

## The Rhetoric and Strategies of Control

This chapter outlines the strategies and tactics that an establishment may choose in opposing agitation. The strategies outlined should make it apparent that the establishment has an advantage in any confrontation with dissenters because of its ability to adapt and adjust when necessary to defeat the activists.

As stated in chapter 1, establishment leaders maintain their power in two general ways. Within a group or organization, leaders must provide evidence of their "superiority" to their followers. Decision makers must show that they have the ability to manage, guide, direct, and enhance the group better than other members of the organization. Leaders also maintain their dominant position by responding in an appropriate manner to external challenges. A significant challenge to leadership may come from agitational groups and the leaders of those groups. This chapter focuses on the rationales that govern establishment leaders' discursive and non-discursive communication in their efforts to confront and defeat agitation. Rhetoric plays an important role in helping establishment leaders maintain their power.

Two major ideas govern the rhetorical stance taken by the establishment: (1) *Decision makers must assume that the worst will happen in a given instance of agitation* and (2) *Decision makers must be prepared to repel any attack on the establishment*. Alan Barth describes the advantages and disadvantages that the establishment has in battles with agitators:

Establishments, generally speaking, are better equipped than student revolutionaries and guerrilla fighters with brass knuckles, tear gas, mace, shotguns and the like; and they are far less squeamish about employing them. . . . In the end, victory goes to the most ruthless. The practice of assuming the worst outcome however, may generate strange and ineffective actions by members of the establishment. For example, during one campus demonstration a flat piece of cardboard painted to look like a gigantic firecracker was tossed toward several policemen. The cardboard firecracker had a lit fuse taped to one edge.

A senior police officer immediately ordered the crowd to clear the area. Two sergeants stomped out the fuse and another went for a fire extinguisher. While the crowd laughed at these elaborate precautions, a much-chastened "bomb-maker" was arrested. In a later interview, the senior officer explained that he assumed a real bomb was attached to the cardboard so he had to act on that assumption. Activists can use the establishment mindset as a way to make the leaders look foolish and reduce their credibility and effectiveness.<sup>1</sup>

During the Democratic National Convention in 1968 activists threatened to pour LSD into Chicago's water system. After investigation, it was shown that it would take five tons or nine billion tabs of LSD to contaminate the water effectively. Even after being presented with this information, the city of Chicago continued to guard pumping stations and filtration plants in order to show that they were able to defeat any actions by agitators.<sup>2</sup>

Leaders of an establishment can effectively counter outside agitators while also enhancing their public image when they can demonstrate that they have made the preparations that are necessary to defeat an external attack. Also, if leaders of an establishment have successfully confronted external challenges in the past, they can use those confrontations to justify increased preparations needed to meet future challenges. For example, after experiencing student protests, riots, and demonstrations in 1968, many college administrators stiffened their resolve, enlarged their campus security forces, and created new rules and regulations in order to be prepared to confront disruptions. An Associated Press survey in the fall of 1969 revealed that the Universities of Maryland and Texas had increased their campus police forces and Temple University formed a new 125-person security unit.

Many universities created broad new rules and policies that would allow them to deal with agitators and disruption. For example, the University of North Carolina adopted regulations that read in part:

Any student or faculty member—including full-time or part-time instructors—who willfully by use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation or fear obstructs, disrupts or attempts to obstruct or disrupt the normal operations or functions of any of the component institutions of the university, or who incites others to do so, shall be subject to suspension, expulsion, discharge or dismissal from the university.<sup>3</sup>

Carl Oglesby illustrated how university presidents instituted this strategy after they met in Denver at the beginning of the 1969-70 academic year to decide how to handle "restless youth." As Oglesby writes, "They agreed that it was time to get tough." The presidents agreed to "strengthen campus security forces and to seek close ties to municipal police. . . . They would give the FBI access to their students' files. They would help army intelligence identify their draft-card burners. They would arm their campus police with real bullets."<sup>4</sup>

Michael E. Brown summarizes a typical establishment's actions when confronted with potential challenges:

The administration of control is suspicious. It projects a dangerous future and guards against it. It also refuses the risk of inadequate coverage by enlarging the controlled population to include all who might be active in any capacity. Control may or may not be administered with a heavy hand, but it is always a generalization applied to specific instances.<sup>5</sup>

Projecting an image of strength may create or illustrate the referent power necessary for maintaining the institution.

### Strategies of Control

When an establishment is confronted with challenges to its structure, policy, ideology, or power, it may adopt one of four rhetorical strategies: avoidance, suppression, adjustment, or capitulation. Depending on the perceived threat to the institution and the power of the group proposing the change, an establishment can decide to use its resources to avoid, suppress, adjust, or capitulate to the changes sought by the agitators. These strategies generally occur in the order outlined—just as the strategies used by agitators generally occur in a predictable pattern.

#### Avoidance

When the establishment uses avoidance, there are a number of available tactics to deal with activists and their ideology, including counterpersuasion, evasion, postponement, secrecy with a rationale, and denial of means.

##### Counterpersuasion

When using counterpersuasion, members of the establishment begin a discussion with the leaders of the dissent movement in an attempt to convince the agitators that they are wrong or that their proposals will not work. This tactic can be useful to the establishment in a number of ways. If counterpersuasion is successful, the threat to the system is minimized or eliminated. If the tactic is unsuccessful, the establishment has gained valuable time to prepare to confront the agitators and has avoided making changes in its ideology, rules, or structure. Even if the tactic is unsuccessful, members of the establishment have gained insights into the nature of the dissent and the changes being proposed. Contact with the leaders of the movement provides information about their strengths and weaknesses. Information gathered through avoidance becomes useful in the establishment's preparation to oppose the dissent and in its choice of future rhetorical tactics to achieve their goals.

Counterpersuasion is the most common and often the most successful tactic available to an establishment. Just as agitators do not dare to bypass the petition phase, an establishment must engage in counterpersuasion. Agitators can use the establishment's refusal to engage in communication as a means of questioning the sincerity and credibility of establishment leaders. Public relations firms, complaint departments, information offices, white papers, and bargaining committees are examples of the vehicles establishments use to engage in counterpersuasion. Such vehicles illustrate the value that establishment leaders place on counterpersuasion. However, if the agitators choose to move beyond the petition-counterpersuasion phase, leaders can tell members of the organization that agitators would not listen to reason and then move to other control strategies and tactics.

Because of the success of groups like MoveOn.org in questioning the actions of the federal government, conservative groups have created opposing organizations that support the government and its actions. One such group, Freedom's Watch, was created to defend President George W. Bush's strategy in Iraq. Most of the group's strategists and donors were closely affiliated with the Bush administration or had held positions in the White House. The group's goal was to mobilize conservatives on a variety of issues to oppose liberal groups and to present a message to individuals who supported the administration.<sup>6</sup>

#### Evasion

If an organization is large enough, it can use the tactic of evasion. Synonyms for evasion include "buck-passing" and "the runaround." A large bureaucracy can effectively avoid dealing with agitators by forcing them to negotiate the labyrinth of receptionists, secretaries, low-level administrators, and other functionaries who make up the hierarchy of any organization.

Evasion played a major role in the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago. The *Walker Report*, an in-depth analysis of convention events, details how Mayor Richard J. Daley and other Chicago administrators used evasion to discourage dissenters from coming to Chicago during the convention.<sup>7</sup> The activists submitted requests to sleep in Chicago's parks, conduct a march to the convention site, organize a rally, and hold a concert. The city of Chicago did not negotiate in "good faith"; rather, it engaged in stalling tactics, hoping dissenters would give up and not attend the convention. Although Mayor Daley controlled all major decisions in Chicago, dissenters were forced to negotiate with Deputy Mayor David Stahl. Stahl at one point indicated he had no power to grant permits, that all of the required decisions were up to the heads of the Park District, the Police Department, and the Department of Streets and Sanitation. The city finally denied the permits on August 5. The convention began on August 25. The city's evasion left the agitators with very little

time for making plans to house agitators during the week of the convention. The agitators chose to ignore the city's decision and used the city's parks as a place to meet and sleep. That decision may have been largely responsible for the violence that occurred (see chapter 6).

Poet Susan Sherman described a similar situation. In 1968 she was invited to attend the Cultural Congress in Havana. She applied to the State Department for approval to travel to Cuba as a journalist. The State Department stalled, so Sherman flew to Mexico City and then to Cuba. The approval to travel "arrived at my apartment three days after the conference began, timed to make it impossible for me to go."<sup>8</sup> The FBI monitored Sherman's activities in Cuba and undertook an investigation of her life, including her part-time teaching position at Hunter College in New York City. After being contacted by the FBI, college officials called Sherman to inform her that she would only be offered one course to teach that fall semester rather than her normal full teaching load. She accepted the class, but when she checked in for the fall semester she was informed that she was not scheduled to teach any courses.<sup>9</sup>

Evasion can involve a significant amount of risk for an establishment. The establishment's actions may make agitators angry and energize them rather than causing them to abandon their agitation. Jerry Rubin illustrates this idea when talking about the reaction students had to administrators' avoidance at the University of California, Berkeley during the dissent on that campus in 1964: "Two months later, we learned a heavy bureaucratic trick: the fucking deans were using 'negotiations' as a dodge to wear us out. Talk, talk, talk, while the rules against political activity stood strong."<sup>10</sup> After coming to that realization, the students enlarged their activities. The establishment's use of evasion backfired.

Evasive actions may cause agitators to seek solutions that involve going outside the normal channels of communication. If an agitative movement is sufficiently powerful, it may go directly to the source of power in the administration. For example, many university presidents live in houses that are located on campus and are easily accessible to students. If university administrators give agitators problems, the activists may go directly to the president's home. The leaders may also appeal to individuals with political power in Washington, D.C., a state legislature, or a state's Board of Regents.

All establishments evading a confrontation with a dissident ideology run the risk that the dissidents will appeal to a higher, more powerful establishment. For example, in 1969 workers who were striking grape growers were unable to plead their case with the Schenley and DiGiorgio companies, so they marched three hundred miles from their union's office in Delano to the governor's mansion in Sacramento. The march attracted a tremendous amount of publicity and helped energize a strike that had been losing much of its early enthusiasm. The march helped lead to an agreement between the union and the growers.

### Postponement

Evasion as a tactic is most effectively used in a large establishment. All establishments, however, may use the tactic of postponement. By postponing any binding decision and by taking the demands of an agitative group "under advisement," an establishment can frequently avoid unwanted change. Creating fact-finding committees, scheduling subsequent board meetings, conferences, and commissions and urging further discussion may all serve as effective impediments to the agitators' challenges. At least two factors favor an establishment's use of the tactic of postponement. If the agitators become impatient and frustrated, they may take unwise or illegal actions. If they break the law, they can be jailed. If they break an institution's rule, they can be eliminated from the organization. Alternatively, the agitators may be patiently persistent and willing to wait. Their patience may allow an establishment to defer decisions or actions indefinitely. Again, the establishment must be careful because the use of this tactic may so anger people that they will be energized and increase the intensity of their dissent.

### Secrecy with a Rationale

Rather than dealing with the demands of agitators, leaders may claim that they are unable to respond because of the necessity of secrecy. Governments may refuse to respond because the response would violate "executive privilege" or because the information may compromise national security. In the 1960s when individuals sought information about the civil rights movement and communism from the FBI, the response was usually a refusal because the information would "compromise FBI informants" or on-going criminal investigations.<sup>11</sup> Businesses or universities may fail to respond because the information may violate confidentiality or student rights.

When an establishment is sufficiently confident of the cohesion and loyalty of its members, this tactic can effectively counter the agitators' demands. However, the principle invoked must, indeed, be higher in the members' hierarchy of values than the accepted practice of responding to questions or petitions by those questioning the institution. Also, the rationale may be unacceptable to agitators and may energize them or cause them to change their approach to more extreme tactics.

If an establishment issues a rationale unacceptable to its membership, serious consequences may result. For example, President Nixon's appeals to "executive privilege" during the Watergate investigation were unacceptable to many members of the public. The eventual release of information during the Watergate hearings played a major role in his forced resignation.

### Denial of Means

Institutional leaders also may choose an avoidance tactic called denial of means. To effectively promulgate their ideas and demands, dis-

senting groups require certain tools like paper, ink, copiers, cameras, recording devices, and sound equipment in addition to meeting halls, parks, or other areas suitable for demonstrations. An establishment can weaken the agitators' effectiveness by denying these tools.

There are many variations on denying means. For example, agitators could be granted the right to meet in a facility, such as a church. However, if the organist in the church is instructed to play music loudly and continuously, the establishment has effectively denied the means of communication. If university students gather for a rally and soon after the sprinklers come on and drench the participants, the rally may be canceled. The establishment can claim the sprinklers were on automatic timers and no one was available to reprogram them.

In 2007, several groups sued New York City for the right to hold rallies on the Great Lawn in Central Park. Historically the lawn had been used for large rallies, but the city began to deny permits for rallies because the "grass is too fragile to permit them." Any group that used the lawn had to post bonds to pay for potential damage. The lawsuit argued that the city granted permits to "the New York Philharmonic and its well-heeled subscribers" and that "classical music fans are just as capable of flattening grass as critics of the White House." An editorial in the *New York Times* argued that "turning Manhattan into a rally-free zone is too high a price to pay" for well-tended grass in Central Park.<sup>12</sup>

The administration of George W. Bush attempted to limit dissent in a variety of ways: individuals wearing shirts with anti-Bush slogans were removed from events where Bush spoke; people with an anti-Bush bumper sticker on their car that said "No More Blood for Oil" were removed from a Bush event; and others who were wearing Young Democrats shirts were not allowed into events. The White House even produced a manual that gave instructions on "detering potential protestors" from events at which President Bush appeared. Included in the manual was a statement that local police should be asked to designate a protest area "preferably not in view of the event site or the motorcade route."<sup>13</sup> The goal of the manual was clear: to deny protestors an opportunity to confront the president in gatherings or even on the street.

An establishment may allow dissenters access to space for protest but limit their movement within that space. In 2009 protestors at the Group of Twenty (G-20) protests in England were allowed to congregate but the "London police have discovered that the best way to neuter demonstrations is not to move everyone on, or dispense troublemakers, but hold them close, cordon them into a diminishing space for hours and hours."<sup>14</sup> The effect on the crowd is dramatic: "The crowd goes from righteous indignation to fury to despair, and ends up pleading. They're all desperate to go. It's crowd control by bladder control."<sup>15</sup>

As technology changes, members of the establishment are forced to adapt their tactics to these changes. In 2007, there were major protests

in Myanmar. As discussed in chapter 2, pictures of the dissent and government suppression were disseminated throughout the world via cell phones and the Internet. Because the government was "embarrassed by smuggled video and photographs that showed their people rising up against them," the leaders "simply switched off the Internet." One observer commented, "They realized that this was their biggest enemy and they took it down." The government also cut off cell phone service and confiscated cell phones from individuals who were using them to communicate information about the protests.<sup>16</sup>

In 2008 the Chinese government took similar actions during protests in Tibet. The news coverage of that dissent created an outcry against Chinese actions months before the Olympic Games in Beijing. In response, the government blacked out international press coverage, refused to allow reporters to travel to areas of conflict, placed limitations on Internet access, and blocked access to YouTube because videos of the protest were being posted on the site.<sup>17</sup>

Because establishments in the United States do not dare to violate constitutional rights of free speech and free assembly, justifications should be issued simultaneously with a denial of physical means. At the Democratic Convention in 1968, speakers who argued against the Johnson administration frequently found their microphones abruptly turned off. Apparently, no justifying reasons were announced; no one even bothered to claim technical difficulties. These actions angered and frustrated delegates who opposed President Johnson.

As discussed previously, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) held meetings in San Francisco that were supposedly open to the public. Because of controversies surrounding HUAC and the hearings, many groups sought tickets so they could protest the committee and its actions. However, HUAC and its supporters created a ticket policy that limited admittance to individuals who belonged to a conservative, patriotic organization like the American Legion, the Daughters of the American Revolution, or a similar organization. Denying the means of protest—in this case, a seat in the hearing room—was an outright violation of the principles of fair play. Because no justifications for the ticket policy were announced, the establishment's actions only raised the level of dissent rather than limiting it.

Denial of means may seem to be a low-order tactic, but it can be used to counter activists' actions at most stages of dissent. For example, when agitators use nonviolent resistance to call attention to their grievances, establishments can institute policies to counter the strategy. In the wake of the student protests, confrontations, and guerrilla activities in 1968–69, the federal government and many state legislatures passed resolutions denying future agitators the means of advancing their causes. Contrary to constitutional guarantees of the right of assembly and privacy, states passed legislation that denied the means of protest, sometimes



with the rationale that large assemblies could get out of hand and police and municipalities could not be held liable if someone were injured during attempts to restore order. Other legislation denied permits or other means to out-of-state students.<sup>18</sup> Chapter 5 illustrates how the state of Mississippi used this tactic to counter the actions of one thousand student volunteers who went to the state in 1964 to help African Americans register to vote.

During the 2008 Olympics, the Chinese government devised an extremely clever means of denying agitators the means to demonstrate. The government created three "protest zones" in Beijing where "demonstrations would be allowed." In order to use the zones, agitators had to gain approval from the Beijing Public Securities Bureau. In several cases, people who applied for permits were arrested. Columnist Nicholas P. Kristof commented on the tactic: "Public Security is pretty shrewd. In the old days it had to go out and catch protestors in the act. Now it saves itself the bother: would-be protestors show up at Public Security offices to apply for permits and are promptly detained. That's cost-effective law enforcement for you."<sup>19</sup> Under the rules, two elderly women were arrested when they applied for a permit to protest being evicted from their home in 2001. They were sentenced to "serve one-year terms in [China's] labor re-education system."<sup>20</sup> However, the charges against the women were dropped once the Olympics had concluded.

## Suppression

Suppression is the second rhetorical strategy an establishment can adopt in response to activists' challenges. Suppression requires a thorough understanding of opponents and their ideology as well as a strong commitment to actively confront and defeat the agitators and their movement. While avoidance tactics focus on the issues underlying the agitation, most suppression tactics attempt to weaken or remove the movement's leaders. Because leaders are crucial, successful harassment can significantly weaken the entire movement. In some cases, the leader is so important that he or she comes to personify the movement. For example, Dr. King became the image of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and Cesar Chavez the personification of the United Farm Workers. Mark Rudd, the most visible of the leaders of the student movement at Columbia University in 1968, summarized this tactic well: "Eliminate the leaders and you eliminate the movement."<sup>21</sup> In Montgomery, whites sought to eliminate Dr. King so they could "cut off the head" of the protest.<sup>22</sup>

### Harassment

The first tactic of suppression is harassment of leaders. Although harassment seems to be directed at the individuals with power in a movement, it actually serves to weaken and dilute the group's solidarity.

Just as an establishment needs its leaders to guide and direct the institution, a dissenting group requires strong leaders who can maintain a cohesive, energized membership. There are two consequences that agitation leaders face when they encounter harassment: (1) They have less time and energy to devote to their cause and their followers because they must defend themselves rather than working in the movement, and (2) the members of the group have an example of what may happen to them if they continue in their beliefs and activities. Abbie Hoffman summarizes the dilemma activists face: "each point along the line . . . where your family was harassed . . . the threats, the kinds of pressure, you know, you've got to make an existential decision about going forward . . . and it's tough."<sup>23</sup>

Harassment encompasses a broad range of actions that range from the use of moral force to relying on physical force. An example of moral force occurs when decision makers threaten to resign unless agitation against them is effectively challenged. During the 1960s many university presidents used this threat as a means to gain the power they needed to effectively oppose campus activists.

Economic harassment is also an effective tool. When blacks began to challenge the system in the South, whites cut off credit at stores and gas stations, refused credit to purchase crucial supplies (including seeds and tools for farming), refused to buy goods from black merchants, and, in extreme cases, shut off distribution of federal food surpluses to needy families.<sup>24</sup> Also, many members of the black middle class, like teachers, school administrators, bus drivers, and other government employees, were afraid to confront the white power structure because they knew they would be fired from their jobs.

During the Montgomery bus boycott, blacks organized carpools to get people to work. The Montgomery police harassed the drivers of the cars: "questioning them, checking their headlights and windshield wipers, writing traffic tickets for minute and often imaginary violations of the law." Drivers feared they would lose their licenses and their insurance. The traffic fines also diverted money that could have been used to support the boycott.<sup>25</sup>

Establishment leaders can also employ physical deterrents. During the 1960s in the South, the homes and cars of black protest leaders were bombed, shots were fired into their homes, arrests were frequent and individuals were often beaten in jail and sometimes killed. When blacks tried to register to vote in some states their names were printed in the local newspaper, often leading to retaliation by whites. Young black activists and ministers also were told that their draft deferments would be revoked if they continued to be active. Some police departments preposterously claimed that blacks were bombing and burning their own homes in order to attract attention—and then arrested black homeowners based on these false claims.<sup>26</sup> If the individuals responsible for the bombings actually

went to trial, they were often found not guilty. Judge William Watkins released bombers in McComb, Mississippi, who had pleaded guilty to probation or suspended sentences because they had been "'unduly provoked' by outsiders of 'low morality and [who were] unhygienic.'"<sup>27</sup>

The harassment of the Black Panthers provides a vivid example of planned harassment against avowed revolutionaries. During the first six months of 1969, Black Panthers were involved in more than sixty criminal prosecutions and were forced to post \$300,000 in bail bonds. On June 4, eight Panthers in Chicago were arrested for harboring a fugitive (who was not even in Chicago) from federal authorities. Five days later, eleven Panthers were arrested and charged with possession of marijuana. On the following morning, simultaneous raids were made on Panther buildings in New York, New Haven, Oakland, Salt Lake City, Des Moines, Denver, and Indianapolis. That afternoon in Chicago, sixteen Panthers were indicted on conspiracy charges. Trying to put the raids in perspective, Kermit Coleman, ghetto project director of the American Civil Liberties Union, said: "As long as you talk about black capitalism, you don't go to jail. But when you come out of a revolutionary bag that doesn't encompass the present political and economic structure, that's when all the powers of repression are brought to bear."<sup>28</sup>

Establishments frequently receive unsolicited help or offers of help from individuals and groups who reject the agitators' beliefs and behaviors. Although establishment leaders may not sanction these unsolicited activities, actions serve the same functions as official harassment. Once Malcolm X was identified as a key figure in the Black Muslims, his house was attacked with rocks, shotguns, and eventually fire bombs. Eldridge Cleaver and Bobby Seale, recognized spokesmen for the Black Panthers, were treated in a similar manner. Madalyn Murray O'Hair, leader of the movement to ban prayers in public schools, was temporarily forced to leave the United States after repeated attacks on her property and threats on her life. The early history of the labor movement in the United States provides many examples of active, deliberate harassment from groups with ties to the establishment. Vigilante organizations usually emerge to oppose union activists attempting to organize workers into unions. At Columbia and other universities, athletes and conservative students united to oppose dissent and harass activists. There were often violent clashes because of the conflict between the dissenters and those who supported the establishment.

In the aftermath of campus protest in 1968-69, Louis Byers formed The National Youth Alliance, which was openly dedicated to "ridding our schools of pinkos, Marxists, and black and white gangsters." Byers explained how his organization would respond to campus protest:

Let's say the following happens—some communistic SDS members (Students for a Democratic Society) take over a student union building somewhere. Well, then, right away our people will meet to

react. . . . At first we will do everything possible, peaceably, to get the rowdies evicted. We will apply pressure on the administration, the local community, and the police—to try to get a general uprising. But if nothing happens this way, then we'll have to resort to final means. We'll organize enough people and enough force to physically enter the building—and toss the militants out ourselves.<sup>29</sup>

In March of 1982, women at the University of California, Davis participated in a "Take Back the Night" march "to protest women's fear of male violence at night." As they were passing fraternity row, "they encountered a shocking display of gross hostility. While one young man backed a car straight into the crowd, another urinated on the marchers; several 'mooned' the women; some men threatened to rape them later; still others hung out windows shouting obscenities."<sup>30</sup>

During 2007 and 2008 there were massive demonstrations calling for immigration reform in the United States. As time passed, the rallies grew smaller and smaller. Leaders argued that one reason was that "immigrants increasingly fear deportation" because of "aggressive enforcement by Border Patrol and police."<sup>31</sup> If they were correct, people simply were too afraid to protest. If true, the establishment had achieved its goal.

Establishment leaders must be careful in their actions or they risk energizing the protestors and convincing uncommitted individuals to support activists. While harassment sometimes either weakens or defeats the agitation, it can also cause a backlash against the establishment. An interesting example occurred during the Iraq War when veterans who participated in antiwar demonstrations were given "other than honorable discharge" notices from the military. They were punished because they "violated the Uniform Code of Military Justice by wearing part" of their military uniforms to antiwar rallies. Apparently the action has not stopped other veterans from dissenting: "The men's cases have spurred dissenting troops to find creative ways to voice their disapproval of the war while remaining well within military guidelines." One of the veterans, who is 80 percent disabled, agreed not to protest in uniform if he could keep his honorable discharge and his veterans benefits; however, "he now attends anti-war demonstrations in civilian clothes; his mother attends as well, wearing his old uniform for him."<sup>32</sup>

In a sense, harassment functions as a testing maneuver. If the agitation ceases after its leaders or members have been harassed, the establishment doesn't need to resort to other suppressive tactics because the agitation no longer poses a threat to the institution.

If agitation is sufficiently solidified, as it was for the SCLC in Birmingham in 1963, then each act of harassment (bombing, burning, jailing, etc.) not only increases the solidarity of the agitative forces but also tends to weaken the referent power of the decision makers within their establishment (the example of Birmingham in chapter 4 illustrates this idea very well).

### Denial of the Agitators' Demands

Harassment is only one of several ways establishments can respond to activists. Leaders may choose a tactic that might be labeled denial of the agitators' demands. In 1967, many college administrators were presented with ultimatums to end military recruitment on campus. Usually the demands were denied. A group at Berkeley demanded that Eldridge Cleaver be allowed to teach a seminar on racism in their Black Studies Program. The chancellor of the Berkeley campus, Roger Heyns, said no. The Third World Coalition Movement at San Francisco State College demanded that President Hayakawa retain a certain faculty member. The demand was denied.

The use of this tactic may be a gamble for leaders of an institution, so it is crucial that the establishment have the power to enforce the decision or their actions may actually weaken the establishment and strengthen the activist cause. For example, when the university denied Cleaver the right to teach a class, they provided him with a reason to attack the leaders of the university and the political leadership of the state; it also damaged the image of the university's leadership in many students' eyes.<sup>33</sup>

Even if an establishment has legitimate power, there is some risk that its decisions or actions may still be interpreted in favor of the agitators. For example, John and Mary Beth Tinker, Iowa high school students, demanded that they be allowed to wear black arm bands in school to protest the war in Vietnam. They were suspended. In 1969, the case reached the Supreme Court, which ruled that the wearing of arm bands was a legal exercise of free speech. Denial puts establishments at risk of losing credibility because a higher authority within the establishment may challenge the legitimacy of actions by establishment leaders.

Moreover, the tactic of denying demands may precipitate and generate increased power in the dissenting group's ranks. If some establishment members interpret the denial as an injustice, internal dissension may result and the establishment's decision may be overturned. A case in point is that of Jerry Sies, a frequent activist at the University of Iowa, who demanded the right to examine city records on substandard apartment housing. A city official denied Sies this right. Members of the city council and the local judiciary joined Sies, and the city records were made available. The denial of demands, therefore, only works when the leaders of the establishment still have legitimate and referent bases of power to enforce their actions.

However, when the legitimate power group and the referent power groups within an establishment differ in ideology, denial of demands causes more damage within the establishment than damage to the agitating group. During the dissent at San Francisco State College in 1968 and 1969, the Board of Trustees, which had legitimate and reward power, held beliefs opposed to those of the faculty, which had referent power. The university president's denial of militant teachers' and students'

demands appeased the board, enraged the faculty, and eventually led to the forced resignation of the president.

### Banishment

Although the word banishment may seem unnecessarily archaic, it encompasses actions like:

1. Excommunication
2. Expulsion
3. Academic suspension
4. Compelling someone to leave an area under the laws of illegal assembly
5. Encouraging or forcing someone to leave the physical boundaries of a city, state, or country
6. Confining someone in jail

The effective use of banishment can weaken or even destroy a movement by removing its leaders. Many cases of banishment can be cited during the 1960s and 1970s. When a group of students at the University of Denver staged a sit-in in 1969, the president, Maurice B. Mitchell, expelled them. The action enabled city police to enter the campus and remove the dissenters. The sit-in ended before the movement gathered momentum, and the courts upheld President Mitchell's action.<sup>34</sup> President Theodore Hesburgh of Notre Dame allowed a grace period of twenty minutes for anyone who "substitutes force for rational persuasion, be it violent or nonviolent." After twenty minutes, demonstrators were automatically expelled—the equivalent of being banished. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* noted: "In California, the state university's board of regents ordered that whenever the governor declares a state of emergency, administrators must put on interim suspension anyone charged with disruptions, banning him [or her] from the campus."<sup>35</sup>

In a report on FBI activities during 1969, Director J. Edgar Hoover said that campus disorders resulted in more than 4,000 arrests. Examples of academic banishment occurred at a variety of institutions: San Francisco State College, 1 expelled, 22 suspended; Harvard, 16 expelled; University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, 90 expelled; University of Kansas, 33 suspended; University of Chicago, 43 expelled, 81 suspended; University of California, Berkeley, 15 expelled, 35 suspended.<sup>36</sup>

During the 1960s, undergraduates who participated in antiwar or antidraft activities could lose their draft deferments and they could then be drafted to serve in Vietnam. Selective Service Director Lewis B. Hershey reasoned that these deferments were issued in the national interest and that anyone trying to hamper the draft or public policy could not be acting in that interest. The U.S. Court of Appeals later ruled that draft boards had no right to reclassify registrants because of antiwar activities,

but, at the same time, upheld the draft system's right to reclassify those who violated other regulations.

Instances of banishment are abundant. Catholic priests Philip and Daniel Berrigan were convicted of destroying selective service records in Catonsville, Maryland, and were sent to a medium-security correctional institution in Danbury, Connecticut. At the San Francisco Presidio stockade in 1968, twenty-seven GIs protested unsanitary conditions and the killing of a prisoner. While attempting to read their grievances, they were charged with mutiny, a capital offense. They were convicted. Many Black Panther leaders were forced to live outside the United States. Eldridge Cleaver, black author and a Panther leader, was forced into exile in Algeria and later France before returning to the United States where he was jailed. Young men who opposed the draft during the Vietnam War were forced to flee to Canada or Sweden to avoid jail terms. In 1919, Alexander Mitchell Palmer, the attorney general of the United States, had a large number of individuals who opposed World War I arrested, placed on a ship, and sent to the Soviet Union. In a similar vein, a group of workers who were striking in Bisbee, Arizona, were loaded into railroad cars and dumped in the desert of southern New Mexico without water or food. Their strike was broken.

Banishment is probably the most effective tactic an establishment can use. Few movements can survive without leadership. Banishment not only removes the leaders but also serves as a deterrent to other members of the group. It is dangerous to control, however, when the banishing establishment violates its own regulations, thereby eroding its legitimate power. A prime example of this may have occurred during the 2004 Republican National Convention. The city of New York wanted minimal dissent during the convention so over 2,000 people were arrested and many were detained for days with any explanation. The *New York Times* argued that many of the tactics were

heavy-handed: rounding up suspects on the streets, fingerprinting them and putting them in holding pens until the convention was all but over. [The city] seemed to cast an awfully wide and indiscriminate net in seeking out potential troublemakers. For more than a year before the convention, members of a police spy unit headed by a former official of the Central Intelligence Agency infiltrated a wide range of groups . . . including environmental and church groups and even a satirical troupe called Billionaires for Bush.<sup>37</sup>

The city's actions led to many lawsuits that forced the city to divulge information about its tactics. That information has embarrassed the city and its officials and could potentially lead to settlements that could be costly.

### Purgation

The most extreme—and obviously illegal—tactic involves killing the leaders and members of an agitative movement. In addition to the crimi-

nality, the tactic is highly risky because the person killed may become a martyr for his or her cause. Individuals may be more powerful dead than alive. There are numerous examples of such martyrs in the history of American labor. For example, in 1969, Joseph A. "Jock" Yablonski, an official in the United Mine Workers, ran for the presidency of the union against an entrenched president, Tony Boyle. Although he lost the election, Yablonski was killed on Boyle's orders. Yablonski became a martyr. His followers created a movement called the Miners for Democracy and forced a new election, which removed Boyle from office. Boyle was eventually convicted of the crime and sent to prison where he died.<sup>38</sup>

### Adjustment

If establishments are not successful in defeating the movement through avoidance or suppression, they will often move to the strategy of adjustment where institutions adapt, modify, or alter their structures, goals, and personnel. Even though the establishment begins to make changes in response to the agitators' demands, adjustment must never be perceived as a decision maker's concession or partial surrender. The adjustment must not be seen as a sign of weakness on the establishment's part. Weakness is not a virtue, especially weakness in the decision makers of a regulatory control agency. The dynamics seem to work as follows. Agitators make a demand, those in control decide to adjust. If agitators declare a victory *and* use language connoting concession and if the members of the establishment *believe* that their decision makers have yielded when confronted with an external challenge, then the members will disavow their allegiance and the establishment will give way to a new order. While decision makers can be perceived as just, merciful, liberal, progressive, and open minded, they must *never* be perceived as weak.

#### Changing the Name of the Regulatory Agency

Just as the tactics of suppression can be either nonviolent or violent, the tactics of adjustment can be either apparent or real. For example, the tactic of changing the name of the regulatory agency after a confrontation with an agitative group is seldom a real adjustment in an establishment's structure, personnel, or ideology. If an agency comes under attack, the establishment can change its name and then argue that the agency has been reformed and the agitator's problems have been solved. If this adjustment is done carefully, the agitators will no longer have a grievance or an organization to attack. After coming under considerable attack, the House Un-American Activities Committee changed its name to The House Committee on Internal Security. After serving as the focal point for demonstrations against Dow Chemical and Marine recruiters, the Business and Industrial Placement Office at a Midwestern university was renamed the Office of Career Counseling.



Changing names may also be necessary for organizations other than regulatory agencies. During the 1980s, the Moral Majority became a powerful conservative force in American life under the leadership of the Reverend Jerry Falwell. However, by 1986 because the press had "bloodied and beaten the name Moral Majority" and because of a lessening of political power and contributions, Falwell changed the name to the Liberty Federation. Falwell claimed that the name was changed so that the organization could broaden its program. However, critics charged that he was not changing anything except the name of the organization.<sup>39</sup>

Changing the name of an organization or regulatory agency, while it rarely satisfies any agitative ideology, does serve to refocus and clarify the purpose of the institution to those within the establishment. Specifically, the tactic tends to solidify those members of the establishment who are removed from the decision makers, yet share the essential values of the institution.

#### **Sacrificing Personnel**

When agitation centers on a flag person, the establishment can resort to a second tactic of adjustment. Lyndon Johnson may have sacrificed himself as an adjustment following the antiwar demonstrations of 1967–68. University presidents like Grayson Kirk of Columbia, Nathan Pusey of Harvard, Morris Abram of Brandeis, Clark Kerr of the University of California, and Robert Smith of San Francisco State probably were sacrificed as adjustments to campus disorders. Oliver North was sacrificed during the Iran–Contra scandal in the 1980s. In 2006–2007, I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, an aide to Vice President Dick Cheney, was commonly seen as being sacrificed during a controversy in which the name of Valerie Plame was leaked to the press as a CIA operative in an attempt to discredit her husband, Ambassador Joseph Wilson, who was a critic of the Iraq War.

This tactic carries risks for decision makers. The channels of communication within an institution suffer from the temporary vacancy, time must be allocated to find a replacement, and the legitimate power of an establishment becomes vulnerable if the tactic is not successful. The establishment must be careful to pick someone willing to accept the sacrificial role. Oliver North was a perfect choice because he willingly accepted much of the blame for the Iran–Contra scandal and was able to lessen the damage to the Reagan administration. North also became a hero to many. If the person does not accept the role, the tactic will backfire. A prime example occurred during the Watergate scandal. The Nixon administration selected White House counsel John Dean as a person to sacrifice. Rather than willingly accept the role, Dean provided crucial information to Congress and the press that made the scandal bigger and raised more questions about the Nixon administration.

Establishments use the tactic of sacrificing personnel to elicit sympathy for the victim and to arouse the moral indignation of establishment

members against the agitators who brought about the sacrifice. This tactic is most successfully accomplished if a flag person can be located to personify the grievances of the agitative group. When the flag person is removed from the establishment, the agitative group suddenly finds itself without a cause, and its energies must be redirected toward maintaining its own membership. Because most establishment members share a common worldview, the replacement for the sacrificed flag person rarely is an individual whom the agitators themselves would have selected.

#### Accepting Some of the Means of Agitation

The establishment may project an image of openness to dissent. In 2007 President Bush undertook a trip to several Latin American nations. His advisors knew that there would be demonstrations against his trip in several nations, but he seemed to welcome the dissent: "I am proud to be going to a part of the world where people can demonstrate, where people can express their minds." Bush has used similar statements about dissent in the United States against the war in Iraq. Bush was arguing that dissent, rather than being a negative for the establishment, was a positive affirmation of the democratic values his administration supported.<sup>40</sup>

One method that agitators use to attract public attention is creative disorder (see chapter 2). If those involved in the creative disorder are ignored or treated kindly, agitation may be effectively thwarted. For example, Aid to Dependent Children demanded higher benefits based on the cost of living and staged a camp-in on government property. No arrests were made; there was virtually no television coverage; and the camp-in ended after one night. In a three-inch news story on the camp-in, the governor later said, "We didn't really provide a camping service for these people. They wanted to express themselves. They did no one any harm."<sup>41</sup>

In 2007, a group of students at Columbia University undertook a hunger strike that "demanded more money for ethnic studies, a more multicultural curriculum and a more neighborly plan for expanding north into Harlem from the Morningside Heights campus." The strikers camped on the library lawn. Rather than evicting the students or arresting them, the "university hooked up the encampment for lights; deeming heaters a fire hazard, officials offered to let the strikers sleep in common space indoors." At the same time, a group of students who opposed the strike used Facebook "to organize a group called 'We Do NOT Support the Hunger Strikers.'" The strike ended "when the administration pledged to explore changes to the curriculum, which, it turned out, had been discussed even before the protest had started."<sup>42</sup>

An example of creative disorder by demonstrators against the Vietnam War consisted of reading the names of servicemen killed in action. When the tactic was first introduced, participants were arrested for assembling to read the lists. When the arrests stopped, the readings became ineffective events because the press no longer covered them.

Accepting some of the means of agitation can provoke agitators to engage in increasingly more serious infractions of law or custom in order to gain the needed attention. If a sit-in goes unnoticed, agitators must risk escalating their creative disorder. Disturbing the peace is a relatively insignificant misdemeanor, and by judiciously waiting for agitators to increase the intensity of their symbolic behavior, shrewd establishment leaders can later impose more severe penalties, up to and including banishment. Accepting some of the means of agitation can also be extremely useful to an institution because the leaders can proclaim that their actions illustrated the institution's strength in opposing its adversaries. That rhetoric may detail the institutional broad mindedness and contrast those actions to the violent activity of agitators. This comparison enables the decision makers to justify the harshness of their suppressive measures.

#### **Incorporate Some of the Personnel**

Incorporating the personnel of an agitative movement may be expensive and, in some instances, deceitful. As a tactic, however, incorporating dissident personnel provides a means of adjustment for both the establishment and the agitative movement. There are many instances of establishments incorporating movement personnel. Universities now eagerly seek minority and female faculty members. Students are invited to serve on many college committees. In California, several grape growers and supply firms created the Agricultural Workers Freedom to Work Association, hired three Mexican-Americans as officers of the association, and attempted to drum up public opposition to the table-grape boycott of the 1960s by claiming that they spoke for farm workers rather than the United Farm Workers.

Although activists may see some visible effects as a result of their efforts, agitators who become members of the establishment face tremendous pressures to reject their past actions and to change their beliefs. They may be slowly converted to the establishment's views and beliefs—cleverly co-opted by the establishment they once fought. Alternatively, they may be assigned roles that have the appearance of power but are merely symbolic.

#### **Incorporate Parts of the Dissident Ideology**

Similarly, the final adjustment tactic of incorporating parts of the agitators' ideology may range from tokenism to a substantial merger. The creation of minority and women's studies programs on campus are a prime example of this tactic. To incorporate the ideology of an agitative movement into an establishment's belief structure is a delicate business. The decision makers must maintain their necessary image of strength. The establishment's membership must not perceive the change as altering in a significant way the values and goals of their institution. Both agitative and control groups should come to an understanding and compromise before this adjustment tactic. Nonnegotiable demands, by definition, do not lead to realistic adjustment.

## Capitulation

The last strategy an institution may adopt is capitulation to the agitators and their ideology. To be totally successful, a dissent movement's ideas, goals, policies, beliefs, and personnel must replace those of the institution challenged. The events in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and 1990s are prime examples of capitulation by an establishment. In the American Revolution, the British capitulated to the American dissenters who called for independence. Establishments do not surrender their power voluntarily. Capitulation is an establishment's last resort. No established agency of control uses this strategy unless total destruction by a superior force is imminent.

## Conclusion

Having reviewed the tactics of agitation and control, we now turn to specific case studies. The review is intentionally incomplete. We hope that readers will explore each case study in depth to gain an applied understanding of the theories of agitation and control.

## Notes

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- <sup>2</sup> David Farber, *Chicago '68* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988): 153.
- <sup>3</sup> Garven Hudgens, "Crackdown on Protests Foreseen," *The Daily Iowan*, September 10, 1969, 3.
- <sup>4</sup> Carl Oglesby, *Ravens in the Storm: A Personal History of the 1960s Antiwar Movement* (New York: Scribner, 2008): 241.
- <sup>5</sup> Michael E. Brown, "The Condemnation and Persecution of Hippies," *Transaction*, 6 (1969): 33.
- <sup>6</sup> Jim Kuhnhehn, "Outsiders Aim to Frame Political Debate," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 28, 2007. Accessed 5/11/2009 from <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/n/a/2007/09/28/politics/p105148D06.DTL&type=politics>
- <sup>7</sup> Daniel Walker, *Rights in Conflict: The Violent Confrontation of Demonstrators and Police in the Parks and Streets of Chicago During the Week of the Democratic National Convention of 1968* (New York: Bantam Books, 1968).
- <sup>8</sup> Susan Sherman, *America's Child: A Woman's Journey through the Radical Sixties* (Willimantic, CT: Curbstone Press, 2007): 149.
- <sup>9</sup> Sherman, 170–171.
- <sup>10</sup> Jerry Rubin, *Do It!* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1970): 23.
- <sup>11</sup> Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years 1954–1963* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988): 678. The FBI used the same rationale in its refusal to give information to the attorney general and even the president.
- <sup>12</sup> "A Perfect Lawn, Mowed and Muted," *New York Times*, March 12, 2007. Accessed 5/11/2009 from <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9904E3D91031F931A25750C0A9619C8B63>
- <sup>13</sup> Peter Baker, "White House Guidebook on Protesters," *The Seattle Times*, August 23, 2007, A-11; "Bush Hails Freedom, But Can He Handle a Lousy T-shirt?" *USA Today* (editorial), August 24, 2007, 12A. The guidebook became public after Jeffery and Nicole Rank were

- arrested for wearing T-shirts at a rally on July 4, 2007, in Wheeling, West Virginia. The shirts said, "Regime Change Starts at Home" and "Love America, Hate Bush." The Ranks were told to cover the shirts or leave the rally. They refused and were arrested. The charges were dropped but the Ranks sued and won \$80,000. The guidebook became public knowledge because of their case.
- <sup>14</sup> A. A. Gill, "Did the Obama Magic Travel Well?" *New York Times*, Sunday Opinion, April 5, 2009, 11.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>16</sup> Seth Mydans, "Monks Are Silenced, and for Now, Internet Is, Too," *New York Times*, October 4, 2007. Accessed 5/11/2009 from <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/04/world/asia/04info.html?th=&emc=th&pagewanted=p>
- <sup>17</sup> Peter Ford, "China Blocks YouTube, Reporters Over Tibet News," *The Christian Science Monitor*, March 18, 2008. Accessed 5/11/2009 from <http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0318/p06s02-woap.html>
- <sup>18</sup> Marquis Childs, "Crippling Storm May Hurt All Campuses," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, May 9, 1969, 4.
- <sup>19</sup> Nicholas P. Kristof, "Malcontents Need Not Apply," *New York Times*, August 17, 2008, 11.
- <sup>20</sup> "Elderly Protesters Sent to Labor," *Albuquerque Journal*, August 21, 2008, B-6.
- <sup>21</sup> Excellent discussions of the importance of the leader are found in Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (February 1970): 1-11; Mark Rudd, "Symbols of the Revolution," in *Up Against the Ivy Wall*, Robert Friedman, ed. (New York: Atheneum, 1968): 296.
- <sup>22</sup> Branch, 173.
- <sup>23</sup> Abbie Hoffman, "Dick Cavett Show," March 1974.
- <sup>24</sup> Branch, 573.
- <sup>25</sup> Branch, 159.
- <sup>26</sup> Taylor Branch, *Pillar of Fire: America in the King Years 1963-65* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998): 497.
- <sup>27</sup> Branch, *Pillar of Fire*, 504.
- <sup>28</sup> Jerry DeMuth, "Chicago Cops Crack Down on Panthers," *National Catholic Reporter*, June 25, 1969, 1.
- <sup>29</sup> Louis Byers, quoted in Tom Tiede, "Vigilantes Train to Combat College Militants," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, June 25, 1969, 11.
- <sup>30</sup> Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Viking, 2000): 185.
- <sup>31</sup> "Immigration Reform Pushed," *Albuquerque Journal*, May 2, 2008, A5.
- <sup>32</sup> Kirsten Scharnberg, "Veterans Risk Reprisal for Anti-War Opinions," *Albuquerque Journal*, June 24, 2007, A5.
- <sup>33</sup> W. J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley At War: The 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989): 83-84.
- <sup>34</sup> Jeffrey Hart, "A Stiffening of Academic Backbone," *National Catholic Reporter*, March 12, 1969, 8.
- <sup>35</sup> *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 10, 1969, 12.
- <sup>36</sup> Philip W. Semas, "Find Colleges Tougher Than Critics Have Said," *Des Moines Register*, August 24, 1969, 1-2.
- <sup>37</sup> "Secrets of the Police," *New York Times* (editorial), August 8, 2007. Accessed 5/11/2009 from [http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/08/opinion/08wed2.html?\\_r=1&th=&oref=slogin&emc=](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/08/opinion/08wed2.html?_r=1&th=&oref=slogin&emc=)
- <sup>38</sup> Richard J. Jensen and Carol L. Jensen, "Labor's Appeal to the Past: The 1972 Election in the United Mine Workers," *Central States Speech Journal*, 28 (Fall 1977): 173-184.
- <sup>39</sup> "Falwell Rechristens His Majority," *Time*, January 21, 1986, 25.
- <sup>40</sup> Tom Raum, "Bush on Tour," *Albuquerque Journal*, March 9, 2007, A9.
- <sup>41</sup> *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, July 7, 1969, 2.
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