

**FROM PRESSURE GROUP TO SOCIAL MOVEMENT:
ORGANIZATIONAL DILEMMAS OF THE EFFORT
TO PROMOTE NUCLEAR POWER***

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Social movement theorists have focused on the efforts groups make to gain the right to routinely influence government policy, while ignoring the opposite process, in which groups lose this right. This paper examines the development of the pronuclear movement in the United States as a case study of a pressure group which lost power and mobilized a social movement to restore it. The antinuclear movement helped to dislodge the pronuclear pressure group. We describe two wings of the pronuclear movement, an industry-based wing and a community-based wing, and look at the different organizational and strategic problems these two bases of mobilization gave rise to.

In the division of labor within the social sciences, sociologists deal more with social movements and political scientists deal more with pressure groups. Yet both would agree that pressure groups and social movements seek to influence government policy. The difference between social movements and pressure groups is not often explicitly discussed, but there are at least three key differences. First, pressure groups are ordinarily part of the *polity*, the set of groups that can routinely influence government decisions and can ensure that their interests are normally recognized in the decision-making process. In contrast, social movements are launched by groups without access to government power, and whose interests are generally not recognized in government policy making. Second, when pressure groups take actions to influence the government, they normally rely on previously mobilized constituencies. Social movements attempt to mobilize constituencies for the first time. Third, social movements tend to use non-institutionalized tactics, channels of influence, and organizational forms. Pressure groups, on the other hand, employ a political system's conventional forms of collective action.¹

A social movement organization becomes a pressure group when it gains routine representation in, and access to, the government. The new member of the polity may still use the rhetoric of a social movement, but in actual behavior and tactical form the movement resembles other groups in the polity. It moves from outside to inside the legislative and administrative arenas. Much of the sociological interpretation of the transformation of social movements emphasizes the routinization, institutionalization, and growing conservatism of organizations that once led vital social movements (Zald and Ash, 1966). Thus, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations, and

1. See Tilly (1978) for a definition of polity membership; Gamson (1975) for a distinction between mobilizing and non-mobilizing groups; and Wilson (1973) and Smelser (1962) for distinctions between institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms of collective action.

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the Farm Bureau became accepted members of the polity with varying residual attachment to social movement rhetoric and movement forms.

Much less attention has been given to the opposite process, in which polity members begin to lose their standing. As we conceptualize this process, authorities begin to distance themselves from the members of the polity. Authorities are no longer routinely accessible, and the interests of the polity members are increasingly disregarded. One option for the pressure group in this situation is to transform itself into a social movement.

Pressure groups lose their position through two different, though related, processes. In the first, changes in technology, economic organizations, and values lead to a general loss of status for a pressure group and the interests it represents. Thus, a decline in public support for prohibition and temperance led to a decline in the power of groups that favored prohibition. In the second process, a pressure group is attacked by other groups, which challenge the legitimacy of the current status and operation of the pressure group and the interests it represents. Where a pressure group has public standing and a claim to represent legitimate social interests, the attack by another group forces the pressure group to defend itself. The two processes are related because the evolution of the first process facilitates the development of direct challenges.

This paper examines the development of the pronuclear movement in the United States as an example of the partial transformation from pressure group to social movement. The term *pronuclear movement* is used here to refer to the collective effort to promote nuclear power as an energy source. The data for this analysis are drawn from semi-structured interviews with 58 pronuclear activists. We conducted interviews in the fall of 1979 and the winter of 1980, using a snowball-sampling technique to generate the final sample. Most of the interviews took place in New England, Michigan, and Washington, D.C. We also attended several pronuclear workshops and conferences. This gave us the opportunity to informally talk with pronuclear activists from across the United States and to monitor discussions among activists. In addition, we collected and analyzed materials issued by the pronuclear movement, as well as relevant newspaper and magazine articles. Finally, we conducted interviews with a small sample of antinuclear activists, also in New England, Michigan, and Washington, D.C.

This paper is divided into two major sections. In the first we examine the transformation of the pronuclear forces from a pressure group to a social movement. This transformation occurred in part because of a challenge posed by the antinuclear movement. The pronuclear movement developed two wings, one based in industry, the other in the community. In the second section, we show that the two wings have substantially different problems of tactics and legitimacy. We argue that the problems of a protest group vary with the group's base of mobilization and its position in the social structure.

FROM PRESSURE GROUP TO SOCIAL MOVEMENT

In this section, we examine the transformation of the pronuclear forces from a pressure group to a social movement. The pronuclear forces qualify as a social movement insofar as they have mobilized an uncommitted constituency, lost much of their ability to routinely influence government policy, and emphasized a new repertoire of social movement tactics. At the same time, the pronuclear movement has retained some of the characteristics of a pressure group; at issue is the question of degree (Gamson, 1975:16).

The transformation of the pronuclear forces from a pressure group to a social movement was a response to a threat to its polity status. Specifically, the antinuclear movement challenged the right of the pronuclear lobby to determine policy on nuclear energy. We use the term *antinuclear movement* to refer to the organized, collective effort that tried to stop the use of nuclear fission to generate electricity, by closing down existing plants, halting the construction of new plants, and

implementing strict safety standards for the disposal of radioactive waste and the operation of nuclear reactors.

The antinuclear movement first emerged as a serious protest movement in the United States in the late 1960s. During the 1970s it grew dramatically in size and intensity. Local citizen groups, at first confined to a few isolated organizations, were numerous in the mid-1970s. National and regional protest rallies drew hundreds of demonstrators, notably in Seabrook, New Hampshire; Rocky Flats, Colorado; and the area around Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania. Civil disobedience was used against nuclear plants under construction (Berger, 1977; Gyorgy, 1979; Mazur, 1981; Stever, 1980; Walsh, 1981; Wasserman, 1979).

Since the late 1970s, the antinuclear movement has been winning the struggle against nuclear power in the United States.² The best evidence for this is the erosion of government support for the nuclear industry and the near-collapse of several sectors of the nuclear industry. During the 1950s and 1960s, the federal government strongly supported nuclear development through direct subsidies and other promotional measures (Bupp and Derian, 1978; Montgomery and Quirk, 1978). In the mid-1950s, utility companies were unwilling to invest large sums of money in reactors and generating equipment, mainly because they were concerned about their financial liability in the event of an accident. In response, Congress in 1957 placed a ceiling of \$560 million on a firm's liability for any one nuclear accident. Reactor orders soon followed (Del Sesto, 1979:57; Weingast, 1980:232).

By the early 1970s, however, federal, state, and local governments began to implement a series of measures that seriously undercut the industry's economic viability. The various levels of government enforced stricter safety regulations, delayed the licensing of new plants, failed to implement a nuclear waste disposal system, refused to allow utilities the rate increases they deemed necessary to finance nuclear construction, restricted sales of nuclear generators to foreign countries, and tightened environmental restraints (Stobaugh and Yergin, 1979; Stroops *et al.*, 1979; Temples, 1980; Weingast, 1980). Faltermayer (1979:117) estimated that two-thirds of the cost of a nuclear power plant finished in 1978 was a result of stricter design criteria imposed since 1969 by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and its predecessor, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC).

The precarious state of the U.S. nuclear industry is highlighted by three factors. First, since 1977, there has been a *de facto* moratorium on orders for new nuclear plants in the United States (Stobaugh and Yergin, 1979:125). Stroops *et al.* (1979:17) estimate that the long-term viability of the plant construction industry requires that utilities order at least four to six new plants a year. Second, the U.S. share of the nuclear export market has dropped from 100 percent in 1972 to 20 percent in 1978 (Stockton and Janke, 1978:4). Finally, the industry is finding it difficult to attract and retain well-trained personnel, which may "lead to a fatal debilitation of research and management capability" (Stroops *et al.*, 1979:18).³

In sum, during the 1950s and 1960s, the nuclear industry was a "member of the polity" in the sense that its interests were promoted by the government and its views were taken into account. During the 1970s, the industry's status was threatened by the antinuclear movement and state and

2. Of course, factors other than the actions of the antinuclear movement have contributed to the industry's problems. For example, since the early 1970s, the growth in the demand for electricity has abated, construction costs of new nuclear power plants have risen steeply, and the market for utility stocks has faltered, making it more difficult to raise the capital needed to build a new plant (Bernstein, 1982; Bupp, and Derian, 1978; Montgomery and Quirk, 1978).

3. Bernard Cohen (1979:14), a prominent nuclear physicist, emphasized the impending crisis in the industry: "Up to 1973 [the industry] got lots of orders which they're still working on. But they've had very few new orders for plants since 1973. As I see it, the critical time will be about 1981. If there's not a substantial influx of new orders by then, there will be massive layoffs in the nuclear industry, and all the experts in various aspects of the nuclear system will find work in other areas. And once that happens, it would take a very long time to reassemble them."

federal policies inimical to the industry's interests. In response, both the industry and its sympathizers began to mobilize.

At the beginning of the 1970s, hearings on the licensing of nuclear power plants were usually uncontested and routine. The industry's four major trade associations, including the Atomic Industrial Forum and the American Nuclear Energy Council, maintained active lobbying offices in Washington. In addition, various firms specializing in nuclear architecture and engineering, reactor manufacturing, and uranium mining lobbied for nuclear power. Many of the industry's lobbyists were former members of Congress or of government agencies that regulated nuclear power. For example, Craig Hosmer, who was director of the American Nuclear Energy Council from 1975 to 1977, was formerly chairman of the Congressional Joint Atomic Energy Committee (Berger, 1977:168; Temples, 1980:244). The industry made little attempt to influence public opinion, except through occasional "public service" advertisements. Professional engineers and scientists might belong to professional associations, but their focus was largely on technical issues, oriented to member education and technical research. Popular support was not mobilized to defend nuclear power against the antinuclear forces. As antinuclear sentiment grew, however, and as authorities adopted policies harmful to the nuclear industry, standard pressure-group tactics were maintained; in addition, a pronuclear movement emerged. In the process of evolving from pressure group to social movement, two wings of the popular movement emerged—one based in industry, the other in the community.

The Industry Wing

Organizations emerged from the firms that build, purchase, or supply nuclear plants and their components, and these firms' trade associations. The industry developed these organizations to undertake non-institutionalized action, and committed personnel to them. Among these organizations:

1) The Committee for Energy Awareness (CEA) was formed shortly after the 1979 accident at Three Mile Island. The CEA was originally launched and funded by the industry's two major trade associations, the Atomic Industrial Forum (AIF) and the Edison Electric Institute (EEI). Established in 1953, the AIF in the late 1970s had over 800 members from all sectors of the nuclear industry (Atomic Industrial Forum, 1979). The EEI is an association of the 200 largest investor-owned utilities, most of which operate nuclear power plants (Berger, 1977:144). Organized under a steering committee of eight senior industry executives, the CEA was staffed by public relations experts on temporary loan from the trade associations and nuclear firms. The committee's activities included sponsoring a "Truth Squad" of two nuclear engineers that followed and publicly responded to antinuclear activists Jane Fonda and Tom Hayden on their 1979 nationwide tour; organizing a pronuclear advertising campaign; publishing a national newsletter, *Energy Upbeat*, for pronuclear advocacy groups; organizing round-table meetings with major newspaper and magazine editors to discuss nuclear issues; sponsoring a retreat in April, 1980, for selected pronuclear leaders from across the United States; and creating a communications plan to assure the flow of "accurate" information from a nuclear plant in the event of an accident.

2) Nuclear Energy Women (NEW), an organization composed primarily of women employed in the industry, was created in late 1975 by 14 professional women in the nuclear industry. NEW's staff director worked for the AIF, and her office was in the association's Washington headquarters. The AIF required NEW to regularly report and justify its activities to AIF management. On October 18, 1979, NEW organized a "Nuclear Energy Education Day," during which more than 4,000 "energy coffees" were held in private homes across the country. The coffees involved discussion of energy issues and featured presentations by experts on nuclear power (Cook, 1979). The organization has also established a speakers bureau of women willing to give public lectures

in favor of nuclear power and has tried, so far unsuccessfully, to persuade women's organizations such as the National Organization of Women and the League of Women Voters to reverse their antinuclear positions.

3) Several nuclear industry firms became involved in the pronuclear movement. Westinghouse Corporation, a major supplier of nuclear plant equipment, was particularly active. In 1975, it established a "Nuclear Information Program" to help promote public and government support of nuclear power (Cook, 1980:16). One of the groups' activities, the "Campus America" program, sent highly trained and well-rehearsed Westinghouse employees to debate antinuclear activists on college campuses; it even paid the expenses of antinuclear debaters (Nickel, 1980). Westinghouse also commissioned a research firm, Cambridge Reports, Inc., to conduct longitudinal national surveys on attitudes toward nuclear power. The surveys were designed to help pronuclear forces more effectively communicate their message to the public. For example, the Cambridge surveys revealed that support for nuclear power was lowest among women, blacks, and young people. Drawing on the survey findings, Cambridge Associates specified the arguments and channels of influence that are most effective in reaching these three groups. Finally, Westinghouse encouraged its 140,000 employees to become involved in the pronuclear movement, especially the 13,000 to 15,000 who worked in Westinghouse's nuclear division. Employees received a monthly news magazine publicizing the types of pronuclear activities their colleagues were involved in and listing upcoming events. Employees were urged to participate in town meetings and other forums that provide an opportunity to promote nuclear power. T-shirts with the slogan "Nuclear Power, Safer Than Sex" were available to employees at a nominal cost.

4) Energy Research Group (ERG), a Boston-based engineering-consulting firm, was organized in 1973 by five graduates of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It was active in the pronuclear movement at both the regional and national levels. ERG served as a consultant to many of New England's pronuclear organizations, providing advice on how to deal with the media, organize public forums, and influence decision makers. At the national level, ERG conducted the retreat sponsored by the CEA in 1980, and helped organize the pronuclear movement's Second National Conference on Energy Advocacy, held in June of the same year. In addition, ERG has drafted several important pronuclear documents. One, commissioned by the CEA, detailed how industry has and can be involved in the pronuclear movement. Another, distributed by the AIF, outlined strategies available to utility companies in the event of a plant-site occupation by antinuclear demonstrators (Goldsmith and Shants, 1978).

The Community Wing

Groups based in local communities were a major force in the pronuclear movement:

1) The New Hampshire Voice of Energy (NHVOE) had a working-class and non-professional middle-class membership and leadership. The organization began in 1975 when a group of women from Manchester, New Hampshire, complained to the local utility about a proposed rate increase. A utility executive told the group that the construction of a controversial nuclear plant in the area would help stabilize the cost of electricity. After researching the issue, the women established a pronuclear organization. The group then grew through friendship and kinship networks, though the initial group of women were the most active. The group's headquarters was the home of one of its members. The NHVOE gained national prominence in 1977, when it sponsored the country's first pronuclear demonstration in Manchester, New Hampshire, on March 17, 1977, attended by over 4000 people (Committee for Energy Awareness, 1980:1).

2) The Massachusetts Voice of Energy (MVOE), formed in 1978, was comprised of nuclear engineers in a single architect-engineering firm and nuclear engineering graduate students at a university near Boston. We considered it community-based, rather than industry-based, for two reasons. First, neither the firm nor the university sponsored the group or encouraged participa-

tion in it. Top management in the firm, in fact, attempted to dissuade employees from participating. Since only a small fraction of the firm's business was nuclear-related, management feared that the political controversy arising from employee participation may jeopardize its other business. One member of the MVOE we interviewed felt that a promotion he had been expecting had been delayed because of his pronuclear activities; another resigned from the firm because of management "harassment" for MVOE activities. The university provided no support to the campus branch of the group. Second, mobilization took place primarily through friendship networks. The students were a closely-knit group, who all worked together in the same study office area. Most of the engineers were friends before joining the MVOE. Among its activities, the MVOE testified in state legislative and regulatory hearings, established a pronuclear speakers bureau, and sponsored such events as the dumping of empty barrels into Boston Harbor to dramatize U.S. dependence on foreign oil.

In sum, both the nuclear power industry and community groups provided an infrastructure on which the pronuclear movement developed. The existence of these two bases of mobilization gave rise to two distinct wings. One, the industry-based wing, emerged from the nuclear industry. It was a more or less conscious attempt by industry leaders and groups to counter the antinuclear movement. The second, the community-based wing, was initiated by individuals integrated into community-based groups and resembles a "classical" social movement (McCarthy and Zald, 1977). These two bases of mobilization have in turn shaped the movement's mobilization dilemmas and tactical choices.

MOBILIZATION DILEMMAS, TACTICAL CHOICES, AND LEGITIMACY

The pronuclear forces have organizational dilemmas and problems directly related to their identification as industry representatives. That is, in the process of becoming a social movement, with its larger claim of ideological and collective goals, they have been tainted by their history as a pressure group. Moreover, links to industry and the social position of the pronuclear groups shaped tactical choices. Our discussion is organized around four analytic themes. First, we explore the problems associated with the achievement of movement legitimacy. Second, we analyze the availability of infra-structure supports to a movement. Third, we examine tactical constraints. Finally, we consider the strategic advantages of a centralized versus decentralized structure.

1) Movement Legitimacy

A movement achieves legitimacy in two ways. *Legitimacy of numbers* is achieved by mobilizing a significant number of internally disciplined people committed to seeking an alternative distribution of power (Tilly, 1978:125; 1979:25). The polity allows into its ranks only those groups that are able to mobilize large numbers of people. Thus, legitimacy is achieved by demonstrating that a committed and mobilized citizenry supports political change. A movement achieves *legitimacy of means* by convincing the public that it is an appropriate vehicle to achieve its constituents' goals. A movement not only must justify its goals, but also justify its *modus operandi* as a social movement. Legitimacy of means helps a movement recruit new members and gain access to the media, and makes government repression less likely and less effective (Rimlinger, 1970; Zald and Ash, 1966). The pronuclear groups faced disparate problems in securing both types of legitimacy.

Achieving *legitimacy of numbers* entails two different types of problems for the two wings of the pronuclear movement. The community groups' most pressing problem was a shortage of resources, such as money, time, and organizing skills. Some groups could not afford to rent an office and were forced to use a member's house as headquarters. Other community activists we interviewed said they lacked important skills, such as the ability to deal with the media. Most complained that the demands of family and work restricted the time they could devote to group

tasks. Activists complained bitterly about the resources allegedly controlled by the antinuclear movement. They claimed that antinuclear groups had ample money, donated by musicians and foundations; time, since members did not hold jobs or worked for the movement at subsistence wages; and organizing skills, since many members participated in other movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Pronuclear activists saw themselves as far less fortunate. Their lack of resources seriously inhibited their mobilization efforts, which in turn has undercut the community groups' claim to legitimacy, since they could not muster the appearance of a well-organized and widely-supported effort.

The industry-based wing of the pronuclear movement, on the other hand, had more than adequate organizational and monetary resources. The Committee For Energy Awareness, for example, had an operating budget of \$1.6 million in 1979 (Burnham, 1979). And the Energy Research Group had a well-equipped and professionally administered office, and a politically experienced and sophisticated professional staff. The major problem faced by the industrial groups was the need to demonstrate that the movement was neither merely a paper organization, nor an industry group protecting its own economic interests. A CEA organizing manual states:

[Government] officials rationalize that people who support energy development do so primarily to protect corporate investments or employment opportunities and therefore discount their opinions (Committee for Energy Awareness, 1980:1).

The industry-based wing tried to create the image that a sincere, committed citizenry supports its efforts.

The nature of the respective legitimacy problems of the two wings of the movement suggest a basis for cooperation between them. The industrial groups were rich in resources, but lacked members; the reverse was true for the community groups. The CEA organizers' manual describes industry's efforts to assist the community groups:

Citizens can provide credible, non-industry spokespersons able to reach decision-makers, educate the public, and challenge the opposition more effectively than industry. Their pro-energy messages are better received and often their actions can be more attention-getting than corporate activities. . . . Industry can play a significant role in supporting citizen activities. In fact, a number of very successful activities have been conducted with industry support. . . . At a minimum, the commitment by the company wanting to effectively support pro-energy activities must contain the following: staff support time and secretarial time, printing and Xeroxing, and money for direct contributions (Committee for Energy Awareness, 1980:3).

In this vein, an East-coast utility company reimbursed local activists for expenses incurred in attending the Second Annual Pronuclear Conference in Chicago in 1979; the CEA hired a New York consulting firm to train community activists in media techniques; Westinghouse and many other corporations supplied pronuclear groups with literature, speakers, and technical advice at a nominal cost or for free; and the AFNE donated funds to Maine Voice of Energy to help that group defeat an antinuclear state referendum in 1979 (Stevens, 1980).

Industry support, however, threatened to undercut one basis for the legitimacy of the community groups: their claim to sincerity. If an industrial group's support was too overwhelming, the recipient community group may have been publicly viewed as an extension of the professional sector.

The pronuclear movement devised several strategies to deal with this problem. One was to conceal industry involvement in the movement. For example, during a workshop at the national pronuclear conference in Chicago, discussion leaders advised participants not to use utility postage machines when sending out mass mailings. On one occasion when a postage machine had been used, antinuclear activists had traced the meter to the utility, providing further ammunition to discredit the pronuclear group. Similarly, a NEW member, employed in the public relations department of a utility company, initiated a petition calling for "legislation to keep our seven

regional nuclear plants operating and to finish those planned for the 1980s." The petition failed to mention the sponsor. Another technique was to exclude industry employees from membership in community organizations. A pronuclear group formed in the Three Mile Island area, for example, prohibited utility employees from formally joining the group, although they were allowed to attend meetings and participate in group activities. Finally, some community groups refused to accept money from industry, though they normally welcomed free services such as secretarial help, expert advice, and printing assistance less likely to taint their image.

The industrial groups faced a different set of risks when they supported community groups. The CEA manual urged "industry [to] have faith that the [community] group's overall thrusts will be positive" (Committee on Energy Awareness, 1980:2). This faith, however, was sometimes difficult to generate. For example, a high-ranking public relations employee of a New Hampshire utility company told us that top management initially resisted a suggestion that the company support a community group. Management feared that the group would act irresponsibly and reflect poorly on the firm. Similarly, a utility executive explained to an annual meeting of the Atomic Industrial Forum the potential problems associated with utility funding of community groups. State utility regulators require such funds to be drawn from stockholders, rather than ratepayers. Stockholders may object to the use of their money for this purpose.

Achieving legitimacy of means involves demonstrating that a social movement is an appropriate vehicle to achieve its constituents' goals. This is especially difficult for movements based on establishment mobilization. Industry's mobilization of the pronuclear movement appears to have violated a norm that protest movements are a vehicle reserved for otherwise powerless groups. The logic behind the norm seems to be that, since privileged and represented groups are able to use institutionalized means of influence, it is unfair for them to use non-institutionalized means as well—a defining characteristic of a social movement.

The industry-based wing of the pronuclear movement used a number of techniques to help establish legitimacy of means. The most important of these was its attempt to recruit blacks and women, a high priority. Movement leaders we interviewed felt that blacks and women were especially effective spokespeople, since their presence gave the movement a grass-roots image. This was borne out by the experience of a woman activist, employed in the public relations department of a utility company. She reported that when she spoke as a utility employee, her "credibility was next to zero;" audiences were hostile and media coverage was inadequate and critical. However, when she spoke as a representative of Nuclear Energy Women she usually received sympathetic press coverage and her audiences were more open to her pronuclear arguments.

Another strategy used by industry was to expand the scope of the movement's goals. Beginning in 1975, the pronuclear movement evolved from a single issue to a multi-issue movement. The movement's original focus on nuclear power was widened to include promotion of other forms of energy (e.g., coal), attainment of economic growth, defense of "the American way of life," support of a free-enterprise economy, and independence from foreign oil. This expansion of the number of goals helped establish legitimacy of means in two ways. First, goal expansion helped to recruit more blacks and women. The leadership of the National Association For the Advancement of Colored People, for example, endorsed nuclear power in part because they believed it would promote economic growth and social mobility (Wilson, 1980). Second, it seemed more reasonable to launch a movement when basic values were under attack than when the issue was the promotion of a particular technology. An employee of the General Electric corporation, for example, advised an Atomic Industrial Forum conference:

If you're about to enter the nuclear debate—don't. It's a loser! The issue of the energy debate is not energy; the issue is, rather, life-styles and the structure of society (Wolfe, 1978:3).

In sum, a group undergoing a transformation from pressure group to social movement must demonstrate that its claims receive the active support of a citizenry not financially dependent upon the industry, and that, even though it may have ties to the polity, a social movement is an appropriate vehicle to achieve its goals.

2) *Movement Infrastructure*

Freeman (1979) argues that the existence of one movement may generate resources for subsequent movements. The antiwar and student movements of the 1960s, for example, furnished the antinuclear movement with a personal communication network, established underground newspapers, office facilities, and trained activists. The pronuclear movement was less fortunate. Although several right-wing groups supported the pronuclear movement, including the John Birch Society, the Ku Klux Klan, and the National Caucus of Labor Committees,⁴ they largely remained on the fringe. The one mobilized constituency the pronuclear forces have most assiduously attempted to draw into their movement, women's and feminist organizations such as the National Organization of Women and the League of Women Voters, adopted antinuclear stands. Many established feminist and women's magazines, ranging from *Ms.* to *Redbook*, have supported the antinuclear position. Thus, the pronuclear movement was forced to mobilize without the benefit of trained activists and an already mobilized constituency.

Five grass-roots activists told us that their lack of experience in movement organizing substantially slowed down their mobilization efforts. They had to acquire new skills and establish a network to share ideas. Yet the availability of an existing infrastructure may be less important if other resources are available. The pronuclear movement's greater monetary resources reduced its relative disadvantage. It was able to hire sophisticated public relations firms to train and advise pronuclear groups, run national and regional conferences, and print literature and training manuals.

3) *Constraints and Choices*

Movements, by definition, use non-institutionalized means to achieve their goals (Wilson, 1973). They vary considerably, however, in the extent to which they employ violent or disorderly tactics. While the antinuclear movement occasionally used civil disobedience and tactics such as occupying plant sites, the pronuclear movement used only non-disruptive tactics such as letter writing, petitions, and legal demonstrations. Two factors, both related to the pronuclear forces' partial transformation from pressure group to social movement, explain this difference. First, while governments often lack an effective intervention technique to control more spontaneous, locally organized, and diffuse forms of protest, this is less true with established movements, which provide the government with a concrete social target (Marx, 1979). In the case of the pronuclear movement, the government's social control agents could use regulatory, legal, and tax mechanisms to suppress illegal actions by the corporate sector. Second, when a group has a high or moderate degree of access to the government, it has something to lose by taking militant actions against the government. Antinuclear activists felt relatively free to use disruptive tactics since they had (or believed they had) little or no influence over the government's energy policy. The pronuclear forces, however, wielded considerable—although declining—influence over government policy. Disruptive tactics would have jeopardized this channel of influence.

4. Leftist groups and others have charged that the National Caucus of Labor Committees is actually a police front, not a true citizens group, but this charge has never been verified.

4) Movement Centralization

Social movement researchers disagree about whether the centralization of power within a movement promotes success (Barkan, 1979; Gamson, 1975; Gerlach and Hine, 1970; Piven and Cloward, 1977). Most groups in the pronuclear movement had only loose ties to one another and no single organization either spoke for the movement or had authority over other organizations. Nor was there any single organization that defined the issues or was the center of public attention. This decentralization benefited the movement in two ways. First, licensing and operating a nuclear plant requires approval from many federal, state, and local regulatory and legislative bodies. Community groups could often play a crucial role when these bodies deliberate. One of the pronuclear movement's main activities was to represent pronuclear "citizens" in these decision-making processes. Often, however, to obtain formal intervenor status, a group must establish that they represent a constituency directly affected by the contested proposal. Centralization of a movement could undercut any such argument, since it would suggest that the organization represents a non-local constituency. More importantly, the proliferation of independent citizen groups increased the overall impact of the pronuclear forces. The reasons for this are explained by a Westinghouse Corporation document:

It's not really necessary that every activity of all the groups in a particular region be coordinated with other groups or with industry activities. In fact, it is more important that policy makers hear a number of different views all pointing to a similar direction from a number of different directions (Kearns, n.d.:10).

Indeed, one pronuclear activist told a training workshop that he had split his one group of 40 into two groups of 20, since this allowed the same number of people to have twice the representation during a regulatory proceeding. He urged other groups to do the same.

Second, decentralization allowed the community groups within the movement to engage in activities that would not have been open to them if in a tightly directed organization dominated by industry. The Committee for Energy Awareness manual states:

Specific activities that citizens' activities can do that often industry cannot are: litigate in court on certain issues; provide many pro-energy voices in hearings before utility commissions, regulatory agencies, and the legislative branch; volunteer for election campaigns; run for office; [conduct] pro-energy initiative campaigns. . . ; ensure that policy makers understand and represent attitudes of the *public* (Committee for Energy Awareness 1980:2, *italics added*.)

A centralized movement structure would inhibit these activities for two reasons. First, federal and local election laws restrict corporate involvement in the electoral process. Second, these activities gain credibility, and lose some of their self-serving appearance, when "citizen" rather than corporate groups initiate them.

Our analysis supports those who argue that a decentralized structure promotes a movement's goals. We believe, however, that the particular advantages of decentralization enjoyed by the pronuclear movement are peculiar to movements with ties to established institutions. For other types of movements—for example, when factionalism is a problem or when coordination is important—a centralized structure may be more advantageous.

IMPACT ON THE PRONUCLEAR MOVEMENT

There are two other issues related to this discussion: the nature of movement/countermovement interaction, and the question of impact. The pronuclear movement emerged as a counter-movement to the antinuclear movement. As such, much of its energies were spent directly attacking the activities of antinuclear organizations: it collected information on the antinuclear groups and used it to disrupt antinuclear activities, cut off the flow of resources to antinuclear groups,

and gave the antinuclear movement a negative image in the media (Useem and Zald, 1981; Zald and Useem, 1982).

It is difficult to assess the extent of the damage inflicted on the antinuclear movement by pronuclear groups. It is likely, for example, that the pronuclear movement's surveillance of antinuclear activity inhibited some citizens from participating in the antinuclear effort. It is nearly impossible, however, to estimate the number of those dissuaded from participation. Similarly, the Clamshell Alliance, a New England-based antinuclear organization, disbanded in 1979 in part to avoid the legal suit against them brought by two pronuclear organizations (Atomic Industrial Forum, 1980). It is difficult to determine the independent effect of the suit, however, since many other problems plagued the alliance, such as factionalism. The suit may have only acted as a catalyst in an ongoing process of disintegration. Thus, in many cases, it is not possible to distinguish the effects of the pronuclear movement's efforts to damage the antinuclear movement from mobilization problems encountered within the antinuclear movement itself.

Ironically, the positive effects of pronuclear actions on the antinuclear movement are easiest to detect. First, the pronuclear movement's efforts bolstered the argument that nuclear power brings with it a curtailment of civil liberties. Second, the pronuclear movement's actions provided antinuclear activists with an additional issue around which to organize. One national organization, Campaign for Political Rights, and several local organizations developed committees or projects to combat the pronuclear movement's efforts to damage the antinuclear movement. Third, the presence of a common enemy produced alliances among antinuclear activists and other groups, especially political rights groups. A manual for antinuclear activists explains how this process occurred:

Groups concerned about civil liberties will become involved in supporting the political rights of antinuclear groups — and at the same time they will become informed on issues related to nuclear power (Campaign for Political Rights, 1979:6).

Ultimately the pronuclear movement has been unable to reverse the decline of the nuclear industry. By 1982, construction costs had escalated, safety problems were unresolved, bond rating services downgraded the credit ratings of utilities having nuclear plants, and design and construction flaws in plants have brought heavy fines from the NRC and construction delays. Particularly alarming to the industry is that utilities have cancelled or delayed indefinitely 19 plants currently under construction, despite outlays of hundreds of millions of dollars (Bernstein, 1982; Sheets, 1982). The industry that spawned the pressure groups was itself becoming increasingly demoralized; many individual firms were reconsidering their commitment to the industry.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A pressure group may become transformed into a social movement when challenged by another social movement. The pronuclear movement grew out of a struggle with the antinuclear movement over government policy toward nuclear power. The pronuclear movement's initial organization as a pressure group shaped the character of its mobilization problems. The movement had to demonstrate that large numbers of committed citizens backed it, and that the movement was not merely a front for the nuclear industry. The movement's two wings provided a basis for this demonstration, but they also produced a tension within the movement. The movement's location in the social structure also affected its choice of tactics: its origins as a pressure group precluded the use of highly disruptive tactics and a centralized organizational structure. Finally, industry involvement in the pronuclear movement illustrates the significant role that established groups and institutions may play in the mobilization of social movements. Movements are usually, but not always, launched by groups from "below." This raises an important question: how is the position of an established polity member undermined, and how does it respond?

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