

During the 2nd Seminar at Milan, May 1972, part of the discussion will deal with new styles of organization management appropriate to the more complex social environment of the future. This article is a contribution to that discussion.

Interdépendance of Organizations

There is a widely prevalent tendency to think of organizations, particularly international organizations, as functioning within the social system like billiard balls on a table. In this view, they may « knock into » one another, but essentially they are completely unrelated to one another — there is no permanent organic relationship between them.

This view resembles that which lies at the base of current environmental problems, namely that each factory can function in its environment as though its products had no significant effect on other parts of nature. In the past two years, however, it has become widely recognized that man exists in a very delicate and complex equilibrium with his environment — any industrial activity may have consequences for any other. Each factory functions in a web or network of dynamic relationships with other factories, via the processes of the natural environment.

To what extent is it recognized that every social activity of man — the domain of most INGOs — may have significant consequences for any other social activity ? It is, in fact, impossible to predict which organizations will give rise to problems by their actions, which other bodies will be affected, and which bodies will then be in the best position to undertake compensatory action. All social entities — INGOs, IGOs, groups, national or local bodies, movements, and individuals — are bound together in a delicate web of interdependent social relationships, in which each is autonomous and at the same time, dependent on the actions of others. It is a truism that « No man is an island unto himself » but it is not so widely recognized that none of man's organizations can function in isolation. This is clearly recognized for one field in the following extract from a speech by Henrik Beer, Secretary General of the League of Red Cross Societies, at the 15th International Conference on Social Welfare :

« One of the most important trends in the field of international voluntary service in recent years has been the recognition that social development cannot be pried loose from economic and political development and that the work of volunteer organizations cannot be isolated from other aspects of social

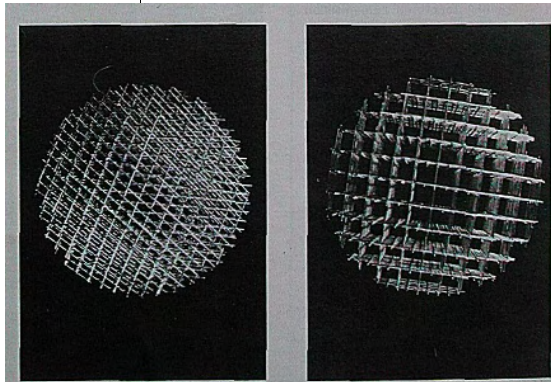
The world Network of Organization A Symbol for the 1970'

work. Prognostics for voluntary service must be seen as part of a whole. It is already outmoded to look on community social services as an entity in itself. It is part of a socio-economic whole... From now on U.N. programmes will not be considered individually. Priority will be given to a total approach by every country to their own development planning, with harmonised progress, and, hopefully, no competition between different agencies and ministries about priorities, people and money. The same will apply to our planning — we shall no longer promote only the programmes we favour ».

The excessive stress placed on the autonomy of organizations masks the links between them. Excessive focus on one type of link — the consultative relationship with UN agencies — de-emphasizes the many other links, formal and informal, between organizations of many types, thus rendering impossible any balanced understanding of the social system.

Can INGOs — recognized or unrecognized by the UN system — adopt any course of collective action which is so shortsighted and procedure-oriented as to expressly favor only isolated international organizations whilst ignoring the immensely complex world network of organizations of all types which stretches from the individual to local, national and international bodies to include the potentially highly-significant inter-INGO groupings ?

For that matter, can the UN agencies afford to encourage any action which



fragments INGOs into unrelated agency-oriented groupings at a point in time when the global crisis is completely multi-disciplinary and demands the utilization of every available resource ? Can the agencies and the many INGOs each treat the world network of organizations as an *administrative problem* when it clearly represents an unstudied *social phenomenon*? Is it not an unexplored global, network of organizational resources — of which the governmental and business worlds are an integral part — which has *not* yet been effectively related to the peace / population / food / development / education / environment crisis precisely because the functional relationship of all the parts to the social whole is repeatedly and systematically ignored in organizational decisions ?

Network of Organizations

It is no longer useful to concentrate on the problems of one * independent » organization or group of organizations (as though each operated as an autonomous frontier outpost surrounded by uncharted terrain). Not is it useful to focus on a single geographical region or subject area — it is now essential to look at the problems of the *network of interdependent organizations and their interrelated concerns*. (The terrain is now charted and populated so that the previously isolated frontier posts can now link together to survive as a community.) The nature and complexity of interdependence between plants and animals in nature has been the theme of the whole environment/ecology issue and the 1970 European Conservation Year. Perhaps this interdependence, still only recognized with great difficulty, between *extremely different organisms* can be used as a parallel to illustrate the nature of the interdependence between *organizations of different types and social function*. This social interdependence has yet to be recognized with precision despite frequent use of such terms as the « international community ». A century ago it was precisely this theme of interdependence between natural organisms which was forcefully stressed amid much controversy with texts such as the following :

Many cases are on record showing how complex and unexpected are the checks and relations between organic beings which have to struggle together in the same country... I am tempted to give one more instance showing how plants and animals, most remote in the scale of nature, are bound together by a web of complex relations ». (Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, London, 1859).

The example showed how two species of flower were fertilized with the aid of humble-bees whose nests were attacked by field-mice, which were in turn preyed upon by cats.

« Hence it is quite credible that the presence of a feline animal in large numbers in a district might determine, through the intervention first of mice and then of bees, the frequency of certain flowers in that district... A corollary of the highest importance may be deduced from the foregoing * remarks, namely that the structure of every organic being is related, in the most essential yet often hidden manner, to that of all other organic beings, with which it comes into competition for food or residence, or from which it has to escape, or on which it preys. >

Organizational Ecology

With this perspective, what can be said of the relationship between such social structures as governmental, and nongovernmental, profit and non-profit, formal and informal organizations, movements, periodicals, mass media, etc ? Is enough yet known of *organizational ecology*, namely the chains of interdependence between social organizations of totally different types, to be able to determine which actions of one type of organization will directly affect the operations and even the survival of which other types of organizations responsible in society for other functions ?

* The program of a large organization, whether intended, or not... affects a wide sector of the organization's environment, one much wider than the organization may understand to be its surrounds... Organizations that wish to deal responsibly with their social surrounds must be capable of eliciting and evaluating responses from those who realize that they are affected but who are ordinarily silent, and from those who are affected but may not realize it... » (R.A. Rosenthal and R.S. Weiss, *Problems of Organizational Processes*.)

In view of the ignorance of these inter-organizational processes and of the ecological role of different categories of the social flora and fauna :

« We think that anybody who wished to sort out « necessary » and « superfluous » or - justified » and - unjustified » NGOs so as to prove the allegation that there is an inflation of international organizations (in the deprecatory sense) would find it rather hard to define his criteria and would have to claim for himself the foresight of a prophet before making his judgement in a great many cases, furthermore, even the smallest, lowliest, and oddest NGO's may well be regarded as an expression of the genuine longing of their members for more international contact, understanding and cooperation. Such longings should be taken seriously because human motivation and psychological fac-

TABLE I	Traditional Style	Charismatic or Intuitive Style	Classical or Bureaucratic Style	Human Relations or Group Style	Systemic Style	Network Style
1. Focus	Maintaining a tradition	Pursuing an intuition	Running an administrative machine	Initiating and leading groups	Survival of a system in a hostile environment	Adapting to emerging conditions
2. Organization	Historical institution	Spontaneous creation	Mechanistic Structure	Network of personal relationships	System of flows of information and materials, developed	Dynamic evolving networks of personal and organizational units, living system or organization
2.1 Conception						
2.2 Purpose of design	Preservation of status quo	Implementing intuition	Maximizing efficiency	Maximizing personal satisfaction	Maximizing survival potential and growth of system	Maximizing relevance to perceived problems
2.3 Source of momentum	Force of tradition	Dynamism of intuition	Leadership drive and allocated funds	Group synergism	Individual self-advancement through organizational unit successes in achieving system milestones	Stimulus of individuals and organizational units by new problems and possibilities
2.4 Duration	< Permanent > through a historical period	<Permanent> for the lifetime of the leader and his immediate disciples	Undefined duration	Undefined short duration	For as long as is useful for owners and employees	For as long as is useful in term of problem relevance
3. Decision making process						
3.1 Main concerns	Recurrent Items	Critical issues	Efficient performance of voted programs	Elaborating groups goals	Adapting system to changing conditions	Maintaining balance between adapting to
3.2 Goals	Unquestioned, possibly implicit	Highly explicit	Objective and evaluated quantitatively	Subjective and emergent	Outlined centrally, defined and refined by decentralized executive units	Defined interdependently
3.3 Degree of consciousness	Non-reflective	Spontaneous	Conscious,calculated	Articulation of feelings	Highly conscious of rational perspective	Conscious balance between value and rational perspectives
3.4 Type of decision	Affirmation of new custom	Proclamation of intuition	Production of orders	Formulation of consensus	Initiated by experts and evaluated team	Participative with representatives of all concerned bodies
3.5 Communication of decision	Transmission of heritage	Magnetic, persuasive influence	Detailed directions	Shared	Initiated by experts and evaluated by team	Outline directives
3.6 Response to decision	Implicit consent	Intuitive accord	Agreement under obligation or coercion	Participation consent	Team consent	Modified by team in response to local conditions
4. LEADERSHIP						
4.1 Dominant personality	Elders, wise, sacred	Enlightened	Aggressive, domineering	Sensitive, cultured	Expert, technician	Network link catalyzers, generalist
4.2 Functions of leaders	Voice of tradition; source of wisdom; nurturer; guardian	Prophetic, inspirational	Direct; implicit; organizing	Permissive, non-directive, creation of < atmosphere >; draws out	Interprets system environment; clarifies goals, monitors change	Interprets psychosocial environment, clarifies goals and organizational complexes required;
5. CENTRAL PROCES						
5.1 Main features	Strength of tradition, little awareness of alternatives	Judgemental character of intuition; all of adherents	Specific standards set by top management	Individual sense of responsibility; answerability to constituents	Conscientiousness of expert; corrective of goals; threat of non-survival of system	Conscientiousness of those with network roles; counterbalancing objectives of organizational units; threat of non-survival of human society
6. ORGANIZED RELATIONSHIPS						
6.1 Intra-organizational	Coherent, stable traditional hierarchical structure	Emanations of the central intuition	Procedural routinized linkages based on document transfer jurisdictional dispute	Fluid; informal based on mutual empathy	Interacting, constant evolution of new authority structures	Interdependent; dynamic emergence of cross-linking authority centers of short duration
6.2 Inter-organizational	Traditional contacts, other organizations are irrelevant, federations of organizations only stable under external supreme authority (eg. sovereign, government, etc.)	Contacts initiated and maintained if they can accept the superiority of the central message and will help to disseminate it; conferences of organizations only if they enhance the authority of the central intuition	Relations governed by policy of « recognition » in which the superiority of the recognizer is considered implicit; weak and unstable federations of organizations	Ad hoc unstructured contacts; organization for project level collaboration; organization groupings racked by fear of « organization »	Links between complementary or competing organizations committed so survival of same macro-system; dictated by cost	Interdependent, dynamic emergence of cross-linking authority centers of short duration, distinction between intra- and inter-organizational links considered academic
7. RELATIONSHIP TO ENVIRONMENT						
7.1 Social environment	Component part of static society	Rejection of status quo; articulates change	Machine for managing extensive but uncomplex environment	Reflection of cultured democratic society	Attuned to those features of its environment which might constitute a potential threat to its continued growth	Attuned to those features of its environment which might constitute a potential activity and to those which might be threatened by its continued activity
7.2 Problem environment	Docile, isolated problems in an orderly environment	Identification of a problem underlying problems.	Docile problem groups characterized by their number and variety rather than their complexity and interrelationship	Dynamic interactive problems, the consequences of some	Aggressive interactive problems; considerable strategic skills required for central planning	Very aggressive interactive problems; centralized strategy abandoned in favor of decentralized response by a network of interdependent organizational units

tors of this kind are of considerable importance for the whole present and future development of international organizations ». (Alexander Szalai. The Future of international organizations. New York: UNITAR, 1970. Paper presented to a seminar on organizations of the future.)

Styles of Organization

Within the above context, it is useful to look at different styles of organization, how they function and how they respond to their environment. The Traditional, Charismatic, and Classical styles are quite familiar. The Human Relations style has recently appeared on the scene, together with the Systemic style. These five styles are described and compared in Table 1 (1). Each succeeding style reflects a progressively greater concern with interdependence, but in each case with compensating weaknesses. The relationship between the different styles of organizations can be usefully illustrated in Figure 1. There is a progressive convergence towards a subtler and more sensitive type of social action, with progressively smaller swings between the extremes shown in Figure 1. Each style of organization is of course the most appropriate in a certain type of environment. But what style of organization is most appropriate to the complex environment noted in the earlier sections of this article? Most management literature is full of descriptions of « systems management » as applied to large corporations and even to governments. Peter Rudge (2) considers the Systemic style to be the most appropriate for complex organizations such as the churches with which he is especially concerned. And yet it is against the concept of a « system » that many left-wing and youth organizations are protesting. It seems certain that international nongovernmental organizations do not wish to conceive of themselves as being part of any system — there is too much suggestion of coordination without respect for autonomy, or of being a « cog in somebody else's machine ».

Working with the ideas in the earlier section of this article, and with highly innovative books such as that of Donald Schon (3), it seemed possible to identify a style of organization that

combines some of the advantages of the Human Relations and Systemic styles and avoids some of their disadvantages. This can be termed the « Network Style ». It is described in Table 1 and is shown as the next swing of the curve in Figure 1. There is of course a range of systems management styles, and some would claim to include the Network style, but it seems as though organizations can become systems without becoming networks (4). And it is the concept of a network of organizations which seems less constrictive and more fruitful.

Nature of the Network

In order for INGOs to survive and contribute effectively to social change in the 1970s there may be some advantage in attempting to define more clearly the nature of this new style of organization. It is as yet undefined because it is of less interest to business corporations for which inter-organizational relations are largely restricted to transactions which can be translated into financial terms. The case of nonprofit organizations is much more complex in many respects. INGOs need to work together to match the strength and demands of governmental and business programs. They also need to work together to ensure that the effects of their programs do not cancel each other out (e.g. in the case of environmental programs), or compete with one another unnecessarily (e.g. in the case of educational programs in a particular locality). But in working together, they do not want to be sucked into an uncontrollable relationship under which their autonomy is threatened.

In a sense we are moving towards the idea that INGOs are autonomous bodies which at any one time may each have working links with « neighbouring » INGOs — or may temporarily be working in isolation. As Figure 2 shows, this type of situation results in a *network* of organizations. It is *not* a frozen structure but a *dynamic* one. Each day new patterns of links are created some new links are formed, some links are terminated. Some patterns of links are more permanent than others — but all links have their part to play in the activity of the network:

Link	
+ 10 years	< permanent > working contacts
+ 5 years	links for long term programs
(eg coordination of complex -	
	mentary programs)
+ 2 years	links for short term projects
	(eg organization of a large conference)
+ 1 year	links (or specific tasks (eg
	joint publication of a book or brochure)

(1) These five styles and their descriptions are based on an excellent typology given in: Peter F. Rudge. Ministry and Management; the study of ecclesiastical administration. London, Tavistock, 1968. Descriptions have however been much modified in a number of cases, the sixth style and some points have been added.

(2) op. cit.

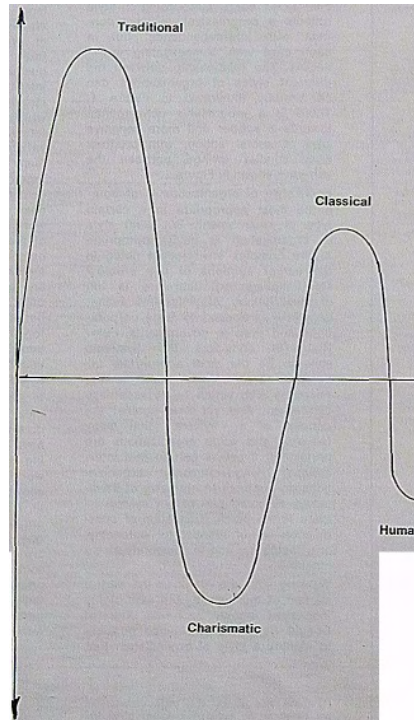
(3) Donald Schon. Beyond the Stable State. (See article based on his book, by A.J.N. Judge Wanted: new types of social entity. International Associations .. March, 1971 p. 148-170).

(4) The Systemic style defined in Table 1 has been modified from that suggested by Peter Rudge to clarify this distinction.

+ 1 month links for very specific points of common interest (eg. exchange of letters and documents following contact at meeting)

Figure 1. Indication of the succession of management style extremes and the convergence over time on a more balanced form

Excessively organized and «efficient»; impersonal, centralized; exclusive definition of relevance



Excessively disorganized and « inefficient »; personal, decentralized; over-sensitive to too many immediate problems

Network Action Strategy

The problem for INGOs is to develop a way of increasing the dynamism and strength of the network without retreating to the unsuccessful formula of the coordinating umbrella body — which is probably following the dinosaurs into social history. Clues to a new action strategy can be obtained by looking at the now well-developed Systemic style.

The Systemic style has been specifically developed for closed-systems; that is to say for an organization and those parts of its environment with which it thinks it should be in contact. Every other outside influence is systematically excluded. But the relations

between the parts of the organizational system are conceived as being very sophisticated and subtle. It would seem possible to « translate » these features of the closed-system into open-system features by thinking of the INGOs not as interlinked parts of a closed system but as autonomous interdependent organs within an open society — the social system as a whole. The Systemic style may then be said to be applicable to one organizational system, whereas the Network style is applicable to many interacting organizations. This might be considered a mere transposition of the Systemic style to a different level, but for one factor. In order for an organization to respond to the

network environment of the open society, it must become less introverted and exclusive in its concerns, and as such one can speak of the emergence of a new organization style both externally for the network as a whole and internally for the organization itself. The stress is on interaction and interdependence, however the choice of interactor and form of relationship is entirely autonomous. Peter Budge (5) has summarized the characteristics of the Systemic style. In the light of the above comments, we can attempt to translate and modify these for the inter-organizational setting. The Network style may therefore be characterized by :

- (a) emphasis on the contribution of special knowledge, competence and experience by any appropriate INGO to the common task of any ad hoc group of INGOs set up for a specific task
- (b) the « realistic » nature of the program of any INGO which is seen as set by its perception of the most significant problems for which it is competent, in terms of the information which it has managed to receive.
- (c) the adjustment and continual redefinition by each INGO of its programs through interaction with and in response to others ; the network is conceived as constantly changing and evolving, sub-networks of INGOs with a special interest in common come into existence for any required period ; INGOs may each be participating in any number of such partial networks; partial networks are deliberately terminated when no longer useful.
- (d) the shedding of «responsibility» as a limited field of rights, obligations and methods (e.g., world

- problems may not be systematically ignored as being some other organizations sole responsibility)
- (e) the spread of commitment of an INGO to society as a whole beyond any technical definition of programs or legal definitions of constitution or statutes.
- (f) a network structure of control, authority, and communication ; the sanctions which apply to the individual INGO's conduct in its working role derive more from presumed community of interest with the rest of the network in the survival and evolution of the open society, and less from any temporary contractual relationship between the INGO and some body recognized as coordinator for the program in question.
- (g) omniscience no longer imputed to key organizations in the network ; knowledge about the economic, social, cultural, scientific, technical, etc. problems of the immediate task may be located anywhere in the organi-

- zational network ; this location may, if appropriate, become the ad hoc centre of control, authority and communication for that task.
- (h) lateral rather than vertical direction of communication through the network, communication between organizations of different status ; consultative contacts are emphasized with each participant adjusting its programs in consequence if it perceives such adjustment to be warranted.
- (i) a content of communication between INGOs which consists of information and advice rather than instructions and decisions.
- (j) commitment to the problems of the development of the open society is more highly valued than loyalty and obedience to the individual INGO.
- (k) importance and prestige attach to affiliation of the INGO to professional, scientific or cultural networks not directly concerned with the INGO's immediate program tasks.

Each of these points concerning inter-organizational relations may require some adjustment in the internal organization of the INGO and more specifically to the way the organization conceives itself. Although comment has been restricted to the INGO network, this is clearly intimately related to the network of governmental agencies to that of business enterprises and to that of the academic community.

The organizational network is an « organic » form appropriate to today's rapidly changing conditions which constantly give rise to fresh problems and unforeseen requirements for action — requirements which cannot be rapidly and satisfac-

torily distributed to organizations working in isolation within rigidly defined programs. The network permits all the decentralization necessary to satisfy the need for autonomous organizational development and individual initiative. It also provides for very rapid centralization, canalization and focussing of resources the moment any complex problem (or natural disaster) emerges which requires the talents of a particular configuration or constellation of INGOs (or other bodies). The centralization is only binding on the INGOs concerned with the problem in question, and for the period during which they have a common cause » and in no way affects others in the network. The network is,

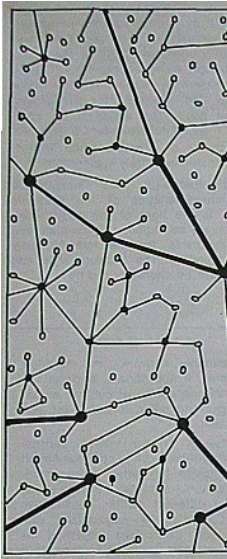
furthermore, multidimensional in character since INGOs may centralize themselves to different extents in many different partial networks and at the same time decentralize (or disassociate) themselves on other issues.

The network is not « coordinated » by any body ; the participating bodies coordinate themselves so that one may speak of « auto-coordination » rather than coordination. Similarly the network as a whole is not « directed » or « controlled » by any body, rather it is « self-directing » and self-adap-

ting.

A.J.

(5) Op. Cit. p. 30.



Network with respect to Issue A
(same organizations as for Issue B,
but different pattern of links(*)

	Organi- zations	Links
Primary	22	14
Secondary	33	8
Tertiary	147	228
Isolates	58	n.a.
Isolated groups	4	n.a.

i.e. network is more integrated, with fewer isolates; but some primary coordinating bodies are only related via tertiary links.

Network with respect to Issue B
(same organizations as for Issue B,
but different pattern of links(**))

	Organi- zations	Links
Primary	8	9
Secondary	12	0
Tertiary	140	130
Isolates	100	n.a.
Isolated groups	34	n.a.

i.e. network is less integrated, with more isolates; but all primary coordinating bodies are related via primary links.

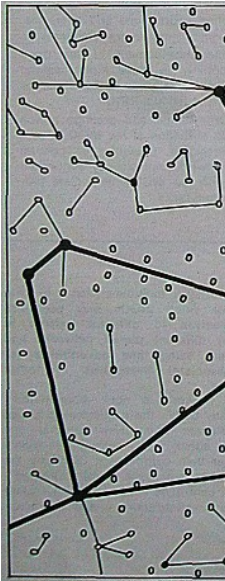


Figure 2. Illustration of how one part of the world network of organizations might appear with respect to two different issues (or, alternatively, at two different dates).

(*) Organizations may be of primary, secondary or tertiary significance to the network in response to any given issue, or they may operate as isolates.