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McGILL UNIVERSITY

GOAL ATTAINMENT, SOCIAL EXCHANGE AND POWER RELATIONS:
A SEARCH FOR GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ORGANIZING STRATEGY

A Thesis Submitted to
The School of Social Work
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
In Partial Fullfillment of the Requirements
for
The Master's Degree in Social Work

by

Ricky W. C. Sin
Montreal, August 1995



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ABSTRACT

This qualitative research employed the single case study approach to review the process by which service users and the staff of a food bank successfully broke through the bureaucratic resistance and secured new premises from the City of Montreal. This study explores the capacity of weaker parties to achieve their desired goal through strategic intervention on social exchange network despite the pre-existing asymmetric power relations. The conception of goal attainment, power relations and social exchange were discussed in order to develop the research questions. Case materials were collected from multiple sources: documentary research, in-depth interviews, and observation. The findings demonstrate that internal solidarity, potential uses of coalitions and expansion of resource networks are fundamental factors for members of a subordinate group to gain power and to achieve their goals. Implications for community organization practice were drawn from the overview of the empirical findings and theoretical concepts.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette recherche qualitative a utilisé l'approche de l'étude d'un cas. Elle analyse le processus par lequel les utilisateurs et les employés d'une banque de nourritures réussissent à briser la résistance bureaucratique et obtiennent un nouveau local de la Ville de Montréal. Elle explore la capacité des membres du groupe faibles d'atteindre l'objectif souhaité par l'intervention stratégique qu'est le réseau d'échange social, malgré l'asymétrie de pouvoir préexistante dans ce milieu. La conception de l'objectif atteint, les relations de pouvoir et l'échange social sont les sujets considérés dans le développement des questions de la recherche. Le matériel recueilli provient de multiples ressources: analyse de manuscrits, entrevues approfondies, et observation. Le résultat de la recherche démontre que la solidarité interne, les utilisations potentielles de coalition et l'expansion de réseaux de ressource sont des facteurs fondamentaux pour les membres d'un groupe subordonné afin de gagner du pouvoir et d'atteindre ses objectifs. Les implications sur la pratique de l'organisation communautaire sont tirées de l'ensemble des résultats de recherches pratiques et de concepts théoriques.

DEDICATION

To my mother who reminds me to be true to our desires and to assert my rights without violating others.

To my father who encourages me to transcend my own interest and to wholeheartedly pursue the well-being of the underprivileged.

To my wife whose sense of humor and wisdom allow me to see life through a wide kaleidoscope.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

"What do you want ?"
"Justice ..."
"When do you want it ?"
"Now!"

This is one of the most popular slogans chanted in the protests with which I was involved in New York City. For a decent contract, members of the Legal Services Staff Association started a 30 day strike upon the breakdown of negotiation between union representatives and employers. To get back to work, workers of Silver Palace Restaurant, which is the only unionized Chinese Restaurant in the United States, and their supporters picketed outside the restaurant twice a day and seven days a week for eight months. Outraged by increasing police brutality against Asian immigrants, groups of Asian American rallied from one police precinct to another. In each event, people were unified and their voices were magnificent. People sang hand in hand and raised their arms to show the colorful placards. These scenes depicted a strikingly romantic picture of "power of the powerless" - "the people united will never be defeated".

Coming back to reality, such a touching moment does not always guarantee that people's demands will be met. Similar

action mentioned above may have an entirely different outcome. Some may end up with great success while others with great loss and frustration. Let us return to the cases in New York City. All the members of the Legal Services Staff Association and Silver Palace Restaurant Workers Union finally resumed their positions. Interestingly, as the sole provider of staff to Legal Services for New York City with over 350 members made up of mostly lawyers and social workers, the Legal Services Staff Association was forced to give up its demands and signed an unwanted contract. Conversely, the 35 Chinese restaurant workers got their contract renewed without any concession, despite the smugglers' endless supply of cheap labor.

The factors which determine the outcome may be too many and varied to be reduced to any single theoretical assertion. However it is a central concern of all the activists who devote themselves to the betterment of the underprivileged. Admittedly, without a well organized picture of major determining variables, it is hard to identify effective ways to remove the constraints and to create possibilities to achieve our desired goal. Organizing seems to just leap in the dark while the aspiration is merely an untouchable dream. Yet, similar criticism was addressed to North American's social activism generally (Milofsky, 1988):

"(social activism) will be more rhetoric and exhortation about change than the technical competence with which to achieve it. What activists promote are more obfuscation, romanticism and self-deceit than clarity of thought and honesty of purpose".

To develop community organization practice as a technique with a firm knowledge base rather than a mystique, scholars in the field of community organization practice have worked on theory and practice technology regarding the struggle of planned social change (Cox and Garvin 1970; Winwood, 1981; Butcher et al, 1986). In Brian Fay's words: "they try to tie knowledge claims to the satisfaction of human purposes and desires (Fay, 1975, pp. 95)." Veteran activists also generously share practice wisdom from their organizing experience (Kahn, 1994). In other words, the origin of community organization practice as well as its development has stemmed from two interrelated and mutually facilitating sources: the abstract world of theoretical construction and the real world of human encounter and our professional practice (Sieder, 1956).

Sharing the same vision, this study attempts to contribute to the realization of this ideal. It applies the single case study approach to review a year long organizing process by which service users and staff of a community cafeteria successfully broke through the bureaucratic resistance and secured new premises from the city government in Montreal. By gathering key participants' perspectives on the issue, the process, the outcome and their own involvement, the study strives to paint a picture of the community organizing process to reflect its intricate and dynamic nature.

To a certain extent, any case study is open to the charge that the researchers only observed and recorded the materials which fit into their pre-existing biases or theoretical orientation. This study is not susceptible to this charge as it does not attempt to verify and disprove any pre-conceived hypothesis. Instead of pretending to be free from any preconception, this report acknowledges these issues in the conceptual foundation that introduces this study. Rather than theory-testing, the theoretical background and research findings form a theoretical-empirical dialogue. By this integrative discussion, it is believed that the vision of theoretical discourse will be widened, understanding of social phenomena deepened, and practical implications on prompt organizing strategy to create these necessary conditions for goal attainment illuminated.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

To explore conditions under which members of subordinate groups can achieve desired goals through social exchange relationships despite pre-existing asymmetric power relations.

Detailed discussion of the conceptual foundation, that is the concept of goal attainment, power relations and social exchange, will be provided in chapter three. However, it is important to highlight the choice of asymmetric power relations as our research focus at this point.

The purpose of centering on power relations is twofold:

First, in social life, power is an essential force which is always in operation. The relation between one's action and someone else's often cannot be predicted without knowing which individual possesses power over the other (Stinchcombe, 1968 pp. 149). Saul Alinsky (1976) maintained that it is impossible to conceive of a world devoid of power; the only choice of concepts is between organized and unorganized power (pp.49-53). Second, many conflicts in society are rooted in a struggles for power. The degree of power an individual or group is able to achieve governs how far they are able to put their wishes into practice at the expense of others (Giddens, 1989, p.729). Just like military force, power may be used to enforce autocracy, or to achieve freedom; to induce change, or resist change. After reviewing contemporary perspectives on planned social change, Crowfoot and Chesler (1974) also conclude:

"... failure to be clear about social power, its bases and resources, and the constituencies available to challenge them predestines the failure of any attempt to reallocate key resources or alter established patterns of control" (pp. 301).

Focusing on organizing in a context of asymmetrical power relations is more explicit. As Gamson (1975) describes in his book, "The Strategy of Social Protest," there is always a basic asymmetry in the contest between a challenging group and its antagonists (p.89). Groups and individuals involved in protests, rallies, or any other kinds of collective action are usually in a subordinate position. Most of them persistently

suffer from various kinds of oppression based on their class, skin color, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. Resistance against their effort to create change from powerful forces is tremendous. Burghardt (1982) also reminds the organizers, in his book, "Organizing for social change", that assuming one's degree of justice or the level of oppression is not an automatic lever to power. Conversely, he states: "we are working within a defensive context (pp. 12-13)."

ORGANIZATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

The present thesis is arranged in six chapters. The following chapter is reserved for a detailed methodological account of the research process. In this section, the essence of the case study approach, specific procedures and methods for data collection, selection of informants, and the mode of analysis will be introduced.

The illustration of theoretical issues behind the thesis will be presented in the third chapter where concept of goal attainment, power relations, and social exchange will be defined and discussed. Focus of the theoretical framework stems from special reference to major theoretical concepts of exchange theory and their application in organizing. A list of research questions emerged and guided the initial stage of data collection.

Since the late 50's, social exchange theory became one of the most influential contemporary sociological theories in

North America. Both the general approach and many of the propositions underlying social exchange theory are used by a number of social scientists (Wallace & Woff, 1980). In view of its explanatory power, writers in community practice also attempt to apply its major concepts into practice theories for community organizing (Brager et al, 1987; Torczyner, 1978, 1991; Benveniste, 1989; Weissman, 1970). This theoretical framework can be particularly useful in analyzing the dynamic relationship among the actors, their potential alliances and the target, and how people can achieve their goal with limited resources.

Chapter four presents the case presentation. It provides an overview of the socio-economic background, the organization - Multi-Caf; the history of development of the issue, and contributing factors influencing the final outcome from the informants' perspective.

Chapter five examines the means and ends of the campaign, explores the changes of power relations through organizers' intervention on the social change networks, and highlights the organizers' role and input in the course of action.

Chapter six is a recapitulation of the implications for community organizing strategy as well as recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGICAL ACCOUNT

INTRODUCTION

The present study is a qualitative investigation. It employs a single case study approach in which a single unit is intensively studied and multiple variables are examined (Gilgun, 1994). This method allows us to know people personally and to see them as they are developing their own definitions of the world (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Bogdan & Taylor, 1975, p.4-5). The study collects descriptive data in narrative form, such as direct quotes from participants and observable behavior. Theoretical development emerges from the data, rather than by proving or disproving hypotheses held before conducting a study. For this reason, generalizing is analytic rather than statistical and probabilistic. Findings extracted from the case are tested for their relation to other cases and with patterns predicted in theory or in previous research and theory (Gilgun, 1994; Seidman, 1991).

The reasons for this choice are three-fold. First, this approach requires the researcher to interpret the real world from the perspective of the people involved, and to discover the intentions actors have in doing whatever it is they are

doing (Biklen, 1982; Fay, 1975, pp.71; Filstead, 1970)). Hence, the research finding may reflect the subjective aspects of the people as well as the context in which the organizer functions. Second, it adopts analytic generalization as the mode of data analysis which resembles community organizers' daily practice experience. As organizers start a new task, they bring their organizing experience and knowledge of related research and theory; they attempt not to impose their prior knowledge on the current situation, but to assess how this knowledge fits (Gilgun, 1994, p.372). Finally, its emphasis on the interactive relationship between the interviewer and informants warrants more flexibility than other methods. The researcher in the field is able to adjust to novel or unexpected circumstances and follow up hints that develop in the process of the research itself.

SELECTION OF THE CASE

The case selected for this study is the organizing process by which service users and staff of Multi-Caf, a community cafeteria in Montreal, successfully broke through bureaucratic resistance and secured new premises from the city government. In the summer of 1991, Multi-Caf was informed by its landlord that the lease would not be renewed. In addition, the place was also found inadequate to accommodate their expanding scale of operation. Due to financial constraints, they could not afford to rent elsewhere. The organization

successfully got its service users' actively involved and solicited support from the community, in order to facilitate awareness of their needs to the city government. Finally, the executive committee of the City Council allowed Multi-Caf to rent the basement kitchen of a community center, which was originally mandated only for recreational activities. The result being that the service became legitimated and the organization successfully moved from a back street to the main street of Cote-des-Neiges.

The major reasons for this selection are:

- a. Even though different participants may have various concerns with regard to the issue, the desired goal is clearly articulated;
- b. In light of the mandate and the decision making structure of the city government, the organization was not in a favorable power position to use the premises.
- c. Different parties got involved: Multi-Caf, government officials, city councilors, service users, local organizations and other supporters;
- d. Full time community organizers played a significant role in the process;
- e. The study is feasible because English can be used as the medium of communication. Most of the direct participants involved in the issue are either English speaking or bilingual. The internal

documents that related organizations kept were in English. The major events related to the issue were covered by the local English newspapers - such as The Gazette, The Suburban and The Mirror.

- f. It is a recent issue. It is still feasible for collecting relevant data.

DATA COLLECTION

More specifically, this is a process study that will relate outcomes to the practical activities and steps leading to the overall impact of interventions (Loeske, 1989). An effective description of processes is what guides this discussion. It is also necessary to describe the context in detail and identify contextual variables that influence the analysis (Yin, 1984, pp.23). All records pertaining to the event must be carefully researched and the appropriate informants who were either directly or indirectly involved must be selected. For this reason, data collection was completed in two different stages.

Process and Methods Employed

at the First Phase

The major task during the initial stage is to develop a preliminary understanding of the context of the campaign - the people, place, and events - so that I can identify specific focuses for in-depth exploration and key informants for

individual interviews. Three different methods of inquiry are used at this stage : -

a. Documentary Research

Most field-work and survey research involves the systematic use of printed or written materials for investigation. To understand the reasons why a particular act was performed, one needs to consider it within a larger context which includes the aims and thoughts of the actors and the circumstances in which they found themselves. Hence, a great variety of data and information was collected from the following sources:

i. Newspaper reports:

Newspapers are an essential source of public records of events despite its dubious standard of accuracy. By compiling reports from different newspapers during this period, we derive valuable information of what happened from the perspective of reporters who were not direct participants.

ii. Internal Documents:

In order to explore inside stories at the organization level, the following materials from Multi-Caf, Project Genesis and McGill Consortium for Human Rights Advocacy Training (MCHRAT)¹ were examined:

¹. In 1994, with the receipt of the major infrastructure grant from the Quebec Minister of Education and Science, MCHRAT changed its name from the McGill Consortium to the Montreal Consortium for Human Rights Advocacy Training.

- minutes of Multi-Caf's board meeting from December 1989 to October 1992;
- annual reports of Multi-Caf from 1990 to 1993;
- minutes of MCHRAT's advisory board meetings and work reports of their "Empowering The Poor Through Human Rights Advocacy Training" which hired the organizer who worked on the issue.

iii. Government Documents:

Statistics which reveal the socio-economic conditions of the community in that period also are drawn from the reports from National Welfare Council and Local Community Services Center - Cote-des-Neiges.

b. Unstructured Interviews

Unstructured interviews are also referred to as in-depth / unstructured / open-ended / non-directive or "flexibly structured interviewing" (Whyte, 1982; Burgess, 1982). The aims of this method are to provide the opportunity for the researcher to probe deeply, to uncover new clues, to open up new dimensions of a problem and to secure vivid, accurate, inclusive accounts from the informants that are based on personal experience. To do so, the researcher must facilitate the informant to relate experiences and attitudes that are relevant to the research problem and encourage the informant to discuss these experiences naturally and freely. In light of

the details sought, qualitative analysis is achieved with a small sample (Biklen, 1982). Hence, I decided to interview the two community organizers who were deeply involved in the whole process and who were acquainted with most of the actors.

c. Participant Observation:

To understand how the users related to one another and to the staff, and to understand their involvement in Multi-Caf, I also spent a week and a half as a service user during the lunch time period at Multi-Caf, and attended the Annual General Meeting in order to observe people's interaction. Only the staff and one or two of the recipients knew me as a student studying the organization while others did not. This enabled me to interact easily and naturally with them.

Process and Methods Employed at
the Second Phase of Research

The second phase includes a detailed investigation. Semi-structured interviews are used. During the interviews, loosely-structured interview guides are employed to keep the conversation around four major areas of concern: (1.) How does the informant find himself or herself related to the issue? (2.) Why does he or she support or oppose Multi-Caf's request? (3.) If the informant mention other actor(s), he or she will also be asked about how he or she perceives the involvement of those actor(s). (4.) How do they perceive the factors which determined the final outcome of the issue?

Throughout the interview, a non-directive approach was

utilized. As Burgess (1982) explains, such a non-directive approach is a good start because it allows "informants to take the subject of discussion in whatever direction they prefer" (p.108). Essentially, informants were asked questions related to what they themselves were sharing during the interview. Sometimes, I became more directive with my questions when individuals touched upon a particular theme that I wanted to develop.

SELECTION OF INFORMANTS

In light of the volume of data that are generated from each interview, the size of the sample should not be out of the researcher's capacity. To focus on key characteristics of interest, efficiency in yielding useful data rather than statistical "representativeness" is the major concern in sampling design (Anastas & MacDonald, 1994, p. 68-69). Therefore, purposeful sampling method was used to select people for interviews. It is a strategy for selecting people who possess the knowledge of the researcher's interest, plus the ability and willingness to communicate it clearly and accurately (Seidman, 1991, p.42-43).

a. A brief description of informants

Briefly speaking, the informants include:

- i. the service users or volunteers of Multi-Caf. Some of them are participants in the event and others are not.

- ii. staff of Multi-Caf: the service director and the organizers;
- iii. Board members: the Chairperson of the Board of Directors and the ex-official member who represented Project Genesis;
- iv. the decision making body regarding the issue: City Councilors including the Chairman of the District Advisory Committee, spokesperson of the ruling party on this issue, and the councillor from the opposition party; and Regional Manager of Recreation and Community Development Services Department.
- v. Others: reporter of a district newspaper who has followed the development of the issue, and an organizer from Local Community Services Center - Cote-des-Neiges.

b. Selection Procedures

We followed ethical research guidelines with human subjects: informed consent and the protection of subjects from harm. Informants were treated with respect in the research. They entered research projects voluntarily, understanding the nature of the study and obligations that are involved. As Biklen (1982) states, the relationship between the researcher and informants is more like having a friendship than a contract. The subjects have a say in regulating the interview and they continuously make decisions about their

participation. The subjects' identities are protected so that the information we collect does not intimidate or in other ways harm them. Anonymity extends not only to documentation, but also to the verbal reporting of information that we have learned through the interviewing.

To get acquainted with the informants, beginning contact was initiated by the staff or their friends. The schedule for interviews was established directly with the informants and the objective of the study was clearly explained to them. By and large, all the informants were deeply involved and having a variety of perspectives regarding the issue. Yet, the selection of informants was significantly restrained for two reasons: First, since the events related to this study occurred over a year ago, it was impossible to get in contact with all the active participants. Second, the selection of informants was limited to people who could be interviewed in English.

MODE OF DATA ANALYSIS

One goal of data analysis in qualitative studies is to present carefully chosen excerpts from the data verbatim so as to derive concepts and results from the words of the research participants themselves (Anastas & MacDonald, 1994). The research questions presented in the following chapter are as broad as possible. However, they are subdivided, modified, refined, and revised as the specifics of the investigating

phenomena were learned throughout the research process (Pearall, 1970). The revisions are made in response to the interplay between fact and theory as the research progresses through three somewhat overlapping phases (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Burgess, 1982):

- i. The first phase begins before any data are collected. The research problem is examined by literature review and researcher's practice experience.
- ii. The second phase extends through most of the period of field research. Its main activity is gathering data on the form, frequency, and the distribution of the relevant phenomena.
- iii. The third phase evolves as the final report is written. All the collected materials - including documents, field notes and transcription for each interview - were studied piece by piece for regularities and patterns as well as for topics the data cover. Words and phrases were assigned to represent these topics and patterns and become final coding categories as a means of sorting the collected descriptive data.

The following are major categories which have emerged:

- i. Setting / Context Codes: codes under which the most general information on the socio-economic background of the setting, or subjects can be sorted.
- ii. Situation Codes: units of data that tell how the subjects define the situation in relation to the issue as they

perceive it.

- iii. Subjects' Way of Thinking About People and Objects Codes: codes that refer to the subjects' understandings of each other, of outsiders, and of the objects that make up their world.
- iv. Process Codes: words and phrases that facilitate the categorization of sequences of activities, events, and changes over time, as well as passages from one type or kind of status to another.
- v. Strategy Codes: the tactics, methods, ways, techniques, maneuvers, ploys, and other conscious ways people accomplish various their goal(s).
- vi. Relationship and Social Structure Codes: regular patterns of behavior among people not officially defined by the organizational chart.
- vii. Research Methodology Codes: material pertinent to research procedures, problems, joys, dilemmas and the like.

INSTRUMENTATION

a. Researcher as the major instrument:

The researcher serves as a kind of "instrument" in the collection and analysis of data. McCracken (1988) points out that the investigator cannot fulfill their functions without using a broad range of personal experience, imagination, and intellect in ways that are various and unpredictable (p.18-

19). The researcher becomes a participant in his or her own research project, for his or her interpretations and actions become a legitimate object of subsequent analysis (Dey, 1993). To limit, acknowledge, and take into account my own bias which emerge in the course of the interview, and to seek their effects on data, I recorded detailed fieldnotes which include reflections of my own subjectivity (Lofland, 1971). Moreover, I also attempted to acknowledge my own pre-conceived conceptual ideas in the following chapter.

In saying this however, the major function of the researcher is to get the subjects to freely express their thoughts around particular topics. He or she is expected to keep a high level of self-criticism and self-awareness. Even though it is rather subtle to prove, the personal quality of the researcher is clearly a factor which may induce an effect in the communication process (Burgess, 1982). Thus, I was very conscious about how my language, ethnicity and social status, appearance affected person I interviewed, and I assumed a non-argumentative, supportive, and understanding attitude. As a young Asian male, graduate student of medium build, speaking English with a strong Hong Kong Chinese accent, it was very unlikely that I was perceived as a domineering figure, if not as a subordinate one, in the context of Canadian society. Being a foreign student was certainly an additional asset for me collecting data. Since I had not been involved in the community, informants might feel comfortable to share their

views on the existing community dynamics. For instance, some negative experience between the informant and other actor(s).

b. Tape Recorder with Supplementary Field Notes:

Audiotape recording was employed for every interview with prior consent from the informants, as it provides an accurate record of verbal data, including not just words but tone of voice, pace of speech and the like (Anastas & MacDonald, 1994). It also helped me to focus my attention on the conversation with the informant.

c. The Interview Guide:

An interview guide is a list of pre-set questions that the researcher wants answers to with intention of gathering data (Lofland, 1971, p.84; Seidman, 1991, p.69). When the researcher encounters less verbal interviewees, he or she could refer to the guide more often. The outline of the interview guide in this study is varied for different informant in order to probe specific data from different sources (please refers to appendix A and B). Two common items are included :

i. Introduction of myself and research project:

First of all, I introduced myself as a graduate student from McGill University studying the function of community organization in welfare rights advocacy. I also initiated some casual topics, such as my impression on Montreal, the summer activities in the city ... etc. This approach helped me establish a rapport with the prospective

interviewee and diffuse some of the suspicion that may have prevented an honest and open dialogue. Then, the purpose and nature of the research was explained. It was an important aspect of the interview process, particularly with the city councillors and government officials who may associate me with people from MCRAT or Multi-Caf and would be more suspicious of the motives for conducting this research. One's public image is always of concern. I ensured anonymity and confidentiality and made a copy of the report for them if so desired. I gave the interviewee permission to interrupt, ask for clarification, and refuse to answer specific questions, thereby making it a reciprocal process based on mutual respect (Lofland, 1971, pp. 86-87).

- ii. The broad general question asked was "Could you share your involvement in the move of Multi-Caf?"

TREATMENT OF DATA

- a. Note on the transcription of interviewees' comments:

Transcribing interview tapes is extremely time-consuming work. It took me six to eight hours to transcribe a 90-minute tape. Nonetheless a detailed and careful transcript could reflect and preserve the manner, essence, and mode of informant's expression. The quotations presented in the present study are verbatim transcriptions of the interviewees' comments. Informants are allowed to convey their

thoughts in their own voices, without perfecting the grammar to make their comments more intelligible.

b. Note on interviewee's identities:

Even though none of the informants expressed a desire to remain anonymous, as Seidman (1991) advised, for the reason of confidentiality, all transcriptions contain only initials for all proper names, while the informants' identity were kept anonymous in this final report (p.50).

LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Admittedly, the methodology of this study still has its own limitations. First, since most of the tasks in the process of data collection and analysis were highly labor-intensive, only a small number of participants were studied. However, the study is more limited in terms of its sampling method due to the restriction of English speaking informants.

Second, even though Berger and Luckmann (1967) note that both misinterpretation and 'hypocrisy' are more difficult to sustain in face-to-face interaction than in less 'close' forms of social interaction, it is possible to misinterpret the informant's meanings even in the face-to-face situation (p. 43-46). Besides, the informant may not qualify every statement explicitly. Thus the research quality depends very much on the skill of the researcher in gaining the confidence of the individuals involved. Without this, the research is unlikely

to get off the ground at all (Giddens 1989, p.672).

Finally, because the events related to this study took place in the period between December 1990 and September 1991, this is an ex post facto, or retrospective study. It is hard to reach all the active participants and make sure the informants recall everything related to the event. The organizer who was in-charge of the whole organizing process shared: "It's so hard for me to remember what happened in the past, you know and I try to think of memories, it is so hard."

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTS

As the study moved from the planning to the implementation stage, I discovered that I must engage continuously in a process of clarifying for others who I am, what the research attempts to find out, and why I wish to obtain the information from the individuals I chose as informants. However, in seeking assistance as I interact with informants, I was confronted with the necessity of being willing and able to compromise, and to accept a subordinate status vis-a-vis those I had chosen to study. From these experience, I have got tremendous insights for refining my research interest in a more clear and manageable manner.

Berger and Kellner (1982) remark in their book "Sociological Imagination": "I must expand my cognitive map and find a way of interpreting the new territory that I have just discovered" (pp.27). Similarly, through the whole process

of data collection and analysis, I have learned how to incorporate new interpretations of the phenomena into our pre-existing frame of reference. I moved to understanding the new by relating it to the old in our own experience. As I continued to talk with the people I contacted, the reconstruction is likely to become firmer and more elaborate. Ultimately, from this searching process, I experienced an ongoing process of knowing, reviewing and re-knowing which is extraordinarily fruitful for enhancing our competence in knowledge inquiry.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the conceptual foundations of the present thesis. The first section is a brief delineation of the concepts of goal attainment, power relations, and social exchange. These concepts are then examined in depth and related to social exchange theory and their application to community organization practice. Finally, this chapter concludes with a list of research questions developed from the conceptual foundations to facilitate the empirical investigation.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF

GOAL ATTAINMENT, POWER RELATIONS & SOCIAL EXCHANGE

a. Goal Attainment

A goal is not only a mark to reach in a race but an object one wishes to obtain. Goal attainment is a central issue in our daily life. Alinsky (1971) states that life and how you live is the story of what you want and how you get it (p.24). In the process of community organization, we keep asking the order of priority of different goals and selecting

alternative strategies and tactics to achieve them (Cox and others, 1974, p.425-429).

b. Power Relations

The concept of power is not a settled one in social sciences. Social scientists have defined the term "power" in various ways. Max Weber defined power as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which his probability rests" (cited in Parsons, 1947, pp.152). This definition of power dominates all others in the field of social science. Scholars have restated it in different ways. David Easton (1966) describes power as "a relationship in which one person or group is able to determine the action of another in the direction of the former's own ends." Dahl's definition reiterates (1957) "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do." All of these definitions stress that power is a relational, not a psychological phenomenon (Bilken, 1983, pp.18).

In the Encyclopedia of Social Science, Dahl (1968) defines power relations as subsets of relations among social units such that the behaviors of one or more units depend in some circumstances on the behavior of other units (p.407). To describe power relations, he suggests four major dimensions to explore: the magnitude of the power of the controlling units with respect to the responsive units, how this power is

distributed within the relations, and the scope, and domain of control that different individuals or actors have, exercise, or are subject to.

Further, three factors are distinguished to explain power difference in social relations: First of all, differences in patterns or structures of power may be attributed primarily to the way in which resources are distributed among the actors or social units. Two individuals with access to the same resources may exercise different degree of power (with respect to the same scope) due to their difference in level of political skill or motivation. One may be more eager to use his or her resources skillfully to increase his power; the other may not. Motivations can be related to resources, or opportunity cost in the language of economists. That is what an individual must forgo or give up in other opportunities as a result of using some of his or her resources to control another actor.

c. Social Exchange

"Social" by Webster is defined as "having to do with human beings living together as a group in a situation requiring that they have dealing with one another", while "exchange" means "the act of giving and receiving reciprocally" (p.637). Social exchange can be simply perceived as the act of giving and receiving reciprocally between individuals or groups. In the following sections, the concept of social exchange will be further explored. The discussion

will focus on the basic premises of this school of thought, how it explains power relations and goal attainment, and its application in community organization practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

BASIC PREMISES

The exchange approach is concerned with the interaction processes that emerge as individuals seek rewards in social relation (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1976; Cook and Emerson, 1978). The basic premises of this mode of analysis can be summarized into the following aspects:

First of all, the primary goal in social interaction is the calculated gain that the actor expects to derive from the association (Blau, 1964, p.17). Ekeh (1974) vulgarizes it: "in social relationships between individuals nothing goes for nothing (p.170)."

Second, all social activities entail some cost to the actor (Blau, 1967, pp. 15). The cost is equal to how much of one resource would be given up to gain a given amount of another resource (Ilchman & Uphoff, 1971, pp. 99). In principle, the value of resources is determined by the interaction of supply and demand in much the same way that money prices are set for goods and services (Emerson, 1981, pp. 32). The resources involved may be economic goods and service, status, information, forces, legitimacy, authority, or whatsoever that contribute to an actor's happiness or that

which would deprive them of it (Ilchman & Uphoff, 1971, p.51-81).

Third, social actors seek to maximize the value of benefits gained while minimizing that of benefits foregone. To do so, parties involved weigh the value of alternative courses of action in terms of opportunity cost - the value attached to benefits forgone - and choose the most beneficial one (p.53 & 101). For this reason, Ekeh treats the model of social exchange as the behavior of the economic man (Ekeh, 1974, pp.171).

Finally, only those activities which are economical - that is, which produce "payoffs" - tend to be perpetuated through time.

MAJOR TYPES OF EXCHANGE RELATIONSHIP FOR GOAL ATTAINMENT

Listed below are major types of exchange relationships through which people attain their goal. As Emerson (1981) states however, this is obviously not a complete list nor a logically organized typology. The labels as yet have not even been agreed upon in the field (pp. 34).

a. Direct Exchange and Indirect Exchange:

A direct exchange is the simplest type of transaction which involves mutually contingent contributions to the exchange, with both contributions evolving together in some social process (pp.33). A direct exchange may also happen in

the form of a reciprocal transaction which involves paired but separately performed contributions, only one of which is contingent upon the other. A "free gift", or altruistic act might initiate the process. It is "free" in the sense that it is performed in a non-contingent context (with or without an underlying expectation of return). The other's contribution may or may not be received. If it is, and if it is contingent upon (prompted by) the initiating contribution, a reciprocal transaction has occurred.

Once an exchange process is initiated in this manner, it will continue as long as each actor's benefits exceed his costs. Initially, the emerging relationship may be quite unstable. But to the extent that norms such as "reciprocity", "fair exchange" or "distributive justice" do emerge from the exchange transactions, they will tend to strengthen and perpetuate the relationship. In this case, social norms substitute indirect exchange for direct exchange transaction (Blau, 1964, p.2255 - 262). More crucial than shared norms for the maintenance of exchange relationships is a climate of mutual trust among the participants. After an exchange relationship is established, the actors come to trust each other on the basis of past experience. Consequently, they feel secure in committing an increasing amount of their available resources to exchange transactions, thus expanding the scope of the relationship (p.91-96).

b. Restricted Exchange and Generalized Exchange

Restricted exchange refers to the mutual reciprocal exchange between two parties. It may be either exclusive, in which the paired relationships are totally isolated [represented as A - B, C - D]; or inclusive, in which the paired relationships are involved in a network with other exchange relationships [represented as (A - B) - (C - D)] (Ekeh, 1974, p.208).

Generalized exchange is a system of social interaction in which, say, A does not expect a direct rewarding activity from B to whom A does benefit, but rather from another individual, say, C or Z. This type of exchange can only operate in an atmosphere of generalized morality and trust that the system will work (p.205). Based on this idea, people develop the conception of generalized duties and rights at an organization level as well as the construction of citizenship (pp.206 - 207).

Emerson (1967b) brings up the notion of exchange connection as a way of indicating how exchange relations are linked to form particular types of network structures. Connections, can be either positive (cooperative or facilitative) or negative (competitive), unilateral or bilateral (pp.70-73). With these concepts he produces a typology of network structures and examines more complex social structures. Different types of network structure can be portrayed graphically as a set of linked actors. For example,

figure 1. and figure 2. demonstrates a three-actor chain and three-actor loop respectively. Any letter in the graph may represent an individual or a corporate group (or collective actor). Parties performing in the network are viewed as relatively autonomous decision-making actors occupying positions in a structure.

Figure 1.: Exchange Network: A Three-Actor Chain

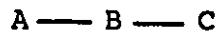
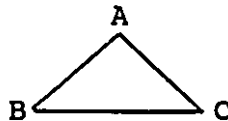


Figure 2.: Exchange Network: A Three-Actor Loop



c. Distributive Exchange and Productive Exchange:

Distributive exchange refers to a flow of resources between exchange parties in a zero-sum manner. It describes who gets (gives) what and when in the exchange process (Ilchman & Uphoff, 1971, pp. 50). As opposed to this kind of simple trading, productive exchange is a mode in which all the parties contribute to collective gain when resources of actors are combined and coordinated to create benefits (Emerson, 1967a, b). Productive exchange usually occurs in a form of

corporate groups which act as a collective actor. The root of the group identification is a function of the level of interdependence among members of the group. In other words, the group tends to continue if it is not possible for its members to obtain any benefit without the group, or such benefit is smaller than their share from the collective gain.

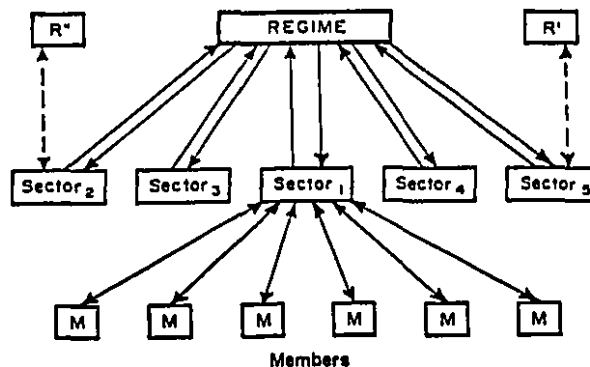
On occasion, within a corporate actor, there is a relationship of principal and agent (Emerson, 1981, pp. 46-49). The principal refers to the corporate as a whole, and the agent is the person or unit which deals with the group affairs and works on behalf of it with an external entity. For a community organization, the principal refers to its membership, while the agent could be the staff or Executive Board. Therefore, we have [(P)-A] - E, with (P) representing the "group" as principal on whose behalf the agent (A) deals with (E)². Inter-organizational exchange can be described within the framework [(P1)-A1]-[A2-(P2)]. Each line is a negotiated exchange relation, and each set of brackets identifies the boundary of a corporate group.

Applying this concept to the analysis of modern polity, all societies - whether they are socialist, capitalist, democratic, or authoritarian - are divided into sectors, or corporate groups, and at the center is the government which engages in systematic exchanges with the various sectors

². The external entity (E) might be a sector of the natural environment that the group deals with through member A, or E might be the agent of another group.

(Ilchman & Uphoff, 1971, pp. 43-45). Graphically, the relationship can be presented as the following:

Figure 3: Exchange Relationship Exchange between Regime and Sectors



POWER IN SOCIAL EXCHANGE RELATIONSHIP

a. Basis of Power:

For exchange theorists, power is a property of social relations. They emphasize that social relations commonly entail ties of mutual dependence between parties. That means each party is in a position, to some degree, to grant or deny, facilitate or hinder, the other's gratification. If the level of dependence on each other is not the same, a power advantage of one party in this exchange relation exists (Emerson, 1962, pp.32; Blau, 1964, pp.14).

As suggested by Emerson (1962), an individual with resources at his or her disposal that enable him or her to meet other's needs can attain power over them provided that four conditions are present. First, they must not have resources that the benefactor needs, otherwise they can obtain what they want from him or her in direct exchange. Second, they must not be able to obtain the benefits from an alternative source, which would make them independent. Third, they must be unable to or unwilling to take what they want by force. Fourth, they must not undergo a change in goal priority that enables them to do without the benefit they originally needed.

The above-mentioned conditions describe exchange processes where there is a differentiation of power due to the dependence of one party on the others. Due to this unilateral dependence, an exchange relation between actors is transformed into a power relations between superior and subordinate. The magnitude of power the superior possesses is a function of the importance of resources and availability of optional exchange partners to the subordinate (Powers, 1985, p.61).

b. Distribution of Power in a Network Structure:

To understand the distribution of power among all the actors in a complex situation, we may make use of the concept of network structure and its graphic presentation. Illustrated below, figure 4 and 5, are two extreme cases. In figure 4, actor A is in a network structure which provides him or her

with a number of alternatives (i.e. B, C, D) for acquiring comparable resources, so that A's dependence on any single exchange partner is minimal. Conversely, actor A is the most powerful one, since he or she is the sole provider of service to actor B, C and D.

Figure 4: Monopolistic Exchange Network Structure

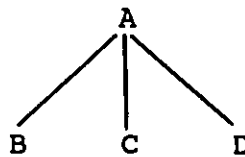
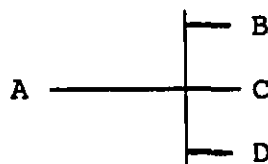


Figure 5 demonstrates a coalition structure. A coalition may be defined as two or more parties who agree to pool their resources to achieve some mutually desired outcome (Komorita, Aquino and Ellis 1989). In this case, actor A becomes much more dependent as long as other exchange partners act collectively.

Figure 5: Coalition Structure



GOAL ATTAINMENT THROUGH SOCIAL EXCHANGE DESPITE POWER DIFFERENCE

In reviewing major concepts of social exchange, goal attainment and differentiation of power in social life, several possible strategies arise through which social actors to can change the power relations from unfavorable to favorable through social exchange processes. Such activity can assist in the attainment of desired goals instead of dependently waiting for the superior's altruistic act. In community organization practice, these strategies may be perceived as tools of empowerment by which "person gain ability to influence relationships and act independently (Torczyner, 1991, pp.16). Emerson prefers to name them as "balancing operations".

Operation 1. Status Recognition

The first operation is to increase the weaker member's power to control the formerly more powerful member through increasing the latter's motivational investment in the relation. This is normally accomplished by giving the individual status recognition in one or more of its many forms, such as prestige, which is highly valued by the recipient but incurring little cost for the giver (Emerson, 1962, pp. 39). For example, a government can bestow awards, knighthoods, medals, and the like on individuals to warrant their support (Ilchman and Uphoff, 1971, pp. 63).

Operation 2.: Coalition Formation

To prevent the exchange partner from access to alternative suppliers of these services is the second operation. The typical means to achieve this purpose is coalition formation among all the alternative suppliers. As long as parties involved in the coalition agree to pool their resources to achieve some mutually desired outcome, it acts as a corporate group and attains higher level of bargaining power (Komorita, Aquino and Ellis 1989). It is a sort of productive exchange relation which is able to induce positive sum effect for its members, given (a) group norms exist and members of the alliance are willing to perform the role; (b) supply of benefits is exceeded by demand. A coalition will disband when supply exceeds demand because coalition members will compete with one another for customers under those conditions (Powers, 1985, pp.62). Actually, the coalition process is basically involved in all organized group functioning, whether the group be called a coalition or not. It is the most commonly used tactic in community organization practice (Brager, 1987; Kahn, 1994).

Operation 3.: Network Extension:

On the contrary, to counter-act the monopolization of resources, the weaker members can choose to extend the network to secure more than one source of resources (Emerson, 1962, pp.67-68;). This operation may take place either by searching

for more alternative exchange partners, if any, or by splitting the monopoly. In his recent book "How People Get Power", Kahn (1994) highlights that "power structures are rarely as unified or monolithic as they are usually considered. Quite often there will be serious conflict of interest and divisions within the power structure." It implies that the careful use of tactics can exploit and intensify these conflicts to the advantage of the poor community by forcing some members of the power structure to bring pressure onto others (pp. 76).

Whether tactics of coalition formation or network extension are used, each actor is required to develop an accurate "perception of the environment", which refers to perceptions of the intent and preferred outcomes of other parties in a situation (Torczyner, 1978, p. 469).

Operation 4.: Motivational Withdrawal

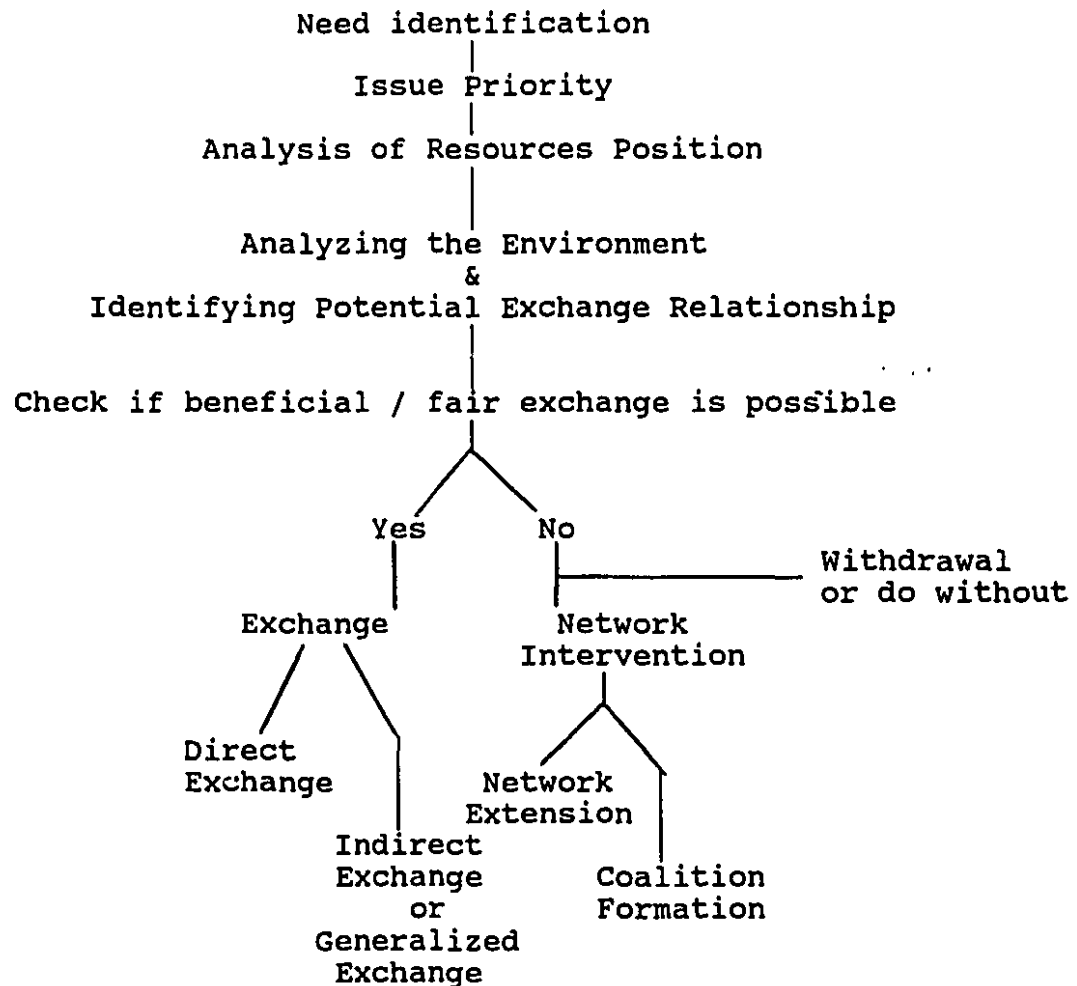
In motivational withdrawal, the weaker member may reduce motivational investment in goals mediated by the powerful. In their discussion on tactical alliance, Lamoureux et al (1989) also stresses the art of retreat: "Retreat is not defeat. It is a tactic that lets you return to a more comfortable position from which you can adjust your strategy and continue the struggle (p.147)." Nevertheless, the use of this tactic depends very much on how urgent the present issue is to the actor involved. That is why the issue priority is perceived as

one of the major factors in determining the selection of organizing strategies (Cox and others, 1974, p.425-429; Torczyner, 1978, p. 469).

SUMMARY

As Olsen (1968) concludes, exchange processes utilize self-interest of actors who are seeking benefits through reciprocal exchanges with others. However, over time these processes develop into stable patterns of power relations and give rise to cultural norms, of which the participants are committed (p.241). The recurrent unilateral supply of important benefits give rise to the differentiation of power. As summarized in figure 5., people can obtain the superior party's support for the attainment of their goal by various proactive strategies, which include status recognition, coalition formation and network extension. To select the best course of action, one needs to assess the issue priority, understand its resource, and explore the availability of mediation outside this relation. Otherwise, the only choice they can make is motivational withdrawal - i.e. temporarily puts aside their goal.

Figure 6 : Strategy for Goal Attainment



RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

The exchange mode of analysis is remarkably insightful for people who are interested in understanding the process of social interaction and the process of social organization. From the discussion of this chapter, the following issues emerge as major points of inquiry for the empirical study.

a. Aspect One: Individual Actor

- i. What is the desired goal of all the parties involved ?
- ii. How urgent and how important is this issue to each party?
- iii. What does the actor consider as he or she chooses alternative course of action ?

b. Aspect Two: Group Actor

- i. To what extent do the group members act collectively and consensually?
- ii. Is there any actor playing the role as an agent in inter-group interaction?
- iii. How does the agent perceive his or her own function?
- iv. How do groups members perceive the agent's function?

c. Aspect Three: Resources

- i. What kind of resources has been used or considered in this process by each party?
- ii. How does each actor assess the value of the resources?

d. Aspect Four: Environment

- i. How does each actor perceive the intent of others?
- ii. Is there any common normative consideration among the actors?
- iii. How did each party relate to one another before the issue was put on the table?

e. Aspect Five: Process

- i. What type of activities occurred?

f. Aspect six: Outcome

- i. What is the outcome at the end of the event?
- ii. Is there anything given out or taken in by each party?
How does each party assess the value of his or her gain or loss?
- iii. What are the determining factors perceived by each party?

CHAPTER FOUR

CASE PRESENTATION

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this section is to provide a "full" story of the organization, the events, and the outcome from the perspective of the informants. The organization of these findings is a serious challenge given the amount of data collected. To provide focus for the discussion in chapter five and to maintain the findings' multi-dimensionality, the information will be presented in as much detail as possible. Following the delineation of the socio-economic context, the organization, and process of development of the events, I will summarize the contributing factors to the outcome perceived by the informants.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

Montreal is the metropolis of Quebec and the heart of Canada's second-largest metropolitan area. Due to the long economic recession over the past decade, more and more people in Canada lost their jobs and became welfare recipients. Here is a quote from the conclusion in the national report of Social Security in Canada:

"Canada's social safety net has protected Canadians fairly well during the past fifty years. However we now face serious challenges. More than 1.2 million children still live in poverty. Too many employable adults face chronic unemployment and have lost hope in the future. Too many of our youth find it difficult to make the transition from school to work. Too many families are juggling the responsibilities of work and home with difficulty. These are just some of the challenges that face Canadians." (Human Resources Development Canada, 1993, p.44).

Table 1 shows the 1990 poverty statistics from province to province in Canada. There were 3.8 million Canadians living below the poverty line, the poverty rate is 14.6 per cent. Quebec had the highest poverty rate (18 % National Council of Welfare, 1992). In 1993, there were more than 450,000 households on welfare in Quebec, a third of whom live in Montreal (National Council of Welfare, 1993). Throughout the Montreal region, almost one person in four, or 24 per cent, can be described as living in poverty (CLSC - Cote-des-Neiges, 1993, p.6).

Moreover, as Table 2 shows, the welfare income lags behind the poverty line set by the government itself (National Welfare Council, 1993). It forces many welfare recipients to live in substandard housing. Others cut back on food in order to be able to afford more livable accommodations, in turn forcing the welfare poor to turn to food banks (National Welfare Council, 1991; Webber, 1992).

Table 1. -- Poverty by Province, 1990

	Number of Poor Persons	Poverty Rate
Newfoundland	88,000	15.6 %
Prince Edward Island	16,000	12.5 %
Nova Scotia	115,000	13.4 %
New Brunswick	101,000	14.3 %
Quebec	1,200,000	18.0 %
Ontario	1,132,000	11.7 %
Manitoba	183,000	17.8 %
Saskatchewan	157,000	16.6 %
Alberta	375,000	15.4 %
British Columbia	454,000	14.6 %
Canada	3,821,000	14.6 %

Source: National Council of Welfare.(1992). Poverty Profile, 1980 - 1990. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada.

Table 2: Adequacy of Benefit in Quebec, 1992

	Welfare Income	Poverty line	%
Single Employable	6,186	15,175	41
Disabled Person	8,016	15,175	53
Single Parent, one child	12,157	20,569	59
Couple, two Children	15,596	30,105	52

Source: National Council of Welfare. (1993). Welfare Income 1992. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada.

In Cote-des-Neiges, where the events took place, the proportion of people living below the poverty line was 33.2 per cent. Among persons 65 and older living alone, more than one in two is classified as poor in the Cote-des-Neiges (50.4%) and the unemployment rate is 14 per cent in Cote-des-Neiges. For the Montreal area the rate is 11.9 per cent (CLSC - Cote-des-Neiges, 1992, p.6). Based on Statistic Canada's analysis of 1991 income-tax returns, Cote-des-Neiges is a low income neighborhood. The median income is less than \$ 15,000 a year (The Gazette, 1993).

The declining standard of living of the people who live in the community is also reflected in the increasing demand for services at Multi-Caf. The meal program regularly served nearly a hundred meals a day. In addition, more than sixty families received service from the "Infant Formula Distribution Program." The food basket program has grown exponentially since it was first offered in 1987. The number of households receiving food baskets grew from 30 households in 1987 to over 500 households in 1993 per month (Multi-Caf, 1993, pp.3).

MULTI CAF - A "SECOND HOME" FOR THE POOR

Multi-Caf is a community cafeteria and food depot that serves the poor of Cote-des-Neiges and Snowdon district in

Montreal. It was founded by Project Genesis³ in 1986 to fight the growing problem of hunger in the community (Project Genesis, 1985, pp.20). For one dollar, people can eat a full meal, usually a bowl of soup, a meat dish, fruit and coffee or tea. It attracts people like Ms. R whose welfare cheque is too little for food. In an interview, she shared:

"My five-seventeen monthly welfare cheque mainly goes to my landlord and pay the hydro bill. Before I came here, I had eaten cat food for months... and now I comes to Multi Caf from Monday to Friday to have lunch and to get the food basket once a month. I have a lot of pride but I put aside my pride. My stomach is more important."

The vision to set up the cafeteria is not limited to food services. Multi-Caf recognizes that the problems associated with poverty required the organization to go a step further. Thus, a community organizer is employed to sensitize the service users and to mobilize them to act on poverty related issue in the city. During the interview, Mr. K, the executive director, shared the mission of his work at Multi-Caf:

"We are here to respond to food needs, but also to act as a center for the poor... We're trying to bring people together, you know, to change the situation that makes them have to use the food bank. We are trying to break the cycle of poverty.. we have a larger vision ... that was one of economic ... and social justice. What we try to do is popular education, we try and build on the strengths that people bring to Multi-caf. And the strength is ironically, their life experience..."

Since 1986 Multi-Caf has tried to maintain a welcoming

³. Project Genesis is a community organization founded in 1977 following a research by the McGill School of Social Work on Jewish poverty in Cote-des-Neiges. It offers individual and community services to resolve social problem and to serve the needs of residents in the Cote-des-Neiges/Snowdon community.

environment and to function as a meeting place where those who are alone and in need could find comfort and support. It organizes different activities such as language classes, recreational outings, film screening, information sessions, etc., Mr. A, a community organizer of Multi-Caf told the reporter in an interview:

"People come here (Multi-Caf) early in the morning and leave in the afternoon. They come here a lot to fraternize. There is really feeling of solidarity" (Derfel, 1991).

Actually, from the conversation with the volunteer, service users and board members, there was no doubt that Multi-Caf is able to materialize their mission. To the service users, the community cafeteria is "a big family" and "a little clubhouse." During the site observation, I found people exchanging clothes, books, and telephone numbers. These were the words of Ms. B., Mr. K. and Mr. D.:

"it's a very important place for many people and there are many people that come here that don't eat breakfast and it gets them out of the house, takes away the loneliness and we're like one big family...it seems to me there is a magnet from my house to here."

" (Multi-Caf) is an amazing place. It's like a microcosm of society. You know, you come here and you see people from all walks of life, from all different countries in the world. There's a good community spirit here."

"Besides from the food service, we have different outings, different activities and everything. It's important to have that because it gives people the sense of belonging to something rather than being isolated. They can develop a network. They can develop new contacts. They can develop meeting new people to possibly find a job."

Going further, Multi-Caf also actively works together

with other community organizations to defend the rights of low income people. In the Annual Report 1991-1992, it was stated:

"As partners in the social change movement, Multi Caf is challenged to find new strategies to fight the degradation of living conditions of increasing numbers of people who are marginalized in our society" (Multi Caf, 1993, p.5).

Multi-Caf gets most of its funding from Centraide and the Federal Government. In spite of regular donations of prepared food from Saint Justine's Hospital and other local organizations, they still need to spend more than 18 per cent of the budget for the supply of food (Multi-Caf, 1991). Due to a tight budget, Multi-Caf shared the space with La Maison des Jeunes on a back street, 3732 De Courtrai Street, for the first five years. Multi Caf used it in the morning and the center opened in the afternoon. In 1991, the annual rent that Multi-Caf paid was \$ 9,720. This amount comprised 12.53 per cent of the total the expenditure in their annual budget (Multi-Caf, 1992).

THE STORY: A SEARCH FOR NEW PREMISES

Issue Formation Stage: December 1990 to March 1991

As early as December 1990, the directors of Multi-Caf recognized that they needed to find another place to continue their services. The executive director reported at the Board of Director's meeting that the relationship between Multi-Caf and Maison des Jeunes was getting worse. The latter kept complaining that Multi-Caf made the building filthy and vermin

infested (Multi-Caf, 1991). Their relationship deteriorated further as Maison Des Jeunes's telephone answering machine was stolen because, it was alleged, Multi-Caf left the door unlocked. In early 1991, they were told by the landlord, the Maison des Jeunes, that their lease would not be renewed. The lease was to end on the 31st of December.

More fundamentally, the space was too small to fit the expanding scale of operation as a result of the ever increasing demand for services. Mr. K., an Extra program worker⁴ shared:

"The place was too small... We had a room about the size of a cupboard to store everything. Demand was going..increasing tremendously for food baskets and we didn't have the space to function properly."

In light of this situation, the Board of Directors decided in February 1991 to search for a new place to continue their services and by so doing to raise the user's consciousness of their rights (Multi-Caf, 1991). Yet, the staff was overwhelmingly preoccupied with the daily functioning of the services. In the meantime, the McGill Consortium for Human Rights Advocacy and Training (MCHRT)⁵

⁴. Extra Program is a provincial government program for welfare recipients under the age of 30 to do community work for 20 hours a week for 15 months and earned \$ 900 on top of their regular welfare income. There were almost forty Extra workers placed at Multi Caf in 1990 - 1991 (Goldenberg, 1991).

⁵ MCHRT is an advocacy training institute under the auspice of McGill University. It brings together distinguished jurists, academics and advocates in the fields of law and social work to assist community organizations to secure rights and entitlement for disadvantaged persons through advocacy techniques rooted in law and social work (Torczyner 1992).

received financial support from the Fonds des Services Aux Collectivités to assist community organizations, which included Multi Caf, to "develop and enhance organizing programs in human rights advocacy" (Torczyner, 1990). Multi-Caf's crisis situation was located as a good opportunity for promoting service user's participation and strengthening the function of the Board of Directors. MCH.RAT decided to hire a part-time organizer, Ms. L, for Multi-Caf to co-ordinate the organizing effort on the issue. According Ms. L, there were two major objectives to be achieved in the process (MCH.RAT, 1991):

- i. To assist Multi-Caf to secure new premises.
- ii. To assist Multi Caf to develop internal structures which will facilitate the overall infrastructure and decision-making within the organization.

Among the staff and the Board members, it was agreed that this issue could be used to force the City to deal with the poverty phenomenon and to legitimize their service by moving it from the side street to the main street. These are the words from Mr. J, the executive director of Multi-Caf:

"These are people (service users) who are really, I mean, outer edges of our community, of our society, people who have been forgotten about, people who are not the subjects of the policies that are being adopted in order to make them feel more comfortable.... But I think through the telephone campaign, letters, lobbying and showing up at City meetings, the real face of poverty was transmitted very well to our elected official."

Exploration Stage: March to June 1991

In March 1991, Ms. L was employed by MCHRAT for Multi Caf to take charge of the organizing work on the issue. In response to the first objective, a strategy committee was formed to work on the new premises for the organization. The committee included service recipients, board members, activists from the community and staff from Multi-Caf and MCHRAT. The committee was also responsible for mobilizing and training other recipients to become involved in advocating for their organization. Along with this mobilization process, Ms. L and Mr. J tried to strengthen the function of the Board of Directors as the decision-making body in Multi Caf. Besides reporting updated information at their meeting, board members were encouraged to participate in every part of the campaign.

From the very beginning, many users became very concerned about the issue:

"we were all very concerned and very upset and just hoping that we'd be able to find a place so that we could continue seeing each other and getting together and eating together and it also bought certain jobs for some people which is also very important."

Some of the users participated in looking for places which might be affordable, suitable for their operation and well located in Cote-des-Neiges. It was soon discovered that most of the locations were neither affordable nor suitable. The rent sought turned out to be as much as three quarters of Multi-Caf's annual budget which was definitely beyond their

financial capacity. Eventually, the Board of Directors concluded that there was no alternative but the basement in an old synagogue in the neighborhood which has been renamed Center De la Peltrie. The building had been leased to the City of Montreal and managed by the Department of Recreational and Community Development Services.

According to Ms. H, the executive director of Project Genesis and a Board member of Multi-Caf, space is always a big issue in Cote-des-Neiges. At that time, the community groups in Cote-des-Neiges were working together to push the City of Montreal to clarify the criteria for the use of the city-owned building. Multi-Caf was determined to participate in this joint effort in order to explore the possibility of using the synagogue (Multi Caf, 1991). However, the councilors and regional manager of the Recreation and Community development Services insisted that it was not their mandate to allow Multi-Caf to use the place, for priority should be given to recreational activities rather than other ongoing community services.

Action Stage: July to August 1991

After four months of exploration for alternative solutions and potential resources, the organizers decided to focus their efforts on pushing the City of Montreal for substantial support. The alternatives raised were whether the City Council would allow them to use the Center De la Peltrie or help them find a new place, as well as help them pay the

rent and make necessary renovations.

a. Mobilization for internal and external support:

The organizers recognized that in order to be productive, effective, and successful, they had to get as many people involved as possible. They started to sensitize the service users and volunteers to get involved and to keep them informed about the progress of the issue. A Users Committee was established to discuss the development of the issue, delegate different tasks, and to prepare the action for the "big event" on August 26th. They met approximately six times in a large group and three times in small groups. Some of the users also met to work on specific tasks, such as preparing songs, placards, and role-playing for the public hearing. In addition, every time the staff met new people, they would share with them the details of the issue. Newsletters and pamphlets were prepared to update the information for their members. Users were also encouraged to solicit support from their friends and relatives. Ms. L recalled that there were around 40-50 non-users participating in signing the petitions.

Multi-Caf also tried to gain as many alliances in the community as possible. In fact, Multi-Caf had already been an active participant at the Cote-des-Neiges / Snowdon Community Council⁶ since 1990 (Multi-Caf, 1991). The director of Multi-

6. The Cote-des-Neiges / Snowdon Community Council is founded by community joint effort initiated by Project Genesis in late 80's. It works on issues such as economic development, activities to counter racism, to fight poverty and to ensure consultation amongst groups in the community. To strengthen its operation, Project Genesis offered a community organizer to this council in its early years. According to the annual report 1991-1992 of Project Genesis, there were 32 member organizations (Project Genesis, 1985, 1993).

Caf was the president of the Council at that time. Referring to what Ms. H said, these organizations were annoyed with the City about the issue of space for community activities. The relationship between community groups and the City grew even worse, as the latter had rented a premises, Snowdon Theater, to Flex-Art, a private gymnastics group and neglected the need of community groups in the district. Hence, most of the community groups showed their support for Multi Caf's demands. Approximately, there were about thirteen to fourteen local organizations which sent their letters of support to the City Council.

In addition, the issue was brought to the advisory board meetings as well as organizers' meeting at MCHRAT. Support and technical advice for action were gathered from legal experts and experienced organizers (MCHRAT 1991a, b, c.).

b. Negotiation and Lobbying:

i. Direct Contact with the city councilors and administrator:

According to the structure of the City Council in Montreal, the major decision making body is the Executive Committee, which is comprised of the Mayor and six other Councilors named by the Mayor and approved by the Council. However, it is the District Advisory Committee (DAC) which screens local issues and irons them out before they are presented to the Executive Committee and Council as a whole (Herland, 1992, p.47-48). For this reason, Multi-Caf located

the DAC as the target for negotiation. In order to grasp individual councilors' personal attitude toward their demand, staff and Board members met all the DAC members individually. They highlighted the importance of Multi-Caf to the community and also gathered information on the costs for renovations and the rent for a new premises. Among the DAC members⁷, one of them, who was one of the two councilors from the opposition party - Democratic Coalition of Montreal (DCM), showed the most enthusiasm. He privately contacted Multi-Caf's staff and publicly declared support for Multi-Caf's demands (Goldenberg, 1991).

In the meantime, the organizers were also aware that it was the administration unit of the city which prepared information and solutions to the city councilors. Regarding the use of the building that Multi-Caf proposed, it fell on the responsibility of the Department of Recreation and Community Development, which oversees the municipal recreation and cultural activities and monitors provincial programs for low-income residents. Thus, Multi-Caf also put pressure on the regional manager of the department from time to time.

At this stage, the organizer got the impression that the city government did not feel that it was an issue for them. The first response from the administration was very clear that

7. In the DAV VII, which oversees the Cote-des-Neiges / Notre-dame-de-grace area, four out of seven councilors were members of the government party - Montreal Citizens' Movement (MCM), two were members of the opposition party - Democratic Coalition of Montreal (DCM), and one was independent. The chairman of the committee is a founding member and former president of the MCM, while both of the two DCM councilors had been MCM councillor since 1982 but left the party and formed the DCM in 1989.

"it was not the City's job and there was no way to help". The city councilors' reaction were rather ambivalent and inconsistent. They responded differently as they were met individually and in group meetings.

iii. Presenting the situation at City Council's general meeting

On July 1st, 1991, Multi-Caf made a motion at the City Council's general meeting to request support from the Executive Committee. They wanted to be sure that the councilors were aware of the urgency of the issue and hoped to force them to respond to it in front of the media. The city councilors openly promised that they would take their concern seriously and see what they could do for them.

iii. Letter to Mayor:

In July 26th, a letter was sent to Mayor Jean Dore to explain Multi-caf's situation and how the community would suffer if Multi-Caf was forced to close.

d. Pressure Tactics

i. Phoning Campaign:

After the organizer located the member of the Executive Committee who oversaw the City of Montreal's urban and community development services, users and volunteers were mobilize to make phone calls to his office. According to Ms. L., the organizer, there were approximately thirty calls per day. Although they were not able to talk to the councilor,

they were confident that their action successfully reminded the councilor of the urgency of their request. The following is a description of the response from the councilor's office:

"we've never got to talk to him but everyone talked to the secretary... the secretary phoned and said 'stop this... you are driving me crazy... we've got your message... we know this is an important issue..."

ii. The Climax: flooding the District Advisory Committee Meeting

After months of negotiation, the organizers targeted the public meeting of the District Advisory Committee, on 26th August, 1991, as the "climax" of their action. The objective of this action was to force the District Committee to give them concrete answers for their request by the middle of September. To do so, users were encouraged to invite their relatives and friends to show up at the public hearing. The organizers and the participants who were more active started the preparation for action three weeks prior to the meeting.

Ms. B was very involved in this period because she felt the issue was very urgent to everyone at Multi-Caf. To articulate her points of view on this issue, she wrote a song and led other service users and the supporters to sing it before the media and the members of the District Advisory Committee:

"We shout... we sing...
We let our voices ring.
Don't close... Don't close...
our Multi Caf.

We go... to eat...
five days a week.
Good food... New friends...
at Multi Caf.

So we... repeat...
don't leave us on the street.
Don't close... Don't close...
our Multi Caf.

To empower the service users to express their own views at the meeting, the organizers helped them prepare their speech and role-played with them to reduce their level of stress. Altogether, there were seven users who testified about the importance of Multi-Caf's service to various types of people - psychiatric patients, new immigrants, single parent families, unemployed youth...etc. Placards and balloons were also prepared to illustrate their demands. As reported, more than seventy five people⁸ from Multi-Caf and other community groups attended the event.

The culminating point of that night came as the organizers and volunteers served a meal to the participants. It demonstrated the urgent need of their service vividly and caught attention from the mass media. This event was reported by local radio stations, televisions, and newspapers in full details.

8. The number of users and supporters at the DAC meeting was not sure. Ms. L thought it was more than seventy five, while the Gazette reported more than one hundred fifty.

e. Use of Mass Media

Throughout the event, the organizers kept close contact with the mass media. Press releases were sent to describe the eviction crisis and its progress. Press conferences were organized to make their request for help a reality to the general public in the City of Montreal. For the event on August 26, they kept close contact with various newspapers to assure their coverage.

THE FINAL OUTCOME AND CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

On September 25, the Executive Committee of the City of Montreal finally decided that the City would help Multi-Caf temporarily relocate to the Center de la Peltrie in January 1992. After that, the city planned to let the service move to the St. Pascal Baylon Church building after the renovation of the basement was complete. Moreover, the City also spent nearly forty thousand dollars to renovate the Center de la Peltrie for Multi-Caf's operation. The decision was publicly announced at the District Advisory Committee meeting on September 30. In recognition of the City's support, flowers were presented to the councilors at the DAC meeting, and a silver ladle was presented to Mayor Jean Dore at the opening ceremony for the new space (Herland, 1992).

To all the informants I interviewed, Multi-Caf's organizing effort was remarkably successful. Table 3 lists the informants' ideas on the contributing factors for Multi-Caf's

success.

The category of decision-makers refers to the three Councilors - the Chairman of the District Advisory Committee, the Spokesperson of Montreal Citizens' Movement (MCM) on this issue and the Councillor from DCM - and the Regional Manager of the Recreation and Community Development Services Department. Mr. S, the MCM city councilor, emphasized that there was unanimity among the councilors no matter who was from the opposition party or the governing party. It was

Table 3: Perceived Contributing factors to the outcome

Perceived Factors	Decision Makers (n=4)	Staff (n=3)	Users & Board Members (n=6)	Others (n=2)
The place is there	1	3	3	/
Cost is little	/	/	3	/
Political pressure				
from the users	1	3	6	2
from the community	1	3	3	1
from the landlord	/	/	/	1
Lobbying effort	/	1	1	/
Media Coverage	/	3	5	/
The need is real	4	3	6	2
Organizer's contribution	3	2	4	/
Councillor's contribution	1	2	2	/

agreed that it should be a top priority to meet the need that Multi-Caf presented. However, it was stressed that this decision was merely a temporary measure on an urgent basis. Otherwise, the city would not modify its priorities to make

space for it. Besides, from the councilor's point of view, the mediation function of the organizer is one of the major contributions. The following is a direct quote from Mr. S's comment:

"They can mediate different opinion and different resources together and put them on to your table so that you can make a decision. I think Ms. L has done quite a good job."

Among the councilors, only Mr. R., the councilor of the opposition party pinpointed the importance of the political pressure from the community.

For the staff, users and Board members, the cause of the outcome was more multi-dimensional. All of them believed that it was because the place was available and affordable to the City of Montreal. Mr. A., the organizer, states "It didn't cost the city a lot of money. There were only some repairs needed to be done." Some of them were also aware of some of the councilors' positive attitude and support toward their demands. More importantly, as Ms. H's opinion quoted below, all of them greatly appreciated the tremendous pressure which was put on the decision making body.

"I think it got to the point where they felt that it would have been a greater political cost. If that wasn't successful, we were going to go to City Hall and we would maybe serve supper at City Hall and we would continue and continue. We were convinced that it was a fight that could be won."

It is worthwhile to highlight that the organizers contribution was strongly respected by both the decision-makers and people from Multi-Caf. Interesting enough, the

councilors stressed the organizers' mediation function, while the users and board members emphasized their mobilizing efforts in the negotiation process.

For the third party participants, including the reporter of district newspaper and the worker at the Local Community Services Center - Cote-des-Neiges, the City Council's final concession was an outcome of the pressure put on the decision makers and the urgent needs of the service to the community.

To examine the outcome of their organizing effort, a wider perspective was taken among the staff and members of the Board of Directors of Multi-Caf. Going beyond the issue of a new space, they also recognized the campaign's impact on the following aspects:

In the first place, it was believed that the service needs which Multi-Caf represented was legitimized. The city government eventually modified its own priorities for the use of city-owned buildings and offered a location for the operation of a community cafeteria. It was particularly amazing to the organizers as the decision was made unusually expeditious.

"That was a real miracle. The miracle is to make the whole machine move... and suddenly... and R. (the Regional Manager) was also very surprised because he said to me once 'I don't understand what you did but it's the first time I see the machine move so fast.'"

"I remember R. (the regional manager) tell us afterwards that we had moved on the City of Montreal's agenda, at least for Cotes des Neiges, from priority number 4641 to the first."

Second, because of the mobilization effort for this event, the sense of belonging and involvement among the service users were thoroughly strengthened, while the decision making function of the Board of Directors became more established. As a whole, the staff, Board members, and the users thought Multi-Caf gained significant maturity through the handling of this crisis. The following are quotes from Mr. S, the chairman of the Board of Directors, and Mr. K, the executive director:

"We have annual general assemblies to elect people to our Board of Directors and we had I think ninety people which is a lot of people and at the last meeting we only had fifty five or sixty people... so we did have a lot of participation in that meeting. That came just right after all this was happening."

"I think what we gained was maturity. I think it's funny because around the same time, we became separate from Project Genesis. I think that took place on paper (their constitution) but I think the actual process in fact took place with that whole fight and the move to this building. I feel like there was almost a regeneration at Multi-caf... it was almost like the child moving out of the house."

Lastly, the mobilization process was definitely a beneficial opportunity for them to promote their organization through on-going media coverage of this event. Not to mention wide coverage of the event on August 26th, information related to their service and the crisis has appeared over and over in local and district newspapers.

CONCLUSION

In Chinese, the word "crisis" is a paradox. It refers to a situation which simultaneously consists of "threat" and "opportunity". Admittedly, Multi-Caf was able to grasp the positive side of the eviction crisis and wonderfully turned the threats into opportunities. They successfully forced the City to put aside the so-called mandate and priority, and let the service move its operation from the back street to the main street and into a city-owned building. The users of a food bank learned and experienced how to exercise their power. Their successful experience is definitely of high reference value to other social activists and deserves further analysis and discussion.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter detailed the socio-economic background, the history of development of the events themselves, the outcome and its underlying factors. A narrative approach was adopted to keep the story within the informants' perspective, in order for readers to interpret with reference to their own experience. However, in the course of data collection and analysis, several ideas came to my mind that would be of interest to other social activists.

GOAL ATTAINMENT: MEANS AND ENDS

a. Multi-Caf's Vision Revisited

Multi-Caf was founded as a community organization and more than just a food bank. The staff are critically conscious that food banks could be institutionalized and become part of the system which marginalizes the poor and keeps them living with a level of benefits below the poverty line. From its onset, Multi-Caf positions itself as an alternative service organization for breaking the poverty cycle. Like other groups of this type, Multi-Caf adopts a non-hierarchical mode of

organization for greater user' participation (Lustiger-Thaler & Shragge, 1993, 164).

This identity and structure helps us understand why Multi-Caf formulated its goals and strategies in the way that it did.

b. Goals and Tactics for Goal Attainment

A summary of the initial goals of the campaign and different tactics which were used by Multi-Caf's organizers is presented in table 4. Reviewing the informants' perception of the underlying factors for the final outcome, we will find that the goals listed in table 4 are related. In fact, sensitizing community members and encouraging user participation are not only in and of themselves but are perceived as major contributing factors by most of the informants to the success of the initiative. In other words, these are not only end goals towards which Multi-Caf was striving, but are also means to secure new premises and pressure the City to assume responsibility. Without user participation in the phone campaign and giving testimony at DAC's public meeting, the campaign might not have been as successful.

On the other hand, from the interviews with those service users who were involved in the campaign, I got a strong impression that they are more than service recipients, and they feel a sense of involvement which contributed to the success of the campaign.

Table 4: Identified Goals and Tactics

Goals	Tactics
1. to secure new premises;	Media Strategy: Lobbying individual councilors; Testifying at City's public meetings; Phone Campaign; Mobilizing community support;
2. to force the City to take responsibility to act on the poverty problem;	Testifying at City's public meetings; Media strategy; Phone Campaign; Mobilizing community support;
3. to sensitize community members concerning the problem of urban poverty	Mobilizing community support; Media strategy; Encourage users to gather friends & relatives' support;
4. to strengthen users' concern & participation in internal organization affairs;	Individual contacts, Leaflets & newsletters to keep users informed of the crisis & its development; Organizing users committee and informal meetings to get users involved.

They are not only proud of the success but also have become more identified with the organization and eager to be involved in the organization's affairs. In a nutshell, the achievement of goal 1 and 2, in turn, contributed to the attainment of

goal 4.

It is very common for community organizations to establish a set of multiple goals in a campaign (Butcher et al, 1980). It is often, however, that the organizer gets confused in defining the means and ends of their action as the amount of work increases. As well, members and volunteers sometimes become no more than a type of instrument for the organization to realize their ultimate concern. Member participation becomes merely rhetoric. In other cases, the organizers are overwhelmed by sensitizing individual members, or resolving members' interpersonal conflicts, and lose control over the direction towards the achievement of substantial task versus process goals.

Skepticism related to these concerns prevailed in my mind in the early stage of this study. As the interviews with the organizers and the participants went on, I learned that encouraging members' participation in the process of achieving other task goals is practically feasible and important. Moreover, two major factors are identified to explain this accomplishments: First, the personal qualities of the organizers are of the most importance. Both of the community organizers, Ms. L and Mr. A, were described as devoted, friendly and kindhearted. They were willing to spend hours working with the participants, designing placards, and preparing the testimony and role plays. They understood service users' sense of powerlessness and were patient to

support the users giving ideas, acquiring techniques, and appreciating their own contribution. In Alinsky's words, the organizers successfully built users' confidence and hope in the idea of organization and thus in themselves (Alinsky, 1971, p.113). Secondly, the strategy committee, which involved experienced organizers and board members, functioned very well in terms of overseeing the situation and giving advice on different tactics for action. It was particularly significant at the early stage when the organizers were faced with multifarious types of task and user participation was not yet established. Overall, the accomplishment of their multiple goals could be explained by their appropriate use of user participation and organizers' expertise.

INTERRELATEDNESS BETWEEN MAJOR ACTORS

a. Major Actor and the Presenting Issue

i. Service Users:

Among the users, it was quite clear that they were very concerned with the survival of the organization. Regardless of whether or not they took part in the activities, they believed that if Multi-Caf failed to get the premises, the organization would come to an end. During the interviews, all the users stated that they were extremely worried about losing what they could get from Multi-Caf - food and fraternity. In other words, they were the major beneficiary of the campaign and the issue was especially urgent to them.

This sense of urgency was found to be of central importance in the mobilization process. All of the people in Multi-Caf observed that it was not easy to motivate service users to participate. The following is a direct quote from Mr. S and Mr. D, a Board member and a service user respectively:

"There are many people who come here just for a meal. To some of them, it is the only meal of the day and they're not interested in anything else."

"The biggest problem here is the feeling of powerlessness of people who have been marginalized by this society. We do not feel that their voice will be listened to..."

However, as the users came to realize that this was a real life or death situation for the cafeteria, the sense of urgency became a motivational force to break through the sense of helplessness and apathetic attitude.

"I think we were able to mobilize quite a few people on this issue because it was something that obviously touched them very closely in their daily lives, you know. It wasn't anything that was abstract. It was a very concrete issue for them and so we saw a number of people who were mobilized aren't the most active people here."

Multi-Caf's success in mobilizing service users' participation, in turn, gave itself a potent resource and made the organization become a legitimate collective actor regarding the issue of hunger. The following is a quote which shows how Ms. L, the organizer, perceived the importance of the user:

"As an organizer, I did not have the same creditability as the users... Hunger affected them and their families. If the Multi Caf was going to

close, they and their families would be in hunger. .. They could give the city councilors a real sense of what was so important. Nobody could do better than they had done."

During the early stages, the public could understand Multi-Caf's situation only in terms of abstract data from the newspapers which revealed the number of people being affected. This picture of the community's need, however, could not have become more concrete than by dozens of service users flooding the DAC meeting and sharing their touching stories.

Unlike going to other charity organizations to get food, those who had taken part in the campaign found themselves more than service recipients for they had a role to play in this cafeteria. In other words, users' participation and their successful experience not only built up their self-confidence but also substantially strengthened their sense of belonging to the organization.

ii. The Councilors:

The District Advisory Committee which concerned mainly socio-cultural activities and played merely an advisory role has been criticized for its limited jurisdiction (Panet-Raymond, 1990; Shragge, 1990, p.75). It was targeted as a "sitting duck" in the campaign because : Firstly, the staff of Multi-Caf believed that the municipal government should not ignore the question of urban poverty and leave it to the provincial and federal governments. Secondly, the place that Multi-Caf desired is a building leased to the City and thus the DAC became an appropriate and visible forum through which

to channel the request.

Theoretically, the city councilors had legitimate power to refuse Multi-Caf's demand. As Mr. S argued that social welfare provision is out of the city council's mandate:

"We didn't want to get involved in a field that is the responsibility of the Provincial Government and the tendencies of the government to throw in our direction responsibility that they don't want to take care of."

According to the Recreation and Community Development Department's priority for the use of the community center, Multi-Caf is obviously not the preference⁹. Additionally, inadequate office space for community organizations had already been a great problem in the Cote-des-Neiges district (Herland, 1992). One must ask, in this case, what made the city councilors change their stance from being opposed to supportive towards Multi-Caf's demand?

The factors given by the informants help to answer this question. However, in order to spell out how these factors effected in these events, it is necessary for us to go beyond the issue of resources or mandates and to examine the political context behind the story.

Cote-des-Neiges and its neighborhood is a district which houses a large part of the Montreal Citizen's Movement's (MCM)

9. According to the regional manager of the Recreation and Community Development Department, the priority for the use of the community center is: First: recreation activities provided by the organization which develops activities in partnership with the City and serves the population in this district. Second: Leisure activities provided by non-partner organization. Third: activities serve other community needs.

early foundation (Herland, 1992). However, many of the previously strong MCM councilors are the ones who bailed out to create the Democratic Coalition of Montreal (DCM) in 1989 and acted as watchdogs on the current administration (Roy and Weston, 1989). Since then, rivalry between these two municipal parties became apparent in this region.

In a 1991 by-election, only two months after the Multi-Caf eviction crisis was resolved, the MCM lost one seat to the DCM in this district. As an incumbent from the MCM, the chairperson of the DAC VII during the campaign defeated his rival from the DCM only by a slight margin (refers to appendix C). More interestingly, in the 1990 election, one of the candidates from the DCM who ran against Mr. S, the spokesperson for the MCM for this study, was formerly a community organizer of Multi-Caf.

Perhaps it is pre-mature to reduce the resolution of Multi-Caf's issue as a result of the councilors' political concerns. Once Multi-Caf's eviction crisis became a community problem in the public media, the councilors' stance toward Multi-Caf's demands would either credit, or otherwise threaten their public image. Thus, it is plausible that the political situation turned the relationship between Multi-Caf and the city councilors from an one-sided dependency into a potentially inter-dependent one. In other words, the political situation provided Multi-Caf with leverage in the lobbying process, even though both parties might not have spelled this

out explicitly.

iii. Administration

According to Ms. L and Mr. K, the staff at Multi-Caf, the greatest resistance came from the administrator who managed the community center. Here are direct quotes from what they shared:

"All kinds of question about why are the municipal councilor not the ones who are setting the policy? Why are the bureaucrats?"

"I realized personally that something I never realized in my life, that the power of the civil service in the whole functioning. Its amazing! They are the ones who have the real power you know."

In his book Lobbying for Social Change, Richan (1991) recapitulated two major characteristics of the civil servants that he came across: Because of the job security, this kind of work attracts people who by nature are not risk takers. Regardless of who it is, the civil servant is keenly aware that his or her career prospects hinge directly on the continued flow of funds. Avoiding reduction of one's budget is a high priority (p.60-61). Not surprisingly, these attributes are also applicable to the regional manager of the Recreation and Community Development Department who played an influential role in the negotiation process.

In the interview, Mr. R, the regional manager, revealed his concern of the limitation of financial resources if the councilors chose to support Multi-Caf's request:

"Even though they (the councilors) don't have the responsibility, they sometimes want to because there are situations that are serious that they want to help. The problem for the municipality is that we don't have the legal responsibility, we don't have the legal power of taxation. So, we take on the responsibility, we have to cover the costs of assuming that responsibility but we don't get any extra money from the other levels of government and what that means is that we have less money to meet the needs of the areas where we do have responsibilities. So, that's where the municipal administration is in a difficult position."

Although the regional manager had great reservation about the councilors' decision, he was able to play the role of a middle man. After the City decided to let Multi-Caf move into the community center, he withheld his resistance and worked with Multi-Caf. The following is the impression that Ms. H, a Board member, got from the ongoing interaction:

"I have a great deal of difficulty figuring out where Mr. R really stands because he is a better politician than the politicians and he always on everybody's side, he's in a fairly comfortable position."

iv. Community Organizations

In terms of support from the community, there are two types of sources: one is those organizations which consistently and materially support their food services, such as the hospital and churches. Another source is community groups with whom Multi-Caf has been constantly working with on a number of local issues, which include the shortage of space for community activities. These community groups showed their support by making phone calls, signing petitions and writing

letters to their city councilors. Some of them also sent members to show up at the DAC meeting.

Based on gathered materials, the involvement of the community groups and organizations might be motivated by a number of factors: First they strongly identified that the food service was an urgent need in the neighborhood. Second they have already developed a partnership, if not symbiotic, relationship through working together in the community council for years. As aforesaid, the executive director of Multi-Caf at that time was the president of the community council. Third, among these organizations, there was already a negative feeling toward the administration which was handling the space issue. Here is the quote from Mr. K, the executive director of Multi-Caf:

"we could look back and we had worked with other groups screaming about the situation of space behind us so it wasn't like this came out of the blue... an emergency situation which developed because this city has not been able to develop policies for community organizations here that are going to help them... when we were having hard time, they all (community organizations) gave their support."

With unambiguous support from the community, Multi-Caf's need legitimized as not its own problem but a community need which justified the City's intervention.

v. Media

It is generally agreed that reporters and commentators perform valuable surveillance and interpretive functions in

society by publicizing social problems and government mismanagement and by summarizing and interpreting the crucial issues from day to day. From the point of view of politics, the media is not simply a source of information, it also performs agenda-setting and mood-shaping functions (Gilsdorf, 1985). That is they can determine what is important and convey this to many people, and even establish value perspectives.

In order to solicit support from the public, the organizers skillfully made use of the above-mentioned functions of the media. From the very beginning, the issue was depicted as a community crisis instead of a problem of Multi-Caf itself. Wide media coverage on the events made the eviction crisis a public issue for Montreal. In the news releases and interviews, solid data and concise portrayals depicted the traumatic impact the closure of Multi-Caf would have on the community. The following is a piece from a news report (Goldenberg, 1991):

"We now have a sword hanging over our heads....if Multi-Caf is forced to close 100 people would no longer have access to daily meals, 5000 families would no longer benefit from the distribution of food baskets, 3 permanent jobs would be lost and 40 social assistance workers would be deprived of the programs offered by the organization."

As Mr. G, a reporter of The Suburban¹⁰, disclosed in the interview, the major criteria for the selection of issue is

10. The Suburban is a district newspaper. In terms of volume of circulation, it is the second largest English newspaper in Quebec. Since it is free, the major income source is from advertisement.

simply "something of reader's interest." Obviously, the depiction of the situation as a community problem, rather than an eviction crisis of a community organization, is appealing to the public and well fit for the taste of the reporter. In turn, media coverage on the issue became a political leverage for Multi-Caf lobbying the city councilors.

b. Interdependence: Power and Exchange

To illuminate the interrelatedness between the key participants regarding this issue, the ideas of power and exchange relations could be applied. Table 5 and 6 illustrate the inter-dependence among the actors. It is believed that the inter-dependence among the key participants is a major factor which made Multi-Caf successful in gaining the city government's approval for the use of the building.

By and large, there is a mutually dependent relationship between Multi-Caf and each of the major actors. The only exception is its relationship with the administrator whose job security and budget control are out of Multi-Caf's direct influence. Hence, indirect influence was necessary to obtain in order to ensure the administrator's co-operation and support. The only way that Multi-Caf could do this was to influence the decision-making body of the administration - the City Councilors. As mentioned above, while Multi-Caf successfully projected its eviction crisis as an urgent community crisis in the public and solicited massive support

Table 5: Inter-dependence between Multi-Caf & Other Actors

Actor	Exchange Partner
<u>Multi-Caf</u>	<u>User</u>
Seek: to maintain a place for mission realization	A place for food & fraternity
Give: A place for food & fraternity	Participation & support
<u>Multi-Caf</u>	<u>City Councilors</u>
Seek: Approval for the use of community center Concern & formal recognition of needs of the poor	To avoid a threat of public image Legitimation from the district
Give: Stop the pressure campaign; Open recognition of City's support;	Permit to use the community center
<u>Multi-Caf</u>	<u>Community Organizations</u>
Seek: Alliance to solve its crisis	Partnership and mutual support
Give: Future support & partnership	Action to show support & concern
<u>Multi-Caf</u>	<u>Media</u>
Seek: A media to give voice to their crisis Concern & support from the public	Stories appealing to public interest;
Give: A story of crisis situation of a food bank in a deprived community	To convey message to the public
<u>Multi-Caf</u>	<u>Administration</u>
Seek: A place to provide services	Job security & budget control;
Give: Removal of threat / supports to its decision-makers	Administrative support & information;

Table 6: Inter-dependence between Councilors & Other Actors

=====	
Actor	Exchange Partner
<hr/>	
<u>City Councilor</u>	<u>Community Organization</u>
Seek: Legitimation	Concern & resource
Give: Concern & resource	Legitimation
<hr/>	
<u>City Councilor</u>	<u>Media</u>
Seek: Positive public image	Information
Give: Information	Coverage
<hr/>	
<u>City Councilor</u>	<u>Administration</u>
Seek: Co-operation & administrative support	Job security & budget control
Give: Authority and administrative power	Co-operation & administrative support
<hr/>	

from the users and the community, it became a legitimate spokesperson regarding the urgent need of food services in the community. In order to gain additional credit, and to stop the threat in the coming election, the city councilors should be highly motivated to give generous support. Illustrated in figure 6 and 7 are the exchange network before and after Multi-Caf's organizing efforts. Figure 6 shows the earliest

stage of the campaign when the staff sought the regional manager's support. Parties involved are Multi-Caf and the administration which is accountable to the City Council. The actors formed a type of chain exchange network. The city grants authority to the department to manage the community center, therefore, the latter holds the power to support or refuse Multi-Caf's demand with reference to the mandate. In this situation, the power advantage rests on the administration's side, because it possesses the power to interpret the mandate and make the decision.

After Multi-Caf's strategic organizing efforts, the source of authority to use the community center is more diversified. This is exemplified in Multi-Caf's initiation of direct contact with the city councilors, testifying at the City Hall, and their phone campaign to the executive committee members. Councilors from different levels became concerned and exercised their influence. In addition, with support from the users and the community, Multi-Caf positioned itself at the center of the bargaining table. The issue is not a matter of a place for an individual organization, but a community issue in urgent need of the City's support. Moreover, the wide coverage of the issue in mass media also increased its pressure on the decision-making body.

Figure 7: Exchange Network in Pre-mobilization Stage

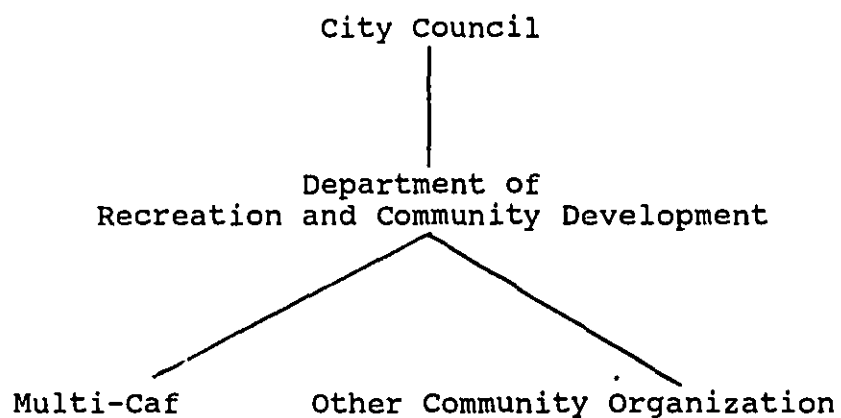
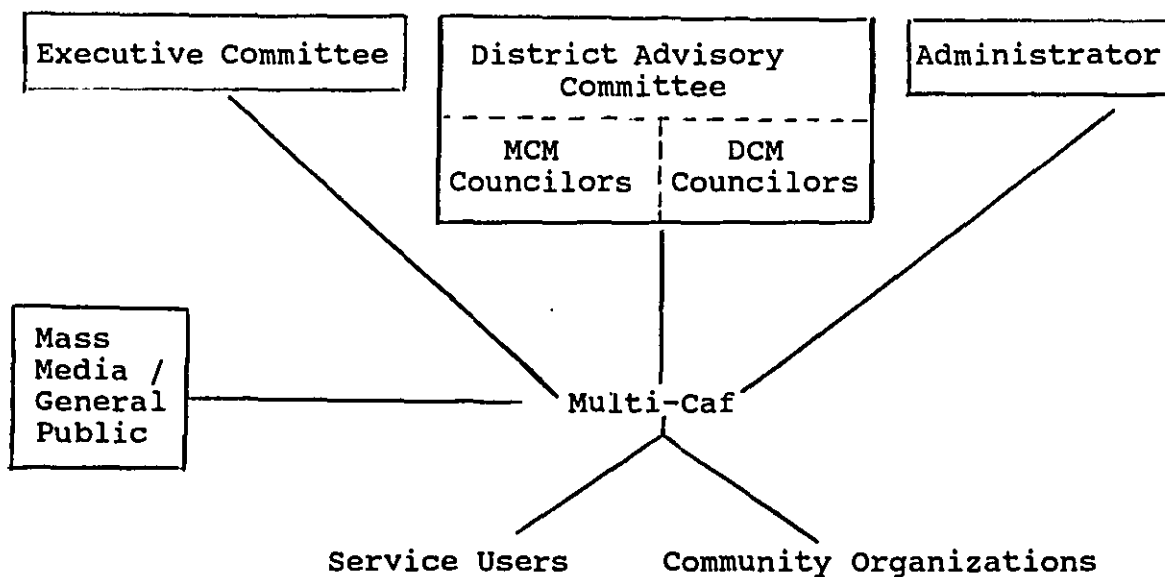


Figure 8: Exchange Network in Post-mobilization Stage



These two efforts resemble what Emerson (1962) called "Network Extension" and "Coalition Formation". That is, to extend the network as to secure more than one source for the desired resource; and to prevent the exchange partner from access to alternative suppliers of the same services (p. 67-68). On the one hand, Multi-Caf skillfully extended its lobbying line from the local administrator into different levels of decision-making body and with different councilors. On the other, it also solicited massive support from the community groups and consolidated its demand as a collective desire from the whole community. The latter forced the councilors to deal not only with the staff from Multi-Caf but representatives from the community. In sum, Multi-Caf was able to increase its power by altering the exchange relationship from a dependent to a inter-dependent one, and release the pre-existing resistance to use the premises.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS: INPUTS & ROLES

After reviewing the organizing process and the work that the community organizers were involved in, their input and major roles can be summarized as below:

a. Input

- i. The organizer effectively helped users and the community understand the urgency of the issue and its impact on the public. From the very beginning, the organizers

consistently conveyed a message to the users and public - if Multi-Caf is forced to close, there will be a traumatic impact on the poor in the community. The eviction crisis was described as a "life or death" situation. Consequently, the sense of urgency not only promoted solidarity among members but also massive support from the community.

- ii. They also mobilized and trained the users to take up different tasks and to take part in the planning and preparation of the actions. In this aspect, a tremendous amount of groundwork was done, including:
 - talk to individual service users during the lunch hour and the time of distributing food basket;
 - phone contacts with service users to invite their participation;
 - co-ordination of different assignments to the participants; such as phone campaign, signing the petitions, designing placards etc.;
 - training for users who testified at the public meeting;
- iii. By attending community council meeting, making telephone contacts with individual community organizations, the organizers also successfully solicited support;
- iv. Being well-informed about the situation of Multi-Caf, the executive director acted as a spokesperson and successfully visualized the poverty problem in the community;

b. Organizers' Roles

- i. Enabler: through individual invitation, encouragement, and training, the organizers developed and promoted a co-operative relationship and aided people in effectively implementing strategies to resolve the crisis.
- ii. Broker: the organizers acted as a support for the participants and an intermediary when conflict occurred among the participants. Moreover, they acted as an interpreter for the service users and the decision-making body to create effective communication between the parties. This mediation function was recognized by Mr. S, the city councilor:

"The person who impressed me was Ms. L. She had the way of doing things. Putting the project in the public light but it seemed fair, it seemed good in an open way of doing things."

- iii. Advocate: the organizers also acted as a support and representative of the organization in both formal (spoke with the reporters, testified at the general council meeting) and informal situations (acquiring information from the administration) to articulate the situation and its impact on the poor.
- iv. Activist: the organizers are very committed to the cause and interests of the service users with whom they share goals. As the service users described: "they treated the work more than a job". Their commitment in the pursuit of the welfare of the poor is a driving force for the users to act on their own problems in this campaign.

SUMMARY

In Chinese history, there is a long-standing debate upon the causal relationship between the situation and the hero. One may assert that "a hero is nothing but a product of the time, while another argues that "a hero makes his or her time." The success of Multi-Caf's campaign echoed Dahl's assertion, which was highlighted in chapter three, that if one is motivated and acquires proper skill(s), it is possible for he or she to create a favorable situation and to gain power for the accomplishment of his or her desired goal(s). Definitely, the magnitude of Multi-Caf's power over the issue had been highly limited by the initial environment. For instance, the mandate which confined the scope of power in favor of the administration, the urgency of the issue, and the lack of alternative solution. Multi-Caf could finally overcome the situation and established a mutually dependent exchange relationship with the city councilors. The strategies used include: consolidating member's solidarity, soliciting community support and building coalition, and expanding alternative contacts with the decision-making body. To do so, the organizers' competence in relationship building, selection of strategy, and the use of mass media is of great importance.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

In the course of conducting this study and writing up the report, I contacted with various people involved in the campaign, reviewed stacks of books and reports on the theoretical and practice issues, and reflected on my own organizing experience. I became more and more aware that there are a host of various contributing factors behind human behavior. Some of the factors we are aware of but the outsider may not, and some are unknown to both. Moreover, it seems impossible to locate the real and major factors with a hundred per cent confidence. What we can do is to trace the factors which are known and possible and to examine the extent of their impact.

The principle of "reciprocity" and "inter-dependence" of social exchange helps illustrate the complexity of power relations between the individual actors, and the possible ways to induce change in this study. However, I have no intention to assert that the interpretation and analysis of this thesis is the best or the only way to understand the dynamic of the campaign. Instead, I believe that multiple perspectives contribute to the understanding of what happened and also to

the advancement of knowledge for what is going on.

In this final chapter, I would like to conclude this thesis by sharing the implications for practice and research in community work practice that have emerged in the research process. Again, I would like to invite the reader's interpretation with critical consciousness on his or her own frame of mind.

IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZING STRATEGY

1. Dimensions of Incentive in Collective Action

The experience of Multi-Caf proves that member participation is the fundamental element in community organizing. Member's collective involvement in the organizing process is not only a source of power for the organization to augment the pressure on the decision-making body, but also an effective way to give themselves a sense of power.

From the interviews with the participants, it is also found that individuals choose their involvement in collective action on different bases. By and large, we may conclude the bases by three general dimensions highlighted in Knoke's synthesized motivational model of collective action (Knoke 1988, 1990) :

1. Rational calculation of cost and benefit;
2. Existing affective bonding in the organization;
3. Normative conformity shared among the participants.

Moreover, it is more common to find that individual member's

involvement may be driven by different dimensions simultaneously. For example, Ms. M's idea of collective action includes the cost-benefit analysis and also the belief of give-and-take:

"I want to see if I can help other people. While I help them, they can help me... I believe in giving in order to receive. Out of the Bible. Give and you shall receive. It's better to give than to receive. This is why I do it.

In order to successfully get people involved, the organizer needs to be very sensitive to the personal needs of each member and to accept individual differences. Moreover, the organizers themselves have to trust people, otherwise members of a subordinate group would never experience the sense of power through their participation. As Mr. L, Multi-Caf's organizer, shared: "trust would only happen if she (the organizer) could really respect them and make them feel that they were really contributing something about the issue."

2. Coalition Network: A Long Term Investment in the Community

It is no doubt that the support from the community is an essential factor for the success of Multi-Caf. It should be mentioned that Multi-Caf and the other community organizations had worked together for a long period of time and had acquired mutual trust from this experience. As Benveniste (1989) states, one cannot force himself into a network but gradually becomes part of it. Moreover, as Mr. K, the executive director

of Multi-Caf, also observed, people in our society are so steeped in the competitive mystique about how to get ahead of the person next to them, it is impossible to cultivate an atmosphere of co-operation in a day or two. On the contrary, a coalition network requires long term and consistent investment from each member organization. To maintain the support from the community, the organizers need to consider the impact of their action on other organizations in the community and to be generous in giving support to others.

3. The Art of Strategic Relationship: Enemy and Alliance

As Dahl (1989) notes: the game of politics need not be zero-sum; if politics is not zero-sum, political opponents are not necessarily implacable enemies; negotiation and bargaining can lead to mutually beneficial compromises (pp. 252). In the case of this study, the relationship between Multi-Caf and the city government can be perceived as political opponents but also as an alliance.

When the administration refused to let Multi-Caf use the city-owned building, the city government was clearly a target for attack. To fundamentally solve the problem of hunger, the target should be at provincial and federal levels. Still, it was hard for the city government to argue that poverty was not their issue, because the poor mostly lives in the core of the city. In this case, the city government's offer to Multi-Caf could be perceived as a double edged sword for its own

interest: to show its "concern" to community need, and also to maintain a powerful community group to work on the issue of urban poor and induce pressure on the government of other levels (Shragge, 1990, p.86).

In addition, Multi-Caf's experience also reminds other organizers that the decision-making body is seldom monolithic. The organizer needs to exploit every opportunity to examine if there are factions within the resource controlling agent, and seek support from the possible exchange partner(s).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. Methodology for the Research on Community Organizing Process:

Community organizing is a dynamic process and usually occurs in a complex situation in which a high level of flexibility and sensitivity is expected. The process involves actors from very different positions who possess various motives which are subjects to change in the course of action. Thus, to reveal the complexity and dynamic nature of the organizing process in real life situations, the context of the events must not be put aside from the discourse.

In-depth qualitative methodology is found well fit for this type of exploration. By in-depth interview and participant observation, the researcher can go into the story of individual actors and to understand the reasoning of the

their decision and action. Going further, I would like to advocate the use of the process study approach concurrent to the actual happenings of the community action. This approach can provide first-hand information and minimize the possibility of informant deception and loss of memory which commonly occurs in ex post facto study. Moreover, audio-visual recording technology can be used to picture the context in details so as to identify the contextual variables which influence the unit of analysis.

2. The Issue of Valuation in Social Exchange:

In economic exchange, the buyer and seller can assess the value of a commodity in terms of a generally agreed monetary unit. With a standardized medium of exchange, individuals can translate many different kinds of value into a single form and compare the worth of different activities and products. In a social exchange process, it is very hard to search for a single unit for all the parties involved to assess the value of the resource (Milofsky 1988). This issue is particularly problematic as the bargaining between actors in a community issue is not often in an explicit way.

Therefore, in order to further utilize social exchange theory as a framework to analyze the strategic relationship between different actors in a community action, the issue of valuation in social exchange deserves further in-depth exploration.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the organizing strategies and processes of disadvantaged groups in regard to their interactions with powerful interests. Exchange theory is a useful tool to understand strategic alliances and objectives in power relationships. The permeable boundaries of these relationships are influenced by, and respond to incentives and possibility of coalition formation in the process of development.

In light of the complexity of the organizing process, the process study approach used is an efficacious instrument for exploring the details and dynamics of a strategic relationship in actual context.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE: COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS

PROFILE OF INTERVIEWEE

Name of the Interviewee: _____ Gender: F / M

PROBES

a. The Issue

- i. How is the issue related to him or her?
- ii. How urgent / important is the issue to him / her?
- iii. What is the objective(s) for the campaign?

b. Process

- i. The history of development of the campaign.
- ii. What are his or her role(s) and input(s) in the process?

c. Perceived Environment

- i. How does he or she perceive the intent of others?
- ii. How does he or she perceive the stance of others?
- iii. What did he or she do to get support from each party?

d. Resources

- i. Is there anything did he or she give out or take in?
- ii. How does he or she assess the value of what he or she give or take?

e. Outcome

- i. What is the outcome at the end of the event?
- iii. What are the major determining factors perceived?

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW GUIDE: OTHER INFORMANTS

PROFILE OF INTERVIEWEE

Name of the Interviewee: _____ Gender: F / M

Relation to the campaign: (service users, volunteers, city councilors, civil servant, others: _____.)

PROBES

a. The Issue

- i. How is the issue related to him or her?
- ii. How urgent / important is the issue to him / her?

b. Process

- i. What type of activities did he or she participate?

c. Perceived Environment

- i. How does he or she perceive the intent of others?
- ii. How does he or she perceive the stance of others?

d. Resources

- i. Is there anything did or she give out or take in?
- ii. How does he or she assess the value of his or her give or take?

e. Outcome

- i. What is the outcome at the end of the event?
- iii. What are the determining factors perceived?

APPENDIX C

1991 BY-ELECTION RESULTS - CITY COUNCIL

DISTRICT VII: COTE-DES-NEIGES/NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRACE

The following table summarizes the result of 1991 by-election of City Councilors in Cote-des-Neiges / Notre-Dame-de-Grace area. The rivalry between the MCM and DCM is found very unambiguous in this area as a whole and also in sub-areas, such as district 27, 31, 32 and 33.

Table 7: 1991 BY-ELECTION RESULTS - DISTRICT VII

DISTRICT	PERCENTAGE OF VOTE GAIN BY PARTY					
	MCM	CPM	MPM	DCM	EM	IND
NO. 27	38%	8%	23%	29%	/	/
NO. 28	54%	20%	10%	11%	/	5%
NO. 29	73%	6%	5%	11%	/	5%
NO. 30	14%	8%	10%	68%	/	/
NO. 31	15%	22%	17%	41% ¹¹	2%	/
NO. 32	32%	13%	30%	25%	/	/
NO. 33	20%	12%	21%	47%	/	/

Source: Karen Herland (1992) People Potholes and City Politics. Montreal: Black Rose Books.

Note: MCM = Montreal Citizens' Movement;
 CPM = Civic Party of Montreal;
 MPM = Municipal Party of Montreal;
 DCM = Democratic Coalition of Montreal;
 EM = Ecology Montreal;
 IND = Independent candidate.

11. In district 31, the councilor Demers-Godley won with the DCM and then became independent in June, 1992.

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