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AN ANALYSIS OF THE RHETORIC OF AGITATION  
AND CONTROL IN THE SIERRA CLUB  
CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT THE  
GRAND CANYON

THESIS

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This study of the rhetoric in the Sierra Club's Grand Canyon Campaign, 1963 to 1967 seeks to determine the decisive strategies in the success of the campaign. Criteria for examining the rhetoric are adapted from the fields of rhetoric and sociology. This analysis examines preconditions of this conservation campaign, its leaders, membership, strategies, and audience-speaker relationships.

The campaign's turning point came when the club used public audiences to pressure Control into capitulating to Agitation's demands. Other factors in the campaign's success were the Sierra Club's purity of belief, suppression action by Control, and incomplete purity of belief in the leader of Control.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe."<sup>1</sup> These words by John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, have served as an ideal and philosophy for this militant-conservationist organization which has stood as a watchdog against wilderness exploiters for eight decades.

Arriving in the United States from Scotland in 1849, eleven year-old John Muir spent the rest of his youth clearing acres and acres of wilderness land for his family's farming purposes. Perhaps this premeditated destruction of wilderness affected him greatly. As a young adult he spent several years working on small inventions until an accident temporarily blinded him. He vowed to give up the inventions of man and devote himself to "the study of the inventions of God"<sup>2</sup> if he recovered his sight. After he regained his sight, he spent most of the rest of his 76-year life in detailed exploration of much of North America's wilderness. All the while his concern for wilderness preservation increased.

The destruction of wilderness areas was immoral and unjust to Muir. During the last twenty years of his life, he vigorously campaigned against these injustices. It was

one of these campaigns that led to Muir's formation of the Sierra Club. Indiscriminate destruction of the Sequoia trees, largest of living things, was at its height in Muir's time. When thousands were cut into shingles or blasted out of the ground to supply grape stakes for winegrowers, Muir wrote, "As well sell the rain clouds, and the snow, and the rivers, to be cut up and carried away if that were possible."<sup>3</sup>

His outraged cry, resounding in his lectures and a series of newspaper articles, had much to do with prodding Congress into finally setting aside Sequoia National Park in 1890. With nothing less than religious zeal, Muir began to form his conservationist group. "John the Baptist was not more eager to get all his fellow sinners into the Jordan than I to baptize all of mine in the beauty of God's mountains,"<sup>4</sup> he insisted. By 1892, with this fervent background, the Sierra Club had begun.

Muir's influence on President Theodore Roosevelt helped to establish six national parks, Yosemite, Sequoia, King's Canyon, Ranier, Petrified Forest, and Grand Canyon, sixteen national monuments, and 148 million acres of national forest. He was president of the Sierra Club from its formation until his death in 1914. His last long battle was to save Hetch-Hetchy, the beautiful Yosemite Park valley, from flooding. The reservoir was to provide water for San Francisco, but Muir felt it could be obtained elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> On this subject Muir lectured, "As well dam for water-tanks the people's cathedrals and churches, for no holier temple has ever been so

consecrated by the heart of man."<sup>6</sup> Despite the efforts of John Muir and his Sierra Club, their long campaign to save Hetch-Hetchy was a failure, for the valley was inundated.

In the National Geographic, Muir was referred to as the "father of Yosemite National Park, saviour of the Sequoias, guiding light of the national park movement, explorer and mountaineer, naturalist and mystic, adviser to Presidents, gadfly of the establishment and America's apostle of wilderness."<sup>7</sup> The feelings of the Sierra Club members today which exhibit not only a responsibility but also a very intense possessive spirit toward the national park system, can be more easily understood in light of this background.

#### Background of the Colorado River Project

One of the projects undertaken by the Sierra Club, during the last few decades, has been a rather long one to preserve the natural state of the Colorado River, its canyons, and its wildlife. Since this thesis deals specifically with one stage of that project, it seems appropriate at this point to examine the background of the Colorado River in relation to the use of its waters.

The river rises in northwestern Colorado, flows 1500 miles through Utah, Arizona, Nevada, California, and Mexico until it reaches the Gulf of California. However, these five states and a foreign country are not the only ones to claim use of the Colorado's waters. Wyoming and New Mexico also lie on the

edges of the river basin. It is a vital source of water for all the states within its basin, and it is the only water source for large areas of Nevada, Arizona, and California. The basin of the Colorado covers one-twelfth of the entire land areas of the continental United States, 250,000 square miles. Much of this is arid or desert country.<sup>8</sup>

The use of Colorado River water was first officially considered during the first United States Geological Survey, which was conducted by Major John Wesley Powell in 1878. Powell's "Report on the Lands of the Arid Regions of the United States" was presented after several scientific expeditions and one trip down the Colorado River in 1869. He realized that water was the critical resource in a region of little rain, and his report was a broad conservation plan for the settlement of the arid country. He pointed out that the region received less than twenty inches of annual rainfall, which was not enough to sustain an economy based on traditional patterns of agriculture, thus many homesteaders were doomed to fail.<sup>9</sup> Powell proposed a plan that he felt would make the best use of the land and water without depleting either. His plan was not received well by Congress; however, because it was considered inconceivable at that time that any part of the West could be used up. It was nearly fifty years before his ideas were to be vindicated, and the careful planning of land and water use became essential.

Increased development in the twentieth century made greater demands on the waters of the Colorado in California and Arizona. In contrast, the upper basin lagged far behind the lower basin in population increase and irrigation development. An impending conflict between upstream and downstream use was recognized. Thus, in 1922, the states signed the Colorado River Compact apportioning waters of the disputed river between the two basins, separated by the Lee Ferry in northern Arizona. Based on a study of the amount of water available, the lower basin, Arizona, Nevada, and California, was assured 75 million acre feet of water in any ten consecutive years. The upper states of Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico and Utah, where ninety percent of the river's flow originated, got the right to the remainder, assumed to be 7.5 million acre feet annually above Lee Ferry.<sup>10</sup>

Unfortunately, in the years following the compact, stream-flow records indicated that the upper states would not be able to utilize their share of the water without some large storage works on the upper river system. The uneven flow of the river, with its erratic periods of drouth and flood, made the fulfillment of the commitment to the lower basin and substantial development in the upper basin impossible without river regulation. Reclamation Bureau studies stated that "42 percent of the upper basin apportioned water cannot be put to use unless excess waters were impounded during periods of prolonged high flows in a system of long-time holdover



reservoirs for release during prolonged periods of low flows."<sup>11</sup>

After several years of investigation by the Bureau of Reclamation, a plan, which was called the most gigantic reclamation project in history, was presented in 1950. It called for construction of nine major dams, reservoirs, and power plants in the upper states. This plan was introduced to Congress in 1952. Among those proposed dams was included one in Echo National Park, Colorado, near Dinosaur National Monument. With this proposal, a serious conservationist effort began, led by the Sierra Club, to exclude the Echo Park dam site from the overall plan.

Conservationists argued that a dam at the site of a national monument was a dangerous precedent and might become a custom in other states.<sup>12</sup> At that time, the Echo Park dam was the first of seventeen other projected dams pending in eight National Parks and Monuments throughout the country. Another argument was that the dam was actually intended to produce power and would not be used to reclaim arid land. California, which received water from the lower basin, argued that excessive water storage in the upper basin would reduce the quality of water in the lower basin, particularly by increasing the salt content.<sup>13</sup>

Another consideration presented by the conservationists was that it seemed unnecessary to irrigate new land for agricultural purposes when the nation was already suffering from

an agricultural surplus.<sup>14</sup> Also in question was the unknown factor of exactly how many years all the dams would be useful. Due to a build up of silt, the reservoir would gradually be filled with mud. Proponents of the dams estimated 100 years or more, but conservationists' calculations were 35-50 years. Either way, the conservationists pointed out that the dams were not a permanent solution to the water problems involved.<sup>15</sup> Another concern of those in opposition to the dams was the projected loss of water through evaporation.<sup>16</sup> Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay estimated approximately 100,000-200,000 acre feet per year, enough water to supply a city the size of Denver for a year, would be lost.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to the problems of the upper basin, there had never been restrictions imposed on well drilling in the lower basin. The result was the veritable looting of the water table in Arizona. People had rushed there during the war years for the purpose of raising quick and profitable crops.<sup>18</sup> As a consequence, the water table was falling from three to eight feet per year all over the state. To augment this situation, the Southwest was experiencing one of the longest droughts during this century, thereby producing a water shortage which, even by Arizona standards, was unprecedented.

Conservationist groups joined together to unite their efforts to save not only Dinosaur National Monument, but also to provide safety measures for Rainbow Bridge National Monument,

which they felt would be endangered after the reservoir at the proposed Glen Canyon Dam began to fill. Persistent agitation on the part of the conservationists for four years was probably the major influence on the passage of a bill in 1956 which excluded the Echo Park Dam and promised to take whatever steps were necessary to protect Rainbow Bridge National Monument.<sup>19</sup> In 1963, however, when the gates were closed on the completed Glen Canyon Dam and the waters began to rise, no protection had been provided for Rainbow Bridge.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, the conservationists joy over their victory with Dinosaur National Monument was short lived, for a 1957 bill proposed a dam on the lower Colorado which they felt would threaten another national monument, the Grand Canyon.<sup>21</sup>

During the nineteen-sixties, the Sierra Club became the major source of agitation rhetoric in the cause of the Grand Canyon; however, the conservationist movement was only one of many protest movements at that time. Particularly notable were the civil rights movement and the anti-war movement. Also the sixties were times of assassinations and attempted assassinations. In general, the political atmosphere was such that a conservationist movement received less attention than it might have in other times.

Another interesting factor of the conservation movement is that it has differed in strategy and tactics to a great extent from other movements of its time, and yet it achieved some success. For the most part, the Sierra Club never advanced

beyond a verbal rhetoric. In contrast to other contemporary movements which employed violence or token violence, a movement which was successful with less than violent strategies has been an interesting study in agitation rhetoric. These considerations, along with the campaign's high level of rhetorical sophistication, created an unusual opportunity for inquiry into an agitation movement.

#### Statement of Purpose

This study will analyze the rhetoric of agitation and control in the Sierra Club campaign to protect the Grand Canyon. The specific questions to be answered by this thesis are:

1. What rhetorical strategies and tactics were employed by agitation and control?
2. What audiences were addressed by agitation and control?
3. What were the audience-speaker relationships in determining communicative conditions?
4. Was it possible for Congress to comply with the Sierra Club demands?
5. What were the determining factors in the success of this campaign?

Before proceeding with a description of the methodology to be used, a definition of agitation and control rhetoric is in order. Rhetoric has been defined by John W. Bowers and

Donovan J. Ochs in The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control, as "the rationale of instrumental, symbolic behaviour."<sup>22</sup> To clarify their definition, they point out that a message or an action is instrumental if it contributes to the production of another message or act, and a message or action is symbolic if it stands for something.<sup>23</sup> These authors also provide us with our definition of agitation and control. Agitation is said to exist "when people outside the normal decision-making establishment advocate significant social change and encounter a degree of resistance within the establishment such as to require more than the normal discursive means of persuasion."<sup>24</sup> Control is defined as "the response of the decision-making establishment to agitation."<sup>25</sup> In the Grand Canyon campaign, Agitation was clearly the Sierra Club, and Control was made up of all departments of the Federal Government, especially the Interior Department, Congress, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Administration.

#### Method and Procedure

In 1957, a bill was proposed which called for construction of a dam in Grand Canyon; however, due to petition by the Sierra Club and time spent by the Interior Department surveying and studying the site, Agitation did not begin for five years. Petition, as a rhetorical strategy, is not necessarily agitative, and the Sierra Club's use of petition will be discussed in more detail in Chapter III. Consequently,

the movement has been dealt with in the period from 1963 to 1967, in Chapter III. More specifically, however, the Agitation rhetoric which has been analyzed included books published by the club, newspaper ads, club bulletins and newsletters, and letters to Congressmen by Sierra Club spokesmen. Control rhetoric included statements and letters from Congressmen, the Secretary of the Interior, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Corps of Engineers, the Internal Revenue Service, and officials of the Administration.

Although Bowers and Ochs have designated clearly defined rhetorical stages for an agitative movement and control responses, they have not provided sufficient criteria for an analysis of agitative language. Since the Sierra Club relied predominantly on a verbal rhetoric, it has been necessary to include other theories of agitation which focus and expand the theory of Bowers and Ochs.

Charles W. Lomas in The Agitator in American Society, has provided useful criteria for studying an agitation movement. Especially helpful is his description of an agitator's linguistic methods of exposing his grievances to audiences. Robert T. Oliver has examined speaker-audience relationships as developed through language in his book, Making Your Meaning Effective, and Egon Bittner provided insight into the characteristics of the membership of a radical movement in his article, "Radicalism and Radical Movements," found in American Sociological Review.

Bowers and Ochs not only defined agitation and control strategies, but also provided useful theory on the variables that influence the success or failure of a movement. A particularly indicated in this campaign is one of their generalizations: "An establishment high in rhetorical sophistication always adjusts as soon as it perceives that the agitative group is high in potential membership, especially-- but not only--when the agitative group's potential is buttressed by rhetorical sophistication."<sup>26</sup> It is also important to note that Bowers and Ochs consider control's responses as influences or possible steps which help agitation. One of control's strategies may work more in favor of agitation than control.

The following criteria for analyzing the rhetoric of agitation and control in this campaign were adapted from the works of Bowers and Ochs, Lomas, Oliver, and Bittner:

- I. Three preconditions are necessary to a successful agitative movement.
  - A. There is clear evidence of injustice or apparent injustice.
  - B. There is massive resistance to change on the part of control.
  - C. There is an available channel of communication between the agitator and his audience.
  
- II. The agitator may address himself to a particular audience.
  - A. The agitator may aim his remarks toward other agitators, the public, or control.
  - B. He can address himself to a broad or narrow segment of society.
  - C. He can try to motivate by fear, reason, benevolence or a combination of these things.
  - D. His words can persuade men of good will to study the problem in search of other solutions.

- III. The agitators attempt to motivate their audiences by exposing injustices affecting them and offering solutions to remedy injustices.
- A. He tries to expose grievances to his audiences.
    1. He may develop grievances in detail or merely assert them.
    2. He may state new ideas and expose for the first time the grievances.
    3. He may use valid evidence or partial and doctored evidence.
    4. Grievances may be long standing beliefs of agitators, supporters, and potential supporters.
  - B. Solutions may be offered to remedy injustices.
    1. There may be a logical relationship between the grievance and the remedy.
    2. The agitator may make these relationships apparent or merely assert them.
    3. The adoption of the remedy might or might not remove the causes which produced the conditions.
- IV. There are relationships which are important in determining communicative conditions between speaker and audience.
- A. Status Relationships: relative position on a scale of inferiority-superiority.
  - B. Functional Relationships: when the assigned duty of the speaker or audience is either of high value or distasteful to the other, these relationships deeply affect the communicative behaviour.
- V. Although Bowers and Ochs designate four other stages of an agitative movement, only their their four stages of escalation in rhetorical agitation are appropriate in analyzing the Sierra Club campaign.<sup>27</sup>
- A. Petition: includes all the normal discursive means of persuasion. The agitator will seldom be successful if he misses this stage. Petition itself is not necessarily agitative.
  - B. Solidification: an agitating group produces or reinforces the cohesiveness of its members. Many tactics may be used.
    1. Plays (guerrilla theater)
    2. Songs
    3. Slogans
    4. Expressive and Esoteric Symbols
    5. In-group Publications
    6. The agitator may speak to develop or reinforce a concern for the purity of belief in the cause, which includes soul-searching on the level of



- the individual believer and purges on the level of the collectivity continuously cleansing the doctrine of foreign elements.
- C. Promulgation: all those tactics designed to win social support for the agitator's position, especially by attracting the news media to communicate the issues of their cause.
    1. Picketing
    2. Erection of Posters
    3. Distributions of Handbills and Leaflets
    4. Mass Protest Meetings
  - D. Polarization: designed to force the uncommitted public in to a conscious choice between agitation and control, thereby gaining new support and sympathy for the movement.
    1. Flag Issues: issues that are particularly susceptible to the charges made against the establishment.
    2. Flag Individuals: individuals who are particularly susceptible to charges made against the establishment.
- VI. When confronted with proposals from agitation, control will respond with one of four rhetorical strategies.
- A. Avoidance: enables the control group to block the movement of the agitators, and includes these tactics:
    1. Counter-persuasion
    2. Evasion
    3. Postponement
    4. Secrecy
    5. Denial of means
  - B. Suppression: blocking the agitator's movement with some barrier, such as:
    1. Harrassment
    2. Denial of Demands
    3. Banishment
    4. Purgation (which is not rhetorical)
  - C. Adjustment: a modification or slight compromise
    1. Control group allows token demands.
    2. Control group makes token changes.
    3. Control group accepts some of the means of agitation.
    4. Control group accepts token personnel.
  - D. Capitulation: complete defeat. It is neither instrumental nor symbolic, therefore, it is not rhetorical.

### Summary of Design

Chapter II examines the social and political conditions of the sixties to describe the social and political atmosphere

as conducive to the development of an agitative movement. Chapter III analyzes the strategies and tactics employed by both agitation and control. Chapter IV analyzes the audience-speaker relationships in this movement. Chapter V summarizes and draws conclusions concerning the Sierra Club's use of agitation and their success or failure.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Harvey Arden, "John Muir's Wild America," National Geographic, 143 (April, 1973), 433-461.

<sup>2</sup>Arden, p. 437.

<sup>3</sup>Arden, p. 451.

<sup>4</sup>Arden, p. 433.

<sup>5</sup>Edwin Way Teale, Trails of Wonder, ed. Peter Seymour (Kansas City, Missouri: Hallmark Cards, Inc., 1972), p. 9.

<sup>6</sup>Arden, p. 461.

<sup>7</sup>Arden, p. 433.

<sup>8</sup>Nello Cassai, "Colorado River Storage Project," American Forests, 61 (February, 1955), 15.

<sup>9</sup>Stewart L. Udall, The Quiet Crisis (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), p. 88.

<sup>10</sup>Cassai, p. 15.

<sup>11</sup>Cassai, p. 16.

<sup>12</sup>Richard Pough, "As Dinosaur Goes," Natural History, 64 (February, 1955), 60.

<sup>13</sup>"Whoops, Wampum Back Colorado Plan," Business Week, 12 February 1955, p. 60.

<sup>14</sup>John B. Oakes, The New York Times, 7 February 1954, Sec. 2, p. 25, col. 1.

<sup>15</sup>Julian A. Steyermark, "Science on the March," The Scientific Monthly, 74 (April, 1952), 231.

<sup>16</sup>"Are You For or Against the Echo Park Dam?" Colliers, 18 February 1955, p. 76.

<sup>17</sup>In an arid land, a large surface area of water, which is several hundred feet higher than the river level, has a high rate of evaporation.

<sup>18</sup>Raymond Mobley, "Perspective," Newsweek, 10 September 1951, p. 108.

<sup>19</sup>The New York Times, 29 November 1957, p. 155, col. 6.

<sup>20</sup>In 1974 Lake Powell is still filling behind Glen Canyon Dam, and the fate of Rainbow Bridge is still unknown. Geologists report the next three years are crucial in determining the extent of damage to Rainbow Bridge. Many feel the sandstone base will be weakened and crumble. Others say that waters will not reach the bridge.

<sup>21</sup>The New York Times, 4 August 1957, p. 46, col. 4.

<sup>22</sup>John W. Bowers and Donovan J. Ochs, The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, Inc., 1971), p. 2.

<sup>23</sup>Bowers and Ochs, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup>Bowers and Ochs, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup>Bowers and Ochs, p. 5.

<sup>26</sup>Bowers and Ochs, p. 140.

<sup>27</sup>The last stages of Bowers and Ochs agitation strategies are non-violent resistance, escalation/confrontation, Gandhi-guerrilla, and Guerrilla. Revolution can be viewed as a final stage; however, it is not rhetorical.

## CHAPTER II

### PRECONDITIONS FOR AN AGITATION MOVEMENT

The particular social and political conditions of the times are influential in the success or failure of an agitation movement. No group of agitators can hope to be successful if special circumstances are not favorable to the initiation and growth of the movement. According to Lomas, three of these conditions should exist.<sup>1</sup> First, there must be one group of people who believe themselves to be victims of an injustice which also affects members of their audience. Second, the ruling group or establishment must show evidence of a massive resistance to change. Third, there must be channels of communication available to the agitator so that he can reach his audience. An investigation of these three conditions as they relate to the Sierra Club and the Colorado River Project follows.

Movements have commonly been the outgrowth of suffering on the part of some segment of society. This suffering is often physical in nature, such as hunger or slavery; however, an increasing number of people began to value what became known as the quality of life. Although they did not suffer immediate physical hardships, they began to perceive what the modern world of progress was doing to their environment as an

injustice. Men saw progress develop more and better technology that would make lifestyles bigger and better for everyone. One group of people began to perceive these developmental actions as threatening to the ecological balance of nature which was not only an injustice to them, but also to all people and future generations as well. This perception led to what was to become known as the ecology movement.<sup>2</sup> The Sierra Club's campaign to preserve the Colorado River and protect the Grand Canyon was one portion of the ecology movement. Certain preconditions as well as governmental actions led conservationists to the belief that injustices did exist and thereby precipitated the Sierra Club's actions.

#### Injustice as a Precondition

Indiscriminate dam building on the part of the government was one major grievance of the conservationists. In the 1930's Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke of "one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished."<sup>3</sup> To improve that situation, he proposed a widespread program part of which dealt with the water and land use. Comprehensive "source to mouth" river basin planning was begun on the largest scale in our history.<sup>4</sup> Within the next decade, the Tennessee River was put to work, abundant low-cost power was provided by dams, and the region was revitalized as cheap power attracted new industries and created jobs for the unemployed. The Tennessee Valley Authority was so successful in relieving the problems

of depressed areas that other areas of the country looked forward to the building of dams as an important improvement in their lives also.

By the nineteen-forties, American technology had produced a great monument to man's engineering ability and geological efficiency. Hoover Dam, the world's largest dam, which in turn produced the world's largest man-made lake, Lake Mead, was built on the Colorado River. This example of man's technological competence encouraged the building of more and more dams, thus by 1952, Congress had bills under consideration which proposed scores of dams on rivers across the country, including nine on the upper Colorado alone.<sup>5</sup> In 1954 there were "some 10,000 reservoirs in the country, storing water behind dam-type structures ranging from earth banks to concrete colossi. They cost about \$5,000,000,000 to build. The Soil Conservation Service took a good look at the structures and concluded that two-thirds of them will be useless, because of the accumulation of mud, within a century. Nearly a fifth of them will be clogged up within 200 years. Only about a sixth can be expected to be any good beyond that."<sup>6</sup>

Dams were seen by some as a panacea. Too little water required a dam, and too much water required a dam. In spite of the abundance of dams, the founder of the Soil Conservation Service announced that "half a million acres of 'good soil' are washing away each year."<sup>7</sup> One of the justifications of many dams was to have been their flood control ability; however,

a dam's effectiveness in this matter could not be promised, and in numerous cases the results were expensively unsuccessful or at least disappointing. One flood control project was proposed which Army Engineers said might lower the potential depth of the Mississippi by one foot in one location. However, this flood control action would have flooded out nine Kansas and Missouri towns in the process.<sup>8</sup>

In October, 1953, Secretary of the Interior, Douglas McKay, announced that the national government must build more power dams. Richard L. Neuberger reported in his national column, "They have chosen sites for dams which are inevitably places where dams can be built only by flooding out towns, farms, railroads, and highways worth many millions of dollars. Can it be that the defenders of free enterprise and sound fiscal practice are deliberately proposing federal development of ineffecient and marginal dam sites?"<sup>9</sup> Conservationists reasoned that the flood problem could not be solved simply by building big dams that drive people and their productive efforts from vast tracts of the best soil. They agreed with the Soil Conservation Service proposal which called for small dams to be built upstream, resulting in not only flood control, but the saving of fertile land and water storage for irrigation purposes.<sup>10</sup>

President Truman expressed the inclination of many Americans of the fifties to have their lives enriched through further control of their rivers. At the dedication of Bull Shoals Dam in 1952 he said:



I'd like to see the day when every major river in our country is under control from its source to its mouth, when they are all wealth givers instead of wealth destroyers--when every one is running clean and pure and doing the work it ought to do for the people of this country. And that wouldn't take too long. It could be done in my lifetime. By 1975, we are going to need two and one-half times as much electric power as we produce today. That means we must develop hydro-electric power at every site where it is feasible.<sup>11</sup>

A conservationist might have interpreted these words as not only unjust to their cause, but possibly dangerous to the preservation of many wilderness areas.

The Scientific Monthly expanded upon the conservationist's grievance in 1952:

The permanent flooding by large dams of immense expanses of beautiful landscape, together with the attendant destruction of valuable forests, animal and plant habitats, good agricultural land, historic archeological sites, or unique caves and springs and the peculiar forms of life they harbor, seems small compensation indeed for what follows in the form of speed boats, neon-lighted resorts, other commercial developments, and eventual silting of the reservoir with muddy waters.

The construction of dams over many sections of the United States seems to have become a monomania with the Corps of Engineers. It is no wonder that scientists throughout the country are seriously concerned about such grandiose projects, the real need for which has not been subjected to scientific proof. In fact, the projects for demanding various areas are in themselves experiments and are part of a pork-barrel enterprise often associated with a desire for political gain and the development of prestige and other forms of human selfishness.<sup>12</sup>

Another major grievance of the conservationists was the threat of violation to national parks. Members of the Sierra Club saw the many proposed dams which were in or near a national park as a threat to all national parks. Because John Muir had been influential in establishing many national parks

and because the club had a long history of protecting them, the Sierrans seemed to see their role as defenders of the national parks. They spent more than three years in the fifties fighting for the preservation of Dinosaur National Monument. The canyons of Dinosaur were carved just below the confluence of the Green and Yampa Rivers, three miles east of the Utah border in Colorado. Its stone walls rise up to three thousand feet above the river bed, producing spectacular scenery. Its name was derived from the nearby dinosaur quarry which has furnished museums throughout the nation with twenty-two complete fossils of the prehistoric reptiles.<sup>13</sup>

A proposed dam at Dinosaur was considered "the gravest threat to the national park system since its creation in 1915."<sup>14</sup> Conservationist's feelings were reflected in the New Republic's comments:

The fact that Reclamation has picked these sites within the Monument, and plugged for them suggests that perhaps it wants to infringe the sanctity of the parks. Almost every Western stream of importance touches, in itself or on its tributaries, some park or monument; and Reclamation has the job of taming every Western stream. It could build dams with a freer hand and have to compromise less with other interests if it could break down the national park immunity. Something similar might be guessed of Secretary McKay. One who ponders the evidence might well conclude not only that Secretary McKay is willing to violate park territory, but he would like nothing better.<sup>15</sup>

Another action considered an injustice by conservationists was the desecration of wilderness areas. The Sierra Club held wilderness areas in high esteem, and the government's failure

to protect them was considered unforgiveable. Perhaps, the best example of this is the case of Glen Canyon Dam in Arizona, which was approved in 1956. Glen Canyon extended from northern Arizona over one hundred miles into Utah. This rarely explored stretch of canyons was unusual on the Colorado River. In its 1500 mile journey to the Gulf of California, the river falls more than two miles, giving it some of the wildest rapids anywhere. Major Powell reported only one extended length of quiet water. That was the water of Glen Canyon; there were no rapids there.<sup>16</sup>

While the Sierra Club and other conservationist groups spent years fighting to save Dinosaur Monument from being flooded by a dam, the Glen Canyon site was not questioned by them as being an important scenic area because it was not well known. When the Dinosaur dam was removed from the bill, it was announced that a Glen Canyon dam would provide the necessary power for both locations. Conservationists were so grateful to have saved the National Monument that the dam at Glen Canyon was not questioned until long after the bill was passed. David Brower, then executive director of the Sierra Club, acknowledged, "At that time too few club leaders knew what was at stake in Glen Canyon--that it deserved full protection as a national park and that a dam in it would be extremely destructive and wholly unnecessary as long as Lake Mead was capable of adequately controlling the Colorado River. Had Glen Canyon been known, and had relevant hydrological data been released, there would be no

Glen Canyon dam. The conservationist force in America could have blocked it."<sup>17</sup>

Conservationists also lamented the fact that their point of view was not given fair consideration or upheld by government officials. During the debates on the Upper Colorado Storage Project from 1952 to 1956, one major issue of the proposed Glen Canyon Dam was the effect of a dam and reservoir on the nearby Rainbow Bridge National Monument. Named by the Indians, "Rainbow that turned to stone," the bridge was a 320 foot high natural sandstone arch which lay five miles up a side canyon of Glen Canyon.<sup>18</sup> When the reservoir was full, the arch would straddle an arm of the lake. When it was drawn down, which would be most of the time, it would stand in a mudflat covered with debris and drowned vegetation. The bridge itself might be endangered, and its setting and approach would be severely impaired.

Glen Canyon Dam was approved by conservationists only after the Bureau of Reclamation had made an agreement that was written into law. The agreement stated that "no project dam or reservoir would lie within any national park or monument and Rainbow Bridge National Monument would be protected from the reservoir behind Glen Canyon Dam."<sup>19</sup> The Bureau of Reclamation claimed that it planned to build a barrier dam below the monument to keep out the waters of the reservoir.<sup>20</sup> The end of the act is explicit, although the means are not: "The Secretary of the Interior shall take adequate protective

measures to preclude impairment of Rainbow Bridge National Monument."<sup>21</sup>

After the passage of the act, the Bureau of Reclamation completed new studies during the next few years which indicated that Rainbow Bridge was in no danger; therefore, no safety precautions needed to be taken.<sup>22</sup> The Sierra Club tried to get a court injunction to hold open the gates at Glen Canyon until the protection was provided, but the Supreme Court ruled that they had no standing to sue.<sup>23</sup> The gates were closed at Glen Canyon in 1963, and conservationists felt that the Bureau of Reclamation had purposefully broken its word to conservationists. Since it was expected that Glen Canyon's reservoir, Lake Powell, would take fifteen to eighteen years to fill, they would have some time to wait before being able to determine any damage to Rainbow Bridge.

In another situation concerning Glen Canyon, the Sierra Club protested unfair lack of consideration for a conservationist's viewpoint. When Glen Canyon was approved in 1956, conservationists were convinced by the Bureau of Reclamation that the dam was necessary for regulation of the river in supplying the right amount of water to the lower or upper basins as called for in the 1922 Compact. River regulation was allegedly the primary purpose of the nine-dam storage complex proposed by the Bureau. Power generation was to be strictly a by-product. However, after the project was started, the United States Geological Survey published a report which vitiated

the River Regulation argument. "According to the report, the Colorado River could be regulated by thirty million acre feet of storage capacity. In 1950 there already existed thirty-eight million acre feet of storage capacity on the main stem. Adding Glen Canyon had increased this to sixty-six million, more than twice the amount needed. When the other dams of the storage project were completed there would be a total of eighty-six million acre feet--roughly three times as much as necessary."<sup>24</sup>

The circumstances surrounding the Rainbow Bridge and the approval of Glen Canyon led the Sierra Club to express mistrust of the Bureau of Reclamation. Club member, Richard C. Bradley, physics professor, wrote, "What recourse does a private citizen have if a federal bureau decides to flout a law and an agreement which were made after full and open debate of all the issues? It also raises a question about large bureaus in general: are they the servants of the public or its masters, do they follow public policy or do they make it, and are they motivated primarily by public interest or self-interest?"<sup>25</sup>

Incidents such as these were similar to many circumstances which led the Sierra Club to view themselves, conservationists, and all Americans as victims of a power structure. This power structure, they felt, would take advantage of opportunities to ignore conservation and lean in the direction of overdevelopment of rivers in order to maintain bureaus and agencies which were established for the purpose of building dams. These conditions represent the major grievances of the Sierra

Club which led to the development of their agitative campaign to protect the Grand Canyon.

### Resistance to Change by Control and Society

During the fifties and early sixties dependence on and belief in the ability of advanced technology to solve all problems was only surpassed by the desire on the part of society to improve and develop all areas of life. "In a great surge toward 'progress', congestion increasingly befouled water and air, and growth created new problems on every hand. 'Progress' too often outran planning, and the bulldozer's work was done before the preservationist and the planner arrived on the scene."<sup>26</sup>

The social and political atmosphere, in general, was more conducive to mass production than conservation of resources. Problems caused by technology were solved by more advanced technology. Water problems were solved by dams. If a river was flooded, a dam was built. If a river did not provide enough water, a dam was built.<sup>27</sup> People had become so accustomed to solving problems in this manner that they saw little future in conservation as a method of solving such problems. To many, methods of preservation and conservation represented a step backwards, and it was almost un-American to allow any area of life to remain idle and non-progressive. Michael W. Straus, a Commissioner of Reclamation in the fifties, expressed that attitude in his speech to the people of Utah who wanted dams built:

From their air-conditioned caves overlooking Central Park in New York, Lincoln Park in Chicago, and Boston Commons, these self-appointed guardians have taken it upon themselves to safeguard the canyons of Dinosaur National Monument for the handful of brave souls who dare to explore the area by boat. Artificial reservoirs would desecrate the area--in addition to making it available to thousands instead of handfuls of people. These critics contend the development of the Colorado River Basin must make way for the status quo, and that the highest use of your area and resources is a museum and cemetery for Dinosaur bones.<sup>28</sup>

Among those in the power structure who wished to continue the big dam building was the governor of Arizona, who wanted his state to profit by these dams. He declared, "The project would show a net profit of at least \$3,500,000,000 in the first seventy-five years. If the orderly development of the Colorado River can be defeated, California alone will profit because there will be only one place for the water to go."<sup>29</sup> Further up the river, Gus P. Backmon of Salt Lake City, Utah, Chamber of Commerce, expressed the aspirations of many in his state, "If mountain states are denied their dams, the water will flow downstream for California's use."<sup>30</sup> Both society and the power structure were reluctant to give up dam building.

U. S. News and World Report interviewed three Congressmen in 1957 and asked each if the federal government would continue building big multipurpose dams. Senator James E. Murray, Democrat from Montana, and chairman of the Senate Interior Committee, answered, "Certainly the federal government will go ahead building multipurpose dams. That's the only sensible and economical way to conserve our remaining natural resources in water



for the use and benefit of all the people, who are, after all, the real owners of these vast national assets. The Congress must follow this course. The only way we will ever achieve comprehensive protection and development of our national resources is through basin-wide planning and development. The same policy should be followed in all of the river basins of the country."<sup>31</sup>

Senator Francis Case, Republican from South Dakota and member of the Public Works Committee answered the same question, "I think so. It's a matter of filling in where the natural sites exist."<sup>32</sup> These two Senators, though of different political parties and different parts of the country, both indicated that the best policy on dams was continued building.

A third Congressman interviewed was Clair Engle, Democrat of California, and chairman of the House Committee on the Interior. His answer indicated that Congress had authorized most of the necessary dams already and that there really wasn't much left to do.<sup>33</sup> Engle was one member of the power structure who seemed to be opposed to more dams. However, it should be recalled that California wanted no more dams built on the upper Colorado since that would decrease their water supply in the southern part of the state.

These were, of course, three isolated opinions, but two out of the three did suggest more than a willingness to continue building big dams, and these were three of the important

principals in the decisions on water projects in Congress. However, the Congressmen on committees dealing with water projects were not the only ones in favor of dam building. For a Congressman, the construction of a dam in his home state gave the constituency some tangible evidence of his value to them as a representative, and therefore, dams were generally considered to be vote-getters and reassurances of re-election.

The Bureau of Reclamation, under the Department of the Interior, was established in 1902 and charged with the construction and operation of irrigation works in the arid West.<sup>34</sup> Over fifty years later the Bureau had grown and was still building dams, though not all were in the arid West. Many conservationists have suggested that the Bureau continued to find numerous damsites in order to maintain employment for its staff.<sup>35</sup> If the Bureau did not resist the natural preservation of some rivers, it might find itself disappearing as a government agency.

Throughout most of the fifties the Secretary of the Interior was Douglas McKay. Having the record for the most dams built in an administration, McKay was called exploitation-minded rather than conservation-minded.<sup>36</sup> His eagerness for dam building, along with the willingness of other members of control and society, led conservationists to believe there was a great force actively seeking to hinder the preservation of national parks and wilderness areas. Resistance to change on the

part of the power structure and society seems to have been carried on through society's attitude toward making progress and continuing to use technology to improve and develop every facet of life.

#### Agitation's Channels of Communication

During the fifties, media coverage for the Sierra Club was found largely in conservationist-type magazines such as Nature Magazine, Audubon Magazine, Natural History, and American Forests. As the club's militancy increased, so did its news coverage. In the middle and late fifties as the club escalated its campaign to save Dinosaur National Monument and Rainbow Bridge National Monument, newspapers and weekly magazines began to give space to the Sierra Club's activities. By the early sixties, news coverage had multiplied several times over. The New York Times and Washington Post provided especially good coverage during the sixties.

One of the Sierra Club's best means of communication was its own publication. This included a monthly magazine, the Sierra Club Bulletin, and newsletters as needed. Also during the sixties the Sierra Club began to publish books, two of which, The Place No One Knew and Time and the River Flowing, dealt with the Colorado River projects. The content of these books will be discussed in more detail in Chapter III. Many articles from the club bulletin were also reprinted in the Congressional Record as a result of several Congressmen who were sympathetic to the Sierra Club cause.

Even though the club received greatly increased attention during the sixties, their coverage would still have to be considered second-rate compared to the other movements of that time. Sierra Club stories were rarely front page news. Four times during the campaign to save Grand Canyon, the club bought full page ads in several newspapers. The Sierra Club had to compete with so many activist movements for media coverage, that its news probably received less attention than it might have under other circumstances. Communication channels were available to the Sierra Club through the news media, but much of its accessibility was due to its own efforts and publications.

#### Summary

During the fifties, conservationists recognized a strong trend toward exploitation of Colorado River water, particularly in the Grand Canyon. Injustices mounted as people made more and more demands on the river, and the power structure continued to approve bills which provided for dams on the Colorado. After approving five dams in the Upper Basin during the fifties, four more were proposed for the Lower Basin in the sixties. Society as a whole seemed to approve the dam building as progress. In addition, through much of its own efforts, the Sierra Club gained access to communication channels. These channels presented their cause before the public at a time when conditions were right for an agitation movement.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>The presence of similar preconditions to protest is also discussed by Kenneth Boulding in "Toward a Theory of Protest," The Age of Protest, ed. Walt Anderson (Pacific Palisades, California: Goodyear Publishing Company, Inc., 1969), pp. v-ix.

<sup>2</sup>The ecology movement per se could be said to have begun with Muir or other early conservationists even though we tend to view it as a contemporary movement of the sixties and seventies.

<sup>3</sup>Stewart L. Udall, The Quiet Crisis (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), p. 141.

<sup>4</sup>Udall, p. 142.

<sup>5</sup>The consequence of excessive dam building on the Colorado River were revealed in the late sixties when the river gradually diminished on its way downstream and trickled to a halt in northwestern Mexico, many miles from its previous destination, the Gulf of California.

<sup>6</sup>Karl Hess, "Dam It All?" American Mercury, 79 (July, 1954), 67-71.

<sup>7</sup>Hess, p. 69.

<sup>8</sup>Hess, p. 67.

<sup>9</sup>Richard L. Neuberger, "Secretary McKay Looks in the Wrong Dam Places," Reporter, 13 October 1953, p. 21.

<sup>10</sup>Elmer T. Peterson, "Big-Dam Foolishness," Reader's Digest, 61 (July, 1952), 63.

<sup>11</sup>Harry S. Truman, "Progress in the South," Vital Speeches, 18 (July, 1952), 586.

<sup>12</sup>Julian A. Steyermark, "Science on the March," The Scientific Monthly, 74 (April, 1952), 231.

<sup>13</sup>"No Dam at Dinosaur," Audubon Magazine, 56 (January, 1954), 29+.

- <sup>14</sup>Bernard DeVoto, "Intramural Giveaway," Harper's, 208 (March, 1954), 10-11.
- <sup>15</sup>Wallace Stegner, "Battle for the Wilderness," New Republic, 15 February 1954, pp. 13-15.
- <sup>16</sup>Richard C. Bradley, "Breach of Promise at Rainbow," Sierra Club Bulletin, 49 (Annual, 1964), 77-78.
- <sup>17</sup>David Brower, "Sedimental Journey," Sierra Club Bulletin, 52 (Annual, 1967), 68.
- <sup>18</sup>Robert H. Thompson, "Decision at Rainbow Bridge," Sierra Club Bulletin, 58 (May, 1973), 9.
- <sup>19</sup>Francois Leydet, Time and the River Flowing (New York: Ballantine Books, 1964), p. 8.
- <sup>20</sup>Bradley, pp. 77-78.
- <sup>21</sup>Bradley, p. 77.
- <sup>22</sup>The New York Times, 8 February 1961, p. 33, col. 6.
- <sup>23</sup>Bradley, p. 77.
- <sup>24</sup>Bradley, p. 78.
- <sup>25</sup>Bradley, p. 77.
- <sup>26</sup>Udall, p. 160.
- <sup>27</sup>Hess, p. 70.
- <sup>28</sup>"Let's Be Fair, Mike," Nature Magazine, 44 (October, 1951), 425.
- <sup>29</sup>Raymond Mobley, "Perspective," Newsweek, 10 September 1951, p. 108.
- <sup>30</sup>Raymond Mobley, "Dams and Dinosaurs," Newsweek, 25 January 1954, p. 84.
- <sup>31</sup>"Dams: Government Will Build More," U. S. News and World Report, 11 January 1957, pp. 126-128.
- <sup>32</sup>"Dams: Government Will Build More," p. 127.
- <sup>33</sup>"Dams: Government Will Build More," p. 128.

<sup>34</sup>Stegner, p. 14.

<sup>35</sup>Stegner, p. 15.

<sup>36</sup>Stegner, p. 13.

## CHAPTER III

### AGITATION AND CONTROL STRATEGIES

#### Introduction

An examination of the strategies and tactics of a particular agitative movement can serve several purposes. First, it allows one to have a more profound knowledge of the strategists involved through an analysis of their rhetorical choices. Second, it provides a greater understanding of the way in which agitation and control groups respond to each other. It may also provide useful insights which enable one to make some predictions about the outcome of future movements.<sup>1</sup>

#### Agitation

Before proceeding with an analysis of the Sierra Club's campaign strategies, it will be advantageous to identify the important strategists of each group. The agitation is made up of all the members of the Sierra Club. After Muir's death in 1914 until the fifties, the Sierra Club consisted of one chapter of dedicated people who were based in San Francisco. In the fifties, a chapter of the club developed in Washington, D. C., where members attempted to influence Congressmen concerning laws on conservation. The establishment of chapters in the West and the East was further instrumental in establishing



chapters in several other states throughout the country, particularly those states with scenic wilderness areas or national parks which were vulnerable to exploitation by development-minded industries. Though many chapters had begun, the membership of six thousand was rather small for a national organization in 1952.<sup>2</sup>

### Leaders of Agitation

At that time the Sierra Club gained a new executive director, David R. Brower, who had been a club member since the thirties. A native of the Sierra Nevada country in California and a veteran mountaineer, Brower had previously served the club in many capacities. He had been editor of the club bulletin and several other club publications while serving as chairman of the San Francisco Chapter.<sup>3</sup> Holiday magazine called Brower "an extremist and proud of it. He is outspoken and aggressive, calling up prodigies of loyalty from his friends and sputters of rage from his foes; he is also humorless and indefatigable, with a rare gift of speech and no gift at all of listening. The Brower philosophy can be summed up in one word-- Preserve: preserve in its original state all that remains wild and uncluttered by man on the ravaged surface of the globe."<sup>4</sup>

Under the direction of Brower, the club underwent some change, not in ideology, but in the degree of success in fighting for its causes. Brower's aggressive eagerness for wilderness preservation, which was reminiscent of the club's

founder, may have been responsible for attracting members to the club and supporters among the ranks of the power structure itself. During Brower's leadership, the club experienced an unprecedented increase of membership, among which were several well known leaders in the government. This does not mean that Brower's leadership meant immediate triumph for Agitation. It means that his importance in the subsequent agitation campaign was his role as its architect.

During the early segment of the Sierra Club's campaign to save Dinosaur National Monument, Brower successfully combined many conservationist groups to form a more influential organization called the Trustees for Conservation which was made up of such clubs as The Isaak Walton League, Wilderness Society, National Audubon Society, and several others.<sup>5</sup> In 1956, Brower was elected chairman of the Natural Resources Council which coordinated the conservation work of thirty-seven national organizations and had a combined membership of more than two million.<sup>6</sup>

#### Membership of Agitation

The Sierra Club membership worked quietly, petitioning Congress for preservation of their wilderness areas and national parks. The typical member was described as "a fierce individualist who is white, affluent, far better educated than the average man, and earns his living in one of the high-ranking professions."<sup>7</sup> Members constantly renewed their dedication to

Sierra Club ideals by exploring the wilderness on back-packing, river running, and camping trips in the style of John Muir. Members included several well known legislators such as Senator Gaylord Nelson, Representative John P. Saylor, Representative Richard Ottinger, and Representative Henry Reuss.<sup>8</sup>

### Control

The Control group consisted of both society at large and the power structure. Society's desire for technological advancement through continuing to encourage progress made them important members of Control. The power structure included all state and federal governmental bodies; however, some departments were more involved in this campaign than others.

### Leaders of Control

The Department of the Interior's activities centered on the management, conservation, and development of the natural resources of the United States. The Secretary of the Interior was often one of the most influential members of Control in implementing conservation policy. The fifties had been a decade which included more dam construction than at any time in our nation's history. In view of this, conservationists had great expectations for the sixties when President Kennedy appointed Stewart L. Udall as Secretary of the Interior in 1961. Udall, a former member of the United States House of Representatives, was known to have an inclination toward conservation; however, he was from Arizona which stood to profit by new dams on the Colorado.<sup>9</sup>

Udall approached his job with an enthusiasm not evidenced by many Interior Secretaries before him. He thought it challenging to deal with persistent lobbyists who planned an exploitation of natural resources through lumber, mining, and other commercial fields. Consequently, Udall encouraged conservationists to lobby for their causes also. Udall considered himself a conservationist and a defender of natural resources, but he qualified it somewhat by designating his position as "conservation for use."<sup>10</sup> In spite of his sometimes brash approach to his job, the press titled him "the darling of the conservationists" during the sixties.<sup>11</sup> Other leaders of Control were Floyd E. Dominy, Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, Senator Frank Moss of Utah, and Representative Morris K. Udall, brother of Secretary Udall.

#### Membership of Control

Within the Interior Department, the Bureau of Reclamation was charged with reclaiming arid lands in the West, and in many respects it rivaled the Army Corps of Engineers as a builder of public works in the West. The commissioner of this bureau was also a significant member of Control. The National Park Service, also in the Interior Department, was established in 1916, to administer and protect the parks. The United States Geological Survey was another agency in the department which conducted research in matters of natural resources. Other government agencies dealing with Sierra Club activities in this campaign were

the Bureau of the Budget and the Internal Revenue Service. Of equal consequence, of course, were Congress and the Administration. These were the people who played a major role in the campaign for Agitation or Control. A description and analysis of their rhetorical strategies follow in this chapter.

## The Campaign

### Petition

The Upper Colorado River Project passed in 1956 with the Echo Park Dam removed from the bill as well as a promise written into the law that no dam constructed under this project would lie within any national park or monument. Conservationists had experienced victory, but they had little time to celebrate. In the summer of 1957, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power applied to the Federal Power Commission for a preliminary permit to make studies at Bridge Canyon in northwestern Arizona.<sup>12</sup> Bridge Canyon is a side canyon of the Grand Canyon some distance from Los Angeles, but it was close enough to provide extra power for them.

In August, 1957, the Sierra Club asked the Federal Power Commission to deny the application, because "such studies could lead to the construction of a \$400,000,000 power dam at the site which is below the Grand Canyon National Monument."<sup>13</sup> In his letter to the commission, Dr. Harold C. Bradley, who was then the Sierra Club president, reasoned that such a dam would back water twenty-seven miles into the monument and park, thus

submerging an important scenic area. Bradley explained his reasoning:

It is not in the national interest to sacrifice scenic resources for hydroelectric power production, in view of the rapid development of such alternative sources as steam power and atomic power. Building a power or Federal reclamation project is inconsistent with the purpose for which Grand Canyon National Park was created. Legislation is pending in Congress for a review of national scenic resources, and it is against the public interest to do anything such as Los Angeles proposed before the review is completed.<sup>15</sup>

It was to be ten years before the question would be resolved. That first petition, a normal discursive strategy, was the beginning of many years of petitioning for the Sierra Club. Although petition itself is not necessarily agitative, it is important to note that the Sierra Club used petition in every possible situation. An agitator must be able to prove that he attempted petition or he is not likely to be successful. The early employment of petition is crucial to an agitative movement for, according to Bowers and Ochs, "an establishment, by showing that petition has not occurred, can discredit the agitators as irresponsible firebrands who disdain normal decision-making processes in favor of disturbance and disruption."<sup>16</sup>

The Upper Basin of the Colorado had received its water plan in the fifties, and now the Lower Basin states, California, Nevada, and Arizona, were anxious to have more water storage and power supply in their area. Their plan was to be known as the Central Arizona Project. However, it was nearly

five years before all the dam sites had been surveyed and the plan finally presented to Congress. During those years, the Sierra Club attempted to persuade the Bureau of Reclamation to carry out the safety measures which were promised on Rainbow Bridge. In December, 1963, the Sierra Club joined with other conservationists in a suit to enjoin Secretary Udall from closing the gates at Glen Canyon Dam until safety measures had been completed. The Supreme Court denied the request.<sup>17</sup> Thus, Control's first response to Agitation's petitioning was a denial of means. The club had also anticipated the Central Arizona Project and made plans to influence the removal of the dam sites which they felt were threatening to the Grand Canyon.

#### Promulgation

Two months after the gates first closed at Glen Canyon in 1963, the Sierra Club published The Place No One Knew,<sup>18</sup> a book which was called a "photographic elegy on the demise of a Western canyon."<sup>19</sup> Written and photographed by Eliot Porter, a professional photographer and former Harvard professor, the book contained seventy-two magnificent pictures. The photographs displayed the beauty of Glen Canyon which would be obliterated after the gates were closed. Porter's special brand of photography captured an unusual sequence of strange and vivid rock formation in Glen Canyon from the river bed to the gracefully molded stone walls. Spectacular subtleties

in colors of purple, blue, red, yellow and orange present the details of running water, irridescent pools, rock walls and textures, caverns, violent twists of sandstone, willows, and small plantlife. The Sierra Club obviously had been planning this publication for some time and hoped to take advantage of the loss of one canyon in the hopes of saving another. The book included Porter's glowing description of the canyon along with quotations for each photograph from such notables as Wallace Stegner, Loren Eiseley, William O. Douglas, Henry David Thoreau, Albert Einstein, and Major John Wesley Powell who took the first recorded trip through Glen Canyon and named it. Thoreau's words were used as a caption for a picture of a place called Dungeon Canyon with gracefully sculptured walls:

The finest workers in stone are not copper or steel tools, but the gentle touches of air and water working at their leisure with a liberal allowance of time.<sup>20</sup>

Wallace Stegner's words were chosen to accompany a deep river bed scene:

We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in. For it can be a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatures, a part of the geography of hope.<sup>21</sup>

Canyon walls of fractured sandstone appear above Supreme Court Justice Douglas' words:

Man's greatest mission is to preserve life, not to destroy it. When the land becomes the symbol of sterility and poverty, when the wonders of creation have been destroyed, youth has no place to go but the alleys, and a blight lies across the land.<sup>22</sup>



In the forward to the book, David Brower, who was also the editor, told why the book was necessary:

If the destruction of Glen Canyon leads indirectly to a diminishing of such forces of rapacity or can somehow correct the belief that man's only road to salvation is a paved one, then there will be some amelioration. The Place No One Knew has a moral--which is why the Sierra Club publishes it--and the moral is simple: Progress need not deny to the people their inalienable rights to be informed and to choose. In Glen Canyon the people never knew what the choices were. Next time in other stretches of the Colorado, and wherever there is wilderness that can be part of our civilization instead of victim to it, the people need to know before a bureau's elite decide to wipe out what no man can replace. The Sierra Club has no better purpose than to try to let people know in time. In Glen Canyon we failed. There could hardly be a costlier peacetime mistake.<sup>23</sup>

The book was carefully and completely filled with statements that evoked emotions of regret, respect, and grief. The pictures alone were highly inspirational, but when the brief text is read throughout the book, one has the feeling that an old and dear friend has just passed on. It seems that somewhere his murderer still lives, and we must beware his striking again.

Brower also had the last word in the book:

Remember these things lost. The native wildlife; the chance to float quietly down a calm river, to let the current carry you past a thousand years of history, through a living canyon of incredible, haunting beauty. Here the Colorado had created a display that rivaled any in the world. No man, in all the generations to be born of man, will ever be free to discover for himself one of the greatest places of all. This we inherited, and have denied to all others--the place no one knew well enough.<sup>24</sup>

This was the nature of the book, which sold for twenty-five dollars in its first edition. The club sent a copy to Utah's Senator Frank E. Moss, who had been responsible for

discouraging a barrier dam to protect Rainbow Bridge. Along with the book, Brower also sent copies of his letter to Secretary Udall requesting protection for Rainbow Bridge. He also asked for a Presidential proclamation enlarging Grand Canyon National Park to preclude the building of a dam in Marble Canyon.<sup>25</sup> Marble Canyon was located a few miles above Grand Canyon on the Colorado River.

The letters, of course, were forms of petition. The book, however, represented more than one Agitation strategy. Its major strategy as Brower indicated was one of promulgation. It served the purpose of informing the public of a particular grievance and aimed at winning support and sympathy for the cause. Even though the price was rather prohibitive as far as reaching the masses of people, the club was able to put copies in the hands of a few people in Control. The news media did cover the story of its publication; however, the story only appeared in book reviews which were typically back page material. Consequently, the book was not widely publicized.

Although news coverage for the Sierra Club was particularly difficult in the West where the media was influenced by groups who wanted further development of the river, The New York Times and the Washington Post faithfully printed Sierra Club news. This, however, was a problem for the club, since members of Control pointed out that the Eastern press had nothing to lose in exposing their grievances.

One of the promulgation tactics used most by the club was illustrated in the book. That tactic was the use of legitimizers, individuals within the establishment or who were newsworthy in some way, who endorsed some part of the agitator's ideology. The Sierra Club's choices of legitimizers were obviously impressive ones. They could hardly have chosen any other more influential newsworthies than Einstein or Thoreau, and Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, who had significantly become a member of the Sierra Club.

Solidification also occurred, although it was not meant to be a major strategy in the publication of the book. Certainly the book must have reinforced cohesiveness among the membership by reminding them of old grievances and preparing them for new ones. Also evident as a tactic of solidification, was the concern for purity of belief. This tactic serves to cleanse the doctrine of any foreign elements such as those proposed by the "conservationists for use" in the power structure. Brower's writings often show evidence of the use of that tactic:

In his powers to alter the face of the only earth he has to live on, man has become a geological force. Unless the power is tempered with responsibility, how is it better than storm, earthquake, drought and flood? Humans can do better.<sup>26</sup>

The Place No One Knew contained yet another agitation strategy, polarization. Part of its purpose was to state the conservationists' cause with such strength that the uncommitted public would be forced to make a choice between Agitation

and Control. One flag issue was apparent. Very little of the text dealt with Rainbow Bridge; however, one striking photograph and a brief description of it served to remind the audiences of an issue on which the Control group had broken a promise. Glen Canyon differed from Rainbow Bridge as a flag issue because Control felt less guilt in its action there. They could maintain that they were not aware of Glen Canyon's scenic worth either, and the conservationists themselves had conceded the use of Glen Canyon as a dam site. However, the book obviously chose to make Glen Canyon an additional flag issue.

Though flag individuals were not mentioned by name, they were implied in such statements from Brower as:

Good men, who have plans for the Colorado River whereby a natural menace becomes a natural resource, would argue tirelessly that the Colorado must be tapped and sold to finance agricultural development in the arid west. For all their good intentions these men had too insular a notion of what man's relation to his environment should be, and it is tragic that their insularity was heeded.<sup>27</sup>

One other reference to a flag individual was aimed at Stewart Udall. Brower wrote, "The man who theoretically had the power to save this place did not find a way to pick up a telephone and give the necessary order."<sup>28</sup> Udall was particularly susceptible as a flag individual because he was considered a conservationist.

#### Counter-persuasion

Control responded when Senator Moss acknowledged his gift from the Sierra Club, a copy of its book, on the floor

of the Senate in a speech supporting the Central Arizona Project. He called the Sierra Club's recent action one of "bitter inflexibility,"<sup>29</sup> and stated, "To the Sierra Club everything seems to be either black or white. What it wants is white, while everything else is automatically black."<sup>30</sup> To the club's requests, Moss responded, "Rainbow Bridge will be completely untouched by any water, and at the same time Lake Powell will open up, for easier and greater access. Many will see and marvel where only a few came before."<sup>31</sup> Finally, he asked the Sierra Club to be "moderate, tolerant, and broadminded."<sup>32</sup> In this response from Control, Senator Moss was using an avoidance strategy. He chose to use counter-persuasion in an attempt to convince his audience that the agitators were wrong.

#### Increased Promulgation

In March, 1964, a thousand conservationists met in Las Vegas with the Wildlife Management Institute. David Brower, as the main speaker, served notice that the Sierra Club planned to fight the Federal Government's proposal to build Marble and Bridge Canyon dams on the lower Colorado.<sup>33</sup> In another large meeting of conservationists, hosted by the Issak Walton League, Henry Caulfield, head of the Interior's Resources Planning Staff, explained the Southwest's water plan, and David Brower asked permission to respond. He suggested alternate solutions for producing power such as steam

and atomic plants: "There are other ways to pay for pumping water than to destroy the living river that give Grand Canyon its shape and its meaning."<sup>34</sup>

Such meetings as these were promulgation tactics designed to amass support from all conservationists. Much of the Sierra Club's power was an agitation force had been based on Brower's ability to combine and lead many groups of conservationists. In spite of that ability, the Central Arizona Project, which was being debated in Congress for the third year, continued to carry provisions for Marble Gorge and Bridge Canyon Dams, thus the Sierra Club produced another major promulgation tactic.

Realizing that the efforts for Glen Canyon came too late, and not wishing to repeat bad timing in Grand Canyon, the Sierra Club published the book, Time and the River Flowing, by Francois Leydet,<sup>35</sup> The book had a very similar format to The Place No One Knew, but it dealt with the Grand Canyon instead of Glen Canyon. Leydet described his seventeen-day boat journey through 240 miles of violent river and illustrated it with stunningly beautiful photographs.

Again, David Brower edited the book and wrote the forward, in which he related the words of a former United States Commissioner of Reclamation who had promoted Colorado River development. In his retirement, he was helping other countries with their dam building. When asked what kind of country his latest project would inundate, he replied, "Nothing but a mess of mountains."<sup>36</sup>

Throughout the book, Leydet recalled Major Powell's trip down the river and extolled on certain historical facts of the river. When he arrived at Marble Gorge he described his feelings, as he thought of a dam at that place:

I pictured myself as a fish in a tank. I imagined the weight of three hundred feet of water above my head--the three hundred feet which would fill this gorge if the dam were built and the river filled the reservoir behind it. I saw the native plants and animals evicted or drowned, the living river, with its varied moods of fury and tranquility, replaced by the monotony of a reservoir lake.<sup>37</sup>

Quotations from some of the same people were chosen to go with the photographs along with quotations from John Steinbeck, E. B. White, and Rachel Carson. The words of Joseph Wood Krutch accompany the scene of the walls of Marble Canyon:

The wisest, the most enlightened, the most remotely long-seeing exploitation of resources is not enough for the simple reason that the whole concept of exploitation is so false and so limited that in the end it will defeat itself and the earth will have been plundered no matter how scientifically and far-seeing the plundering has been done.<sup>38</sup>

The book conceded that only a miracle could save Glen Canyon, but it warned that:

The bureau operating Glen Canyon will destroy Grand Canyon, too, and all that it meant or could mean throughout this civilization's time. It takes a living river to keep a canyon alive, including the Grand Canyon of the Colorado. Kept alive, this canyon is still more: It can remain a symbol of man's remembering not to be too arrogant about the natural forces that built him and that built the only earth he is equipped to survive on.<sup>39</sup>

Time and the River Flowing was also used to explain the conservationists' grievances in more detail than the first book. Leydet contended that Marble Gorge and Bridge Canyon

dams would not only waste water, but would adulterate the quality of the remaining water. The dams would not regulate the flow of the river or store water for irrigation purposes, but would be used only to produce power.

A few final scenes from Glen Canyon concluded the book. One particularly scenic spot was called Cathedral in the Desert, which would be filled with water after 1965. The place was a huge opening in the canyon wall, which towered up on the inside forming a gigantic room. The photograph was followed by these words, "For a replaceable commodity we spent this irreplaceable grandeur. Your son may pass close to it. But neither he nor any man yet to be born will ever again know it, nor will the intimate things that gave this place its magic ever again know the sun."<sup>40</sup>

Time and the River Flowing used all the strategies formerly used in The Place No One Knew, but it had more impact. A reader could be moved by the fact that Glen Canyon had been destroyed, but he was unable to save Glen Canyon. In the second book, however, it was not too late for members of the audience to act.

Probably the most often quoted line in the campaign also appeared in the book. President Theodore Roosevelt spoke as he stood on the rim of the Grand Canyon, "In the Grand Canyon, Arizona has a natural wonder which, so far as I know, is in kind absolutely unparalleled throughout the rest of the world. Leave it as it is. You cannot improve on it. The ages have been at work on it, and man can only mar it."<sup>41</sup>



### Counter-persuasion

In June, 1965, the Bureau of Reclamation also published a book called Lake Powell: Clear Water on the Colorado<sup>42</sup> which extolled the virtues of a new lake and its recreational values. A New York Times editorial called the book an attempt to justify the destruction of Glen Canyon. The editorial also mentioned the unusual clear, blue water of the photographs in the book. The Times recalled that the Colorado River had never run clear, and had always been known for its muddy red color due to the large amount of sand moving in the river.<sup>43</sup> Control continued to use counter-persuasion.

### Promulgation

In September, 1963, the National Park Service had drawn up a report on the effects of the Lower Colorado River Project on the Grand Canyon National Monument. The report was, of course, never publicized by the Interior Department, but in 1965, David Brower learned of its existence and insisted that its contents be revealed. The report indicated that a "Bridge Canyon reservoir would change the character of a particularly scenic length of wild river to something less desirable from the National Park standpoint."<sup>44</sup> The report further described the wildlife and habitat that would be evicted. When these words began to be quoted, newspaper editorials began to appear and an "avalanche of mail descended on the White House, on Congress, and on the Department of the Interior."<sup>45</sup> The agitators were beginning to reach the public.

### Avoidance

Control next employed what appeared to be an adjustment strategy; however, time proved it to be merely an avoidance strategy. The Bureau of the Budget, in May, 1965, recommended deferral of the Bridge Canyon Dam and the creation of a committee of outstanding citizens to re-evaluate the scenic considerations along with the National Water Commission to study the nation's water supplies and needs.<sup>46</sup> Brower warned conservationists not to be "lulled by a seeming victory. We must continue to urge that there be no Grand Canyon dams at all."<sup>47</sup> He referred to the Marble Gorge dam which was still under consideration.

### Polarization

That encounter between Agitation and Control produced some language from both sides which resembled name-calling. Certainly it was polarization. Floyd E. Dominy, Commissioner of the Reclamation Bureau contended that his bureau "does not destroy nature, but improves on it."<sup>48</sup> He referred to opponents of the dams as "status-quo conservationists" whose arguments he characterized as "frantic flak."<sup>49</sup> Brower called Dominy and his bureau "the dam-it-all reclamationists," and he related that he didn't particularly care how the verb was spelled.<sup>50</sup>

### Promulgation

The deferral kept Bridge Canyon out of consideration for several months, but in 1966, Bridge and Marble Gorge

both were introduced again in the House Interior Committee. Once again the Sierra Club used a promulgation tactic. On June 9, 1966, the Sierra Club purchased a full page ad in The New York Times which was titled, "Now only you can save Grand Canyon from being flooded for profit."<sup>51</sup> The ad briefly listed the vital statistics dealing with the effects of Marble Gorge and Bridge Canyon dams on Grand Canyon. The ad mentioned the name of the chairman of the House Interior Committee, Wayne Aspinall, as the person who should be notified if the public did not want Grand Canyon dammed. It also provided five coupon-type letters addressed to the President, Secretary Udall, Wayne Aspinall, and three were left blank to be filled in with other Congressmen's names. Each coupon urged deletion of both dams from the Central Arizona Project. While encouraging people to clip and mail the coupons, the ad stated:

Remember, with all the complexities of Washington politics, and the ins and outs of committees and procedures, there is only one simple, incredible issue here: This time it's the Grand Canyon they want to flood. The Grand Canyon.<sup>52</sup>

#### Suppression

In a separate coupon the ad also solicited contributions and memberships. Tiny letters at the end of the coupon indicated, "All contributions and membership dues are deductible."<sup>53</sup> Control responded immediately with a suppression tactic. The ad had appeared on Thursday, June 9, 1966, and on Friday, June 10, 1966, the Sierra Club was served with a warning

from the Internal Revenue Service, indicating that its tax exempt status was being investigated. Contributions were not to be considered tax exempt from that date until the investigation was completed. The Revenue Service explained that tax exempt organizations were not allowed to influence legislation in a substantial way.<sup>54</sup>

David Brower said that he considered the proposed action "a dire penalty. It seems incredible that a major effort to protect what is possibly the nation's greatest scenic resource, Grand Canyon, should bring this reward."<sup>55</sup> Brower strongly suggested that the bureau's swift action was in response to pressure from Interior Department officials and Representative Aspinall who was angered by the telegrams and phone calls which he received on Friday morning.

Reaction to Control's suppression tactic was swift and widespread. Numerous editorials appeared defending the Sierra Club's right to lobby for conservation, and letters continued to arrive in Washington offices to deplore the actions of the Revenue Service. Articles appeared in Life and other national magazines describing not only the tax exempt status of the club, but also the club's arguments against the dams. Although the club had been threatened with the loss of its tax status, the actions of control had resulted in the extensive media coverage for its grievances. Brower admitted, "We saw that there was risk, but the risk to our solvency is much less important than the risk to land. We're going to continue defending

Grand Canyon, and we're hoping that enough citizens will care enough to keep us afloat."<sup>56</sup>

### Promulgation and Polarization

On July 25, 1966, the Sierra Club purchased another full page ad. In two-inch type, the ad listed major national parks and wilderness areas, and asked, "How can you guarantee these, Mr. Udall, if Grand Canyon is dammed for profit?"<sup>57</sup> By addressing the entire ad to Secretary Udall, accusing him of neglecting his responsibilities to protect national parks, the club had used the flag individual tactic. The ad again stated its arguments, provided coupons and described the action taken by the Revenue Service against the club for the former ad. It concluded, "And while we cannot now promise that any contributions you send us are deductible, we can promise that any contributions you send will help fight the remaining battle against a technology that feels it no longer needs virtue."<sup>58</sup>

### Avoidance

Letters, editorials, and petitions against the dams containing numerous signatures were printed in the Congressional Record through the efforts of Representative John Saylor, Pennsylvania, and other sympathetic Congressmen. Many objected to the action of the Internal Revenue. Typical of the complaints, one such letter stated, "It is fair to assume that the I. R. S. intervention against the Sierra Club at this time is more than coincidental. It smacks of harassment and intimidation. The

curb was ordered without investigation or hearing."<sup>59</sup> In spite of the public aversion to the dams evidenced in the media and from constituents, the House Committee on the Interior approved the Central Arizona Project on July 29, 1966, by a vote of twenty-two to ten.<sup>60</sup> Charges that it was an evil bill came from Representative Saylor who had led the fight to kill the dams.

#### Solidification and Polarization

In August, 1966, the Sierra Club announced that it was growing at a rate of one thousand new members per month, which was about eight hundred more than they could normally expect. In the same month, Senator Morris K. Udall charged that the Sierra Club ads had gone beyond the bounds of fair play when he stated, "Your ads are carefully worded so as to avoid any assertion that Grand Canyon National Park comprises the geological 'Grand Canyon.' Yet, the ads were clearly designed to, and did, leave that impression."<sup>61</sup> Udall also reminded Brower that he had warned the club in 1956, that lobbying could lead to an I.R.S. intervention. Brower had proposed a compromise to Senator Udall which called for alternate dam site, but Udall called it a request for capitulation rather than a compromise.<sup>62</sup>

#### Suppression

In December, 1966, the Sierra Club announced that its tax status had been officially revoked because the club

advocated legislation affecting natural resources. Brower issued a statement promising to fight the tax status. Since the Revenue Service's action in June, the club had experienced an immediate decline in gifts, but had increased in membership from 38,000 to 47,000. Brower promised, "The Sierra Club is prepared to carry on and will do so in spite of I. R. S. coercion."<sup>63</sup>

#### Adjustment and Promulgation

The club petitioned the Federal Power Commission in January, 1967, to intervene in the application of the Arizona Power Authority to build a dam at Marble Gorge. On February 1, the Administration announced that it had abandoned plans for the two dams and would propose instead a steam power plant to supply water to arid areas of Tucson and Phoenix.<sup>64</sup> Early in March, the Sierra Club placed another ad which read, "Grand Canyon National Monument is hereby abolished--from a bill submitted to Congress 15 days ago by representative Wayne Aspinall."<sup>65</sup> The ad explained that the fight was not over and that the dams still stood a chance of passing. It also contained five more coupons addressed to the President, Representative Saylor, Governor Reagan, and Arizona Governor John R. Williams.

In the ad Brower mentioned that the Sierra Club offices had been filled with wires, letters, and flowers in praise of the director and his staff for having "slain Goliath and turned away the Philistines."<sup>66</sup> However, he pointed out that "We now

have several 'Goliaths' and as for the Philistines, they're coming back over the hill."<sup>67</sup> While the conservationists could now look forward to administrative support, there were still groups in Arizona, California, and Nevada that were planning to have dams in Grand Canyon, and the bill was still in Congress.

### Capitulation

The club's next ad, in The New York Times Magazine of April 16, 1967, was headlined, "Should we also flood the Sistine Chapel so tourists can get nearer the ceiling?"<sup>68</sup> This ad reiterated the arguments against the dams, but contained only one coupon, which was for memberships or contributions. Soon the administration's plan had been introduced in the Interior Committee of the House, and Secretary Udall asked that the dams be eliminated and a steam plant be built for power. The bill passed the House and Senate with an extra proposal to enlarge Grand Canyon National Park to include Marble Gorge.<sup>69</sup>

On October 1, 1967, President Johnson signed the bill.<sup>70</sup> Thus ended the seventeen year debates on plans for Colorado River water. The conservationists had won the final battle. Control responded with complete capitulation, and accepted all of the terms of the agitators. The Grand Canyon had not been violated; however, David Brower warned that:

No one may quite relax as long as there is a Colorado River, running sometimes wild and almost free, in an unspoiled Grand Canyon. To leave it as it is, as Theodore Roosevelt urged, is to tempt those who would change it.<sup>71</sup>



## Conclusions

The Sierra Club had made full use of its right to petition. Studying the laws and being prepared at the right times, they rarely missed an opportunity to present their grievances through the established means of Control. When petition alone did not produce Agitation's goals, they escalated their rhetorical strategies. Solidification was strong among Sierra Club members. For over thirty years the club had published an in-group magazine which kept members informed of its activities. During the campaign to save the Grand Canyon, national news reports were issued to members to advise when it was necessary to write letters to Congressmen. Of course, solidification was also reinforced by the hundreds of trips taken each year which included such activities as hiking, mountain-climbing, river running, and clean-up marches through the wilderness.

During the campaign, purity of belief in the cause probably reached its highest level in the history of the club. Purity of belief is illustrated in David Brower's reply to Secretary Udall's offer to compromise by building only one dam in Grand Canyon:

If someone threatened to put two bullets through your heart, would you consider one bullet an acceptable compromise? Either of the dams would inflict a mortal wound on the Canyon; a second dam would be overkill. If splitting the difference were to be regarded as the proper basis for compromise, conservationists would be at a disadvantage; they cannot advocate fewer than zero dams in Grand Canyon.<sup>72</sup>

The strategy employed most by the Sierra Club in this campaign was promulgation. Knowing several years in advance

of the plans to dam Grand Canyon, the club was able to prepare promulgation tactics that otherwise might have not been possible. The most extensive of these promulgation tactics was the publication of two books, The Place No One Knew and Time and the River Flowing, in 1963 and 1964. Although these tactics were impressive undertakings, the books might have been more successful in taking the message to the public had they been less expensive. However, the books made a largely convincing, if somewhat emotional, statement of the Sierra Club's arguments against the dams.

The use of legitimizers in order to exploit the media was of some benefit to the agitators in the campaign. Through the members of Congress who were either club members or were sympathetic to the cause, Agitation gained publicity for its activities. Another promulgation tactic which involved more than club members, was the mass meetings and organization of many conservationists to serve a common purpose. Though the Sierra Club represented only a small portion of that larger group, David Brower was frequently the leader of these groups.

Most important of promulgation tactics must have been the use of newspaper ads to relate the message to the masses. Before the first ad appeared, the public had not become involved in large numbers through letters and verbal protest. The persistence and quantity of these public protests from June, 1966, to June, 1967, could not be ignored by Control. However, the results of this tactic, the Revenue Service's revokation of the

club's tax status, was probably equally significant in delivering the conservationists' message. The Revenue Service's action was unexpected by the club, because many other tax-deductible organizations, which lobbied on a much grander scale, had kept their tax exempt status. The Central Arizona Project Association, for example, spent over \$74,000 in 1965, to advocate the dams that the club opposed.<sup>73</sup>

The Sierra Club used polarization tactics on occasion. One flag issue was the broken promise on the part of Control to protect Rainbow Bridge from rising waters. Another flag issue was the damming of Glen Canyon when the Sierra Club felt it should be given national park status. The third tactic was a flag individual. Secretary Udall had been responsible for the closing of the gates at Glen Canyon when no protection had been provided for Rainbow Bridge. He not only claimed to be a conservationist, but he had also demonstrated his dislike for people who would exploit natural resources in many cases. In 1962, he had published a book, The Quiet Crisis, which was a strong statement of his personal feelings about the necessity of conservation. Being a native of Arizona; however, he was depended upon by the people of that state to deliver their water and power. As a result of this conflict within Udall, he was particularly susceptible as a flag individual.

As long as the agitators were petitioning only, Control used avoidance tactics. Counter-persuasion was used most in answering the agitator's charges in Congress and the Interior

Department. After the Sierra Club escalated to a strong promulgation campaign, Control used a suppression tactic, harassment, in revoking the club's tax exemption. Following the strong support Agitation received from the public, control adjusted by removing one of the dams from the bill and asking for its inclusion in the national park. During the succeeding months Agitation continued its promulgation tactics, and when the Central Arizona Project was signed, including all the Sierra Club demands; Control had capitulated.

The growth experienced by the Sierra Club during David Brower's leadership, was unprecedented among conservationist organizations. From a membership of 6,000 when he took office, to 70,000 in 1968,<sup>74</sup> the membership doubled nearly twenty times. Much of this growth occurred during the mid-sixties, following the I. R. S. action against the club. As the membership grew, so did the budget, from \$100,000 in the early fifties to nearly two million in 1968.<sup>75</sup> The unusually fast rate of growth produced some problems for the club. In the early days, membership was selective, and prospective members had to be sponsored by another member to join. The Grand Canyon campaign, however, produced a momentum in growth and militancy of which made sponsorship impractical. Due to the increased militancy of the club, two factions formed. Older and more conservative members voiced the opinion that they would prefer the milder approach to conservation, while others expressed their full support of Brower's tactics.

In the two years following the Grand Canyon campaign, members debated their differences. During those years Brower continued the club's conservation work and made plans to expand club activities on a world-wide basis. When it became clear that many members would not tolerate this new venture for the club, Brower resigned as executive director, and organized his own group called Friends of the Earth.<sup>76</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Bowers and Ochs have isolated three variables which are critical for agitation and control. For agitation, these are, actual membership, potential membership and rhetorical sophistication which is the extent to which the leadership of agitation is able to apply agitative principles. For control, these variables are power, strength of ideology, and rhetorical sophistication. John W. Bowers and Donovan J. Ochs, The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, Inc., 1971), pp. 137-138.

<sup>2</sup>Scott Thurber, "Conservation Comes of Age," The Nation, 27 February 1967, pp. 272-275.

<sup>3</sup>"That Local Boy Made Good," Sierra Club Bulletin, 41 (January, 1956), 6.

<sup>4</sup>Robert Wernick, "Spoiling for a Good Fight," Holiday, 44 (December, 1968), 58-59.

<sup>5</sup>Wallace Stegner, "Battle for the Wilderness," New Republic, 15 February 1954, 14.

<sup>6</sup>"Our Winning Fight for Dinosaur," Sierra Club Bulletin, 41 (January, 1956), 5.

<sup>7</sup>Wernick, p. 58.

<sup>8</sup>The New York Times, 7 August 1966, p. 50, col. 3.

<sup>9</sup>The New York Times, 2 February 1967, p. 24, col. 3.

<sup>10</sup>The New York Times, 2 February 1967, p. 24, col. 3.

<sup>11</sup>The New York Times, 2 February 1967, p. 24, col. 3.

<sup>12</sup>The New York Times, 4 August 1957, p. 46, col. 4.

<sup>13</sup>The New York Times, 4 August 1957, p. 46, col. 4.

<sup>14</sup>The New York Times, 4 August 1957, p. 46, col. 4.

<sup>15</sup>The New York Times, 4 August 1957, p. 46, col. 4.

<sup>16</sup>Bowers and Ochs, p. 17.

- <sup>17</sup>The New York Times, 22 January 1963, p. 34, col. 2.
- <sup>18</sup>Eliot Porter, The Place No One Knew (New York: Ballantine Books, 1963).
- <sup>19</sup>Brooks Atkinson, The New York Times, 11 June 1963, p. 34, col. 2.
- <sup>20</sup>Porter, p. 86.
- <sup>21</sup>Porter, p. 150.
- <sup>22</sup>Porter, p. 100.
- <sup>23</sup>Porter, p. 6.
- <sup>24</sup>Porter, p. 158.
- <sup>25</sup>U. S. Congress, Senate, Senator Frank E. Moss speaking on Sierra Club letters. 88th Congress, 1st Session, 19 August 1963, Congressional Record, p. 15265. Hereafter referred to as Cong. Rec., 19 August 1963, p. 15265.
- <sup>26</sup>David Brower, "Sedimental Journey," Sierra Club Bulletin, 52 (Annual, 1967), 88.
- <sup>27</sup>Porter, p. 5.
- <sup>28</sup>Porter, p. 5.
- <sup>29</sup>Cong. Rec., 19 August 1963, p. 15265.
- <sup>30</sup>Cong. Rec., 19 August 1963, p. 15265.
- <sup>31</sup>Cong. Rec., 19 August 1963, p. 15265.
- <sup>32</sup>Cong. Rec., 19 August 1963, p. 15265.
- <sup>33</sup>William M. Blair, The New York Times, 15 March 1964, p. 69, col. 1-5.
- <sup>34</sup>Blair, p. 69, col. 3.
- <sup>35</sup>Francois Leydet, Time and the River Flowing (New York: Ballantine Books, 1964).
- <sup>36</sup>Leydet, p. 7.
- <sup>37</sup>Leydet, p. 50.
- <sup>38</sup>Leydet, p. 144.

<sup>39</sup>Leydet, p. 151.

<sup>40</sup>Leydet, p. 158.

<sup>41</sup>Leydet, p. 82.

<sup>42</sup>Unfortunately, this book is not available at this time for analysis, and only brief descriptions can be found; however, the descriptions appeared in The New York Times which is considered a reliable source.

<sup>43</sup>The New York Times, 5 June 1965, p. 31, col. 4.

<sup>44</sup>Arnold Hano, The New York Times Magazine, 12 December 1965, Sec. 4, p. 56.

<sup>45</sup>Hano, p. 57.

<sup>46</sup>Hano, p. 125.

<sup>47</sup>Hano, p. 126.

<sup>48</sup>Donald Janson, The New York Times, 2 May 1966, p. 42, col. 1-5.

<sup>49</sup>Hano, p. 56.

<sup>50</sup>Hano, p. 56.

<sup>51</sup>The New York Times, 9 June 1966, p. 35.

<sup>52</sup>The New York Times, 9 June 1966, p. 35.

<sup>53</sup>The New York Times, 9 June 1966, p. 35.

<sup>54</sup>The New York Times, 12 June 1966, p. 50, col. 3.

<sup>55</sup>The New York Times, 12 June 1966, p. 50, col. 3.

<sup>56</sup>U. S. Congress, House of Representatives, Representative John W. Wydlet speaking on Internal Revenue agitation. 89th Congress, 2nd Session, 13 July 1966, Congressional Record, p. A3670.

<sup>57</sup>The New York Times, 25 July 1966, p. 15.

<sup>58</sup>The New York Times, 25 July 1966, p. 15.

<sup>59</sup>U. S. Congress, House of Representatives, Representative John D. Dingell speaking against Grand Canyon Dams. 89th Congress, 2nd Session, 26 July 1966, Congressional Record, p. A3956.



<sup>60</sup>William M. Blair, The New York Times, 29 July 1966, p. 10, col. 1.

<sup>61</sup>U. S. Congress, House of Representatives, Representative Morris K. Udall speaking on Sierra Club Tax Status. 89th Congress, 2nd Session, 15 August 1966, Congressional Record, p. 19439. Hereafter referred to as Cong. Rec., 15 August 1966, p. 19439.

<sup>62</sup>Cong. Rec., 15 August 1966, p. 19439.

<sup>63</sup>Wallace Turner, The New York Times, 21 December 1966, p. 27, col. 3.

<sup>64</sup>The New York Times, 2 February 1967, p. 1, col 5.

<sup>65</sup>The New York Times, 13 March 1967, p. 41.

<sup>66</sup>The New York Times, 13 March 1967, p. 41.

<sup>67</sup>The New York Times, 13 March 1967, p. 41.

<sup>68</sup>The New York Times Magazine, 16 April 1967, p. 127.

<sup>69</sup>William M. Blair, The New York Times, 15 March 1967, p. 48, col. 1.

<sup>70</sup>The New York Times, 1 October 1967, p. 42, col. 1.

<sup>71</sup>Leydet, p. 9.

<sup>72</sup>"Why Grand Canyon Should Not Be Dammed," Sierra Club Bulletin, 51 (July-August, 1966), 4.

<sup>73</sup>Thurber, p. 274.

<sup>74</sup>Wernick, p. 58.

<sup>75</sup>Harold Peterson, "Brower Power Awaits the Verdict," Sports Illustrated, 14 April 1969, p. 36-38.

<sup>76</sup>Harold Peterson, p. 38.

## CHAPTER IV

### AUDIENCE-SPEAKER RELATIONSHIPS

A particular audience may provide the necessary inspiration for a speaker and may even determine a speaker's content and character of his speech. Indeed, the audience acts as a partner in the communicative process.<sup>1</sup> Because of the important role played by the audience, it is necessary to examine the audience-speaker relationships in a movement. During an agitative campaign, these relationships between audience and speaker will affect its success or failure.

First, it must be established which audiences the speaker chooses to address. He may speak to other agitators, the public, control, or a combination of these.<sup>2</sup> The frequency with which he speaks to a certain group may allow the critic to discover with which group the speaker expects to find the most success. Second, the speaker may address a broad segment of society or a very narrow one. His attention to a minority group might indicate the speaker's opinion that more solidification is desirable among agitation. Choosing a broad segment of society, the speaker may feel that success lies in the public's knowledge and acceptance of his grievances.

Two relationships are also important when determining communicative conditions between speakers and listeners.

First, are status relationships.<sup>3</sup> If the speaker and listener are on the same plane of equality, or if one is in some way superior to the other, the speaker will choose his arguments accordingly. The second relationship is functional.<sup>4</sup> When the assigned duty of one set of the participants is either of high value or is distasteful to the other, these relationships will be reflected in the attitude of the speaker for his audience.

In the early stages of the campaign, the Sierra Club's audiences strictly represented a narrow segment of society which tended to be sympathetic to its cause. Their message reached other members which amounted to only a few thousand people. A limited number of people from Control were also among the audience. There were apparent status relationships of equality in this period. The rhetoric in this stage of the campaign was marked by shared apprehension and a mournful quality. Speaking of the loss of one canyon, David Brower said, "The best of the canyon is going or gone. Some second-best beauty remains along the Colorado of course, but much of its meaning vanished when Glen Canyon died."<sup>5</sup>

Club member Bruce Kilgore described a visit to the rising waters of Glen Canyon in 1963: "We saw a beaver swimming around the tops of some cottonwood trees that apparently had been his private domain a few days earlier. We wondered how long he would swim, whether he would try to seek out a new unflooded place for himself, or whether his natural instincts

would only tell him that "this must be a temporary high in the river and it will pass."<sup>6</sup>

Such illustrations typify the tone of Agitation in the early sixties. The club reached most of its audience at that time through in-group publications. Although David Brower often spoke to other groups of conservationists, he and other Sierra Club speakers spoke on an equality basis mostly to other members of the Agitation group itself. As the day for the closing of the gates at Glen Canyon approached, the club's audience began to include not only other agitators but Control as well. The club's leaders revealed Apprehension in December, 1962 in a letter to Congress and Secretary Udall, on behalf of Rainbow Bridge:

Although the district court ruled that the public has no standing before the court in its attempt to act in defense of public parks, you do stand in a position to act. The court has ruled that it is up to you to obey the law.

If you allow Glen Canyon Dam to be closed prematurely, you will have abandoned your last chance to see that the law binding you is complied with. We hereby plead that you do not jeopardize the President's conservation program by allowing erosion of the laws upon which conservation depends.<sup>7</sup>

Agitation's words admitted the superior functional status of Control in such phrases as "it is up to you," and "If you allow," or "We hereby plead. . . ." All of these phrases not only recognize, but also appeal to the use of Control's superior power.

When the gates had been closed, Agitation's attitude turned to indignation and suggested their own superior knowledge of what the future held: "But where will the chance to know wilderness

be a generation from now? How much of the magic of the American earth, will have been dozed and paved into oblivion by the great feats of engineering that seem to come so much more readily to hand than the knack of saving something for what it is? Again and again the challenge to explore has been met, handled, and relished by one generation--and precluded to any other."<sup>8</sup>

Brower indicated his feeling of a superior knowledge when addressing Control in Congressional Committee meetings and letters. He was always well equipped with evidence that would dispute the evidence presented by Control. Control asserted its superiority by accusing Brower of distorting and misrepresenting the facts to the public. The newspaper ads, for instance, left the impression that Grand Canyon proper, i.e., The Park, would be flooded, when, in fact, the two dam sites were actually side canyons and were not inside the park at all.<sup>9</sup>

Brower's presentations to the public were often largely emotional appeals with the facts somewhat abbreviated. In Agitation's four major communications with the public, the newspaper ads, Brower often used fear to motivate his audiences. Through such statements as "Grand Canyon National Monument is Hereby Abolished,"<sup>10</sup> he gained the audiences' attention and encouraged them to act out of fear. Even though he always listed his arguments against the dams, Brower may have given a picture to his audiences that was less than complete by failing to mention that neither of the two proposed dams were in the park.

Agitation saw the status of their control audiences certainly as no greater than their own. That audience for the most part, was quite well educated, and the club recognized this in speaking to Control. Their status might have been considered equal, except for one position of the Sierra Club. Members considered themselves to have far superior ideals than Control. As for the function of their Control audiences, Agitation definitely held contempt for persons in positions of power who allowed exploitation of wilderness to occur. Due to that same power, however, Agitation was forced to acknowledge a functional superiority on the part of Control also. Control's use or threatened use of its superior powers led the Sierra Club to adopt a much angrier approach to their campaign.

This angry approach reached a new audience, the public. The Club's appeals to the public took the form of warnings in the newspaper advertisements. The Sierra Club now reached its largest audience. The club perceived this audience's function as important to their success. That function was seen not only as a means of spreading the message to the masses, but also as a means of annoying Control with persistent and voluminous complaints.

This was the first time that the Sierra Club had ever issued such a large public appeal to the masses. Club policy in the past had made very little use of the public as an audience. It was contrary to the nature of the club to speak

to large audiences. Conservation work had been carried on quietly in the past. Membership had been selective and so had the choice of audiences. Though some of its message had reached portions of the public, past messages had, nevertheless, been directed to other agitators and Control.

The use of public audiences was a major factor in the campaign's success. In the Grand Canyon campaign, agitation had experienced very little progress toward their goals until it began to make use of public audiences. The Grand Canyon dams had been proposed in Congress over three years, and Agitation's petition and promulgation tactics had produced only avoidance tactics from Control. It is interesting to note, that after the first success with a public audience, the club continued to address the same audience often. Within a year, Agitation had won.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Robert T. Oliver, Making Your Meaning Effective (Boston: Holbrook Press, Inc., 1971), p. 57.

<sup>2</sup>Charles W. Lomas, The Agitator in American Society (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), p. 23.

<sup>3</sup>Oliver, p. 58.

<sup>4</sup>Oliver, p. 61.

<sup>5</sup>Eliot Porter, The Place No One Knew (New York: Ballantine Books, 1963), p. 5.

<sup>6</sup>Bruce M. Kilgore, "Silent River," Sierra Club Bulletin, 48 (April-May, 1963), 7.

<sup>7</sup>Lawrence E. Davies, The New York Times, 12 January 1963, p. 7, col. 5.

<sup>8</sup>Porter, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup>Cong. Rec., 15 August 1966, p. 19439.

<sup>10</sup>The New York Times, 13 March 1967, p. 41.



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Sierra Club served as a leader among conservationist organizations for over eighty years. Working through the inspiration of John Muir, its founder, the club had successful in many movements to preserve wilderness and protect national parks. In 1952, the club sent its most militant leader since Muir into battle against over development of the Colorado River. David Brower exhibited an aggressiveness in his job as executive director that was instrumental in preserving the natural state of Dinosaur Monument. His most outstanding conservation campaign, however, was the one to save Grand Canyon from being dammed. The agitation and control rhetoric of that campaign from 1963 to 1967, has been analyzed. Criteria for the analysis were adapted from John W. Bowers and Donovan J. Ochs in The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control; Charles W. Lomas' The Agitator in American Society; Robert T. Oliver's Making Your Meaning Effective; and Egon Bittner's article "Radicalism and Radical Movements" in the American Sociological Review.

The definition of agitation and control used has been that of Bowers and Ochs. They defined agitation as that which exists "when people outside the normal decision-making establishment advocate significant social change and encounter a degree of

resistance within the establishment such as to require more than the normal discursive means of persuasion."<sup>1</sup> For an agitation to occur certain political and social preconditions must exist. First, a group of people perceive themselves to be victims of injustice. Second, the power structure shows a massive resistance to change its actions which produce injustice. Third, accessible communication channels must exist between an agitation and its audiences.

Research of the Grand Canyon campaign has revealed evidence of the existence of each of these preconditions. The Sierra Club believed that all Americans were victims of a power structure that allowed and encouraged over development of the nation's rivers. They also felt that the conservationists' point of view was not given fair consideration in the planning of national parks and wilderness areas.

Control and Society showed a great reluctance to change its beliefs. The Southwest was experiencing a severe drought, and it was anxious to find a solution to their water shortage. Society had built a dependence on technology as the answer to all problems. The social and political atmosphere was more conducive to mass production than conservation of resources. Dams were signs of progress, and progress, from Society's and Control's point of view, was America's most important product.

As the Sierra Club began to present its grievances on behalf of Grand Canyon, Eastern newspapers and many conservationist and news magazines provided coverage for agitation's cause. Their

channels of communication grew as their militancy increased. When the club began to provide its own means of communication through publication of books and purchase of advertisements, the mass media supplied exposure for their grievances. These preconditions provided the necessary impetus for the agitative campaign.

The Sierra Club membership with the support of several other conservationist organizations made up the agitation group. The most important agitation strategist in the campaign was David Brower. Thirty years a member of the club, Brower had been executive director for eleven years when the Grand Canyon campaign began. Under Brower's direction the club grew from a dedicated organization to a militant one. Club members were unusual among other militant agitators of their time. They were typically white, affluent, and very well educated.

Control was made up of many governmental bodies. The Interior Department, the Bureau of Reclamation, and other Bureaus within that department were important members of control. Congress and the President also played important roles. Most important as a control strategist was Secretary Udall who supported the dams. His support lacked enthusiasm, however, because of his personal desire to remain a conservationist.

Petition is not necessarily an agitative strategy; nevertheless, the Sierra Club used every opportunity to petition that was available. It was a group that usually worked within the

established means of control. Solidification among the members was strengthened by quality in-group publications and shared trips into the wilderness. Through those experiences and to a greater extent, through the leadership of Brower, Agitation maintained a high level of purity of belief. This quality allowed them to accept no compromise in defending the Grand Canyon. The strength of that quality was a major element in the campaign's success.

The club's campaign depended most on promulgation tactics. These tactics included the publication of beautifully illustrated books, the use of legitimizers, the leading of mass meetings in conjunction with other conservation groups, and the purchase of advertisements. All of these tactics attracted the news media to some extent, but the advertisements must be considered responsible for gaining the most attention. If the advertisements had not been followed by the immediate suppression tactic from the Internal Revenue Service, the ads still would have been the strongest promulgation tactic used by the club. However, the I. R. S. did intervene, and consequently, Agitation was treated to a large amount of news coverage. This was a turning point in the campaign.

The club's polarization tactics also exemplified a significant strategy in the campaign. Rainbow Bridge and Glen Canyon Dam were established as symbols for the club. These flag issues were two of Agitation's best arguments to support their contention that the power structure did not give fair

consideration to the conservationist point of view. Agitation's use of Stewart Udall as a flag individual also promoted the conservationist cause by creating a strong negative reaction to him.

Control maintained a long campaign of avoidance tactics in response to Agitation's proposals. Counter-persuasion from Congress, evasion from Secretary Udall, and postponement from the Bureau of the Budget were the avoidance tactics used. Avoidance was followed by harassment, a suppression tactic used by the Internal Revenue Service. Control made its one adjustment after that, which was an acceptance of some of the means of Agitation. Control capitulated after Agitation continued what had been its most successful promulgation tactic.

Agitation addressed itself to three different audiences. These were other members of Agitation, Control and the public. During the first three years of the campaign, Agitation addressed audiences made up of other agitators and Control to a great extent. They began to reach larger audiences with newspaper ads in 1966. The use of these audiences represented a major factor in the success of Agitation and marked a turning point in the campaign. Two relationships are important when examining the audiences of an agitation movement. Status relationships identify the superiority or inferiority of a speaker and audience. Agitation saw its Control audience as equal in many ways, with the exception of ideals. Functional relationships reflect the attitude of one set of participants toward

the assigned duty of the other set. Agitation considered Control's function as distasteful in many ways, but they were dependent upon Control's superior powers to reach their goals. Although Control evidenced this superior functional status in the actual power of making decisions and performing acts, Agitation, with a somewhat equal status relationship to Control was the successful side.

Agitation used different methods of motivation with different audiences. With Control they most often used reason. With the public, however, they often used fear. It was due more to the fear used on public audiences than the reason used on Control, that Agitation was successful.

The Sierra Club studied its problems in depth, and prepared decisions on what they felt to be the best solution to the problems. After they presented their solutions, they never considered solutions proposed by others. Their position was much too uncompromising to allow another suggested solution. This also stems from purity of belief in their cause.

Several factors were important in determining the success of the Sierra Club's agitation campaign. First, was Brower's purity of belief which carried over to the club members. Due to the persistence of that quality, members were able to maintain their uncompromising position. Purity of belief was emphasized by statements and actions of the club. Another factor in determining the campaign's success was Agitation's

change of audiences. When Agitation began to speak to large segments of society, they were able to put more pressure on Control from larger groups of people. A third deciding factor of Agitation's success was Control's suppressive action which produced public support and sympathy for the club. A fourth factor probably was the lack of purity of belief on the part of a major member of Control, Stewart Udall. Had the Secretary had the same purity of belief in his support of the dams that Agitation had in their oppositions to the dams, the campaign might not have been won by Agitation.

The atmosphere of American society in the sixties provided the necessary background for many varied movements. The Sierra Club's Grand Canyon campaign was unusual among them due to its predominant reliance upon a verbal rhetoric and the fact that it achieved complete success without employing any of the violent stages of escalation. It was a campaign which relied largely on its purity of belief and public audiences for its success. An analysis of the campaign has been useful in revealing the predominant strategies of a successful movement heretofore rarely examined.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup>John W. Bowers and Donovan J. Ochs, The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, Inc., 1971), p. 4.



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