STRATEGIC, TACTICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DILEMMAS OF THE PROTEST MOVEMENT AGAINST NUCLEAR POWER*

STEVEN E. BARKAN
University of Maine at Orono

Recent research has recognized that social movements face several dilemmas in simultaneously mobilizing the many resources that are necessary for their success. This study examines some of the problems that have confronted the contemporary protest movement against the construction and operation of nuclear power plants. Its emphasis is on differences within the antinuclear movement over four strategic, tactical, or organizational matters: (1) the single-issue focus; (2) the definition of non-violence; (3) the intent of the civil disobedience committed by protesters; and (4) the use of affinity groups and a consensus style of decisionmaking. Some of the tactical problems that antinuclear protesters have encountered in the criminal courts are also identified, and implications for the resource mobilization perspective discussed.

Social movements face many tough questions of strategy and tactics. A particular course of action may help achieve one goal but make it more difficult to achieve another. The organizational pattern of movement groups also matters, as a lack of effective organization may frustrate their efforts to change existing conditions. Movements throughout American history have had to resolve these ongoing dilemmas of protest group activity. The abolitionist movement of the nineteenth century, for example, was divided by differences over tactics. In the women's suffrage movement a few decades later, the wisdom of extending the movement's focus beyond the suffrage issue was debated at length. More recently, the southern civil rights movement was often beset by arguments over the possible benefits and disadvantages of various marches and rallies. And several Vietnam antiwar groups developed centralized structures of authority that permitted quick decisionmaking but also led to frustration among those denied any real influence on courses of action.

In this paper I examine a number of strategic, tactical, and organizational dilemmas that have characterized the contemporary protest movement against nuclear power. These difficulties derive from the number of issues the movement has chosen to emphasize, its commitment to non-violent civil disobedience as a primary method of protest, and its novel consensus style of decisionmaking using affinity groups. I also discuss the legal and political dilemmas confronting antinuclear protesters who have faced criminal prosecution for committing civil disobedience.

In concentrating on some of the problems of this particular movement, I hope to contribute to the resource mobilization perspective guiding recent research on social movements (cf. Oberschall, 1973; McCarthy and Zald, 1977; Jenkins and Perrow, 1977). Emphasizing the many resources that social movements must aggregate if they are to succeed, this approach is in many ways a better tool than the more traditional, social-psychological perspective on collective behavior (cf. Smelser, 1963; Gurr, 1970) for understanding the everyday problems and realities of protest group effects.

One crucial problem generally ignored in the older literature has been that of movement strategy (but see Turner, 1970). The resource mobilization approach recognizes the dilemma of determining the most effective allocation of limited social movement resources (McCarthy and Zald, 1977). Efforts to mobilize one of the various resources needed by social movements may prevent the mobilization of others. In particular, movements face difficulties in appealing simultaneously to four different constituencies: (1) their own membership and organizational

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base; (2) the news media; (3) the public; and (4) target groups or antagonists, including government officials (Lipsky, 1968)[1] Thus, for example, protest leaders who employ moderate tactics to win a favorable press image and appeal to target officials may risk alienating movement activists. Such discussion troubled the southern civil rights movement of the 1960s, as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) often criticized the more moderate tactics of Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (Miller, 1968).

Scholars developing the resource mobilization perspective have recognized these problems. But there are still few detailed examinations of their sources and impacts in any particular social movement, especially in the planning and execution of specific protest actions (but see Lipsky, 1970). McCarthy and Zald (1977), for example, admit they disregard tactical dilemmas in developing their partial theory of mobilization. By analyzing the origins, manifestation and impact of these and other dilemmas in the protest movement against nuclear power, this study stresses the tension within social movements between the need to win external support and the ideological leanings of the membership base. It also uses the experience of the antinuclear movement to test Gamson's (1975) assertions about the lack of permeability in the American political system, the effectiveness of "unruly" tactics of protest, and the instrumental nature of insurgent efforts.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EXTERNAL SUPPORT: TWO MODELS OF PROTEST

Before proceeding to the analysis, it will be helpful to identify and clarify an important difference among adherents of the resource mobilization perspective. This emerging approach is in several ways a loose collection of research on many different kinds of movements in many different eras and places, including collective violence in nineteenth-century Europe (Tilly et al., 1975), peasant revolts in Latin America (Oberschall, 1973), and protest movements of farm workers and poor rent strikers in the recent American experience (Lipsky, 1970; Jenkins and Perrow, 1977; see also Gamson, 1975). Inevitably, in reacting to classic collective behavior theory, various studies using the new perspective have had various emphases. These include the secondary importance of discontent in accounting for the rise of protest, the instrumental quality of movement activity, and the social control efforts of state officials.

Because of the different movements and groups considered and different methodologies employed, the studies have not agreed about the importance of external support for protest movement success. In his work on poor rent strikers, Lipsky (1968, 1970) attributes paramount importance to the securing of public support by acts of protest: "The essence of political protest consists of activating third parties to participate in controversy in ways favorable to protest goals" (1968:1153). Jenkins and Perrow (1977) reach a similar conclusion in their study of the United Farm Workers, maintaining that the U.F.W. succeeded and earlier organizing efforts failed not because of changes in the internal movement characteristics favored by the classical literature, but rather because of the public's boycott of grapes and the backing of church groups and organized labor. Though not identified with the resource mobilization perspective, Turner (1964, 1969) also stresses the impact of public response on protest strategies and outcomes.

In contrast, Piven and Cloward (1977, 1978), whose work shares many but not all emphases of the new approach, present a model of protest that does not depend on outside support for its success. Arguing that movements of the poor may best succeed through mass defiance and disruption, they contend that efforts to build membership organizations or to win the support of organized labor or other outside groups tend only to undermine insurgent goals (for critiques see Jenkins, 1979; Roach and Roach, 1978, 1979). They consider public support as important

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1. Turner (1970) also examines the impact of these constituencies on movement strategy, but gives less emphasis than Lipsky to the tension involved in simultaneously appealing to all these groups.

primarily in limiting the degree of repression that state officials might otherwise employ (1977:29). In a footnote they dismiss the kind of protest discussed by Lipsky as mere "showmanship" and "hardly protest at all" (1977:23-24). Gamson (1975) would probably disagree in several ways with Piven and Cloward. But the model of protest presented in his study of challenging groups from 1800 to 1945 emphasizes how such internal characteristics as group size and organizational pattern, rather than external support, account for the success and failure of insurgent efforts. Gamson's study does deal briefly with external sponsorship (1975:63-66), and elsewhere (1979) he has indicated the desirability of public backing. Still, such support assumes only a tacit role in his analysis of challenging groups.

Implicit in all these works is a fundamental point that should be set forth more clearly: insurgent groups differ in their need for public support. There are movements of the poor, but also movements of those not so poor. There are movements of those whose institutional location provides little disruptive potential (cf. Piven and Cloward, 1977), but also movements of those with greater disruptive potential.

Thus the need for external support may be seen as a function of two dimensions of potential social movement power. The first has to do with the level of internal resources, such as money, leadership skills, and writing and speaking prowess. Groups with a membership base, or mass beneficiary constituency (McCarthy and Zald, 1977), lacking such resources presumably must rely more on external support to obtain them than is true of movement groups whose members already possess such resources and skills. Farm workers (Jenkins and Perrow, 1977) and the urban poor (Lipsky, 1968; Roach and Roach, 1978) are examples of aggrieved groups lacking internal resources, while draft resisters during the Vietnam war were wealthier and better educated (Baskir and Strauss, 1978).

The second dimension of potential movement power comes from the threat of disruption or noncooperation that insurgent groups present. It involves such considerations as their numbers, ability to withstand reprisals, functional importance to a political or economic institution, and the capacity of those managing the institution to respond with concessions (Piven and Cloward, 1977; Jenkins, 1979). Insurgent groups whose mass beneficiary constituency poses little threat of harm by disruption or noncooperation presumably must also rely more on external parties to intercede on their behalf than is true of groups whose members do pose a significant threat. Farm workers, for example, pose little threat by striking, partly because of the availability of strikebreakers (Jenkins and Perrow, 1977), while industrial workers in the 1930s posed a much greater threat by striking (Piven and Cloward, 1977). The noncooperation of draft resisters and evaders in the last decade was also effective; more than 570,000 young men did not register, refused induction, or left the country, significantly undermining the ability of the Selective Service System to enforce induction orders (Baskir and Strauss, 1978). The disruptive potential of the urban poor remains a point of contention between Piven and Cloward (1977, 1978) and their critics (Roach and Roach, 1978, 1979).

These two dimensions of potential insurgent power suggest a fourfold typology outlined in Figure 1, with examples included from the recent American experience. The four cells in turn suggest varying degrees of need for external support. The "high" and "low" markers in Figure 1 are, of course, relative, representing a continuum along each dimension. Thus, movements falling in cell I will presumably need external support much more than movements falling in cell IV. The need for outside backing, ranging from high to low, would likely be I, II, III and IV. Viewing movements in this manner helps to mediate the emphasis of the traditional literature on internal movement considerations with the stress in much of the resource mobilization literature on external approval and support. Movements with few internal resources will need public support, and also be concerned with their public image, much more than movements with many internal resources. And as our typology suggests, the dependence on out-

Degree of Threat Posed by Disruption or Noncooperation	Level of Internal Resources and Skills	
	Low	High
	I	II
Low	Farm worker protest Urban poor protest[a]	Antinuclear movement
	III	IV
High	Industrial worker movement in 1930s Urban poor protest[b]	Draft resistance during Vietnam war

[a]According to Roach and Roach (1978)
[b]According to Piven and Cloward (1977)

FIGURE 1

Typology of Potential Power of Social Movements

side support of movements with few resources, and consequent dilemmas of strategy and tactics, may be obviated to a large degree if their membership base is able to pose significant threats via disruption or noncooperation.

Furthermore, the typology identifies not only the degree of external backing needed but also the kinds of strategies and tactics that will be employed. Groups low on both dimensions will use strategies designed to secure public support and approval, while groups high on both dimensions will be able to carry out protest actions with less concern for their public image. The more powerless groups will also have to pay more attention to the appearance they present to elected officials and others capable of granting insurgent goals. The different strategies suggested by these two dimensions of potential power are partly reflected in Turner's (1970) distinction between persuasion and coercion; the former involves only symbolic appeals to public values and attitudes, the latter the use or threat of harm should protest goals not be granted. Turner (1970) notes, for example, the limitations imposed by potentially sympathetic groups from among the American middle and upper classes on the use of coercive tactics.

By tying in the two dimensions of potential social movement power with the need for external support, our discussion provides a more dynamic way of understanding the sources and impact in particular social movements of dilemmas of strategy, tactics and organization. Groups low on both dimensions and thus having the greatest need for external support and a favorable image among elected officials and other target groups will experience these dilemmas more often and more severely than will groups high on both dimensions. Powerless movements will also experience higher levels of dissension generated by the desire of various activists for militant strategies and actions that others see as undermining the group's public image (cf. Lipsky, 1968; Turner, 1970). Thus problems have arisen within the United Farm Workers over the conflict between the workers' cultural value of *machismo* and the nonviolent tactics that have been essential to winning a favorable image in the press and securing public and official support (Levy, 1975). Similarly, the women's movement in the early 1970s divided over the question of lesbianism, as many activists worried over the difficulties the issue might pose in presenting feminist concerns to the public (Freeman, 1975).

As we shall see, the protest movement against nuclear power has been occupied to a large degree with winning publicity and achieving a favorable public image. Although antinuclear activists possess many internal resources and skills of the kind mentioned earlier, their numbers have not been large enough for their protest actions to present a great threat of disruption to

atomic plants. Their concern with the image presented to the public and elected officials via the press has in turn sharpened ideological conflicts within the movement over strategy, tactics and organization. The analysis that follows focuses on some of the internal features examined by Gamson (1975), including the choice of issues, the use of civil disobedience as a nonviolent constraint, and the movement's organizational structure and decisionmaking process. An analysis of the experience of antinuclear protesters in the criminal courts also explores the tension raised by the movement's desire to use its criminal trials as public forums.

BACKGROUND OF THE ANTINUCLEAR POWER MOVEMENT

Over the last two or three years, dozens of protests have taken place throughout the United States and Europe in opposition to the construction and operation of nuclear power plants (cf. Hill, 1977; Hines, 1977; Mohr, 1978; *The New York Times*, 1978b).[2] The American demonstrations have been heralded in the press and by the protesters themselves as a new wave of political activism for the 1970s and 1980s, reminding many observers of the early days of the Vietnam peace movement (cf. Alpern, 1978; Scheiner, 1977).

In the 1960s and 1970s, opposition to atomic plants had centered in established environmental organizations and local citizen groups who used the normal channels of regulatory agencies and the courts (Gyorgy *et al.*, 1979). Though these groups helped effect several safety requirements for the nuclear industry, their attempts at legal "intervention" failed to slow down the construction and licensing of atomic plants very seriously. They were also expensive, technical, and confined to hearing rooms and courtrooms, largely removed from public attention.

By about 1974 opponents of nuclear power had become impatient with the intervention process. During that year, the first national antinuclear conference, "Critical Mass '74," was held in Washington, D.C., under the sponsorship of Ralph Nader. About the same time, opponents of nuclear power in several states tried to focus greater public attention on the issue through the use of antinuclear referenda. These referenda had mixed results; though a 1974 antinuclear ballot issue in western Massachusetts won 48 percent of the vote, referenda in several other states in 1976 lost by 2-1 margins. Nuclear opponents remained unsatisfied with the referenda, finding them too slow, too expensive and generally unsuccessful (Gyorgy *et al.*, 1979).

The first significant protest action against atomic power plants was the 1974 toppling on Washington's Birthday of a nuclear plant weather observation tower by Samuel Lovejoy, a Massachusetts farmer. Lovejoy said he wanted "to twist some heads around here. I wanted people to think, 'That guy's willing to go to jail—these nuclear plants must be heavier than I thought' " (Kifner, 1974:33). His arrest and subsequent trial received considerable coverage in the local press and helped make nuclear power a major topic of debate in western Massachusettts (Wasserman, 1977a).

Protests in other parts of the country were slow in coming, however, as during the next two years opposition to atomic plants remained restricted to referenda and intervention attempts. Then in February 1975 some 30,000 farmers, students and environmentalists marched onto the site of a proposed nuclear plant in Whyl, West Germany and stayed there in varying numbers for nine months, forcing the cancellation of the planned construction (Hines, 1977).

The success at Whyl inspired similar, if much smaller, attempted occupations of the now-

2. The substance of this paper was written before the celebrated March 1979 accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant near Harrisburg, Pa. The Three Mile Island accident dramatically focused public attention on the safety and costs of nuclear power plants, led to Congressional and other investigations of atomic safety, and galvanized dozens of protests across the world against nuclear power (cf. McQuiston, 1979a, b; *Time*, 1979; Williams, 1979; *The New York Times*, 1979).

famous Seabrook plant site on the New Hampshire seacoast (Abalone Alliance 1978a). In July 1976 nuclear opponents from that state and other parts of New England met shortly after the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission issued a construction permit for the Seabrook plant. During the previous eight years, Seabrook residents had opposed the plant before regulatory agencies and in a town meeting vote. Spurred by the failure of these methods and the success at Whyl, the people at the meeting formed the Clamshell Alliance. A few weeks later on August 1, 600 people rallied at the Seabrook plant site, with 18 arrested for trespassing there. Finally, in May 1977 more than 1400 people from New England and other states were arrested for occupying the construction area. Their act of civil disobedience received extensive press coverage across the nation and turned Seabrook into a national symbol of opposition to nuclear power plants (Wasserman, 1977b; Kifner, 1977; Clamshell Alliance, 1978).

It also spawned the formation of similar antinuclear groups in many other states, with colorful names like the Abalone Alliance in California and the Crabshell Alliance in Washington. According to one estimate, half of the nation's 65 atomic plants faced opposition by such groups as of June 1978 (Kuhn, 1978). A number of demonstrations have taken place at these plants, including more than a dozen attempted occupations in such states as California, Oregon, Colorado, Pennsylvania and South Carolina. Arrests at these sites have ranged from 14 to 500 (Solomon, 1977; Baechler, 1978; Hurst, 1978; Scheiner, 1978; Wallace, 1978).

Using the Clamshell Alliance and its Seabrook occupations as a model, these other organizations have relied on nonviolent civil disobedience as a primary method of protest and adopted a consensus style of decisionmaking involving the use of affinity groups. Later sections of this paper will include a discussion of these features in greater detail and an examination of the strategic and tactical difficulties they have posed for the antinuclear movement.

DILEMMAS OF THE ANTINUCLEAR MOVEMENT

The Single-Issue vs. Multiple-Issue Dilemma

Social movements throughout American history have had to decide how many issues to emphasize. In the abolitionist movement preceding the Civil War, women often attempted to connect the issue of women's rights to the antislavery cause, only to have male abolitionists assert that such efforts would weaken the antislavery movement (Tyler, 1944). Later, in the women's suffrage movement, a point of continual and heated debate was whether to restrict the movement's focus to the right of women to vote, or instead broaden it to include other ways in which women suffered from discrimination (Flexner, 1959). More recently, the Vietnam peace movement was divided by arguments over whether to concentrate solely on the war or instead tie the war to such issues as imperialism and racism (Dellinger, 1975). Despite these debates, there is no firm evidence on whether a "single-issue" or "multiple-issue" approach is more likely to succeed. Gamson (1975) found that single-issue groups were far more successful than multiple-issue groups, but concluded that the low success rate of the latter may be explained away when attempts to displace antagonists are held constant.

The contemporary protest movement against nuclear power has also debated this single-issue vs. multiple-issue dilemma.[3] Proponents of the former approach have argued that extending the movement's focus beyond that of the atomic plants would alienate the public and government target officials, and for the most part the antinuclear alliances have shied away from such issues

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3. The concept of issue is, as Gamson (1975) points out, ambiguous, and it is often difficult to conclude whether a group has more than one issue. Gamson (1975) concedes the arbitrariness of his own method for

as corporate capitalism and socialism (Jezer, 1977). Their dilemma is underscored by questions raised by nuclear industry representatives over the movement's true purpose. As one industry spokesperson has asked, "Is it to stop just one form of energy, or is it social and political change?" (Alpern, 1978:29).

Such questions notwithstanding, supporters of broadening the movement's focus assert the necessity of attacking capitalism and advocating socialism if radical social change is to be achieved, and argue that only this multiple-issue approach would appeal to workers and minorities (Hedemann, 1977; Halpern, 1978). One socialist, for example, has called the political ideology of the Clamshell Alliance "incredibly mushy" (Jezer, 1977:18), while another has stressed the need to pay more attention to workplace conditions in alternative sources of energy (Jezer, 1977). The wisdom of including other issues somewhat less related to nuclear technology has also been debated; at the May 1977 Seabrook occupation, a lesbian feminist affinity group dressed in lavender prompted one local organizer to complain that bringing in the gay issue would alienate New Hampshire residents (Drolet, 1977).

A point of particular tension has been the amount of emphasis to be placed on the elimination of nuclear weapons. Though the antinuclear power alliances arose primarily out of an environmental concern over the safety of atomic plants, several members of the movement have called for increased emphasis on the connections between nuclear power and nuclear weapons. In the spring of 1977 a number of traditional peace organizations formed a coalition called the Mobilization for Survival (MfS) to coordinate demonstrations for nuclear disarmament (Peck and Mathews, 1977; Lacefield, 1978; Berkowitz, 1978). Though the MfS sought an alliance with the nuclear power protest groups, the latter feared that stressing disarmament would cost them public support and prompt "political leaders [to] see them as kooks" (Alpern, 1978:27); they also suspected that the MfS would try to take credit for the growing protests against nuclear power (Alliance for Survival, 1978). The two sides have since maintained a rather loose and uneasy relationship; though both have been at some pains to recognize the connection they see between atomic weapons and atomic power, they have chosen by and large to organize separate protest activities, with many individuals demonstrating against both nuclear-related targets.

The dilemma confronting the antinuclear power groups over the disarmament issue has extended in some instances beyond this interorganizational level to that of local protest strategy. In Albuquerque, New Mexico, a group called Citizens Against Nuclear Threats (CANT) has divided over the weapons issue. Organized in November 1976 in an area economically dependent on nuclear weapons research and production, CANT has focused on stopping plans by the U.S. government and various corporations to use New Mexico as a site for nuclear waste disposal. The members of the War Resisters League who helped found CANT wanted the group to raise the issue of disarmament continually, but environmentalists in CANT insisted that nuclear weapons not be mentioned at all, lest they lose support among local residents on the radioactive waste issue. In one case WRL members were asked not to criticize a corporation which was involved in waste disposal plans but which also conducted nuclear weapons research. The debate has "thoroughly frustrated" the WRL members and also hampered peace-related organizing in Albuquerque (Simpson, 1978). Somewhat in contrast to the CANT experience was that of the Missouri Peace Institute in Columbia, Missouri, which decided to add nuclear power to its list of

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characterizing challenging groups as pursuing one or more issues. In the discussion here of the dilemmas over issues within the antinuclear power movement, it is assumed that an issue is any demand that movement activists try to bring, or want to bring, to the attention of the public. Thus, the closing of atomic power plants is one issue, eliminating nuclear weapons is another, and bringing about socialism is a third.

targets despite some fears that criticism of atomic plants might alienate potential supporters (Hedemann, 1978).

Civil Disobedience and Nonviolence

Debates over the wisdom of various tactics of protest have plagued every social movement. In the abolitionist period, radicals like William Lloyd Garrison were charged by more moderate antislavery leaders with advocating extremist tactics that would hurt the cause of abolitionism (Nye, 1963). The women's suffrage, civil rights and Vietnam peace movements of later years were also beset by tactical differences such as the merits of relying on the ballot box versus the benefits of demonstrations and picketing. Gamson (1975) found that "unruly" tactics, including both violent and nonviolent constraints, were more likely to succeed than conventional political methods.

Through its attempted occupations of nuclear power plant sites, the contemporary movement against atomic power has adopted civil disobedience as a primary method of protest, along with various legal rallies and demonstrations. Not surprisingly, established environmental organizations have avoided involvment in these protest actions, preferring to continue opposing the plants in the courts and regulatory agencies (Sive, 1977).

A scrupulous concern for nonviolence has marked the attempted occupations of atomic plants, winning very favorable attention in the national and local press (Irwin and Faison, 1978; Abalone Alliance, 1978; Alpern, 1978). According to many antinuclear activists, the protest and civil disobedience of the Vietnam peace movement were necessary tactics for putting the war on the national agenda and bringing pressure to bear on the President and on Congress. However, they also feel that the violence and other turbulence of the movement often obscured its goal of ending the war, and they look more favorably on the nonviolent direct action of the southern civil rights movement, viewing it as an essential tactic for winning the sympathy of the public while keeping clear the goal of ending segregation.

Thus, although some antinuclear protesters look upon nonviolence as a philosophical principle guiding all personal and political actions, others have adopted it as the most promising protest strategy for the movement's effort to end nuclear power, reflecting a distinction between conscientious and pragmatic nonviolence (Stiehm, 1968). In any event, all those participating in the attempted occupations have been required to attend training sessions in nonviolence conducted by specialists from the American Friends Service Committee and other groups. These sessions typically involve discussions of nuclear power and nonviolence principles, and also include role-playing of potentially tense situations involving police, the press and nuclear workers. The concern for nonviolence has several tactical objectives:

to present a favorable image to the public and elected officials through the news media;

to reduce the potential for outbreaks of violence, which could not only lead to physical injury but also discredit the movement and divert attention from the nuclear power issue;

to present a contrast to the "violent technology" that the protesters claim nuclear power represents;

to deflect actions by possible *agents provocateurs* of the kind that helped undermine the Vietnam peace movement (cf. Marx, 1974); and, finally,

to maintain good relations and develop lines of communication with the police and National Guard.

To maintain a nonviolent discipline at the occupations, usual guidelines have included bans on

weapons, alcohol and drugs, and prohibitions against running and destroying property (Clamshell Alliance, 1978).

Though the occupations of the plant sites have helped focus national attention on nuclear power, disagreements over their nature and intent and over the definition of nonviolence have led to some problems within the antinuclear movement. The various antinuclear protest alliances have never been very precise in setting forth the goals of their illegal occupations, often only announcing that they are meant "to stop" or "to oppose" atomic power. At best the alliances have declared both a symbolic, or persuasive, aim of dramatizing and publicizing opposition to nuclear power plants as well as an obstructionist, or coercive, aim of blockading and occupying the plant sites until construction or operation is halted. Despite the latter professed goal, the numbers of occupiers have not been nearly enough to carry the occupations beyond the symbolic stage, as occurred at Whyl, West Germany, although the larger occupations have resulted in significant police and court costs (cf. McQuiston, 1979b).

Still, many antinuclear activists are committed to civil disobedience for obstructionist reasons, and at some of the plant site occupations tactical arguments have occurred as a result. At the May 1977 Seabrook occupation where 1,414 were arrested, the Clamshell Alliance had expected everyone to be taken into custody as soon as they tried to enter the construction area. When, surprisingly, the occupiers were allowed onto the plant's parking lot, they sat down to discuss what to do next. Many thought they should remain where they were, while others criticized the passivity of the occupation and wanted to stop cars containing personnel of the utility constructing the plant from entering the site. The latter group of protesters also wished to move into the construction area itself by cutting through the fence separating the area from the parking lot. Both these suggestions were condemned as acts of violence by those wishing to remain in the parking lot (Rosenblith, 1977; Hedemann, 1977). A similar tactical dispute over the aim of civil disobedience beset the April 1978 occupation of the Rocky Flats nuclear plant in Colorado that produces the plutonium "triggers" for all American nuclear weapons. About 150 persons sat down on railroad tracks inside the site of the plant. Subsequently, the group split between those who wanted to wait for a shipment train to come, and those who felt a 24-hour vigil was enough. Thirty-five stayed and were arrested six days later (Kuhn, 1978).

After the 1977 Seabrook occupiers were arrested, hundreds were detained in National Guard armories for up to thirteen days until the state agreed to release them on personal recognizance. The Clamshell Alliance had failed to prepare for the possibility of lengthy incarceration, and ideological differences made for prolonged and often heated tactical debates during the next two weeks. These disagreements again concerned the intent of antinuclear civil disobedience and definitions of nonviolence. Some of the occupiers in the armories advocated full cooperation with the National Guardsmen supervising their detainment, believing that any confrontation would constitute violence and hurt their relations with the Guardsmen. Other protesters spoke out for continual resistance inside the armories, feeling that they could not in good conscience obey any government order or aid in their own detainment (Jezer, 1977).

The two groups differed on several points. Noncooperators resisted such things as the separation of men from women, as demanded by the Guard; they condemned the McDonald's and Burger King hamburgers they were provided, prompting charges of "dietary elitism" by one cooperator (Jezer, 1977:20); and they refused to join other protesters in cleaning bathrooms and taking out the trash. When one resister suggested they refuse to go for arraignment when called, a cooperator was prompted to say, "I thought we agreed to be nonviolent!" (Hedemann, 1977:15). In one already overcrowded armory, occupiers blocked the entrance so that the police could not place more occupiers inside, while in another armory such a blockade was avoided because most of those inside wanted to avoid any confrontations. Resisters generally felt that noncooperation

with their imprisonment was necessary to "raise the stakes against the state" (Rosenblith, 1977:16), to politicize those detained in the armories, and to ensure that the various issues they held important received press publicity. Cooperators, on the other hand, charged that acts of noncooperation in regard to these "side issues" diverted attention from the nuclear power issue and made it seem that the people inside the armories were weak when actually they had achieved solidarity about the more important personal recognizance issue (Jezer, 1977; Barry *et al.,* 1977).

A year later divisions within the Clamshell Alliance over civil disobedience again caused serious rifts (Knight, 1978). Another illegal occupation of the Seabrook site had been planned for June 1978, and by early June a few thousand protesters had already received nonviolent training. Then the state of New Hampshire offered part of the plant site to the Clamshell Alliance for a legal rally. This was a clever tactical ploy; as one observer noted, "Political differences between the seacoast residents and more militant protesters elsewhere made it impossible for the Clamshell to satisfy all its constituencies" (Gunther, 1978:3).

Clamshell members from the Seabrook area strongly supported the state's proposal, feeling that a legal rally would attract new people and that the "seige" atmosphere of an illegal demonstration would antagonize local residents (Wasserman, 1978b). Members of the Alliance from other parts of New England advocated the original illegal occupation just as strongly, believing it a necessary tactic to stop construction of the plant and fearing that accepting the state's offer would be interpreted as a sign of weakness (Rosenblith, 1978; Waronker, 1978). One Clamshell activist summed up their dilemma: "The state offered us a deal that we couldn't refuse without looking unreasonable. Do we go ahead with the occupation and satisfy the majority of Clams around New England? Or do we solidify our support in the seacoast?" (Kuhn, 1978:7).

The Clamshell Alliance did decide on a legal rally, which attracted some 20,000 persons. Despite the large number, which many members of the Alliance applauded, other Clamshell activists still felt it had "sold out" to the state, with one radical faction asserting, "Our job is no longer only to educate but to take direct actions beyond the realm of symbolic protest in order to force the government to end nukes" (Kuhn, 1978:7). Meanwhile, the Governor of New Hampshire found himself in a similar quandary. Although he claimed that the protesters' failure to stop construction was a "very distinct and humiliating defeat," the *Manchester Union Leader,* a conservative newspaper that had been a strong supporter of the Governor, criticized him for allowing the rally in the first place (*The New York Times,* 1978a:A10).

Consensus and Affinity Groups

Several scholars have analyzed the impact of the organizational pattern of social movement groups on their ability to prevent factionalism and achieve insurgent goals. Gamson (1975), for example, found bureaucratic and power-centralized forms of organization to be associated with success among the challenging groups he studied. He also found a negative association between centralization of power and factionalism (see also Zald and Ash, 1966). Similarly, Freeman (1975) discussed the strategic and tactical disadvantages of the lack of structure of the small "rap groups" she examined in her study of the early phase of the contemporary women's liberation movement. In contrast to these works, Piven and Cloward (1977), following Michels (1949), emphasized the accomodative consequences of bureaucratization and oligarchization.

The experience of the antinuclear protest alliances presents a vivid picture of the benefits and problems posed by the specific organizational pattern they have adopted, following the example of the Clamshell Alliance (cf. Clamshell Alliance, 1978; Gyorgy *et al.,* 1979). To avoid the centralized power structure that antinuclear protesters feel was one fault of the Vietnam antiwar movement, the alliances have stressed democratic decisionmaking and maximum participation by all. Influenced by feminism and Quakerism, the alliances are nonhierarchical and decentralized. There are no elected officers or other levels of membership, and there is no centralized leadership

(cf. Gamson, 1975). At meetings, rotating "facilitators" take the place of permanent chairpersons, and frequently everyone present must have a chance to speak before anyone can speak a second time.

Borrowing from the Meeting process of Quakers, decisions are reached by consensus, not by majority vote (Wasserman, 1977b). Meetings take no action that is not consented to by every participant. If anyone dissents from a decision, discussion must continue until everyone consents to the proposal. Those who do not agree but do not feel strongly enough to block consensus may "stand aside" and allow the group to reach a decision despite the absence of total consensus. Since the decisions reached represent, perforce, a compromise of views among all those present, the antinuclear alliances have intended consensus as a way of allowing all meeting participants to be involved in the making of decisions without anyone feeling coerced. The benefits of consensus as a decisionmaking *process* have thus been both affective and organizational. By maximizing participation, consensus has generally led to good morale and minimized feelings of disenchantment with group decisions (Gyorgy *et al.,* 1979). On the level of organizational maintenance, consensus has concomitantly served to reduce hostility and possible factionalism (Wasserman, 1977b), thus representing a means to control internal conflict that is quite different from Gamson's (1975) advocacy of centralization of power.

The stress of the antinuclear alliances on maximum participation is also reflected in the decisionmaking *structures* they have adopted. To reach "general" strategic decisions, each of the local groups that feeds into the larger, regional or statewide alliance chooses a spokesperson to represent it in a coordinating committee that makes decisions on this larger level, using the consensus method. Decisions reached by the coordinating committee are subject to approval by all the local groups, and thus a major decision may take two weeks or more to complete.

A similar decisionmaking structure has been used in planning and carrying out *specific* protest actions, particularly the occupations of atomic plant sites. In this structure, "affinity groups" have the function of the local groups discussed above. The term is one the antinuclear movement has borrowed from the Spanish Civil War of the late 1930s, where small *grupos de afinidad* were the foundation of Anarchist organization (Gyorgy *et al.,* 1979). Usually composed of ten to twenty people, affinity groups are commonly formed during the nonviolent training sessions that prepare for plant occupations, and generally dissolve after the completion of a particular occupation and its legal consequences. The groups are organized on the basis of such considerations as previous friendship ties, membership in other organizations or concerns such as feminism. To reach decisions during the planning and execution of an occupation, each affinity group selects someone to represent it on a coordinating committee. This committee's decisions are subject to approval by all affinity groups, with decisions at all levels always following the consensus process.

Affinity groups are thus meant to provide the same affective and organizational benefits that have characterized the general decisionmaking structure outlined above. But they have had several tactical benefits as well. First, affinity groups provide emotional and tactical support during plant site occupations, where each group stays together and supplies its own transportation, food and medical needs. Second, the affinity group structure has afforded a high degree of orderliness and discipline during the occupations, helping to project a nonviolent image. Finally, the affinity group structure is intended as a way of identifying and isolating *agents provocateurs* or other potential disrupters of the nonviolent standards guiding atomic plant occupations (Clamshell Alliance, 1978; Kuhn, 1978).

The use of consensus and affinity groups by the antinuclear power movement marks a significant departure from other social movements in American history. But in eschewing the bureaucratic and oligarchical forms of organization that Gamson (1975) found to be associated with a challenging group's success, the antinuclear alliances have had to make a trade-off between the

psychic, organizational and tactical benefits of the consensus process and their parallel structures of decisionmaking, and the ability to act quickly and effectively in conflict situations. As Quakers have found, reaching consensus can often be a protracted, tiring procedure, and the decisionmaking process of the antinuclear movement has several times failed to function smoothly, especially in times of stress or in situations that demanded quick action, leading to many difficulties.

After the arrests of 280 persons following an April 1978 occupation by the Palmetto Alliance of a nuclear waste plant site in Barnwell, South Carolina, thirty representatives of groups across the South making up the Alliance debated the question of bail solidarity. One side was willing to pay up to $25 bail per person to avoid adding to the expense of incarceration that local residents would pay for the occupiers' continued imprisonment, while a more radical group felt that no bail should be paid. Though a majority vote might have resolved the issue much more quickly, discussion continued for nine hours until consensus was finally reached on the $25 limit, with those against bail agreeing that unity among the protesters had the highest priority (Kuhn, 1978).

At the May 1977 illegal occupation of the Seabrook plant site, the problems inside the armories during the protesters' thirteen-day incarceration were intensified by the slowness and, at times, the impossibility of reaching consensus. When the occupiers first entered the site, the affinity group mode of decisionmaking temporarily broke down in the effort to decide what to do next, as affinity group representatives seemed to be coming back from coordinating committee meetings with "orders from above" (Rosenblith, 1977:6). The coordinating committee spent most of the day discussing such issues as what to name the site instead of what action should next be taken (Hedemann, 1977).

After the 1,414 arrests took place at the Seabrook site, a few people held out against consensus on accepting the state's offer of personal recognizance because the state had not promised to treat everyone similarly, and thus prevented a decision from being reached on this matter (Rosenblith, 1977). In other meetings during the ensuing days, confusion over the meaning of consensus led to long debates over various issues. As one occupier put it, "Some felt consensus required agreement by everyone, rather than a sensitivity to the strength of opinions and a willingness to step aside if your opinion was not based on a strongly-held principle" (Hedemann, 1977:14); often those holding minority views refused to abstain rather than block consensus. In addition, protesters inexperienced in decisionmaking by consensus tended to exaggerate differences rather than look for points of agreement (Jezer, 1977).

At the legal rally at Seabrook a year later, a violation of the Clamshell Alliance's method of reaching decisions was again heavily criticized. The decision to accept the state's offer to hold a legal rally, proposed only days before the planned civil disobedience, was made by the Alliance's coordinating committee of affinity group representatives, without going back as required to the affinity groups for their consent. Many members of the Alliance subsequently charged that the decision was a severe breach of Clamshell's decentralized structure and that the Alliance was controlled by a few "heavyweights" (Schapiro, 1978; Gunther, 1978).

Antinuclear Protesters in the Criminal Courts

Political protesters may gain a great deal of publicity by committing civil disobedience, but they also expose themselves to criminal prosecution. Now new strategic choices must be made and tactical dilemmas resolved. Inside the courtroom the judge and especially the jury represent two new "constituencies" whose support is important, and outside the courtroom the public awaits the coverage that the press may provide. Defendants must determine whether they will plead guilty or not guilty; if the latter, they must decide whether their primary goal will be to win an acquittal and avoid imprisonment or a fine, or to use the proceedings as a forum to inform the jury and the public of the political circumstances surrounding the case and their reasons for breaking the law via civil disobedience.

Depending on these decisions, the accused must also decide whether their defense will be based on technical or on political grounds and whether they will be represented by counsel or act as their own attorneys. Decisions to conduct a technical defense may in many cases enhance the chances for acquittal but make for more boring proceedings and reduced press coverage; conversely, decisions to conduct a political defense may achieve their propaganda purpose but only at the expense of conviction. The two extremes were represented by the Chicago Eight and Spock draft conspiracy cases of the last decade. In the former the tactics of confrontation employed by the defense led to worldwide publicity but antagonized the jury, while in the latter a decision to proceed with a technical defense disappointed the peace movement, which had expected the trial to challenge the draft and the Vietnam war (Barkan, 1977).

Antinuclear protesters have pursued various legal alternatives following their arrests at illegal occupations of atomic plant sites, and judges and juries have varied in their responses. Several protesters have pleaded guilty, feeling they did indeed break the law and therefore should not contest the charge (Drysdale, 1978). Others have entered guilty pleas for a different reason, believing that standing trial would lend credibility to a legal system they consider illegitimate (Wasserman, 1977a). And some have entered pleas of not guilty and subsequently proceeded with technical defenses.

But many others have pleaded not guilty—or the more flowery "I plead for the beauty that surrounds us" (Hurst, 1978:13)—and chosen to use their cases to put nuclear power "on trial," feeling that the legal opportunities following civil disobedience "can be as important as the acts themselves" (Crow and Davidson, 1977:5). These defendants have hoped, first, that the jury will accept their antinuclear arguments and acquit them as a result, and second, that the jurors as well as the outside public will be moved by the proceedings to oppose atomic plants themselves. As two nuclear weapons activists have observed:

> The court provides an arena for a hearing, no matter how small, and one is never sure how large or how small it will ultimately be. Twelve jurors, a judge, a bailiff, a court reporter and a prosecutor will all have reactions; and we do not know how many people they may share them with (Crow and Davidson, 1977:6).

But these attempts to turn their trials into discussions of the dangers of nuclear power have been fraught with tactical problems, as the defense teams have had to minimize or virtually ignore technical grounds relating to criminal trespass laws that might more easily lead to acquittals. They have also had difficulty in appealing simultaneously to the judge, the jury, and the public through the news media, as several judges have resisted defense efforts to make atomic power an issue.

The legal experience of some 50 members of California's Abalone Alliance who trespassed in August 1977 onto the site of the Diablo Canyon atomic plant illustrates the tension posed by the conflict between the wish to avoid conviction by a technical defense, and that of focusing attention instead on nuclear power. When the first nine defendants were tried a month later, a few of them wanted to proceed with a political defense, but were persuaded by their attorneys that technical grounds, e.g., that the fence enclosing the site did not have the requisite number of "no trespassing" signs, would be more likely to win an acquittal. The defense also waived its right to a jury, feeling that a judge would better understand its technical arguments (Drysdale, 1978). Subsequently, however, the judge found the defendants guilty.

Finding this case politically unsatisfying, the remaining defendants hired a new attorney and were determined that in the next trial they would attempt to raise the nuclear power issue along with the technical grounds that had failed previously, all before a jury. The beginning of the second trial was aborted, however, when it was discovered that one of the defendants was in fact an undercover sheriff, and the question of whether his presence undermined defense efforts has since been argued in the appellate courts (Drysdale, 1978; Thompson, 1977).

The 1974 case against Samuel Lovejoy for toppling the nuclear plant weather tower in Massachusetts also illustrates the successes and problems of the trials of the antinuclear activists. Feeling that he could talk about atomic power more effectively than a lawyer could, Lovejoy chose to act as his own attorney. He anticipated the possible conflict he would face in trying to appeal to the various parties in the case:

> I was confronted with trying to prove to these twelve people in front of me . . . that I'd done the right thing. At the same time I had to make the case to the judge—who would give the jury their final instructions—and to the public, where we had to win against the nuke. So I had to devise a presentation for these twelve people, based on the charges and on the court restrictions, and just hope that it would all come out coherent and meaningful to the community at large (Wasserman, 1977a:34).

Lovejoy was fortunate in trying his case before one of the most liberal Superior Court judges in the state, who aided the self-represented defendant in the various stages of legal procedure (cf. Barkan, 1977). Although the judge allowed Lovejoy to take the witness stand for one and a half days and give his reasons for toppling the weather tower, he refused to permit testimony by two expert witnesses, one on nuclear power and one on the history of civil disobedience. Instead the judge had them testify only for the record, with the jury out of the courtroom. Near the end of the trial, a technicality that Lovejoy had raised only offhandedly prompted the judge to dismiss the charges. Despite winning his freedom, Lovejoy was disappointed, commenting later, "The whole point was to see if I could convince twelve people from Franklin County that I did the right thing to stop the nuke. I wanted them to decide. I didn't want to win on a technicality" (Wasserman, 1977a:37). As it turned out, an informal survey of the jury later revealed that a majority would have acquitted. The trial itself received a good deal of publicity throughout western Massachusetts (Wasserman, 1977a).

Elsewhere, however, antinuclear defendants have faced difficulties before more conservative judges. In New Hampshire, judges "have proven quite hostile and rude" (Light, 1978) to Clamshell Alliance attorneys and defendants. In initial arraignment proceedings they have required bail up to $500, while their counterparts in California and Colorado released atomic plant occupiers on personal recognizance (Baechler, 1977; Wasserman, 1977b; Hurst, 1978). In subsequent trials, New Hampshire judges have refused to allow nuclear-related testimony. In one trial of ten Seabrook occupiers arrested in August 1976 and acting as their own attorneys, the judge badgered the accused over their ignorance of legal procedure, although his conduct helped the case win press publicity (Wasserman, 1977a). In the trial of one of the people arrested in the May 1977 Seabrook occupation, the judge ruled the state's "competing harms" statute (specifying that an illegal act may be held not culpable if it was necessary to prevent a greater harm from occurring) out of order when it was raised by the defense; he also refused to permit expert witnesses to testify. After the jury found the defendant guilty, the judge sentenced him to four months in prison, the longest sentence for criminal trepass handed down in that particular county in twelve years. The judge reasoned that the Seabrook occupation constituted "mob action," adding, "This is one of the few cases since I've been on the bench in which sentencing may serve as a deterrent to future crimes of this type" (Wasserman, 1978a:139).

The ideal trial from the defense's point of view was the December 1977 case of 96 people who had blocked the gates of the Trojan atomic plant in Oregon. There a pretrial arrangement allowed the defense to introduce testimony by expert witnesses on the dangers of nuclear power, in return for an agreement by the defense not to ask for individual trials and not to force the state to have every arresting officer testify. The defense's aim was to make use of Oregon's "choice of evils" statute (similar to New Hampshire's "competing harms" law). Later, however, the judge instructed the jury to exclude both the "choice of evils" statute and the expert testimony from its deliberations. This forced the defense attorney in his closing argument to the jury finally to in-

troduce a technicality, as he asserted that the occupiers were arrested on railroad rather than on utility property. The jury acquitted after five hours of deliberation; a poll later revealed that the jurors would have acquitted immediately had the judge allowed them to consider the expert testimony and the "choice of evils" law, leading defendants and their supporters to hail the verdict as a victory against nuclear power. The trial also received major coverage in all organs of the Oregon news media, achieving the defense goal of publicity (Trojan Decommissioning Alliance, 1978; Stein and Holt, 1978).

These examples manifest the problems nuclear protesters have faced in the criminal courts. As civil disobedients they have voluntarily exposed themselves to possible jail terms and fines, and those pleading not guilty have been forced to spend much time, energy and money in their defense. In choosing which kind of defense to conduct, the accused and their lawyers have faced tactical problems deriving from the trial goals held most important. Though their cases have often presented excellent opportunities to raise and publicize the issue of nuclear power, in many proceedings such discussion has been stifled. As should be evident, this use of the criminal justice system for political ends represents one important feature of social movement activity generally ignored in the sociological literature, providing especially dramatic examples of the resource mobilization and social control efforts common in many social movements (Barkan, forthcoming).

CONCLUSION

Perhaps no social movement can escape completely the dilemmas of protest activity. The strategic, tactical and organizational problems of insurgent groups derive from their attempts to mobilize elusive resources. The solidarity and morale of the movement's activists must also be maintained, making for even more tension in the choice of strategy, tactics and organization. Lacking the power to achieve their goals through conventional political channels, social movements must resort to protest tactics designed either to coerce target officials to grant insurgent goals or, perhaps more often, to win the support of the public. If the latter, favorable press coverage is often invaluable. The need for public support in turn depends on at least two dimensions of potential social movement power, the level of internal resources and skills and the threat posed by disruption or noncooperation. A particular movement's placement along these two dimensions indicates its degree of need for public support and also points to the number and kinds of dilemmas it will face in appealing to the public, the press and target officials. Still, no two social movements are alike, and the common problems they face take particular forms depending on the peculiar historical and political context in which every movement finds itself.

This case study of the problems of the contemporary protest movement against nuclear power illustrates the difficulties facing social movements of all types. Arising from the failure of established environmental organizations and citizen groups to have the courts and regulatory agencies end the construction and operation of atomic plants, the antinuclear movement has resorted to a variety of protest tactics, particularly illegal occupations of plant sites, to take its case to the public. By all accounts it has helped make nuclear power an issue of local and national concern. In so doing, however, it has encountered difficulties in the choice of issues, tactics, and organization that trouble all social movements. The particular dilemmas of the antinuclear movement stem largely from its focus on nonviolence and civil disobedience and from its innovative use of affinity groups and a consensus style of decisionmaking. These dilemmas have been intensified by conflicts posed by the values and attitudes of antinuclear protesters. The movement's efforts to turn the criminal courts into forums on nuclear power have met with both success and failure, and decisions on whether to try to use the courts in this manner will continue to present dilemmas for the movement.

The experience of the antinuclear movement supports several of Gamson's (1975) challenges to pluralist conceptions of the American political system. Prior to the antinuclear protests, the conventional channels of American politics had been notably resistant to efforts to prevent the construction and operation of nuclear power plants. Subsequently, the movement's "unruly" tactics of protest have gained a good deal of press attention, probably publicizing the issue of nuclear power more than any other strategy could have. Finally, the dilemmas of the antinuclear movement underscore its instrumental nature; if its efforts were primarily irrational expressions of distress, there would be little concern over proper strategy, tactics and organization.

Will the antinuclear movement repeat the experience of the Vietnam peace protests to whose early days it has been compared? As the antiwar movement grew, new problems emerged. New members were attracted whose ideology differed from that of earlier activists. The continuation of the war and the draft led to increased militancy by both protesters and police, and also to increased surveillance by the federal and lcoal governments. Already there is evidence of government and business surveillance of the antinuclear movement (Wasserman, 1978b; Thompson, 1977). Some of the problems at the large Seabrook demonstrations in 1977 and 1978 may be traced to the growth of the Clamshell Alliance from its original local roots in New Hampshire (Wasserman, 1977b). Though the antinuclear alliances have engaged in serious "criticism/self-criticism," as they call it, of their difficulties and differences, it would not be surprising to see their dilemmas continue and perhaps take new forms. If the construction and operation of atomic plants continue despite the antinuclear protests and the repercussions of the Three Mile Island accident, more militant tactics may be employed, prompting police violence and government harassment. Whatever the movement's future, it will enable sociologists to test several assumptions of the traditional and emergent perspectives on American politics, collective behavior, and social movements.

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