrate solely on those related to the specialized function of protecting her children; even such basic and immediate responses as search and rescue represent for many bystanders a specialized task increasing the division of labor. Similarly, on the organizational level, the tendency is to increase specialization, in which organizations, particularly disaster-oriented ones, ignore many normal activities in order to concentrate specifically on their disaster-relevant tasks.

Turner's model undoubtedly is intriguing and applicable in certain disaster situations. Without challenging the deeper theoretical contention, namely, that mechanical solidarity always exists with organic solidarity, it does appear that he has unduly emphasized the fact of a breakdown in division of labor in order to provide a theoretical explanation of the empirical contention that there is heightened social solidarity. It is not the division of labor, or even the hostility to outsiders that adequately explains this heightened social solidarity, but the qualitative change undergone in the normative structure of society per se.

While Durkheim discussed the changing nature of law (from repressive to

restitutive) and the changing nature of economic interaction (from comprehensive to division of labor) as part of the transition from mechanical to organic solidarity, Tonnies,<sup>10</sup> also using an evolutionary approach, accentuated the nature of the social relationships that men enter into. He spoke of two types of human organization, the Gemeinschaft, characterized by affective and intimate contacts among its members based on natural will rooted in custom, and the Gesellschaft, characterized by impersonal and segmented contacts based on rational will rooted in law.

Most theorists have noted the impersonal nature of modern society, yet a natural disaster is the touchstone for an outpouring of empathy among members of a community leading to acts of altruism on a scale that, as Barton has remarked, is "unusual in modern societies."<sup>11</sup> Explanations for such reactions to a state of disaster include: sharing of a common fate, and feeling of guilt experienced by those who have been spared the worst ravages of the disaster. However, from a sociological and structural perspective, a disaster destroys many of the artificial impediments to social interaction. It is not the breakdown of the division of labor that is critically significant, but rather the inroads made into the structural embellishments of a modern society. For instance, Simmel has written of the metropolitan man who ". . . develops an organ protecting him against the threatening currents and discrepancies of his external environment which would uproot him."<sup>12</sup> However, man is no longer afforded such protection during disasters which bring him into direct contact with the external environment, both human and natural.

A structural transformation occurs not only in the physical but also in the social environment; in this context a man is motivated to act for the alleviance of the suffering engendered by the disaster. The old patterns of behavior and the old frameworks of social organization are no longer as



relevant, and new patterns and frameworks must be improvised. It is from this perspective that the role of the volunteer must be understood and his performance analyzed.

A new normative structure arises in which altruistic acts based upon deep emotions of concern for the welfare of fellow citizens and grounded in sentiments of empathy and the sense of close community ties become a normal and natural occurrence. Possibly the very number of such acts and their apparent normalcy in the new situation has tended to hide the qualitative difference between such positive responses of individuals to disaster situations in contrast to the negative responses so often evinced in non-disaster situations, in which the peril may be no less real and the plight of the victim no less acute.

Williams<sup>13</sup> has noted that despite the existence of strong humanitarian norms in the value system of American society, the existence of a host of social blemishes indicates a general indifference by the populace. Dynes has noted the existence of slavery in the past and slums in the present as examples of society's tolerance of blemishes in the societal framework.<sup>14</sup>

Bystanders to crimes often complacently, and sometimes even callously, refuse to assist the victims. One of the most notorious examples of indifference was the Genovese case in New York in September 1964 when a young woman was stabbed to death near her home, while 38 neighbors ignored her death throes which lasted half an hour. When the police were finally notified, a squad car arrived on the scene within two minutes.<sup>15</sup> The press occasionally reports victims of accidents being left to their fate, while the specific problem of doctors failing to respond in emergency situations has reached such large dimensions that a number of states have enacted laws to encourage doctors to volunteer their services in emergencies.

It is then not the supposed lack of a division of labor that is responsible

for the resurgence of a Durkheimian mechanical solidarity. Rather, physical destruction and its accompanying traumatic community experience destroy many of the artificial social barriers which blunt empathy and emotional ties. The reconstitution of a Gemeinschaft, a community, in such situations serves as background and setting for a phenomenal increase in acts of altruism and sacrifice, and, less dramatically, for many manifestations of volunteerism and other simple acts of sheer human kindness and good citizenship.

Such a rejuvenation of social community includes two aspects: first, the atmosphere that is generated within the community; second, the nature of human relationships. The dimensions of the transformation may be such that even acts which superficially appear similar to those performed in a non-disaster situation may qualitatively represent a different type of social action. Using Weber's<sup>16</sup> four types of social action, an act that was normally considered rational may during a disaster become an emotional or affective act.

Alternatively, using Parson's<sup>17</sup> pattern variables, the formal nature of the act may remain unchanged while its inner content undergoes a transformation which stresses affectivity instead of affective neutrality or becomes collective-oriented instead of self-oriented. Thus, a doctor may perform identical services both before and during the disaster, but the content of the act, the motivation, the attitude to the other party, may be totally different.

Volunteerism must be defined with regard to the quality of the act, not its outer form. For the purposes of this paper, volunteerism will be regarded as any act that is oriented to the direct or indirect service of some other person or thing regardless of whether or not such act serves the self-interest of the actor.

The different types of volunteerism include:

1. Spontaneous individual volunteers--those who give assistance on

a purely individual basis, noted primarily in the earlier stages of the disaster, e.g., search and rescue.

2. Anticipated organization volunteers--those who are regularly linked to some organization, e.g., volunteer fire brigade and the Red Cross, whose participation in these organizations is known beforehand, and who figure in any pre-disaster plans of the organization.
3. Spontaneous organization volunteers--those who place themselves at the service of an organization only after a disaster has actually struck. Spontaneous organization volunteers may become associated with four types of organizations:
  - a. those who volunteer to help a regular disaster organization-- Type 1<sup>18</sup> or Type 2 organization.
  - b. those who formally create an ad hoc organization for the purpose of dealing with the specific disaster--Type 4 organization.
  - c. those who use their pre-existing nondisaster-oriented organization for disaster work--Type 3 organization.
  - d. In addition there are those who, without creating a formal group, nevertheless carry out their disaster tasks within a loose, informal framework of a group--as in the example quoted by Zurcher.
4. Anticipated individual volunteers--who fulfill the general expectations of society on an individual basis--such as a doctor placing his skills at the disposal of victims.

This approach gives the following schematic typology with examples:

	<u>Individual</u>	<u>Organized</u>
<u>Anticipated</u>	Doctor	Regular volunteer firefighter
<u>Spontaneous</u>	Search and rescue by bystander	Non-regular volunteer firefighter

The usefulness of this typology depends partly on an understanding of the role of voluntary, particularly charitable and disaster-oriented, organizations, both under normal conditions of modern life, and under disaster conditions.

### Organization in Modern Society

In modern industrial society, the proliferation of organizations to cater to the needs of man is marked--to the extent that industrial society has even, according to some writers, imposed a new type of personality on its members: the "other-directed man"<sup>19</sup> or "organization man."<sup>20</sup> Little<sup>21</sup> has noted that modernization in West African countries has been accompanied by the emergence of specific organizations to deal with aspects of life formerly the function of the tribe.

The role of the organization has been perhaps more pronounced in America than elsewhere, partly, as an English sociologist, Wilson,<sup>22</sup> points out, to compensate for the lack of a traditional framework providing cohesion to the society: "The Americans have necessarily been concerned with the problem of social conformity and the agencies which weld together diverse and heterogeneous elements into some type of social consensus." Because America is "the world's most untraditional society . . . new groupings were necessary to discount the latent differences of background, status, and ethnicity which must be surrendered for the sake of the necessary new social solidarity. . . . With the passing of traditional society, the group has emerged to fulfill functions formerly realized by the stable stratification patterns of earlier social organization."

Increasingly, organizations are being formed to undertake tasks that were previously the function of close-knit family and community groups. No longer are primary groups solely, or even mainly, responsible for such aspects of life as education, occupation, socialization, and recreation; these are now the tasks of organizations. As Blau<sup>23</sup> has noted, even the humanitarian act of giving charity is becoming an impersonal giving of alms through organizations which serve as intermediaries between the giver and the receiver with each being ignorant of the identity of the other.

Much of this development is clearly reflected in Tonnies' analysis<sup>24</sup> of the concepts of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft. He explains that each type of society is composed of two stages. First, there are unions of Gemeinschaft, such as closely and cohesively structured families, followed by associations of Gesellschaft, such as guilds and churches. Inversely, the Gesellschaft changes from associations of Gesellschaft, characterized by such impersonal frameworks as economic undertakings, to unions of Gesellschaft, where, within organizations, attention is given to intimate and personal aspects of life, such as organizations devoted to social welfare.

Modern society offers few opportunities for spontaneous and individual acts of altruism, of volunteerism. The burgeoning division of labor has diminished the spheres of social life in which personal altruistic acts are possible. Thus, welfare agencies deal with the most intimate aspects of human existence; the police assume the function of law enforcement; laws and regulations lay the basis for providing for the deprived and the underprivileged. The very desire to act altruistically often is expressed through institutionalized forms. Pepinsky<sup>25</sup> has written of the professional altruist, while a growing number of organizations provide frameworks through which man may express altruism. Therefore, altruism becomes a calculated part of one's activity, and not a spontaneous

reaction to a specific need.

Concentrating specifically on volunteer organizations geared to charitable activity (including disaster-relevant organizations, e.g., Red Cross), two overriding factors prompt volunteers to participate:

1. If the association supplies a structural framework within which the member can find primary group contacts, status location, personal satisfaction and personal aggrandizement.
2. If the association supplies a means of expressing the humanitarian ethic of the society, which might otherwise find no adequate means of expression.

Both of these factors are naturally closely related to the impersonal Gesellschaft nature of society. In the first case, the association provides many opportunities for personal contacts and heightened social interaction which formerly were automatic concomitants of small town, rural or extended family systems. In the second case, the inner desire to act out the humanitarian ethic may be channeled through some community-sanctioned framework.

Many writers have noted the discrepancy between the ideal and the real norms of society.<sup>26</sup> Often overlooked is the fact that today's impersonal society, with its encompassing organizational structure, discourages individual manifestations of the idealized norms. Only when norms are placed within a structured framework may they be implemented. Obvious examples include: a soldier who is prepared to sacrifice for his comrades, even at the risk of his own life, while reluctant to make even minimal sacrifices under normal civilian conditions;<sup>27</sup> the uniformed boy scout who helps the proverbial old lady across the street, but hardly extends even elementary courtesies when encountering her at other times; the rich philanthropist who creates a foundation for the furtherance of human welfare, but is oblivious to the beggar in the street.

While people may be reluctant to give expression to humanitarian values in an impersonal setting, they may seek legitimate and recognized means of doing so within an accepted organizational setting. In other words, altruistic acts may only be anticipated in an impersonal setting when the normal modes for such action are supplied by the society. Just as involved economic transactions cannot be expected until the necessary economic institutions come into being, just as educational advances cannot occur until the necessary institutionalized facilities are available, so volunteerism, perhaps paradoxically, can be anticipated only when the institutionalized means of giving effect to it are supplied.

It is difficult to demand that a spectator of a crime endanger his own safety by attempting to prevent the crime; yet, it is possible to demand that such a spectator respond to society's institutionalized means of communicating his knowledge of the crime to the police, the organization whose function is to combat crime. The case of bystanders of fires or accidents is similar. Since the specialized division of labor denies them the knowledge and skills to intervene effectively, they must rely upon specially designed and designated organizations in order to cope effectively with the situation. Indeed, volunteer fire brigades do exist; the Red Cross does provide training in first aid; even the police invite more citizen participation in crime prevention. The important point, though, is that mere exhortation to humanitarian behavior will not elicit the desired response, whereas the provision of institutionalized means of acting adequately and sensibly through duly constituted organizations will.

Obviously, much social interaction does occur outside the organized aspects of modern society. Simmel<sup>28</sup> has discussed the "web of group relationships" or "social circles" in which much informal interaction underlying social cohesion finds expression. Similarly, many research projects on bureaucracy demonstrate that informal interaction within the formal organizational structure plays a

significant role in the operational efficiency of the organization. Similarly, many individual acts of altruism and volunteerism may always be noted, just as many economic transactions take place outside the confines of the regular organizational set up. Individuals do aid strangers in distress, give alms, or practice many other acts of good citizenship; these will always be integral parts of the societal scene. For the most part, however, volunteerism and charitable acts of all types are best realized in modern society when formalized means of doing so are provided. Given the conditions of modern life, concerted efforts to alleviate suffering or to promote altruism and volunteerism demand organizational channels.

The most noted and comprehensive history of the institutionalization of volunteerism is Sills' analysis of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis<sup>29</sup>--its means and ends, its work and development, its inception in answer to a need and its subsequent adaptation to changing needs. Sills categorized those who volunteered for the various activities of the foundation as:

1. Polio veterans--those who prior to joining the foundation had some sort of personal contact with polio which had aroused their interest in the problem of polio and the work of the foundation.
2. Humanitarians--those who were motivated to join by the imperatives of their "other-oriented" characters, desiring either to "help others" or to "do something about polio."
3. Good citizens--those who acted because of a vague desire to be of service to their community.
4. Joiners--those who acted because of a desire to further their own interest by seeking enhanced status and expanded social contacts through membership.

Doubtlessly underlying the motivation of all these groups is the clearly



acknowledged or vaguely sensed awareness that the volunteer is ultimately making a contribution to the welfare of others. Thus even the "joiners" find some personal satisfaction because the purpose for which they have volunteered is honorable and humanitarian. While seeking their own advancement, they willingly choose a charitable organization. The profusion of voluntary organizations in modern society allows ample selection, and the self-interest of "joiners" may be better served by organizations which give them better visibility. In the final analysis, they have made a conscious and voluntary decision to become involved with a specific charitable organization.

The crucial question, one which is almost totally ignored and requires study, is whether, without existing organizational frameworks, the volunteers would have sought and could have found alternative means of tangibly expressing their identification with others' suffering.

While giving expression to altruism, volunteerism in such instances is done impersonally; as Blau has written, no direct exchange between benefactor and beneficiary occurs; the transference is indirect through the mediating offices of a third party. In order to understand the qualitative nature of this act and the inner content which it expresses, it would be necessary to investigate whether volunteers would be prepared to act personally, e.g., to help the child of a neighbor who was suffering from infantile paralysis. It is possible, though conjectural, that such demands on an intense and personal level would be rejected by volunteers who might be prepared to work only within an impersonal setting without contact with the beneficiaries. Normally, then, only institutionalized and structural frameworks can elicit the necessary volunteer response. While this conclusion may be a sad comment on the modern human condition, it does reflect social reality.

Such an approach has obvious implications for any study of a disaster

situation. A successful response to a disaster must be rooted in prevailing structural foundations. If the impact of a disaster on social life is to effect a transformation from a Gesellschaft to a Gemeinschaft, then any adequate response must be alert to the constricting realities of the social environment that might be brought about by such change. Altruistic acts that are dependent on the existence of organizational frameworks in a Gesellschaft may be hindered by such a framework in a Gemeinschaft. Too much a priori reliance on organizational planning to cope with the urgent exigencies of a disaster may frustrate the very intent of the planners.

A valid conceptualization of volunteerism necessarily depends upon an examination of the empirical evidence on volunteer responses. This study will draw on the findings of a number of monographs and articles published in this area, as well as a more extensive analysis of volunteer responses in one particular disaster: the New Orleans Hurricane Betsy and flood damage disaster of 1965.

#### Volunteerism in Disasters

In their analysis of the 1953 Beecher tornado, Form and Nosow state: "Perhaps the most striking fact about the rescue activities was what the Beecherites did for themselves. There was unanimous agreement among both victims and rescuers that the Beecher people had gone a long way toward taking care of themselves before any other outsider groups came into their area."<sup>30</sup> This statement summarizes one of the most relevant facts that has emerged from the disaster studies undertaken in the last 15 years. Disasters elicit deep feelings of empathy for one's fellow man as well as stirring up strong emotions and motivations to engage actively in combating the effects of disasters. Such responses refuted many widely held assumptions that the chief effect of disasters on people is to engender panic and similar non-utilitarian behavioral reactions.

Another incorrect but popular notion is that convergence on the scene of disasters is motivated by a hedonistic and negativistic desire to exploit the plight of victims by looting their property and by witnessing their discomfort. On the contrary, most convergence is prompted by a desire to be of assistance and is designed for that purpose. This widely noted concern for the plight of the victims and desire to help applies to a broad spectrum of individuals and a broad range of activities, all of which may be classified under the generic concept of volunteerism.

Volunteer actions are noted throughout the impact and post-impact stages, and include such diverse acts as the immediate, spontaneous and unorganized activities of those close to the scene at the time of impact, to later organized activities of those who have no direct contact, either by virtue of residence or of personal connections, with the disaster area.

Despite the breadth of the range of activities, volunteers are distinguished by the fact that their actions are basically altruistic and occasionally self-sacrificing, and that their actions both in motivation and in actual performance are qualitatively different from normal modes of social behavior.

In order to understand what causes widespread altruistic acts, it is necessary to inquire into the interrelationship between the societal background and individual actions. In a perceptive article, Campbell<sup>31</sup> has pointed out that in the "multiple contingency environments" of modern society there is functional value in having opposing tendencies geared to opposing values. Such values cause alternating expressions depending on the circumstances and needs of the occasion. Campbell specifically refers to the conflicting values of egoism and altruism and suggests that their coexistence as values in social life is not inconsistent, but rather pragmatic. Thus, while "normal peace time exigencies of life" encourage egoistic behavior for the most part, the possibility of

eliciting altruistic behavior is ever present, should the need arise and the circumstances demand.

Altruistic responses do not automatically emerge as a result of disasters. Admittedly, common fears and shared fate do tend to draw people together; the research into the effects of bombing in World War II is ample evidence. Nevertheless, there is no less truth in the simple yet deeply significant statement by Wolfenstein that "extreme situations bring out the best and the worst in people."<sup>32</sup> She recounts two of the better known historical examples of "bringing out the worst": the shipwrecks of the Titanic and the Medusa. During the Titanic disaster, the occupants of some lifeboats forcibly beat off other passengers swimming toward them and left them to almost certain death. On the Medusa (captured for posterity in the famous painting of the survivors on the raft by Gericault), dying shipmates were thrown into the water to preserve the rations of their healthier shipmates.

The crucial sociological question is to determine whether evidence of the "best" or "worst" in man is a chance outcome of the personal qualities of those caught up in the disaster or whether their reactions are not a consequence of structural and environmental factors.

Wolfenstein's two examples suggest that it was not a chance convergence of weak and wicked people on the lifeboats or the raft that prompted selfish action, but that, under the particular circumstances, there seemed to be no purpose in behaving altruistically. Volunteerism, under these circumstances, would have brought no obvious advantages to the group as a whole. In both these cases we are dealing with tightly closed social systems, with only limited resources, with lack of contact with the outside world, and with only an uncertain prospect of being saved.

Most disasters are not of this type. Some direct, perceivable contact is

retained with the outside world, or else contact is presumed imminent. In such instances there is no need for panic reaction, and mutual aid serves a functional purpose. Conditions such as these apply to most disasters and are conducive to volunteerism.

Disasters cause changes in the societal environment from a Gesellschaft to a Gemeinschaft. In a Gemeinschaft, affective ties and mutual cooperation are enhanced by nature of the framework. In an interesting analysis, Kropotkin<sup>33</sup> has posited that human evolution arises from mutual cooperation against a hostile natural environment. Accepting the basic Darwinian idea of social life being a "struggle for existence," Kropotkin forcefully argued that this struggle was directed primarily against nature and derived its impetus not from competitive strife (as many Social Darwinists would have it), but from mutual cooperation of the members of a society. Nevertheless, he did concede that in modern cities " . . . the absence of common interests nurtures indifference" which may paralyze basic mutual endeavors.

However, even though modern urban society does not foster or favor mutual cooperation, but the indifference that many observers have noted, disaster conditions tend to break through indifference and to reconstitute those conditions which foster cooperation. Once more, man is opposed to nature in a "struggle for existence," the result of which is largely determined by man's capacity to recreate the behavior patterns of cooperation which originally enabled him to achieve mastery over nature.

Many observers have noted this return to a Gemeinschaft environment. Although not employing sociological concepts, a writer in a psychiatric journal has described the scene of a disaster in the following terms:

"There was a reaction of excitement which was expressed in a carnival, camping out atmosphere. Unshaven men quickly bought out all camping supplies in the community, while housewives

stocked up at local stores with essentials of food, flashlight batteries, and charcoal, chattering gaily with strangers about their personal 'good fortune.' Many sightseers and amateur photographers made the rounds, stopping at badly damaged houses for social visits and to commiserate with the owners. . . . much help was given to the owners of seriously damaged houses. People pitched in with power saws to clear trees off homes, while others nailed down temporary tar paper roofs on the homes of people they hardly knew."

However the euphoria of Gemeinschaft eventually wore off.

"When the post-impact period began approximately five days after the storm the tenor changed from excitement to frustration."<sup>34</sup>

Although such a change in the societal environment is normally recorded at the community level, the new type of social relationship may spread even beyond the spatial boundaries of the disaster. At the time of the floods of 1953, "during the first days after the disaster, all of Holland felt great unity. On the roads, in streetcars, trains, everywhere, the subject of conversation was the disaster. Strangers spoke to each other and exchanged information. Emotions were not only expressed by speech reactions but by deeds. Everyone was prepared for action."<sup>35</sup>

This, then, is the overall setting within which volunteerism must be analyzed: a disintegration of the Gesellschaft and a return to the Gemeinschaft. Historically, such societies have been more cohesive as entities, and their members have shown more concern for each other. Cooperative striving and mutual aid characterize the struggle for existence against a hostile environment. Within such a setting, the concept of volunteerism must be examined empirically.

#### Individual Response

The spontaneous response of individuals to disaster situations is most marked during the impact and immediate post-impact stages. As Killian has written: "A sequence of group behavior has been identified, marked by the

frequency and significance of spontaneous group formulation and the taking over of functions by institutionalized agencies later." At the same time, he points out that "group disorganization is not necessarily indicative of widespread personal disorganization."<sup>36</sup>

Despite the upheaval and isolation caused in the community, most research reports clearly indicate that the vast majority of the members of the community adopt positive steps to aid others. In the tornado at White County, Arkansas, almost 80% of the citizens were actively engaged in search and rescue and allied operations in the period immediately following impact.<sup>37</sup>

On the one hand, danger confronting the community and the suffering of its citizens prompts a high degree of motivation; on the other hand, the unusual types of activity needed (search, rescue and medical treatment) pose serious problems for the individual volunteer. While in a disaster society regresses automatically from the Gesellschaft to the Gemeinschaft, the individual, trained for the former, may find it difficult to adapt to the latter.

Barton has written of the need for an "emergency social system . . . to be created to fill the 'social vacuum'" and suggests that there are "three main obstacles to effective individual participation" in emergency social systems:

1. Society may fail to define adequately what the individual's role should be.
2. Role conflict may be created because of the obligations the individual has to different groups.
3. The individual may not be motivated.<sup>38</sup>

Since motivation is generally not a problem, the first two obstacles are more important.

Barton has designed a typology<sup>39</sup> to indicate the various alternatives of role definition that may arise in a disaster situation. He suggests that the

highly motivated person must decide what he should do and with whom he should interact. Four possibilities exist:

1. Certain people will have well-defined disaster roles in which they know both what to do and with whom to interact; for example, policemen and firemen.
2. It may be clear with whom to interact, but it may not be clear exactly what to do; for example, family roles in which it is obvious that attention should be devoted to saving members of the family, but the requisite knowledge or skill may be lacking, e.g., administering medical treatment.
3. Conversely, the task may be familiar, but there may be a need to improvise relevant relationships; for example, a doctor tending strangers and relying on strangers to provide him with auxiliary services normally the function of a trained nurse.
4. There may be a lack of knowledge of both what to do and with whom to interact. Here the would-be volunteer is obliged to improvise his role entirely.

This latter possibility is of primary interest. Barton suggests that the role vacuum is partly filled by the often quoted "informal mass assault"--which he explains as "large numbers of people with little organization or skill swarming over the impact area trying to rescue and care for victims."<sup>40</sup> This assault is not always beneficial and may disrupt more legitimate and organized rescue activities.

The informal atmosphere, the "carnival spirit," all doubtless contribute to the willingness of people to risk the possibility of incompetent performance in unusual roles because the strict demands of normal social convention and interaction no longer apply. Thus the normally immaculately dressed businessman



will be prepared to soil his clothes while participating in rescue activities; the administrator will be prepared to take advice (and, if need be, orders) from a subordinate whose personal qualities and technical skills qualify him for a position of leadership.

Nevertheless, despite this willingness a certain estrangement between the individual and his social environment is liable to exist. Estrangement results when the physical destruction of a disaster automatically and totally transforms the social environment, while the traumatic experience undergone by the individual is not always sufficient to orient him to a full comprehension of the new societal framework in which he lives and operates. Perhaps one of the chief consequences of such disparity is the conflict that arises from multiple role responsibilities, particularly in the often opposing demands of familial and occupational obligations.

No doubt, part of the conflict stems from the fact that, as Barton<sup>41</sup> suggests, under normal circumstances the individual is able to compartmentalize his roles and order his life so as to minimize the conflicts caused by competing obligations. From the perspective of this study, an additional factor is the nature of the new social setting--the Gemeinschaft--which to a certain extent presupposes an integrated unity of family and occupation.

A variable that becomes significant during the impact and the immediate post-impact periods is the concern shown for family and the desire to contribute positively to assist them. The familial inclination at this stage is often a principal source of role conflict; for example, when the individual has to choose between helping a member of his own family who is not in any dire straits or going to the rescue of a neighbor or stranger who is in desperate need of help; or alternatively, to choose between helping the family or ignoring them in order to fulfill certain commitments arising out of prior obligations, e.g., a

commitment to an organization. For members of a Type I organization the strict disciplinarian framework, or perhaps even more so, the clearly defined community obligation, is often sufficient to resolve the conflict, but other types of role conflict may not be so easily solved.

These conflicts were first analyzed by Killian,<sup>42</sup> who based many of his theoretical concepts on the empirical findings of the Texas City disaster. Killian describes how many firemen and policemen ignored their occupational commitments in order to fulfill family obligations. Though this analysis has been regarded as a seminal contribution to both role theory and disaster study, White<sup>43</sup> and Dynes<sup>44</sup> have indicated that the theoretical framework lacks empirical basis. White's investigation of three communities struck by tornadoes shows that there were no instances in which a member of a disaster-relevant organization forsook his occupational task in order to tend to the needs of his family. Dynes has emphasized, "The abandonment of organizational roles simply does not occur."

However, even Killian's article provides clear examples of persons maintaining their occupational roles. Killian notes that oil refinery workers did stay on their job until their units were safely shut down, as they had been trained to do. Barton suggests that a possible reason for this is that: "Perhaps they realized that failure to carry out the shutdown procedure might further endanger themselves and their families, or that it might endanger another primary group immediately present--their fellow workers."<sup>45</sup>

This latter comment seems to touch on the crucial issue: that it is affective feelings rather than mere occupational obligations that evoke actions that go beyond the normal narrow demands of job fulfillment. However, from the perspective of this analysis, it would seem that these workers were motivated by concern not only for family and primary groups, but also for the community as a whole. In the latter case, the conditions for affective behavior were

present, providing a congruence of interests between occupational functions and concern for family, friends and neighbors--the ideal of the Gemeinschaft structure.

### Convergence

Concern for the family is one of the main factors causing the well-known phenomenon of convergence, the "movement or inclination and approach toward a particular point,"<sup>46</sup> in this case, toward the disaster-stricken area. Fritz and Mathewson distinguish three major forms of convergence:

1. Personal convergence--the actual physical movement of a person.
2. Informational convergence--the movement or transmission of messages.
3. Material convergence--the physical movement of supplies and equipment.

Convergence itself may be external (movement toward the disaster from outside) or internal (movement toward specific points within the disaster area). A certain degree of the phenomenon of convergence is non-utilitarian and even disruptive; thus, traffic jams result from the merging of cars attempting to enter the disaster area for the purpose of sightseeing and create enormous problems of control; similarly, a slight amount of hedonistic activity, such as looting, occurs. Yet, as Fritz and Mathewson have clearly shown, the primary purpose of convergence is to be able to share in the struggle of the community to recover, and to contribute to that struggle. In the case of families who are separated, convergence, whether personal, informational or material, whether external or internal, is a means of retaining the cohesive unity of the family in the disaster situation.

Beyond this, convergence is also an outcome of volunteerism when people

from outside the disaster area and sometimes without even personal ties in the area nevertheless offer their support. The national impact that the 1953 floods in Holland had on the population as a whole has already been mentioned. Tangible expression to this reaction was noted as "volunteers began arriving in the stricken area . . . from all over the country. Student organizations rented buses to bring their members to the area. Dutch universities were closed the first week so that students could go and help."<sup>47</sup>

Even so, most convergence is probably caused by people who do have some personal stake in the area, either residents of the area temporarily removed from it, or members of what Fritz and Mathewson call contiguous zones. "The speed and volume of external help convergence is determined essentially by personal identification with victims in the area and spatial proximity to the disaster area."<sup>48</sup> Waves of response can be traced with aid being volunteered from areas spatially farther removed from the area as news of the disaster and knowledge of its dimensions spread.

The social effects of a disaster and the transformation in the social environment may often extend beyond the actual area stricken. Much of the phenomenon of convergence may more easily be understood from this perspective, which takes into account an outflow of empathy for the stricken people on the part of those outside the actual area. The phenomenon of convergence admittedly raises the important issue as to the boundaries of the community within which the affective feelings of a Gemeinschaft will be felt, since, unlike a Gesellschaft, the Gemeinschaft presupposes some spatial limitations. As has been noted, during the Holland floods the whole country shared in these sentiments of sympathy. Convergence does indeed pose a problem for conceptualizing, and even more so, for operationalizing the basic thesis presented. The extent and intensity of the Gemeinschaft will largely be determined by the kind of factors

that Barton<sup>49</sup> has outlined as relevant in determining the nature of the response to a disaster.

Since convergence often also takes place following accidents under non-disaster conditions (e.g., a car crash), it may be hypothesized that in such events the convergence will be basically non-utilitarian or even negative in orientation (e.g., sightseeing), as contrasted to convergence in large-scale disasters which is generally positive in its motivation and utilitarian in its manifestation.

### Organizations in Disaster

This study is based on the concept of a change in the nature of society caused by the drastic and all-pervasive effects of disasters, a change which accentuates affective relationships rather than impersonal relationships, a change which elicits altruistic behavior rather than self-centered behavior. The crucial question that must be considered is what effect a change in the nature of society has on the normal structural framework of institutions which, as indicated, is an essential and integral part of an impersonal society in which most social action is based on self-centered interest.

The role of organizations in such modern societies is so paramount that even altruistic feelings can often only find an outlet in behavior through an organizational framework. What then is the fate of organizations when the societal props are removed by the effects of the disaster? This question takes on added and pragmatic significance since much of the a priori planning to meet disasters and much of the post-impact response centers around the role of organizations

Fritz and Mathewson suggest that the role of the organization in disaster relief may have been given undue emphasis:

"Formal relief and control agencies normally keep some form of record of the extent and type of assistance which they render to a disaster-stricken population. The great bulk

of the informal, volunteer assistance, on the other hand, usually goes unrecorded, unnoticed and unevaluated. The result is that formal relief and control agencies frequently overestimate the proportional extent of their own efforts in relieving the suffering of disaster victims and grossly underestimate the extent of informal assistance. Recent disasters repeatedly have shown that, with the possible exception of first aid and medical care, a significant proportion of the emergency relief and restorative activity can be and actually is handled on an informal, unofficial basis. The NORC studies, for example, have shown that most of the initial relief work done during the emergency period--rescue, transportation to hospital, provision of emergency shelter, assistance in clearing debris, traffic direction, salvaging property, and providing emotional support--has come from informal rather than formal sources."<sup>50</sup>

Similarly, Killian had already suggested in the earlier years of disaster research that the ". . . uncritical acceptance of the reports of the smooth and efficient functioning of pre-existing organizations and formal leaders is checked by sensitivity to malfunctionings and conflicts of organizations, the not infrequent failure of formal leadership and the importance of the emergent leader and the spontaneous informal group in disaster."<sup>51</sup>

Nevertheless despite these and similar critical evaluations of organizations, the role of relief organizations is indispensable in effecting a return to normal conditions. Few would entirely deny their contribution; few would agree to disband them. On the contrary, much present research analyzes how organizations act under stress and how the problems and difficulties of operating under emergency conditions may be minimized so as to retain the viability of the organization and to exploit its utility.

The perspective of this analysis poses a particular dilemma. With the disintegration of the societal framework, the need for organizations should become insignificant, yet they do continue to operate, and despite criticism, to function with varying degrees of effectiveness.

The apparent paradox can be resolved only by understanding how the

organization functions and what causes, or at least contributes to, any success that it might achieve. Is it the bureaucratic structure of the organization that underlies its operational effectiveness, or is it the affective relations between its members who become a primary group for the duration of the disaster action? Further, can certain organizations, e.g., the Red Cross, operate at all without utilizing assistance spontaneously given by volunteers?

These issues will provide background for an empirical analysis of the response of one particular organization, the Red Cross, in a particular emergency, Hurricane Betsy and the subsequent flooding of New Orleans.<sup>52</sup> In particular, an analysis will be made of the role of non-regular and non-organized volunteers in maintaining the ability of the organization to function effectively.

#### Hurricane Betsy and the Red Cross

Hurricane Betsy was analyzed in detail by the DRC at OSU; part of this research centered around full-time and regular volunteer workers of the Red Cross. The intention is not to inquire into the efficiency of the Red Cross in coping with the situation, but rather to analyze the relationships that emerged between the representatives of the Red Cross (both full-time officials and part-time regular volunteers) and the community that they were serving. A constant thread runs through the verbal responses of Red Cross workers (more particularly those who were in direct, close and constant contact with the members of the community) indicating that the successful response of the Red Cross was in no small measure the result of the cooperative behavior of members of the community the Red Cross served. Further, without such cooperation, no amount of prior planning or preparation could have achieved the necessary, desired results.

Hurricane Betsy involved a disaster of two dimensions and in two stages-- first, the effects of the hurricane itself, and second, the unexpected additional

problem of flooding, the result of a wave of water sweeping into parts of the city in the wake of the hurricane. To accommodate the homeless, special, previously designated shelter stations were opened at a number of schools and churches. These were generally under the control of regular volunteer members of the Red Cross who had been previously assigned to them and who had been informed prior to the impact that the shelters were to be opened. The shelters were equipped with supplies which were replenished during the few days that they were used.

Most of these "official" volunteers worked unstintingly to carry out their tasks and to care for the evacuees; most of them expressed satisfaction and pride in their roles as members of a relief organization. At the same time, almost all acknowledged the assistance provided by the evacuees themselves in contributing to the success of the Red Cross. As one of the Red Cross workers said: "One of the real highlights . . . or the real plus factors was that never before have we seen such a spontaneous response from the general public in terms of volunteer help. . . . I didn't know what we would have done without these volunteers."

In a potentially dangerous situation, in which people including old persons were being helped to wade through the swirling water to reach the shelters, the person in charge of one shelter reported: "I was swamped with men that were ready to just go ahead, that's how cooperative they were. . . there was no excitement during the ordeal. Everybody was doing a job in an orderly manner. . . . Everybody realized that there was a job to be done."

An analysis of the interviews with Red Cross workers suggests that the help offered was a result of three different factors:

1. A desire to help as a result of the awareness of the common plight.
2. A desire to help which was more particularly fostered by some



pre-existing community link.

3. A desire to help which was more particularly fostered by some pre-existing organizational link.

The first instance cited presents no particular problem for this analysis, for it is an individual response to a stress situation in the community which causes a structural change in the societal environment conducive to altruistic patterns of behavior. Thus, according to one of the regular staff members at the headquarters of the Red Cross, ". . . we had a woman that had been a hash slinger some place and she literally took over the kitchen . . . and mobilized some volunteers."

In addition to feelings of empathy, the spirit of community in a particular area often contributed to the activation of a group of people. "And the volunteers who had taken over were doing . . . it beautifully . . . these were just neighborhood people who came in and just saw a job to be done and did it, and it was magnificent . . . it was well done, and done by people who knew one another . . . I can't think of . . . a better set up. They were from the same locality, their children went to the same school and actually this is the way it should be."

Finally, several instances of extremely effective assistance was attributed to responses provided by semi-organized groups. It is this response which perhaps requires deeper analysis, as, in these cases, it was the pre-existing organizational framework which contributed to the successful activity--something which apparently conflicts with the basic contention of this paper.

Thus it was recorded that, "Both the Baptist Seminary and the Notre Dame Seminary made their students available round the clock. Every welfare agency in town . . . made their entire staffs available. And Tulane School of Social Work . . . made both their faculty and student body available."

Again, at one of the shelters it was felt that "the biggest help of all was the group of sisters that arrived on Friday . . . they really changed the whole picture immediately. They rolled up their sleeves and went to work. And by their going to work and taking care of the children they got a number of the evacuees to help out too. . . . They kept arriving . . . one group would relieve another."

At several of the shelters the response of the youth, in general, but of organized scout groups in particular, was commented on. "The girl scouts worked all night. They set up games for the children in the shelter . . . they moved among the people. They helped mothers with their small children. . . . They came in on their own and volunteered their services." At this same shelter, the person in charge stated that, "I had some volunteer help from the sea scouts and I can't say too much about these boys. They were wonderful. They moved with me all through the buildings and their aid was terrific. . . . You only had to tell them once and they divided themselves up, they had group leaders . . . and they took over these assignments."

Doubtless, much of the usefulness of these groups resulted from their pre-existing organizational set up. However, all the groups quoted are particular types of organizations, hardly representative of organizational life in its more usual connotations. Generally, members of religious orders or scouting organizations, students at seminaries or in schools of social work are liable to have personal built-in inclinations to altruistic behavior, having joined these organizations for just such a reason, as well as having their altruistic tendencies further reinforced and inculcated by the organizations. While the organizational framework might have helped in these cases, it could hardly be considered crucial. Another likely reason for positive member response is that organizations of these types encourage and facilitate primary group relationships, not imper-

sonal relationships, thereby making them particularly suitable for work in disaster conditions.

However, even the most impersonal organizations may change their functions and mode of operation in order to adapt themselves to changed conditions. This is perhaps best seen in the case of commercial organizations which willingly forfeit their main aim of profit and contribute their resources without regard to any economic considerations. As a Red Cross worker explained: "We contacted one of the local wholesale houses, and instead of charging a full price, he gave it at below cost. Cost a thousand dollars on the purchase of sheets which was a donation on his part."

Because of the fact that the original disaster of the hurricane was compounded by subsequent flooding, all relief organizations found themselves under pressures that they were unable to cope with except by the judicious assistance of spontaneous volunteer help. Thus, as with the Red Cross, one of the officials of the Salvation Army maintained that "we did a professional job with a bunch of amateurs. It was a job that had to be done as quickly as possible with the least amount of experience that was ever involved in anything as great as this. . . . I think this was one of the most terrific jobs that was ever done in any community."

It was not only at the shelters that volunteers helped the Red Cross, but also at the local headquarters of the Red Cross. It is perhaps significant to note that while the appreciation for the help given by these volunteers was freely expressed by local officials, evaluation by the representatives of the national office tended to denigrate the need for volunteer help. One of the local officials stated: "Our national people . . . thought we weren't doing a particularly good job for a while . . . they had reference to the fact that we were using so many volunteers who had come off the street, but our staff was pushed too far and spread too thin, we had

to use them and with just a minimum of instruction they went to work for us and many of them did an outstanding job."

### Summary

Although the discussion has primarily focused on individual responses to disaster situations and the effect of changes in the societal environment on individual values, emotions and behavior, the implications for disaster research extend beyond individuals and include organizations also. Much of the discussion raises the important issue of the functions that organizations do, and should, perform in disaster situations. Sjoberg and Barton have proposed two conflicting approaches; the former stresses the importance of organizational response, the latter raises some doubts as to its effectiveness. While Sjoberg writes that, "One of the most impressive consequences of disaster in industrial societies . . . is the proliferation and extension of a host of organizations that have as their primary goal the handling of the periodic upheavals to which society is subject,"<sup>53</sup> Barton cautiously suggests that, "Further study of effective modes of relationships between disaster organizations and on-the-spot volunteer helpers should be of great practical value in disaster planning. The idea that everybody should be organized in advance is utopian. Organizations should plan and practice ways of exploiting the spontaneous mass response to disaster more effectively."<sup>54</sup>

This paper contends that organizations, including those that are geared to disaster activity, can operate effectively only when there is a realization of the nature of the societal environment within which this activity occurs. The nature of this environment vitiates organizational activity in the normal sense of the term with its bureaucratic, formal, hierarchic structure. However, given man's prior history of activity within an organizational framework, it is

apparent that organizations cannot be ignored. It however is important to examine them from the societal perspective of a disaster situation, and not as ordinarily constituted. This has evident implications for the nature of the interaction between the organization and the public.

Many researchers have noted that the Salvation Army, though providing basically similar services, is generally accorded more recognition and gratitude than the Red Cross. Such differential response appears to be a consequence not so much of differential contribution, as the built-in ability of the Salvation Army to shed its bureaucratic framework under stress conditions and to work at a level consistent with the overall societal framework. In a post-disaster study of individual reactions to the performances of nine different disaster organizations, Moore found that the Red Cross and federal agencies were ranked 8th and 9th respectively and suggests, "Impersonality and bureaucratic procedures are characteristic of these two agencies and this is offered as a possible explanation of their rankings."<sup>55</sup>

Quarantelli has noted that much prior organizational planning and actual activity is futile because of the failure of organizations to realize that, even under disaster conditions, the amount of control that they can impose on the members of a community is limited. "Organizations . . . appear immune to contradictory evidence regarding their presupposition of control, because the perceived failure of victims to follow orders is interpreted in part as institutional weaknesses in the means used" instead of questioning whether "the end objective is one that can actually be realized."<sup>56</sup> Elsewhere, Quarantelli, following numerous other disaster researchers, has noted; "There is a fairly discernible hierarchy or orientation in seeking help. Victims first seek aid from family members and close friends; secondly from other friends and neighbors. They then turn to anonymous local community residents, and to various organiza-

tions of which they are members, such as unions and churches. Lastly, and only if familiar groups such as the police and the mass media agencies prove unrewarding, is there any turning to public agencies specifically organized to deal with problems of disaster relief."<sup>57</sup>

While a disaster agency must be continually prepared to provide the services, personnel and supplies which the public expect, the manner it performs its duty should be consistent with circumstances. In many bureaucratic organizations the normal lines of communication and chain of authority are bypassed. Such occurrences it is suggested are not isolated aberrations to be tolerated, but essential components of the disaster response, to be positively encouraged.

Further, inasmuch as Type 1 organizations cope adequately with the demands made upon them, such response is only partly because of the pre-existing bureaucratic structure; it is also because the relationships between the members, e.g., police or firemen, take on a new dimension. The policemen and firemen are ready to work long hours, undergo risk, and act beyond the "call of duty" not only because of the professional imperatives of the job, but also because of the emotional and affective response evoked by the human tragedy they witness. In a sense their action may be interpreted in Weberian social action terms, as being closer to the actions of volunteers than to their routine everyday actions.

This agrees with the research conducted into the factors motivating soldiers under stress conditions of warfare, where feelings for close associates in the army (primary groups) were more relevant than overall patriotic sentiments or general military obligations.<sup>58</sup> Adopting such an analysis to Type 1 organizations could add considerably to the understanding of the operation of these organizations in emergency conditions.

The effects of a disaster then are felt not only at the physical level in the destruction caused, and at the individual level in the suffering evoked, but

also at the social level in the qualitative change undergone. It is this change which lies behind much volunteerism, whether recognized as such or not, whether performed individually or by organizations. Indeed, of all the changes wrought as a result of the disaster, the increase of volunteer action within the community may well be among the most significant.

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