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JACKSON SOCIAL SERVICES (JSS), a private, religious-run social agency in Alaska, conducted a community organization project in Iliaka, a mixed Native-White village. The project's overall goal was to involve the whole community in project decision making with the intention that the community would decide what programs it wanted JSS to undertake. Part of this goal involved increasing Natives' self-determination, that is, power in community decision making. As a beginning for the project and for gaining access to the community, JSS proposed two concrete goals which arose in response to knowledge about severe child and family welfare problems in the community, and Natives' distress when the state welfare removed nineteen Native children from the village in a 15-month period.¹ The first of these concrete goals was to reduce child and family welfare problems by providing resident social services. The second was to establish a new community organization capable of managing local child and family welfare problems, and thereby prevent the removal of children from the village. The project started in late 1970 when JSS hired two community organizers, a minister and his wife, and ended in early 1973 when the organizers left Iliaka.

In the short term, the project's goal achievement is impressive. During the period the project was underway, no children were removed from the village and five children formerly removed were returned. In addition, several families arranged informal placements of Native children from both Iliaka and other nearby villages. Most important, the project promoted the expansion of a relatively weak health board into a viable health and welfare organization that succeeded in managing local welfare problems and attracting funds from other agencies. The initial participants in the health and welfare organization were a coalition of liberal Whites and grassroots Natives.

The long term effects of the project are less impressive. As the Iliaka health and welfare organization (IHWO) attracted growing interest and financial support by state and federal agencies, a different group became interested in controlling IHWO decision making—the more elite and powerful members of the community. These White and Native elites formed a coalition that succeeded in discrediting the community organizers and in promoting their terminations as administrator and executive secretary of the health and welfare organization.

After the organizers left the village, IHWO became disinterested in welfare functions, and in line with the central interests of White board members, concentrated on health services. In the year following the organizers' departure, two Native children were removed from the

village by state welfare. By 1975, the welfare arm of the organization was virtually nonexistent (although JSS plans to send another organizer to the village), while the health organization is attracting increasing attention and financial support from representatives of state and federal agencies who view it as a model. The question arises, why were major project goals defeated while an unanticipated one was so successfully achieved?

I shall seek to answer this question by evaluating and analyzing project goals, ideologies, strategies, and activities. I gathered data for the evaluation in several ways. I am familiar with Iliaka residents and social processes from three prior field studies in the village, in the summers of 1967, 1969, and 1970. My two research assistants conducted interviews in Iliaka, one for a month early in the project; and the second for two months one year after the project had ended for the purpose of follow up. I conducted the bulk of the Iliaka interviewing during the project from my home community which is near Iliaka and the transportation center of the Native region of which Iliaka is a part. At the time of the research, every Iliaka resident traveling to or from the village had to make a stop at my home community, lasting from several hours to a day or two. These travelers represented a broad cross section of Iliaka Whites and Natives, leaders and citizens, and project participants, clients, and observers. I met planes going to or from Iliaka (roughly twice a week) precisely to interview villagers. I interviewed them at the airport, post office, bar, store, and my home. This provided an excellent opportunity to conduct continuous interviews with Iliakans from all walks of life during and after the project. The major gap in the fieldwork was the lack of first hand observations in the village during most of the project.

In addition to the fieldwork and interviewing, I had access to minutes of Iliaka city council and Iliaka Health and Welfare Organization meetings. Further, as informal consultant to project planners and organizers from the inception to the end of the project, I received continuous feedback from them in the form of confidences and detailed records of the deliberations and activities. Finally, I interviewed urban-based administrators from agencies involved in Iliaka. To offer the best possible protection to the identity of informants, I use fictitious names for the village, project sponsors, and individuals, and I have altered minor details about the project.

Iliaka is a remote coastal village which was settled about 200 years ago. Since then the population has hovered between 200 and 300 until the contemporary period when, with an active fishing industry, it numbers about 400. Periodically throughout its history, Iliaka has attracted Whites interested in economic opportunity in the area. In 1970, resident Whites accounted for about one-third of the village population.

On occasion, White contact in Alaska Native villages has encouraged positive change. In his study of Barter Island, Alaska Eskimos, Chance reported that given a particular set of circumstances (among which are valued jobs and job opportunities for the whole work force) culture change was rapid and positive (Chance 1965:372). However, as Chance himself observed, the most common pattern of culture contact has been one of cultural disruption (*ibid*). Berreman's 1952 study of the Aleut village of Nikolski revealed that culture disruption was so severe that every child over nine years of age planned to emigrate from the community as soon as possible in quest of success in the White man's way of life (Berreman 1952:106).

Berreman's more typical finding of cultural disruption attendant upon White contact is characteristic of Iliaka where most traditional institutions have disintegrated: the subsistence economy, chief system, and extended family system as well as shamans and religious ceremonials. The one contemporary institution that Natives consider distinctly Native is the Russian Orthodox church, introduced during the period of Russian influence early in the nineteenth century.

When Iliaka incorporated as a first class city (under Alaska law) and established a city council in the 1940s, the chief became largely a figurehead. After his death in the 1960s, Iliaka Natives did not replace him. The Russian Orthodox church organizations (sisterhood and church committee) became the only source for tradition oriented leaders. These leaders, essentially the informal leaders in the village, coexisted with a modern leadership group, those who served on the city council. The modern leaders, to whom I refer as elites, comprise the most financially successful Natives in the village. The elites have had greater experience than the others in a wage economy and in dealing with outside bureaucracies. The Native council members also predominate in the leadership of the recently formed Iliaka Native village corporation, established as a result of the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971.

In her study of leadership patterns among Nunivak Island, Alaska Eskimos, Lantis (1972) found the existence of political factions, among which were a church affiliated group and a group affiliated with the reindeer project. She indicated competition for control of the council between these groups. In Iliaka the two Native leadership groups showed little competition for power. Rather, they operated in different areas of decision making and with different styles. Native council members were formally acknowledged leaders. As the council was the major decision making organization in the community, Native council leaders engaged in making the important decisions concerning such matters as taxation and the use of city funds. The tradition oriented group provided informal leadership and were

concerned with such issues as maintaining the church building and finding food for the hungry and homes for the homeless. These two leadership groups seldom overlapped. Native elites infrequently played a leading role in church groups, and Native informal leaders seldom served on the council.

Studies of Native-White villages in the north repeatedly indicate that Whites have dominant economic and political power (for example Fried, 1963). This is certainly the case in Iliaka. Whites control the major economic resource—fishing and fish processing plants. The majority of Natives, most of whom have lost their seamanship skills, are reduced to working as unskilled fish processors. Whites also control other key community institutions. They predominate on the city council; in 1970, four of seven council members were White. And like other northern villages, Whites superintend and teach in the school.

The White leadership, both business and political, represents the interests of the majority of Whites in the village. Most Iliaka Whites are short term residents attracted by the promise of economic opportunity. They tend to be highly ambitious people who lacked standard credentials for achieving their goals in the cities in which they formerly lived. Thus, they sought opportunities in remote, out of the way places like Iliaka where a White fish-processor could become a superintendent of a fish processing plant, and a construction or manual laborer could become a foreman or an engineer.

There is also a small group of White dissidents to whom I refer as liberals because of their strong interest in and commitment to the Natives. The liberals, primarily professionals, often play an informal leadership role in their efforts to help Natives organize to change their conditions. Because of their close ties to Natives and their efforts to change the balance of power in the village, the liberals often find themselves unpopular with and socially ostracized by the White majority. Aware of this unpopularity, liberals seldom run for council. However, several were prime movers in the development of IHWO.

There is another small group of Whites, those associated with the Baha'i and Assembly of God church missions. Leaders of the missions do not play an active role in formal politics but have influenced the development of IHWO.

These, then, are the groups that have the potential for influencing the course of the JSS project: White elites, White liberals, White missionaries, Native elites, and Native informal leaders.

Political Background

HISTORY AND STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT. JSS operates several social service programs directed

primarily to children and youth. Native children comprise a significant portion of their clients. Long concerned about the damaging effects of removing homeless, neglected, and abused Native children from their villages and placing them in homes and institutions in distant cities, JSS decided to demonstrate alternatives to this practice. This was the initial impetus for the project. Iliaka was selected as a site for the demonstration because of JSS's historical interest in the village (it once ran a mission there) and because it knew the village had severe child welfare and other social problems.

JSS established a three man board to plan and implement the Iliaka project. The board hired Jim and Viola Luther as the organizers. Jim was a minister who turned to community organization work with the poor during the 1960s. Viola was not formally trained but JSS was impressed with her natural talent for social work.

Major decision making authority for the project resided in the board, but the Luthers were given discretion to make on-the-spot decisions necessary to their organizational tasks. The Luthers were expected to keep a daily or weekly log of their activities, keep the board continually informed, and periodically meet with the board to review, evaluate, and reformulate goals and strategies.

GOALS AND GOAL AMBIGUITY. Community organization in the U.S. has been plagued by conceptual confusion. On the one hand there is the traditional concept, based on democratic principles of grassroots participation. It emphasizes the processes by which decisions are made rather than the decisions themselves (Ross 1955; Seider 1956; Murphy 1954). The overall goal concerns the process of relating to a community rather than to any given end. Reflecting Parsons' conception of society as a normative order that is not only stable but intrinsically harmonious, this model assumes that communities have a common set of "core" values around which members can organize to achieve common ends (Parsons 1951:262). The literature frequently refers to this concept as the integrative or consensus model of community organization.

Juxtaposed to this model is the more modern power or conflict model popularized by Alinsky in the 1940s (Alinsky 1946), and coming into prominence in the 1960s. Following the lead of Hunter's studies indicating a pyramidal community power structure led by businessmen, this model assumes the existence of inherent conflicts of interests between different groups in the community based on differences in ideology, socioeconomic position, and affiliation (Schelling 1960; Boulding 1962; Hunter 1956). Unlike the amorphous goals in the integrative model, advocates of a conflict model specify concrete goals aimed primarily at

realigning the power resources in the community and altering the existing structure of decision making.

The initial decision facing community organizers, then, is whether to choose "process" goals and community consensus goals in line with an integrative model, or concrete community change goals in line with a conflict model. JSS planners were consciously committed to an integrative model, reflecting their commitment to philosophical idealism and their belief in the inherent goodness of men. But their goals reflected the influence of both models. They included both "process" and concrete goals, as well as consensus and change goals. Planners did not consider the potential contradiction in their goal to involve the whole community and at the same time increase Natives' power in community decision making. The first part of this goal was based on the assumption of community consensus, and the second part, on changing community power relations. JSS planners did not perceive a contradiction in these goals because they assumed that community change could be consensually achieved.

STRATEGIES AND STRATEGY AMBIGUITY. Since strategies inhere in goals, JSS's goal ambiguity gave rise to a similar confusion in specification of strategies. Community consensus goals call for an integrative strategy aimed at bringing about collaboration and cooperation by working through the existing power structure. The underlying tactical assumption of this strategy is that effective communication, education, and persuasion can overcome barriers to understanding. Building rapport and creating the proper social climate are the organizers' central tools (Ross 1955).

On the other hand, goals of community change call for a conflict strategy. Two tactics indicated for this strategy are: (1) organizing the poor for social action, and (2) political bargaining through the exchange of resources. The community organization literature, especially since the poverty program in the 1960s, gives abundant instances of organizing the poor for social action (Grosser 1969). Less attention has been paid to political bargaining through exchange of resources (Spergal 1969). I consider the concept "exchange of resources" especially relevant to community organization because when a project is introduced it entails bringing a new resource to the community. If the resource is significant, then its control and distribution become issues of concern to groups other than the project, and the project, unwittingly or not, finds itself enmeshed in community decision making. This, indeed, is what occurred in a later phase of the JSS project.

Project planners were consciously committed to an integrative strategy which called for working with the whole community; but they resisted following the tactical mandates of this strategy because they held

views that conflicted with its basic assumption of the potential cohesiveness of communities. They had a strong commitment to grassroots Natives and an awareness that Natives' deprivation related in part to race and class oppression. But project planners were unwilling to follow through on the implications of this awareness and develop tactics in line with a conflict strategy because they violated their belief in the inherent goodness of men. Instead, they adopted an indeterminate strategy² one of deliberate vagueness, a "wait and see, hang loose," approach, to let things happen and move on from there. They vacillated between the tactical imperatives of both strategies.

Project Program and Activities: Phase 1

A SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM IS BORN. Other than a general orientation toward reducing child and family welfare problems, project programs were intentionally unspecified to assure that they would develop in line with the interests of the community. The organizers defined their role to the community in these terms, emphasizing not only their initial interest in child welfare problems, but their central interest in having the community decide on project programs. And, indeed, within the first six months of the project, though in a nondeliberate fashion of which neither the organizers nor community members were aware, the Native community did define the organizers' role as providers of social services. The White community tended to ignore the project at that time because it had no resources they coveted. Project planners did anticipate some social service delivery functions but they did not envision it as a central project focus. This unanticipated role grew like Topsy.

Early in the project, Natives identified four families with serious problems of child neglect. In addition, some Natives expressed an interest in the return of children from three other families who had formerly been removed from the village by state welfare.

To become acquainted with the situation in these families, to identify others with family problems, to identify potential foster homes, to become acquainted with key members of the community, and to gain an understanding of community dynamics, the Luthers set out to meet as many members of the community as possible. Through attendance at public meetings, Russian Orthodox church services and festivities, and especially through visits to the bar, the Luthers met a considerable number of community members. After six weeks in the village they had established contact with 46 adults, 28 of whom were Native. Notably missing from the early contacts (as well as later ones) were members of the White and Native power groups and of the

Assembly of God church. The majority of their contacts were with grassroots Natives and liberal Whites.

In the following weeks the Luthers came to know the large majority of Natives and some Whites. Mutual visiting relations developed with a growing number of persons, primarily Native. As Natives came to trust the sincerity of the Luthers, increasingly they turned to them with personal and family problems—help in understanding city billing procedures, and in filling out social security forms and welfare applications; every manner of counseling; loans of money; use of washing facilities; food and housing for the temporarily homeless; the list was legion. The Luthers were coming to realize that a situation of continuous crisis exists in Iliaka.

One such crisis occurred early in the project when a child's death was attributed to parental neglect in the Resneff family. Community members, both Native and White, deemed an immediate placement of the other ten Resneff children as urgent. In consultation with the health board, Jim Luther developed a plan for the local placement of these ten children. The state welfare agency had already given him, via the JSS, legal authority to investigate, license, and supervise foster homes in the village. This he proceeded to do. He also advised the local magistrate that he had emergency placement powers, of which the magistrate had been unaware. The Luthers counseled the Resneff parents toward the end of working out a plan for the return of the children. Later, the Luthers arranged for the permanent court custody hearing to be held in Iliaka, a precedent-setting experience for the village. The court placed all the children locally according to the recommendations given by Jim Luther and the health board. These activities legitimated the Luthers in the Native community which now considered them not only well-intentioned but also effective in protecting their interests.

With this growth in trust, a community-wide referral system developed where others not in need of help referred those who were, especially when they perceived a crisis. Soon after the Resneff crisis, another occurred in a Native family, the Dillings, also considered a child neglect family. The Dillings lived across the bay from Iliaka. In pursuit of his mother in Iliaka, one of the young Dillings boys was found floating across the bay on a bed springs and mattress. This case was immediately referred to the Luthers.

Increasing numbers of persons appeared at the Luthers' door seeking detoxification, emergency shelter, counseling, intervention in family problems, protection from police harassment (which was considerable). Often the Luthers had not a moment of the day free from meeting the needs of community members.

As they continued to furnish these services, it became apparent that, although it had not been an original

intention of the project, the Luthers were fully engaged in the delivery of comprehensive social services. They were operating an emergency shelter for children and adults, an alcohol detoxification center, a family counseling center, and providing other services. This mandate from the Native community was quickly accepted as the first project goal which was specified as developing an innovative comprehensive community social service program.

EVALUATION OF PHASE 1 AND PLANS FOR PHASE 2. In July 1971, seven months after the onset of the project, the board and the Luthers met in Anchorage to evaluate the effects of the project to date and to outline the next steps. The Luthers reported that they were providing an innovative social service where there were no rules: there were no eligibility or means tests, and everyone was welcome for whatever services could reasonably be given, at any time of the day or night. In the course of these services, they had managed crises in two Native families (involving 15 children), licensed 15 foster homes in the village, arranged local placements for 15 foster children, and secured the return of five Native children who had been formerly removed.

The board concluded that the first phase of the project was well accomplished. It was time, members decided, to move on to the second phase which was to establish local organizational sponsorship for the social service program the Luthers had been operating.

Their plan involved strengthening the local health board and expanding it to a health and welfare organization, securing contracts from centralized agencies for providing their services locally through the new health and welfare organization, and developing an alliance between the health and welfare organization and the regional and village Native organizations. The aim was to establish a mixed Native-White health and welfare organization which would provide health and social services to the entire community.

The plan clearly reflected the influence of an integrative strategy. Tactically, it called for working with the entire community and involving members of significant influence groups. But board members and the Luthers were ambivalent about these tactics. They did not trust White or Native elites to represent the interests of Native citizens. Therefore, while they articulated an integrative strategy for phase 2, they hedged on specifying its tactical requirements, as the minutes of the board meeting indicate:

We especially bogged down in our discussion of whether the goals of the Iliaka project include organizational work with the White establishment and the (Native power group). We ended up feeling they (Whites) should be included in the project as a means of helping the Native people organize and get in control of their lives.

This statement entails a fundamental contradiction. If Whites were not to be trusted to represent Natives' interests then how could they be expected to help Natives "organize and get in control of their lives?" If elite Whites were needed because they were organizationally powerful, then how could they be expected to assume a peripheral role in the health and welfare organization?

The failure to resolve these contradictions was one more sign of planners' strategy ambivalence. To acknowledge the contradiction would have required coming to grips with the reality of power in Iliaka. While planners clearly were aware of this reality as their distrust of White and Native elites indicates, they did not grapple with its implications.

If they had, they might have considered alternatives in line with a conflict strategy. One alternative would have been the deliberate use of political bargaining, to win support from elites by exchanging resources. Another alternative might have been to ignore White elites and set up an all-Native welfare organization sponsored by the Russian Orthodox church sisterhood, the Native village corporation, or both. In a study of the Eskimo village of Napaskiak, Alaska, Oswalt and Van Stone noted the important role of the Russian Orthodox church mission in strengthening Native organization and leadership (Oswalt and Van Stone 1963:25). And most important, if planners had been able to consider a conflict strategy, they would have given serious consideration to means for strengthening Native leadership. There was some discussion at the meeting around this issue but it was fragmentary. No attention was given to the role or potential role of the Native client population, the group with which the Luthers had the closest and most frequent contact, in organizing and running the new health and welfare organization. Participants addressed the issue of Native leadership only peripherally by advancing two ideas. The first was to strengthen Natives' identity (and presumably their leadership potential) by strengthening the Russian Orthodox church. But they did not specify means for achieving this other than to collect clothes and other materials for the sisterhood to run a thrift shop. The second idea was to establish a food buyer's cooperative which they believed would not only relieve Natives' poverty but also give them experience in collective organization to solve a common problem. This plan never got off the ground.

No consideration was given to strengthening grassroots Native leadership by training Natives to perform social service and community organization functions. This tactic was considered at the outset of the project but not pursued for two reasons: (1) there is a dearth of Native leadership in the village and organizers felt discouraged about Natives' leadership potential; and (2) this tactic, like political bargaining and establishing an

all-Native organization would entail a stronger commitment to a conflict strategy than board members were willing to make. Caught on the horns of a strategic dilemma, they vacillated between the tactical mandates of both strategies.

This left the organizers without clear guidelines for carrying out the second phase of the project. The plan called for working with the health board and Native village corporation, both of which had ties to the White and Native power groups. As an official municipal organization, the health board members were appointed by the city council which is dominated by White elites. The Native village corporation was in its formative stages but all signs indicated it would be led by the Native elite. Thus, while they tabled the issue of how to work with the Native and White power groups, they selected a plan whose effectiveness hinged on the support of these power groups.

Project Program and Activities: Phase 2

A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION IS BORN. The Iliaka health board became the focus of project organizational efforts for two reasons: (1) health and welfare issues are closely related; and (2) the health board demonstrated one of the few instances in Iliaka when Whites and Natives work together in a way that enhances Natives' interests and well being.

The health board is a recent development in Iliaka. Prior to 1969, a small health committee operated periodically. Then in 1969, the city council officially appointed the Iliaka Board of Health and provided space for a clinic. The city council appointed board members who had been active in the health committee, including Stephen Goode, a White school teacher, who came to play a principal role in the organization of IHWO.

By 1970 the health board went into full swing. A volunteer registered nurse and a health aide on the board operated a clinic with regular hours in space provided by the city; board members contacted agencies on state, national, and international levels for help in securing health man- and womanpower, and raised funds for the purchase of a permanent clinic building. In early 1971, with the emergence of two crisis situations in child neglect, the health board became actively involved in social services.

Jim Luther and the health board worked closely to develop plans for protecting the children in these two child neglect families. By May 1971 the health board agreed to officially expand its role to include supervision of social services, and asked Jim Luther to act as consultant to the board. Jim Luther and health board members explored ideas for new welfare programs such as a permanent emergency shelter, group foster care facility, and day care program.

At the same time outside agencies were becoming interested in this singular development of a village health and welfare organization. A public welfare social worker wrote a glowing report of the health board and arranged to turn over to it responsibility for direct services to clients, including casework, an unusual arrangement for a public welfare agency to make. The Indian Health Service had been interested in improving health care in Iliaka for several years and it sent a representative to Iliaka to explore the possibility of a contract with the health board for local provision of certain medical services. A physician visiting Iliaka suggested that the health board hire him as their physician for a year. (Iliaka has had no resident physician since World War II.)

With numerous program ideas and a growing show of interest by outside agencies, the health board and Jim Luther began to discuss alternative forms of organization that would place the health board in a more favorable position to secure grants and contracts. In September, 1971, John Forard, a member of the project board, visited Iliaka to consult with the health board on organizational alternatives.

Clearly John Forard and Jim Luther had their own agenda in line with project goals outlined at their July conference, but they tried to objectively present the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative considered. In every instance, the health board chose in line with project objectives.

It decided to rename itself the Iliaka Health and Welfare Organization, to provide services to the entire community rather than to divide along racial lines, to become a comprehensive health planning agency, and to incorporate as a quasiprivate organization. Most important, the health board decided to enlarge its membership from seven to nine with six members to be nominated by the Native village organization and three by the city council. Further, the health board accepted John Forard's offer to lend the Luthers to the new organization (and pay their salaries) for one year: Jim Luther to act as executive director, and Viola, as executive secretary and social worker. The board also expressed interest in John Forard's offer to supply a multipurpose building for a clinic and social service center.

During the ensuing months, Jim Luther and Stephen Goode devoted diligent effort to implementing the decisions made at the meeting. Part of this activity involved drawing up formal agreements between participating groups. These agreements involved an exchange of resources, but the exchange did not come about from actual bargaining. Since IHWO and JSS shared common goals, the agreements concerning their relationship were mutually satisfactory. One stipulated that JSS would supply the multipurpose building and IHWO would furnish the foundation and installation. A

second stated that JSS would provide Luthers' salary for one year and IHWO would incorporate as a private, nonprofit organization. The third agreement between IHWO and the Native village corporation gave the village Native organization the right to nominate six of the nine IHWO board members. In exchange the Native village corporation was to share with IHWO all health and social service programs and/or resources and funds for these, and to agree to IHWO administering all such programs. No formal agreement between IHWO and the city council was drawn up. While IHWO did incorporate, none of the above agreements was signed because of conflict that developed around control of IHWO decision making.

The new IHWO board represented a change from the old health board. Instead of the coalition of liberal Whites and grassroots Natives, the new board also included some elite Whites and Natives. The three Whites appointed by the council included only one liberal, Stephen Goode; the other two represented the interests of the White elite. Neither of the latter two persons had close ties to the Native community. The six Natives appointed by the village Native corporation included three Native elite, one of whom was active in the Assembly of God church.

Throughout the first half of 1972 it became increasingly evident in the community that the IHWO might come to represent a considerable resource. In a visit to Iliaka to talk to IHWO members, the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services expressed interest in supporting their program. A Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) representative expressed similar interest. IHWO was also collecting sizable contributions from fishermen and planned to extend their quest for contributions to the fish processing plants.

After a trip to Anchorage to discuss funding and contracts, Jim Luther returned to Iliaka in May 1972 with an anticipated IHWO budget in excess of \$100,000, a substantial resource for a small village. Project planners did not consider the implications of these new resources, that is, the potential bargaining advantages they give JSS in winning support for project goals, and the potential community conflict that might arise over control of these resources. Such conflict was not long in arising.

Now that money was likely to be available, the board reconsidered its priorities. The central issue they debated was whether to concentrate on health or welfare services. The whole community was united around the need for improved health services, but the White elite on the board were in favor of concentrating on them to the exclusion of welfare services, which grassroots Natives needed and wanted. One of the White elite on the IHWO board was outspoken in her belief that all homeless and neglected Native children are better off being removed

from the village, and is reported to have once engineered the removal of some Native children. As Luther was the major spokesman for the welfare program, these White elites started an anti-Luther campaign.

One of the board members, as well as others in the community, cast their eyes on the jobs that would become available with increased IHWO funding, especially the Luthers' high paying jobs. These persons also joined the anti-Luther move. Others, who later joined the anti-Luther campaign, had different reasons.

THE COMMUNITY POLARIZES. The Iliaka Native village corporation is a chapter of a Native regional organization and is strongly influenced by it; in fact, some Iliaka Natives serve on the boards of both organizations. At the time of the JSS project, the Native regional organization was relatively new and was trying to strengthen itself by attracting funds for it and its chapters to operate social programs. The regional organization was already operating an urban alcohol rehabilitation program, and in 1972 it received funds to operate a similar program in Iliaka. IHWO's agreement calling for the village Native corporation to turn over its funds and programs to it represented a threat to the jurisdiction and growth of the village corporation and the Native regional organization.

Similarly, JSS felt its project was threatened by the expansionist interests of the Native regional organization. This was a crucial issue throughout the life of the project but JSS did not come to grips with its implications. Since the regional and village Native organizations are the major Native power group in the area, their support was critical to the project's success. But JSS did not engage in active bargaining that could win their support. Of course, bargaining does not assure a successful outcome; it may expose irreconcilable conflicts of interest between the parties involved. If that had occurred, however, it would have alerted JSS to the need to consider alternatives, either doing it alone without the support of this group, or, in consideration that the Native organizations are the major spokesmen for Iliaka Natives, turning project funds over to them, as the regional Native organization requested.

The perception of threats to their interests by JSS is one of the reasons that village Native corporation leaders opposed the Luthers, but there were other reasons. Businessmen in the leadership of the Native corporation appeared to have become increasingly concerned about Jim Luther's growing decision making power as the board attracted significant resources. In September 1972, when the anti-Luther campaign was in full swing, two of the Native businessmen fired a series of questions at Jim Luther impugning his veracity: "Why did you come here? Where does the money for your goings on really come from? Why do we need social services in

Iliaka [as representatives of local liquor interests, these men tend to be defensive about admitting to local alcohol and related problems]?" These leading decision makers in the Native community appeared to be reluctant to share decision power with someone like Jim Luther whom they could not control. Thus, the businessmen in the Native village corporation joined the anti-Luther move.

The Native Assembly of God church member of the IHWO board also joined it, ostensibly because the Luthers frequented the bar. As members of a fundamentalist church organization, this group advocates abstinence and charged the Luthers with contributing to the alcohol problems in the village by going to the bar and drinking with Natives. Furthermore, they considered such behavior unseemly for a minister and his wife. But I believe another reason underlies this group's opposition to the Luthers, that is, competition for control of the client resource in the village.

Clients represent an important resource not only for social agencies but for church groups that use a social service strategy to attract members. This appears to be the strategy adopted by the Assembly of God church leaders who encourage people to bring their problems to them. On several occasions, the pastor's wife complained about losing their callers to the Luthers. She said that their house had always been full of people seeking help with their problems until the Luthers came; now those same people seek help from the Luthers. Children are an especially important resource to a new mission trying to build membership through a Sunday school program. Several members of the church became foster parents of Native children whom they sent to their own church. When Native natural parents of one of these children protested this act to Jim Luther and asked him to intercede in their behalf and request the foster parents to send the child to the Russian Orthodox church, the foster parents became angry and refused to keep the foster child.

While the Assembly of God church in Iliaka is a small organization with only a few Native members, it clearly had the potential to undermine the project if its support were not won, as later events will show. Further, some of its members had ties to the council and Native village corporation. But JSS did not seriously consider exchanging resources with the Assembly of God people, in part because planners did not consider them very important, and also because they sensed an irreconcilable conflict of interests regarding control of the Native client resource. But unless they dealt with this issue head-on, they could not determine that interests were irreconcilable and that there was need to consider alternatives.

In the summer of 1972 Stephen Goode left the village for a year and the council replaced him with the most

vitriolic anti-Luther White in the village. The board's campaigners against the Luthers now included the three White representatives appointed by the council, and two Natives appointed by the Native regional organization. This group also included three Assembly of God church members. The anti-Luther faction charged the Luthers with the very trait that could most undermine them in the native community—phyness. They said the Luthers were phony because while they pretended an altruistic interest in the Natives, their real interest was in keeping their “cushy” jobs. One of the White board members spread the rumor that the Luthers were receiving \$40 a day from JSS for every person they fed or housed. Augmenting these rumors was the charge by the Assembly of God members and others that the Luthers were contributing to the drinking problem in the village by buying Natives drinks in the bar.

These charges fell on responsive ears in the White community. The Luthers did, indeed, hold two of the best jobs in the village; and others who had moved to Iliaka precisely to improve their opportunities probably coveted these jobs. Furthermore, like other liberal Whites, the Luthers violated the etiquette of race relations in the community. The majority of Whites live socially and residentially separate from Natives and tend to rationalize this social distance by invoking negative stereotypes against Natives. When the Luthers broke down these racial barriers, not only by forming close social bonds with Natives but by drinking and dancing with them in the bar, Whites' rationalizations for racial separation were threatened. Whites do not define the issue in terms of threats to their rationalizations but in terms of deficiencies in the character of those who pose the threat. One White woman, for example, attributed Viola Luther's close relationship to Natives to a flaw in her character. She said: “Why, she [Viola Luther] patronized Natives all the time. No White woman would dance with a drunken Native from choice or let them put their hands on her.” My research assistant, visiting Iliaka a year after the Luthers had left found that nearly all Whites expressed suspicion about the Luthers. When asked about the Luthers, invariably, their response was, “they were phonies through and through.”

As the Luthers' closest ties were with the grassroots Natives, this group was expected to offer the fullest support to them and the project. And two grassroots Natives on the IHWO board did consistently support them. The other two did not. Nor did the Native community at large organize to support the Luthers when their jobs with IHWO were at stake. I attribute this lack of support for the Luthers to an ambivalence that inheres in a situation of dependency and that gives rise to a “dependency-hostility syndrome.” When people have been reduced to dependency as have many Iliaka Natives, they recognize the need for and want help from

others. But since that very help symbolizes their own inadequacies, it also provokes resentment against those on whom they depend. For people lacking resources to build their own esteem, one of the few options is to see more powerful persons fall from grace. I believe the operation of a dependency-hostility syndrome rendered grassroots natives vulnerable to the anti-Luther gossip campaign, and that is why Natives did not organize to support the Luthers, and why two of the four grassroots members of the IHWO board voted against them.

The antagonisms against the Luthers broke into full view at the June 1972 IHWO meeting when the board tabled Jim Luther's budget proposal which included the Luthers' salaries. In July, the board held a meeting to which it did not invite Jim Luther. In August, the Luthers went to Anchorage to discuss the situation with the project board. At that meeting it was decided that John Forard should attend the September IHWO meeting to assess the situation himself.

Two days before John Forard was expected in the community, the IHWO board called a special meeting from which Jim Luther was again excluded. At this meeting the board decided to fire the Luthers, to hire the physician who had expressed an interest in living in Iliaka for a year as director at some later time, and to change the name of the signatory on the board's contract with the Indian Health Service from Jim Luther to Hilda Braun, one of the board members appointed by the city council.

When John Forard met with the IHWO board two days later, the board voted to hire Hilda Braun as acting director (with no mention being made of firing Jim Luther). Only two board members, both grassroots Natives, opposed the motion. They proposed that the board retain Jim Luther until the physician became available to assume the directorship. At that point, a White board member called for the question and the motion carried seven to two. One of the Native board members, in protest, resigned from the board on the spot. The seven who supported the motion included the three White city council appointees, the two village Native corporation members, and two grassroots Natives.

AFTERMATH. In trying to determine a constructive role JSS might play with IHWO, the project board consulted with the new IHWO board chairman (Stephen Goode's replacement), a Native city council member and village Native corporation leader, as well as a member of the Assembly of God church. The chairman requested JSS help in recruiting and training a Deputy Director-Social Worker, preferably someone from Iliaka; however, the project board's information indicated that this issue was not discussed at IHWO board meetings.

In any event, after the IHWO board terminated the

Luthers, the project board reassessed its policy and proposed the following changes:

- (1) to discontinue plans to send a building to the village;
- (2) to seek funds for training a Director-Social Worker for IHWO; and
- (3) to limit the Luthers' role to social services only until project funds were depleted, which was anticipated to occur in about five months.

During their last five months in Iliaka, the Luthers continued their social service role, especially in supervising foster placements and the Resneff family. All but one of the ten Resneff children had been returned to their parents and the family appeared to be stabilized. The reintegration of a family that had manifested pervasive problems for many years represented one of the most favorable outcomes of the project.

After the Luthers left Iliaka and there was no longer need to undercut their role, the IHWO board virtually abandoned its welfare services, despite Stephen Goode's return to the village and chairmanship of the board. The board concentrated on securing funds for strengthening health services in the village. The board had already succeeded in securing a \$40,000 contract from Indian Health Services and a \$3,000 grant from the Alaska Division of Mental Health. Shortly after the end of the project, the board received funding from the Alaska Health Manpower Corporation for the salaries of resident medical personnel—a physician's extender and a registered nurse (the physician changed his mind about moving to Iliaka).

At the time of this writing, IHWO is attracting continual interest (as a health, not a welfare organization) from state and federal agencies that view it as a model village health organization with the potential to become the regional health association. IHWO has now assumed responsibility for addressing health needs in nearby villages as well. Thus, while JSS failed in its central goal to establish a welfare organization capable of managing local welfare problems, its efforts did result in the development of a model village health organization.

Conclusions

EVALUATION. The JSS project can claim both successes and failures in its welfare goals. Its major success was in providing an innovative, comprehensive social service program. The Luthers' final project report indicated that they provided social services to 70% of Native adults and 50% of Native children, and to 26% of White adults and about 10% of White children. Of course, the provision of social services does not necessarily mean that people were helped. But the Luthers' provision of these services did result in preventing the

removal of Native children formerly removed, and maintaining the functioning of two families with pervasive problems.

It is difficult to make a precise assessment of the effects of social services on other clients. The personal and social problems of many of the Luthers' clients have been by no means cured. But this does not deny the usefulness of the services the Luthers provided them. Where a long history of oppression and deculturation underlies peoples' problems, cure requires change in the social structures that oppress them. Until such structures are changed, management of the problem is the only interim course available. For example, with the widespread drinking problems in Iliaka, a place for drunks to go is extremely important. Without such a place, a drinking person may fall down in the street unconscious and die. (This is a particularly serious hazard in the arctic and subarctic.) Furthermore, it is important for the family to have a place to send a drunken member whose presence at home may disrupt the family's ability to function. Thus, a detoxification and emergency shelter does not cure drinking problems but it helps protect the lives of drinkers and enables drinkers' families to carry out their social roles.

These favorable project outcomes were short term; they lasted only as long as the project did. The test of their worth lay in the durability of the changes which the project introduced. And herein lies the area of greatest project failure. It failed precisely in its community organization goals, to establish a local welfare organization capable of managing welfare problems.

STRATEGY STRADDLING. JSS planners had a dominant commitment to an integrative strategy. This strategy calls for working with the entire community toward common ends. However, planners did not follow through on this strategy because they rejected one of its basic assumptions—that the community was inherently cohesive. Their knowledge of race and class conflict in Iliaka convinced them that White and Native elites would not represent the interests of grassroots Natives who were their principal concern.

But neither did planners evolve a strategy which conformed to their knowledge of social, racial, and political realities in Iliaka. The White elite dominates community decision making and this elite historically has either ignored or violated Natives' interests. Thus, enhancing the interests of grassroots Natives required altering the existing power relations by strengthening Native power, a goal that is in line with a conflict strategy. However, a conflict strategy violated planners' basic philosophical commitment to consensus and to their belief in the inherent goodness of men, and therefore they did not pursue it.

If they had followed a conflict strategy, planners could have considered several tactical lines. One is deliberate political bargaining, exchanging resources with community groups to win their support. As suggested earlier, this tactic may have proved ineffective because of the existence of possibly irreconcilable conflicts of interest. But only through active engagement in bargaining could JSS have discovered whether or not it were a feasible tactic.

If it proved ineffective, if JSS had become convinced that elite Whites could not be won over to support a local welfare organization, then project planners could have considered the alternative of promoting an all-Native welfare organization. This would not necessarily have been a panacea because of class conflicts. Elite and grassroots Natives frequently have different interests and agendas of action. But an alliance between grassroots Natives and Native leaders, (who depend on the grassroots for reelection) would have a far greater chance of reflecting Native citizens' interests than would an alliance between Native and White leaders, who depend very little on grassroots Natives, and therefore are unresponsive to their demands.

An all-Native welfare organization in Iliaka need not exclude White participation, but it would place Natives in control of selecting White participants. Nor need it prevent the providing of services to the entire community, but it would assure that Natives determine program priorities.

An all-Native welfare organization in Iliaka could take one of the several forms. One would be to turn project funds over to the regional Native organization to provide the services themselves, as the regional organization proposed. The project did consider and reject this alternative primarily because planners considered leaders in the regional organization self-interested and unrepresentative of grassroots Natives. I believe JSS's reluctance to seriously consider this alternative, reflects, in part, a bias common to White middle class organizers (as well as social scientists) who tend to pose higher standards for minority group than for White political leaders. While it is commonly recognized that politicians are often self-serving and untrustworthy, there is a far greater outcry when minority group leaders show these propensities. However deficient their leaders, the Native regional organization is the most promising source for changing the existing structure of power in Iliaka and other villages.

A second possible sponsor for an all-Native welfare organization is the Russian Orthodox church. JSS also considered this possibility but was reluctant because the church sisterhood, the major church organization, is relatively inexperienced in dealing with bureaucracies, and therefore might not know how to negotiate for contracts and grants. However, a training program

among this group to equip it with the necessary skills was not seriously considered.

A third form an all-Native welfare organization could have taken is a broadly based Native organization including possibly three members nominated by the church sisterhood, three by the village Native corporation, and three selected from the Native citizenry. JSS did not consider this alternative.

These alternatives were either not considered or were summarily rejected because, I believe, adopting them would have meant commitment to a conflict strategy which opposed the project's integrative goals and the idealistic assumptions underlying them.

Because JSS was ambivalent about both a conflict and integrative strategy, they committed themselves to neither but vacillated between them in an indeterminate fashion; in essence, they straddled the two strategies and in so doing accomplished the goals of neither. The failure of the project's community organization goals paved the way for the White's goals to predominate. That is why the unanticipated outcome of developing a strong health organization occurred.

A final note of caution in interpreting this analysis is in order. It is easy enough to criticize in hindsight the mistakes of others. But JSS confronted very complex problems in Iliaka. The personal, family, and organizational problems there do not lend themselves to easy solution under the best of circumstances. One cannot undo the consequences of 200 years of deprivation and deculturation by a simple mandate to have a clearcut strategic and tactical design in community organization. I can only conclude this analysis with the suggestion that strategy commitment and the casting off of the illusory fetters that inhere in much of community organization practice are essential to any level of success in changing the structure of decision making in places like Iliaka.

NOTES

¹The abduction of Indian children by social agencies has reached scandalous proportions nationwide. A recent survey by the Association of American Indian Affairs found that in states with large Indian populations, 25 to 35% of all Indian children are removed from their families and placed in foster homes, adoptive homes, and institutions (Association 1974:1)

²D. V. Donnison et al. conceptualize the concept of "indeterminancy" in social services (1965:240-41).

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