

to be inappropriate. There are risks, then, of the kind involving waste of effort or the diffusion of effort, rather than the creation of new, positive benefits.

Another kind of risk is that badly structured groups may adopt purposes opposed to those of the organization. This happens when my children form a coalition against me. This happens when a business manager finds to his surprise that his employees (all of whom he knows by their first names and can ask about their children) form a union. This is the formation of a social group with a unity of purpose that is often, initially, at least, deliberately opposed to some of the objectives of the management; in time the purposes tend to converge. I heard a yarn while we were out having coffee a moment ago about a military base in which a subversive, highly cohesive, highly effective spontaneous group emerged, with some rather drastic consequences with respect to the effectiveness of that base.

When you create social power, it is dangerous and risky, in much the same sense that it is dangerous to make dynamite. Dynamite can be put to very good uses, but it can also be risky to handle and also to put to evil purposes. It is only in this sense that I say there is some risk in moving in this direction.

QUESTION: Doctor, you have pretty well put together such things as permanent committees, ad hoc committees, and cliques. It seems to me there is quite a difference between these, and I would like to have you talk on them a little.

DR. SEASHORE: One of the first things a manager must learn if he is to use groups well is to distinguish between different kinds of groups and the characteristics they will need. Let me pick up your theme by sketching as an illustration the differences between an ideal executive committee and an ideal coordinating committee. I expect that all of you at one time or another have created committees without paying attention as to whether the committee was intended for an executive function, that is decision-making, problem-solving, action-initiating, or whether instead the purpose of the committee was to coordinate, exchange ideas, and generate ideas.

Now, if your committee has executive purposes, and if you understand groups, you are going to adopt some very different standards and guidelines with respect to membership, with respect to the authority that is prescribed and the limitations on it, than if it is to be