Group Process and Social Integration: A System Analysis of Two Movements of Social Protest

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Social psychology as the area which lies between individual psychology and the social sciences has in the past been polarized toward psychology. The focus has been upon an understanding of the individual as he functions in social settings with limited investigation of those social settings. The study of small groups has pushed beyond this framework but not very far. Group process is generally examined as personal interaction divorced from social context. In fact, the major advances in social psychology since its gradual emergence as a discipline of its own in the late twenties and early thirties have been the growth of an experimental or laboratory social psychology and the accumulation of findings about the nature of small groups. Both types of contributions have been of such substantial character that social psychologists are no longer marginal men in departments of psychology. Indeed the introductory text in psychology which does not utilize fairly heavily the findings of social psychological research is the exception. And the success of these approaches will reinforce continued work along similar lines with potentially valuable outcomes. Nonetheless, it is my thesis that the significant area for the social psychology of the future lies not in a continuation of these main streams of research directed at the individual and small group isolated from social context. Rather, it lies in a social psychological analysis of social structure and the study of societal process. This is the area which led to the creation of SPSSI when psychologists became concerned with economic justice, industrial conflict, social cleavages based upon economic and racial differentials and war and peace.

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And it was to these problems which Kenneth Clark (1965) addressed himself in a discussion of social power just a year ago in his Lewin Memorial talk.

The overriding concern of social psychology with the individual and the small group can be seen in the conventional accounts of its historical development. These accounts trace its origins in the United States to the work of McDougall representing the individual approach of the biological evolutionists and to the work of E. A. Ross reflecting the social interaction doctrines of French sociologists. This is correct but it ignores a persisting though minor stream of influence, namely the theorists concerned with social structure and social change, such as Durkheim, Marx and Weber. The French sociological contributions of Tarde and LeBon which were the basis of Ross’ approach were not as much sociological as applications of concepts of French abnormal psychology to social problems. The true societal doctrines coming from Durkheim and Weber were much slower in affecting social psychology and even today are fragmented in their impact. Thus, we have seen the utilization of such concepts as norms and roles, social stratification, anomie, legitimacy, power, norms of reciprocity and interdependence—but generally as fairly isolated concepts.

Societal Process

The social psychology of the future, moreover, can well devote itself to the problems of societal process as well as group process, to the patterning of individuals which make up social structure as well as the cognitive structures of the individual. In the larger sense we have won the fight at the small group level. We know a great deal about how individuals are tied into the small group through processes of participation, of sociometric attraction, of mutual social reinforcement, of shared objectives. This has been the thrust of the group dynamics movement for the past twenty-five years. The work of the Tavistock researchers has demonstrated, moreover, that some of the individual processes of participation in a meaningful work cycle hold for the small group as well as for the personality under given conditions (Rice, 1958; Trist, 1963), a finding foreshadowed by the earlier work of Lewis and Franklin (1944) and Horwitz (1954) on the group Zeigarnik and more recently extended to the level of aspiration concept by Zander and Medow (1963). Much of course remains to be done in mopping up operations at the small group level and even more in applying these findings in many appropriate group settings. But there has been little major advance in the work on group process in recent years save for the move toward its use in therapeutic fashion for working through problems of defensive reactions of group members toward one another.
The major problems we face, however, need new approaches, new concepts and new research. We have too long neglected the nature of social systems and the dynamics of their functioning. We have made little progress in studying the role relationships which constitute social systems and with the relationships of subgroups to the larger societal framework. We have been remiss in applying ourselves to an understanding of social movements and conflicts between organized groups. The general reason given is that these problems belong to the other social sciences. But since social systems exist only as patterns of human behavior, they are an appropriate field of study for social psychologists. Artifacts or products of a society can be studied at a superorganic level, but the actual production of such artifacts in the complex actions of people can be studied at the social psychological level. Our constructs for such a study need to be social system concepts so that we are directed toward the relevant aspects of collective and reciprocal behaviors. The variables to be observed and measured are still psychological. The conceptualizations we use, however, should be such as to guide us to the appropriate interdependent behavior. Otherwise we are likely to employ a direct and misleading equivalent of a group outcome in searching for individual patterns of belief and action. Wars are made in the minds of men but this statement can be deceptive if it equates the declaration or prosecution of a war with the aggressive impulses of the members of the warring nation. The nation is not an aggregate of similarly-minded aggressive individuals acting in parallel but a complex organization of many criss-crossing cycles of social behavior (Allport, 1962).

Two Movements of Social Protest

Let us look at two movements of social protest in our society as examples of the relevance of social structure and system forces for an understanding of social phenomena—the civil rights movement and the protests against the war in Vietnam. From the conventional approach of individual psychology, they seem very similar. They have both been led by much the same type of people, largely those outside the basic power structure of the society: small groups of student activists, part of the academic and intellectual world, some Church groups and some members of the Negro community. The power groups of industry and business, organized labor and the organizations representing the professions of law, medicine and education have not been conspicuously arrayed in support of either of these movements. In addition to the overlapping personnel and overlapping group membership behind the two trends, there has been a similarity in their dedication to values of egalitarianism, humanitarianism,
democracy and nonviolence. They are alike in their appeals to the American public and in their tactics for achieving their objectives.

They have one other major similarity which is more at the system than at the individual level. They both have the advantage that the values which justify their thrust are part of the value system of the larger society. In other words, they have legitimacy in the broader sense of the term in that they are sanctioned by the accepted ideology of society. The opposition in contrast has had great difficulty in finding a rationale to justify its position. The doctrine of racism furnishes little support for the opposition to Civil Rights in a political democracy of a multiethnic character recently involved in an all out war against Nazi Germany. Such a racist ideology appeals only to very limited sectors of the society. The legal doctrine of interposition in its absurd legalism was merely a delaying tactic. The plea for nongovernment intervention on issues of civil rights makes little sense in a bureaucratic society committed to legislation as a means of solving problems. In brief, the discriminatory practices of our society had going for them some local laws, much internalized prejudice and specific economic advantage to certain subgroups, but no ideological legitimacy. In passing, it might be mentioned that there are those who see some danger in the slogan of black power in that it opens an ideological door to the rightists which had been slammed shut in their faces.

In similar fashion the protestors against the Vietnam war had the legitimizing values of the society on their side. Democracy demands the right of self determination of small as well as large nations. It does not justify the intervention of large powers in small nations merely because of their power. Our societal values are not consistent with the support of a military junta whose leaders fought on the side of the French rather than their own people in expelling colonial rule. Nor do they countenance the killing and wounding of women and children in an undeclared war. The United States, as Kenneth Boulding has commented, has all the advantages in the conflict in economic might, technological strength, military weapons and fire power, everything in short but legitimacy. This is one reason why American intervention in Vietnam has been so unpopular abroad even among our allies and so unenthusiastically received at home. There is, of course, the ideological justification of combatting communism but why communism has to be combated in this particular way has not been clear either to American or to world opinion. The legitimacy for the conflict that does exist is more at the pragmatic level growing out of the dynamics of the conflict itself.

I have distinguished between legitimizing values at the societal level as a system force as against the individual values of the members of a protest movement. Individual values are internalized in the personality. System
ideology is the set of values accepted as appropriate general guides for the behavior of members of the system. These values may or may not be internalized by a majority of system members and certainly are not internalized in their entirety. When a social system collapses, its ideology often collapses which would not be true if there were a one-to-one correspondence between personal and system values.

System Level Differences

Though the Civil Rights movement and the antiwar cause resemble one another in personnel, in individual motivation, in group tactics and in the system values utilized, the similarities of the two movements pretty well ends there. Their differences at the system level are great. The Civil Rights movement is basically consistent with the forces in our societal structure and is moving in the same direction as these forces. The antiwar movement opposes some of the dominant trends in the national system. Though the same individual motivations and sometimes the same individuals are found in the two movements, their progress and their effectiveness are radically different. It is necessary, then to consider the nature of the social system which affect these outcomes.

American society is basically an organizational, or bureaucratic, technological society in which role systems based upon rules and functional requirements have replaced traditional authority and absolutistic standards. Three characteristics of bureaucratic structure are relevant to our discussion: its growth or maximization dynamic, its conflict-reducing mechanisms to achieve an integrated system and the functional nature of its legitimizing values.

The dynamic of a bureaucratic system, once it is established, is to maximize its input-output ratio of energy to place it in a more powerful position with respect to other systems and to its environment (Yuchtman, 1966). It will ingest resources outside its boundaries, it will seek to control its external environment, it will grow until checked by outside forces (Katz and Kahn, 1966). With all our attempts to control monopolistic growth, our industrial enterprises have grown bigger and bigger. With all our talk about curbing the size of the federal government, its payroll and its activities, it continues to grow in size and in function. It is much more difficult in a bureaucratic structure to eliminate a subsystem once established than to add two new ones.

The dynamic of maximization is related to the second characteristic of bureaucratic systems, the development of mechanisms for reducing internal conflict. Cleavages within the system impair its effectiveness in competition
with other systems. Conflicts about interests, privileges and ideas are met basically by compromises and mutual concessions and by not permitting all of the dissident voices representation in decision making. The general pattern for conflict reduction is the narrowing of channels for their expression so that many divergent views are reconciled or silenced at lower levels in the structure. A small unit has to resolve differences among members so that it speaks with one voice in its own subsystem and not with a multitude of opinions. Within the subsystem the unit differences have to be compromised so that the subsystem represents but one position to the higher levels in the structure. This pattern means that many conflicts are handled at lower levels. Though the final position of a large subsystem has the power of the entire subsystem behind it, this position is already a compromise of generalities which has blunted the sharpness of the conflicting interests and factions. The example par excellence of this pattern is the two-party system. By the time the wishes of the many interest and factional groups have been filtered up through the hierarchical structure, the party line is not far from dead center. The many competing groups are not represented directly and formally in the Congress, the top decision-making political body. Many conflicts have thus been compromised and Congress has an easier task of reaching decisions. A multi-party system with proportional representation, on the other hand, gives more adequate representation to divergent interest and ideological factions but it has the disadvantage of making it more difficult to achieve national unity (Valen and Katz, 1964). The general trend in bureaucratic structures is toward the pattern achieved by the two-party system in getting agreement at various levels so that many sharp conflicts are absorbed along the line.

Restricted Communication—A Necessity

Ashby (1952) in his brilliant system analysis gives some of the reasons why this is so. Stability of the system would take infinitely long to achieve if all the elements in the system were in full contact and communication. All the variables of all the subsystems would have to be satisfied at once—a highly unlikely event. If, however, communication is restricted among subsystems, or they are temporarily isolated, then each subsystem can achieve its own stability. With restricted communication, success can accumulate from successive trials whereas in the single suprasystem success is all-or-none. An overall system can move toward equilibrium through sufficient connectedness of its subsystems so that the operation of one can activate another and enough separation so that each can reach agreement within itself. Equilibrium can be approached in the system as a whole, but no complex suprasystem would ever have equilibrium in all its subsystems at the same time.
To the general Ashby description of subsystem and suprasystem we should add the concept of hierarchical levels. The need to reach some agreement at each succeeding level further structures and restricts the full interplay of communication and conflicting forces.

One reason why group process is inadequate for the study of social systems is that it deals with genuine group consensus through group discussion and decision-making. This can only be realistically applied at the very lowest level in social structures, for the moment the decision of the local group is carried by its representatives to a higher level, we are dealing with a political process of compromise and majority rule. At the next higher level, the representatives are no longer free to work through to a full agreement as individuals. They are role representatives of their local groups as well as members of the higher group in the structure. They must take back something to their constituents and hence they bargain and trade and finally reach some compromise rather than the integrated solution of group process. The dynamics differ from small group process and the outcomes differ.

**Bureaucratic System — A Process of Progressive Agreement**

In brief, the bureaucratic system handles conflict by a process of progressive agreement among subunits at each level of the structure. Many dissident voices are lost long before the final decision-making circles are reached. The structure is built to accommodate conflict, to mute its expression and to redefine clashing positions on clear-cut issues as moderate stands on ambiguous generalities.

There are also more direct mechanisms of repression as in the denial of the franchise to certain groups or the use of complex machinery to make difficult the participation of many people even at the local level.

Another device for slowing down change within a bureaucratic system comes from the character of the managerial and administrative roles. These roles are built around procedures for getting things done and not around the analysis of substantive issues. The administrator’s major task is to keep things moving, to seek enough compromise to prevent the machinery from breaking down, in short to be an expert on procedure not on content. Thus the head of the poverty program was selected because of his administrative skills not because of his understanding of the poverty problem. In his administrative role the official takes his cues about general policy from those above him in the structure. Basic changes in the system, however, require issue-oriented rather than procedure-oriented managers, i.e. men with genuine knowledge and understanding of the change objectives.

A third characteristic of bureaucratic structures is the functional nature of their legitimizing values. The system is unified not only through
devices for handling internal conflict but also through the values which reflect the functional interdependence of the people in the system. These values, moreover, do not represent transcendental principles based upon divine revelation or an absolutistic morality. They have to relate to the functioning of the system to supply both cognitive structure and ideological justification for its activities. The essential justification for the assumption of roles is not that the role itself is morally correct, but that it is necessary for the operation of the system.

The process of building a social structure begins in early socialization and it takes on specification with adult socialization into given social systems. Individuals begin early to learn that family, school and social groupings all have expectations, rewards and sanctions for many specific roles in which the justification of the required behavior is not necessarily carried by the nature of the activity itself. There is a divorce from the meaning of the activities as desirable in and of themselves, and the goals which they are expected to accomplish. To be a good group member means that the individual accepts his role assignments as part of the rules of the game.

The justification for the assumption of roles lies in the rewards to the individual for being a member of the system. The system values then must be capable of translation into pragmatic programs. This is further emphasized by the technological character of our organizational society in which the criterion is constantly employed: Does it work? Finally, this system has the congruent property of a democratic ideology. Since people are required to assume many roles, since they are to be interchangeable for many purposes save where there is a high degree of specificity for an important role, their essential equality with respect to system demands and opportunities for participation becomes important. To utilize manpower resources effectively implies that surplus meanings of such characteristics as ethnic group membership, sex or hair color are irrelevant. And, as we move away from transcendental and traditional principles as the source of morality, an egalitarian democratic philosophy geared to the privileges and rights of all individuals becomes the common ground for the commitment of all citizens to their society.

**The Civil Rights Movement -- Extending Preexisting Trends**

To return, then, to a consideration of the two liberal movements, I would call attention to some of the system forces which have been working to accord a different reception to the Civil Rights issue than to the antiwar cause. The racial cleavage in our society, deepened by economic stratification, has been under attack by liberals for more than a century.
But it was not until World War II that the problem of racial integration was seriously considered in the perspective of national unity. Negroes were needed in defense industry, in governmental services and in the armed forces. It was no accident that some of the first moves toward integration were made in the armed forces and, moreover, in combat units at the front. And at home wartime agencies were directed to give employment to all qualified personnel. Shortly after the war President Truman issued the order authorizing integration throughout the armed forces. The realization grew, moreover, that in a world where the majority of the people were nonwhite and where millions of people in the areas uncommitted in the conflict between the United States and Russia were nonwhite, assigning third-class citizenship to American Negroes was not a wise policy. Nor was it a wise policy in an economy with little need for unskilled labor to deprive citizens of education and training for the economic needs of the nation.

Against this background, the Civil Rights movement utilized two other system forces to achieve some of its initial successes. It obtained legitimacy in the narrow sense of legal sanctions by pushing for new interpretations and enforcement of existing laws of the land. The discriminatory practices of generations were clearly inconsistent with the legal basis of our political system. The precedent had been set by President Truman in his executive order making discrimination in the armed services illegal. Mention already has been made of the larger legitimacy of the movement in gearing into the values of a democratic society. The economics of the system in effectively using its manpower was thus not the sole cause of the changes brought about, but when economics, law and ideology are all on the same side, something is going to give.

Why, then, has the Negro revolution been so slow in achieving its objectives if the changes involved are so consistent with the general trends in the national system? The reason is that in addition to change forces pushing the system to maximizing its character there are also built-in maintenance forces representative of the older equilibrium. There are defenses in depth which slow down the change process. Subsystems with some power of their own operate in any large structure and can be resistant for limited periods to changes initiated in other parts of the system. We had an interesting example of the problem of change and the steady state of a system last semester when Selective Service put into effect the old device of draft deferment based upon standing in college or in national tests. This policy hit those groups with poorest academic preparation the hardest and can nullify the moves to open up channels for the training of Negroes for professional positions.

In other words, the overall system is not a single homogeneous structure. Subsystems exist such that political democracy does not have a corresponding parallel in economic structures with full equality of
opportunity. The political system has been more open to change with the greatest advances occurring in this domain with the enfranchisement of Negroes and growing acquisition of equal legal rights. In the economic and social sectors, however, the built-in defenses in depth have been much more resistant to change.

Mechanisms for Dealing with Internal Conflict

More specifically, however, we need to take account of the mechanisms of a bureaucratic society for dealing with internal conflict. The most common devices are those of compromise and of indirect ways of meeting the conflict. Compromise has been conspicuous as in the gradualism doctrine, in the concessions made by nationwide employers, and in the agreements reached at the community level. The difficulty with the compromise technique is that its outcome is partially dependent upon the power of the bargaining group. This method places a premium upon the mobilization of threat of economic and political sanctions. As the integration movement has mobilized power to exact concessions, it has had considerable success but progress has not been great. The majority group still has the power of superior numbers, superior resources and an entrenched position in the social hierarchy. Moreover, if the struggle is confined to mobilization of black power rather than generalized to embrace broad values, it produces repercussions in certain sectors of the white population. Nevertheless, such power mobilization is an important if not the most important means for continuing progress with respect to civil rights.

The common mechanism for reducing conflict is the attenuation of its representation in decision-making centers. In a two-party system the Negroes are limited in their influence to the old A. F. of L. technique of rewarding friends and punishing enemies and generally this has to be done within a single party structure. The attempt to secure direct representation through a party of their own in Mississippi achieved some purposes but not the avowed objective. The system is so set up as to accommodate minority groups without integrating them. There were no institutional channels through which the Civil Rights movement could directly affect decision-making circles, apart from the judicial system. Thus they have taken to the streets and to demonstrations as well as to the use of economic boycotts and voter registration drives. The effectiveness of these tactics has been in part a matter of the power mobilized and in part a matter of making visible to important sectors of the American public the unjustified practices of discrimination.
Another way of damping the fire of an underprivileged group is through the many established blocks to their rise in the various power and prestige structures. Negroes have been successful in law and medicine but more within their own community than within the larger society. They have achieved some break-throughs in the political system. In the world of finance and industry, however, there has been less progress. They have lacked the training, the resources for committing themselves to such careers, the social background, and the personal associations necessary to move into the economic sector in leadership roles.

Integration has been achieved at the political level so that great advances have been made in the citizenship rights of voting and equality before the law. Opportunities for schooling have been opened up in law though not always in practice. One would predict in terms of system forces that the greatest progress will continue to be in the political domain with full enfranchisement of all Negro citizens, with equal legal rights, with equal access to public institutions and with increasing numbers of Negroes achieving positions of importance in the political structure. Where discrimination is reinforced by economic stratification, change will be much slower. Relative to past economic standards there will be improvement but relative to the rising standards of the white population, the improvement will not seem significant. The general economic upgrading of the national population has been proceeding rapidly and the person just entering the race may have great difficulty catching up to the accelerated pace.

In brief, then, the Civil Rights movement has achieved much as it has interacted with other system forces, received their support and helped to give them more adequate definition. It has not revolutionized the social system but has pushed it toward greater consistency. The threatened revolution has been contained within the system.

The Protest Movement — Opposing Preexisting Trends

The protest movement against the Vietnam war and the peace movement in general have the major difficulty of opposing some of the dynamic trends in the national system. The maximization dynamic is expressed in the extension of national interests and national power. There is the push to utilize our influence and power, for as we are now reminded, we have to assume our responsibilities in the world. Moreover, the major forces which challenge our international position come from the expansion of communism. And the assumption is that it is better to meet this challenge at distant points from our own shores which means protecting weaker nations less capable of resisting than the U.S.
Secretary of State Dean Rusk, has acknowledged our military commitments to 40 nations around the globe. He denied that this represented a policy of *pax Americana* but there are those who interpreted this as diplomatic language. Such language needs to be understood in the context in which it appears. Since World War II we have been engaged in a continuing process of extending our psychological boundaries beyond our geographical borders. Conflict with other expanding systems are bound to occur. These conflicts do not inevitably mean war but the immediate past suggests that we need to do more to take advantage of the degrees of freedom, to seek counter forces in the social situation, for the maintenance of world peace.

The facts are that Vietnam is only one instance of the collisions between the U.S. and other nations in Asia. Before Vietnam there was Laos; before Laos, Korea. After South Vietnam, there may be North Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Korea, and even China. In addition to our fighting forces in Vietnam, we have military bases in other parts of east Asia. The other day the press reported that we now have 27,000 troops in Thailand and are presently expanding our four military bases there by a new complex costing almost $100,000,000. Nor does the present conflict seem to be a function of the warlike personalities of our national leaders. Recall that in 1964 the American people chose between two slates of candidates, the trigger-happy Goldwater and his equally belligerent running-mate, Miller, and the consensus-seeking Johnson and the liberal Humphrey. Remember, too, it was supposed to be a choice not an echo. I am contending, then, that the decisions in national leadership roles are in good measure determined by system forces and that the conventional interpretation of these requirements in the Asian situation was an escalation of warlike measures. I am also arguing that such decisions were not inevitable and that there was enough range of interpretation of the situation and of appropriate national policy, for an *unusual* national leadership to have followed a different course. National interest, national prestige, national honor as well as the struggle against communism could have been defined in other ways. Though the dice were loaded, the players could have discarded them.

**National Leaders – What Degree of Freedom?**

The degree of freedom of movement for national leaders is greater at an early stage in international relations. Once, however, the decisions are made to utilize the military power of the nation, then it is extremely difficult at later stages to reverse the policy. At the early stage the problem is one of progressive commitment, i.e., what look like small steps in the beginning
become binding decisions for more complete involvement. The decision to furnish aid to an anti-communist government, the use of American military as advisers rather than as participants, the partial involvement of limited forces, and then greater and greater escalation were not necessarily thought through in advance as the desirable policy. One step led to another. To break out of this pattern of progressive commitment requires unusual qualities of statesmanship at the national level. The present and the preceding three administrations were all involved in this pattern though there are indications that the Kennedy administration if it had continued might have been more resourceful in arresting the trend. A statesmanlike leadership would have to rise above some of the relevant central subsystems in the national structure specifically the Department of State, the CIA, the Defense Department, the National Security Council and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These subgroupings concerned with problems of national interest, prestige and power develop narrow conceptions of their goals and the means for achieving them. There are doves as well as hawks in these groups but the system tends to select more hawks than doves and to damp dovelike voices. Moreover, these agencies are already locked into a limited set of strategy alternatives dictated in part by their own responses to the moves of the international opponent and the subsequent reactions of the opposition.

The protest movement against our involvement in Vietnam was not effective in influencing the policy of the Administration as it moved from one critical decision to another. The protestors lacked organized power. The academic community did not speak with a single voice. Moreover, the voices were those of individuals not of organized groups of strength. There were no easily identifiable blocks of voters like Negroes or labor union members to support the movement. The pacifist organizations were courageous but tiny. The members of Congress who furnished the one source of leverage and who gave additional legitimacy to the movement received little support from the mass media. They were not able to contend with the strong executive-legislative combination of forces arrayed against them. Nor was there a peace lobby in Washington to compete with the lobbies representing business and industry interested in defense expenditures.

Once embarked upon the policy of military intervention and limited escalation, the system forces are even stronger in resisting a change toward peaceful alternatives. Even without a formal declaration of war, the use of American armed forces and the resulting casualty lists produce a situation in which the national membership character of the people becomes salient. The nation state becomes more than ever the dominant social structure. The state is the formal organized system to which all other structures are legally subservient. It functions as the final arbiter of decisions within the society
when conflicts cannot be resolved at other levels. It has a monopoly on physical force for implementing these decisions.

The Arousal of National Roles

This is the formal description at the level of political science. What does it mean psychologically? It means that when national roles are aroused they take precedence over any other social role the individual can play as a member of his family, his church, his profession, his work organization, etc. National sovereignty also means that every organized group in the society must function as an arm of the state in times of national emergency if so ordered. This is most obvious when industries are nationalized in wartime but there are less thorough manifestations as when organizations cooperate with the government in not employing citizens whose loyalty is under suspicion. In times of peace, national roles are latent roles so that the average citizen spends most of his time in activities of making a living, being a member of his family, engaging in leisure time activities, etc. Apart from observing laws and voting, he gives little time or thought to his citizenship rights and obligations. The national state and his membership as an American citizen are remote considerations. But when the emergency of possible war or actual international conflict arises, national roles take priority over other roles. The basic institutional pattern that has been built into the members of the society through the socialization process and which has indirectly mediated the relationship of their activities to need satisfaction, now takes over. As a member of the national system the individual must either assume his national roles or leave the system. And there are no places to go save prison or exile.

Even an undeclared war provides the conditions for the arousal of national roles. One aspect of such arousal is the restriction of freedom of movement at all levels in the structure. Other roles are no longer open choices. And the definition of the national role assumes clearer structure with the decisions of national leaders. These leaders themselves lose freedom of movement. Not only are they committed by their previous decisions in their own eyes, but these decisions have activated expectations throughout the structure which further lock them into a given pattern of behavior. And, as leaders guiding the nation in an international conflict, they are more vulnerable to criticism from their political opponents if they do not play their roles in a militant manner ostensibly supportive of national interest. Freedom of movement is also reduced for groups and individuals with respect to actions and words opposing national policy. People not happy about the war and its escalation now take the position that we should get it over with in some fashion rather than complete
withdrawal. The function of public opinion in affecting national policy becomes weak and negligible.

The solution to the war in Asia of a complete withdrawal of our armed forces, though logical, is unrealistic. It neglects not only the dynamics of the arousal of national roles but also the expansionist push of the American power system in Asia. We have established military bases in Asian countries other than Vietnam and have committed ourselves to fighting the spread of communism on the Asian continent. The pattern of commitment is not the same, however, for the administration and for the American people. The objectives of the administration go beyond the successful prosecution of the undeclared war. If it were to be won, or if some favorable peace could be negotiated, the conflict could readily flare up again either in Thailand, Laos or Cambodia. The American people, however, at the present time would be satisfied with the settlement of the Vietnam war.

Discouraging as the prospects are for a peaceful settlement in Vietnam and for a permanent peace in Asia, there are factors which conceivably can work toward international stability in this part of the world. For one thing, the American people after Korea and after Vietnam may be more reluctant to support further military intervention so far from our shores. Consistent with the interpretation is the fact that the motivational basis for national involvement has seen some change in the development of our bureaucratic society during the past forty years.

Symbolic, Normative, or Instrumental Involvement

Individuals can be tied into a bureaucratic system in one of three ways or some combination of them: symbolic, normative, or instrumental involvement (Katz, 1965). Symbolic attachment refers to emotionally held attitudes in which the symbols represent absolute values and have a life of their own. They are not the means to an end but are ends in themselves. Emotional conditioning in childhood to symbols of the nation such as the flag, the national anthem or national heroes are one basis for symbolic commitment. Normative involvement on the other hand does not imply internationalization of the sanctity of given symbols but rather the acceptance of specific legitimate requirements of the system necessary for system membership. Thus one meets the demands of one's role because he wants to stay in the system not because he is emotionally attached to signs representing its abstract values. Finally, functional involvement has to do with commitment to the system because its demands are instrumental to his needs. The union member may be committed to his union because it is a group means for dealing with his needs. Such a functional attachment is not limited to bread-and-butter matters. It can also be related to his own values
which find meaningful realization in group action which advance his beliefs and commitment of a functional character where values get translated into specific programs of action as against symbolic attachment to nonoperational goals. In the Vietnam war the man who enlists because his heart quickens at the sight of the flag shows symbolic commitment. The man who accepts his call to the service primarily because this is the requirement for the American male of certain ages is demonstrating normative commitment. The underprivileged youth who sees in armed service a way of getting an education and technical training is an example of functional commitment. So, too, would be the man who enters the service because he feels that democratic values are threatened by communism in Asia and armed intervention is necessary to prevent a communist takeover.

With the development of a bureaucratic society there has been a relative decline in symbolic commitment to national roles and a rise in normative and functional commitment. The great majority of the men in our armed forces are there not so much because of the considerations of national honor as because they received the notice from their draft boards. Bureaucratic society, emphasizing as it does the authority of rules rather than of tradition, is carried much more by role readiness and functional interdependence than by the internalization of emotional symbols. This is a relative matter, moreover, and suggests a different emphasis in the mix of motivational patterns in the history of our nation (Katz, Kelman & Flacks, 1963).

**An Implication: More Freedom of Action**

What are the implications of this analysis if we still find ourselves in war? What difference does it make if men carry out their military obligations on a different motivational basis than in World War I, as long as the end result is the same? I believe it does make a difference for these reasons: With greater functional and normative involvement there is more freedom of action than with symbolic commitment. Functional and normative nationalism can lead to other than military paths to objectives. It can lead to international negotiation and cooperation in situations in which symbolic patriotism would demand war.

National leaders often operate as if symbolic commitment were still the dominant way in which people were tied to the nation. Thus they sometimes perceive less freedom for action than they really have. They may assume that a conciliatory series of moves will mean political suicide because people will feel that national honor and interests are imperiled. The political opposition can be depended upon to try to arouse patriotic sentiments to discredit such soft policies. Though there are people who still
are readily moved by slogan appeals of a superpatriotic character, they are not as numerous or as powerful as is often assumed. Both public opinion polls and election returns show that flag waving by those out of office does not necessarily defeat the incumbent.

Eighty-Eight Per Cent of Population for Negotiation

In late February and early March of this year Sidney Verba and a group of social scientists at Stanford University in cooperation with the National Opinion Research Center conducted a nation-wide survey on opinions toward the war in Vietnam (1966). This survey differed from the Gallup Poll in that it dug more deeply into the complex of attitudes toward the war. Its major findings indicated that people have very mixed feelings about the war and that there is more of a potential in American public opinion for deescalation than for escalation. In the first place, there are very few real hawks or doves. Only six per cent of the national sample take consistent positions in favor of escalation and opposed to deescalation. Fourteen per cent are consistent doves. In the second place, the great majority (some 88%) are willing to negotiate with the Vietcong and would support (some 70%) a UN-negotiated truce in Vietnam. “A 52 per cent majority would be willing to see the Vietcong assume a role in a South Vietnam coalition government and a 54 per cent majority favor holding free elections in South Vietnam, even if the Vietcong might win”. In the third place, “the majority of American citizens have reservations about containing the war when faced with its possible costs. The study asked whether people wanted to continue fighting in Vietnam if it meant cutting back various Great Society programs (such as aid to education and medicare), increasing taxes, and imposing economic controls. On every count majorities were registered in opposition.”

Though 60 per cent would continue the war if it required calling up the National Guard, only 40 per cent would want to continue if it meant full-scale mobilization. And only 38 per cent would be in favor of a continuation of the conflict if it meant that several hundred American soldiers would be killed each week. Though the people are evenly divided about having a half a million troops in South Vietnam, a majority oppose steps of escalation such as bombing the cities of North Vietnam, fighting a ground war in China, or the use of atomic weapons. Finally, in spite of press reports, it is not true that the opposition to President Johnson on the war comes mainly from those who are in favor of a more vigorous prosecution of the conflict. The opposition is 2 to 1 from the other side; those who favor deescalation.
It is true, however, that 81 per cent of the people would disapprove of an immediate withdrawal of American troops if the Communists were to take over.

**Vietnam — A Functional Commitment**

I have cited these findings at some length because they come from the most thorough study we have had of American public reaction to the war. Moreover, they indicate that there is more freedom for our political leaders to follow other alternatives than escalation of the conflict than political leaders themselves seem to assume. People are concerned about winning the war in Vietnam but they are against continuing the war if it means genuine sacrifice. Thus their commitment is more functional than symbolic, in that a symbolic commitment calls for pursuance of policy no matter what the cost. Symbolic commitment in its absolutistic character emphasizes national sovereignty and opposes internationalism. Functional involvement finds no difficulty in accepting an international arrangement consistent with broadly defined national goals. In a recent Michigan study we found that the functionally committed person wanted to strengthen the UN, the symbolically wanted to withdraw from it; the functionally committed were willing to abide by decisions of the World Court, the symbolically committed were not, and in general the symbolically committed favored a more aggressive stance toward communist countries than did the functionally involved.

The European community was achieved not because nations gave up their identity but because they had a functional basis to their nationalism (Haas, 1958). DeGaulle with his symbolic attachment has set back the clock with respect to furthering European integration.

Clear recognition by national leaders of the functional involvement of the American in the national structure and an application of the same logic would call for a realistic assessment of the gains and costs for alternative strategies in southeast Asia. The U.S. has the weapons and the manpower to conquer South Vietnam and for that matter, North Vietnam. The costs, however, would be huge in the death and devastation visited upon the civilians in those countries, in American lives, in the diversion of funds from the building of the Great Society at home. The extension of the war to North Vietnam and the destruction of that country, moreover, brings us perilously close to the next step, the use of atomic weapons. Even if all of Vietnam were conquered, the price of holding it would be high. It would require economic rehabilitation of both countries and a continuing large force of American troops to resist communist infiltration from the surrounding areas. Moreover, the objective of defeating Communism
Group Process and Social Integration

would not necessarily be achieved. To many of the uncommitted people in Asian countries, the escalation of the war would seem to them to validate the communist claims about the nature of American imperialistic might. We are judged not by our final objectives but by means we use to achieve them. The means are the visible proof in the opinion of other countries of what we are trying to do, rather than some idealized statement of what we assert is our objective. Finally, the basic answer to the spread of communism lies only partially in superior fire power. It also lies in superior ideology as that ideology can be implemented in securing a better way of life for the masses of people.

To Reverse the Spiral of Escalation...

Alternatives to our present policy in Vietnam must be considered in terms of a realistic step which would move toward deescalation of the war. The spiral of escalation is difficult but not impossible to reverse. In international conflict it receives two positive types of feedback: one from the counter-moves of the opponent, the other the internal feedback from the aroused nationalism of the people. Both cycles of feedback interact. But the aroused nationalism of the American people about the Vietnam war has not reached the proportions of intensity which means we have passed the point of no return. The majority of people would welcome a cessation or reduction of the war even if it did not mean the unconditional surrender of the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese. The external cycle is more difficult to predict but since the limited period of the cessation of bombing we have not experimented with specific moves of deescalation. We have increasingly seen the conflict in purely military terms.

I have given considerable emphasis to the role of national leadership and some of the factors affecting decision making at high levels. Another structural aspect of this concerns the information and ideas which the system furnishes for decision making. Here the nation suffers from the lack of an adaptive subsystem concerning foreign policy which would have the functions of research and intelligence to provide an accurate assessment of the world situation, an analysis of the effects of our policies, and a thoughtful consideration of alternative strategies. For the internal economy we have moved in the direction of such a subsystem with the President's Council of Economic Advisers. In the international field, however, we rely upon the State Department and the CIA which are action rather than intelligence agencies. From the point of view of furnishing information and ideas, these agencies are redundant systems. They operate to filter out new information and new ideas. They are closed information loops which receive and process
the answers predetermined by their limited questions and their restricted coding sets. They operate in such fashion as to maintain rather than break out of the locked-in patterns of past strategy (Schlesinger, 1965). Exceptional presidents in the past have been able to by-pass these conventional structures in the determination of foreign policy. What is required as a reliable basis for system functioning in international relations is some governmental restructuring to provide an adequate adaptive subsystem available to national leadership. National decision making, then, would not be imprisoned by its own closed information circuits, would not have to repeat past errors, and could consider alternatives to atomic destruction. The apparent success of brinksmanship in the past is a poor guide for the future. Time has a way of running out on us as individuals. It can also run out for social systems.

REFERENCES