

has more. On the contrary, it is perfectly clear that the quantity of control in an organization is not fixed. You can create more power, more control; you can lose it in total. In fact, the extent to which an organization is "organized" probably is a direct reflection of the amount of social control and influence that goes on. When this amount reaches zero, you no longer have an organization at all. Some of you may have worked in organizations that were approaching this point, where you had all of the forms of organization, all the positions and roles filled, the duties assigned, and so on, but no one was really influencing the behavior of others, and as a consequence very little work got done.

Now, these ideas about the quantity and the distribution of control in organizations have not been invented by social scientists but have been generated by people like yourselves who are running organizations and who have tried some rather venturesome new ways to run organizations. Let me mention some of the catch words here-- decentralization, multiple management, bottom-up management, management by committee, group-centered management, the task-force concept, the business-team concept. I could go on with a long roster of words like these that would bring to your minds various ways in which managements have attempted to express a new view of the nature of social power and its optimum distribution in an organization. All of these activities I have mentioned have this in common, that they imply a willingness on the part of the top-level people to be influenced by people at lower levels. When put in those terms and that bluntly, it sounds like revolution, and, gentlemen, that's what is going on: a small revolution in our notions about the origin and use of social power.

Well, so much about social power and control, the distribution of it and the amount of it. Let me go on, then, to say a few words about social groups.

Whenever you put people together, under almost any circumstance, they do not associate with each other randomly. They form groups, they cluster. The way in which this goes on is quite predictable, even though when we are personally involved in such a situation where spontaneous groups are forming, we may not observe the way in which the sequence of events is regular and repeats previous such events. Groups form. They become cohesive; they establish boundaries; they set up implicit rules about membership or exclusion from the group; they create a small social structure with differentiated roles, functions, and norms; they come to influence very profoundly