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ON POWER AND POWERLESSNESS  
OR  
WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS\*

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This paper is designed as part of a discussion on the social consequences of powerlessness. This is a highly important topic, but I believe that such a discussion is premature. It should be preceded by an extended consideration of the concepts of power and powerlessness. While there is little consensus among sociologists as to the key concepts for sociological analysis, I believe that most would include power somewhere on their list. My own list would include power along with exploitation, class, nation, consciousness, conflict and social change among others. Each of these concepts takes on meaning only as they relate to one another in a larger theoretical framework.

Such a theory would recognize the basic dynamic nature of society. Each of the concepts would be related to social change and would be recognized as being themselves fluid and changeable. All are constantly reshaped through the interplay of social forces. Consequently, their relations to each other are constantly in flux. Power would be recognized as an objective phenomena which may be created, destroyed or altered in magnitude. It would also be recognized as a property of collectivities rather than individuals. Research within this theoretical tradition would recognize that social analysis must be specific to particular socio-historical settings.

It is not my intention to present such a theory in this paper. I simply wish to demonstrate that existing formulations of power and powerlessness are inadequate and suggest directions for reformulations. The paper will first briefly summarize the two dominant orientations (that of the social psychologists and the political sociologists) and then make a few brief statements regarding a more promising, but still less than completely adequate approach (that of col-

lective behavior and social movements). This will be followed by a brief overview of the fight by the residents of Waiahole and Waikane (Hawaii) to prevent eviction and to retain their life style. This material will be used to illustrate the weaknesses in existing treatments and to point the way toward a better formulation of power and powerlessness. In the course of the latter I will attempt to illustrate how existing formulations by social psychologists and political sociologists can continue to make a valuable contribution although a lesser one than currently claimed.

#### The Social Psychological Approach

Recent decades have seen two major lines of emphasis in sociological research on power and powerlessness. The dominant line of inquiry has followed from Melvin Seeman's classic article on alienation in which powerlessness was defined as one of the five (later six) types of alienation.<sup>1</sup> I will not attempt to summarize the work in this tradition as Seeman has already done this in two separate papers, and several other state of the field summaries exist.<sup>2</sup> However a few general comments are in order at this point.

Seeman states that one form of being alienated is:

...to be characterized by....A sense of powerlessness: a low expectancy that one's own behavior can control the occurrence of personal and social rewards; for the alienated man, control seems vested in external forces, powerful others, luck, or fate.<sup>3</sup>

Powerlessness is defined as a subjective state of individuals. There may or may not be an association between amounts of actual power possessed by the individual concerned and his subjective state but the primary focus of the researcher is upon the subjective state rather than the objective condition. Similarly, a power whether subjectively or objectively defined, is treated as a possession of individuals rather than classes or other collectivities.

Much scholarly effort has been expended in developing various indices or objective measures of powerlessness as a subjective state. Several of these indices have then been correlated with various factors believed to be productive of the sense of powerlessness, with various behavioral consequences, or with other subjectively perceived types of alienation. Seeman derived the following set of propositions from empirical research on powerlessness:

1. Membership and participation in control-relevant organizations is associated with low alienation (powerlessness).
2. The alienated (powerless) person is not likely to engage in planned instrumentally oriented action.
3. The powerless are characterized by their readiness to participate in relatively unplanned and/or short-term protest activities.
4. Those who feel powerless tend to learn less of the control-relevant information in the environment.
5. Negroes and other minorities tend to feel more powerless than comparable whites.<sup>4</sup>

Later studies have expanded the correlates of powerlessness and have suggested the further breakdown of powerlessness into sensed personal efficacy as distinct from sensed political efficacy. Still the general pattern of work in this area remains pretty much as it was in 1972. Powerlessness is defined in terms of self-perceptions and measured by a variety of scales or single items in questionnaire or interview settings. There is a general agreement with Seeman when he states: "There is no reason to assume a strong correlation between feelings of powerlessness...and circumstances of powerlessness."<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless most scholars working in this area seem to concur with his further statement that:

Although there is no reason to assume a high correlation between objective structure and subjective sentiment there is reason to assume that situations and feelings will not generally be independent.<sup>6</sup>

Few scholars attempt to measure the association between objective power and subjectively defined powerlessness although Lippitt et al. did demonstrate an association between self-defined, other-attributed, and observer-defined patterns of power or influence in a group setting.<sup>7</sup> While there is a general acknowledgment that perceptions of powerlessness are changeable, there has been little work done using this notion. Hunt and Hardt have done one of the few studies demonstrating that perceptions of powerlessness may be altered by certain types of experiences.<sup>8</sup> None of the existing work in this tradition has indicated awareness of the fact that meaningful social power is not possessed by individuals but rather by social collectivities ranging from small community groupings to social classes. I will return to a consideration of the utility of the social psychological approach in the Discussion section.

#### Political Sociology and Power

Political sociologists have always been more concerned than social psychologists with power as an objective phenomena. It is true that their measures are indirect and often employ perceptions as indices, but the primary objective has always been to assess real power. Community power studies are the arena in which political sociologists have best displayed their conceptions of power.<sup>9</sup>

#### Community Power

The fifties and sixties saw a large number of community power studies utilizing two different and competing techniques of measurement. Floyd Hunter, William H. Form, Delbert Miller and many others utilized a reputational approach in which a panel of knowledgeable, larger segments of the community, allegedly

powerful people or some combination thereof were interviewed in order to arrive at the power structure of a given community. Dahl and many of his imitators considered this methodology to be faulty and preferred to examine the resolution of particular community issues. The debate over the best method of studying power reigned for an extended period of time. Clark describes the current conceptualization of power:

Probably the best known debate of earlier years involved Hunter, Dahl, and their respective followers. Reputational and decisional methods were viewed as conflicting means to the same end: answering the question of who governs? ... With time, however, the fact that they were studying distinct phenomena has become clearer. Hunter's basic concern was power, conceived of as the potential for influence. Dahl's concern was influence, conceived of as making explicit decisions among alternatives. Hunter's reputational method, inquiring of the potential import of various actors, operationalized power. Dahl's decisional method focussing on particular actors in reaching specific decisions, operationalized influence. Similarly, a power structure, as the patterned distribution of power, may be distinguished from a decision-making structure, or the patterned distribution of influence in a social system.

Third, and distinct from power and influence, is base resources....Base resources are the actor's properties or facilities that may be converted into power or influence. Some obvious examples are money, high social status, and verbal skills. Appropriate measures vary for different base resources. However an important class of base resources consists of those deriving from occupancy of a particular social status -- mayor, city councilman, bank president, etc. One simple procedure for gauging such base resources has been termed the positional method: it generates a list of statuses occupied by leading individuals in a community.<sup>10</sup>

These are the three dominant approaches to the study of community power. Each is oriented toward determining some aspect of an actual distribution of power in a given community. The best work in each tradition recognizes that power may be possessed by collectivities as well as by individuals. Those using the base resources approach might examine the amount of money controlled by an individual (e.g., Nelson Rockefeller's wealth), a status (e.g., a bank president's

control over the financial assets of a bank), or a sector of the community (e.g., a given coalition of banks with interlocking directorships and reciprocal stock ownerships possesses effective voting control over x percent of all financial institutions in America). This approach then enables one to examine the distribution of base resources, note the extent of concentration, and make inferences regarding the distribution of real power.

Those who utilize the reputational method could ascertain the perception of the extent of power possessed by a given individual or community sector. This type of research may be either related to particular issues, classes of issues, or be more generalized, but in each case it is a technique for ascertaining an actual power structure. Those who utilize decisional methods, be they concerned with real or fictional decisions, attempt to chart the actual patterns of influence as manifested by either individuals or community sectors relative to that particular decision. It is assumed that this technique observes the power structure when activated and allows inferences to be drawn regarding the actual distribution of power. Neither the reputational nor the decision approaches enable one to clearly distinguish between power or influence held by an individual or that which is linked to a particular status which he occupies.

All three approaches suffer in that they are unable to assess power in relation to social change. They tend to view power distributions as static. The decision-making approach is a bit more dynamic in that it follows an issue over time and can chart the activation of actors and social processes as it moves toward resolution. Nevertheless, it tends to be restricted to issues and decisions which arise within the social system rather than those which arise as challenges to the system. It could be used to chart the manner in which new coalitions create or seize power which they did not previously possess but there is little evidence of any actual use for this purpose.

### Participation and Power

Political sociologists have also been concerned with power in numerous political participation studies. These studies yield useful information on participation but the relationship<sup>11</sup> between participation and power remains problematic as stated by Alford and Friedland:

...power is held by those who benefit over time from the operation of social, economic, and political structures. Power is not held by those who win in a given electoral battle or attempt to influence a decision; we would call that 'influence.' As important as influence is in specific political situations and conflicts...this definition of power does not focus on the structural context in which influence is or is not exerted. Nor is power a capacity to control....If a capacity is not used, then there is no way of knowing what would happen if it were used. Our definition has the advantage of referring to concrete behavior -- not the behavior of those seeking benefits, but of those who, consciously or unconsciously, intentionally or unintentionally, act in such a way as to confer benefits upon one group rather than another.

Therefore, we argue that power should not be assumed to follow from participation. Power and participation are independent although causally related phenomena....Participation may be associated with power, but power can exist without participation, e.g., social groups may benefit from the operation of structures without any participation on their part. Participation may occur without power -- symbolic participation...and powerlessness can exist without participation when particular social groups withdraw or are excluded. We call power without participation systemic power. Finally, the ways in which the organization of the state affects the exercise of all modes of power is structural power. While the creation of such structural power requires participation, its effects are often to reduce the need for participation by dominant groups.<sup>12</sup>

### Political Sociological and Social Psychological Approaches Compared

The approach toward the study of power used by political sociologists resembles that of the social psychologists in having both virtues and shortcomings but differs in its primary emphasis. The social psychologists are primarily concerned with powerlessness as a subjectively defined individual attri-



bute while the political sociologists are primarily concerned with power as an objective attribute which may be possessed either by individuals or social collectivities. Perhaps the most valuable insights along these lines are provided by Alford and Friedland in their observation that the most powerful segments of the community may not need to actively exercise their power once they have structured the government so that its normal operations serve their interests.

It appears that these two approaches supplement one another and enable us to make some determination regarding both the nature of power as actually existing within a given social system and as subjectively perceived by the system participants. This observation is valid and we will return to it shortly. Nevertheless the two approaches in combination are still inadequate in that they do not adequately analyze the relation of power to social change and they tend to treat power as a static or relatively fixed phenomena which is neither created nor destroyed. More will be said on this subject in the Discussion section.

#### Collective Behavior and Social Movements

The field of collective behavior and social movements can best be described as having a unifying perspective rather than an integrated theory.<sup>13</sup> Neil Smelser probably provided the most ambitious attempt at a general theory of collective behavior and the results proved less than satisfactory.<sup>14</sup> There does appear to be an emerging consensus on a perspective which can provide a valuable jumping off point for our own concerns. Increasingly collective behavior and social movements are recognized as collective problem solving efforts on the part of those sharing a community of interests, confronted by a common problem, and excluded from legitimate channels of redress. There is an unfortunate tendency for researchers to specialize on narrowly defined topics which are analyzed in isolation from one another.

We have many excellent studies on the nature of grievances, strains, social structures, etc. which may spark the search for a collective solution to a common problem. We also have many studies of the mobilization process. Studies which help us to distinguish between those who are the first to become concerned and who help others to perceive the problem, those who are the first to see the possibility of a collective solution and form the vanguard of a movement, their early recruits, late joiners, uninvolved members of the constituency, and the opposition. There are also many studies of the leadership and the following, the role of ideology, the development of strategy and tactics and movement in relation to the public. Others have concentrated on the study of career patterns of social movements and what happens to them after they either achieve their objectives or fail to do so over an extended period of time.

There are also numerous case studies of individual movements which do attempt to analyze the interrelations among the concepts cited in the above list. These studies partially overcome the problem caused by treating a unity as if it were made up of discrete parts. However at present there is very little good comparative analyses of social movements attempting to generalize across movements so as to improve our understanding of the general process. The one outstanding exception is the very fine work of Jeffery Paige on agrarian revolutions.<sup>15</sup> This is a model which should be followed more frequently in the future. Let us now turn to a case history which will be valuable in helping us to understand the type of conceptualization of power and powerlessness required for good social analysis.<sup>16</sup>

#### Waiahole and Waikane Valleys

Waiahole and Waikane are two valleys in the state of Hawaii located on the windward side of Oahu (urban Honolulu is located on the leeward side of the same ✓

island). The valleys are well watered and were the site of taro growing during traditional Hawaiian times and produced much rice during the period of heavy use of contract labor on the sugar plantations. In 1890 Lincoln McCandless began acquiring land in the valleys through a series of techniques which were neither more nor less moral and legal than those utilized by other haoles (caucasians) in their drive to acquire land held by Hawaiians. He soon came to own the majority of the more desirable land in the valleys. This passed to his heirs at his death. They continued to lease out the land to small farmers and others who grew sweet potatoes, papayas and bananas, supplemented by eggplant, string beans, taro, flowers and lesser amounts of other fruits and vegetables, along with some livestock.

#### Development Plans

The McCandless heirs, the legal name for the descendants of Lincoln McCandless who acquired title to the valleys at his death, foresaw the potential for profits through development as early as 1958 when they hired Harland Bartholomew and Associates to devise a development plan. The plan envisaged an eventual 2,032 houses to be built in the valleys, along with the construction of the world's largest marina offshore at Waikane. These plans were not immediately acted upon because it was felt that the time was not yet ripe. However, initial preparations were made. Tenants were informed, some as early as 1956, that because of the possibility of future development in the area they would no longer be extended long-term leases. They would be allowed to remain on the land if they would accept month-to-month leases, a legal state which would permit them to be evicted with a 28-day notice. By the end of 1959 all tenants were on such leases. One might speculate on the degree of security this gives to farmers, especially when many crops -- especially orchard crops -- take from 18 months to two years for a profitable yield after planting.

It is likely that economic conditions did not warrant any serious consideration of development in the 1950s and 1960s. However, the McCandless heirs had their development plans updated by Donald Woolbrink and Associates in 1970 and on December 1, 1973, submitted to the state a letter of intent to rezone 1,337 acres of agricultural land in Waiahole and Waikane (752 acres to urban and 585 acres to rural or large-lot residential use classifications). George Houghtailing's Community Planning organization was hired to work out the concrete details and carry the development plan through to completion.

#### The Residents

The valley residents are not homogeneous. Not all were tenants. Lincoln McCandless had not succeeded in acquiring all land in the valleys. Some of the Hawaiians granted kuleanas of land during the Grand Mahale were able to retain their land, pass it on to their heirs who either still possess it or have sold it to others. Thus there is a scattering of small plots of individually owned land mixed in with land leased from the McCandless heirs. Nor are all residents full-time farmers. Some are into commercial agriculture to the extent that their entire livelihood depends upon agriculture, others hold outside jobs, but most either grow some crops or raise some livestock. This is used for both personal consumption and to supplement income through truck farming activities. The population is also ethnically mixed.

The developers employed Robert W. Anderson to conduct a survey of valley residents in order to develop information which would support their application to rezone the valleys for development. His study has severe defects but it still provides some useful information regarding the social composition of the two valleys. He found 46 percent of the valley residents to be either pure or part Hawaiian, 20 percent to be of Japanese ancestry, 17 percent to be Filipino,

12 percent haole (caucasian), and the remaining five percent to be other. Most residents were long-time valley residents. Forty-one percent of the families had lived in their present residence for more than 20 years with another 17 percent having lived in them between 10 and 19 years. The 42 percent living in their present residences less than 10 years (27 percent less than five years) actually overstates the degree of transiency in two ways. It does not take into account children of valley residents who upon achieving maturity set up their own house-keeping in the valley. Nor does it take into account those persons who changed residences but moved within the two valleys.

The people living in the valleys were not wealthy. Anderson found their median family income to be \$9,800 in 1973 compared to the 1971 Oahu median of \$11,990. Even with the inflation of incomes that took place during those two years more Waiahole-Waikane residents had income under \$5,000 (24 percent compared to 10 percent for Oahu) and less earned over \$15,000 (22 percent compared to 32 percent for Oahu). This is despite the fact that a very high proportion of the Waiahole-Waikane families had multiple income earners. The age distribution of Waiahole-Waikane residents was skewed with relatively few being in their most productive years. Only 16.8 percent of all residents were males between 20 and 55 with another 20.3 percent being females in the same age bracket.

#### The Power Distribution, January, 1974

Let us stop at this point and see what we could realistically say about power and what we would predict as the eventual fate of the valleys in January 1974. The landlord had clear title to most of the land in Waiahole and Waikane valleys. Much has been said about the manner in which Lincoln McCandless acquired the land and many charges have been made regarding immoral, unethical, or quasi-legal tactics. Nevertheless, viable legal challenges to title were ruled out by past legal enactments and court proceedings. The land clearly belongs to

the McCandless heirs as far as the state is concerned. The right of the landlord to sell the land to developers is unchallenged. All tenants exist on month-to-month leases and may legally be evicted with a 28-day notice. The land may be legally developed for residential purposes with a few provisos regarding zoning.

Most of the land is currently zoned agricultural with only a relatively small area along the main highway and near Waiahole school zoned urban. The portion which is zoned urban could be developed for small lot residential purposes without any rezoning. The portion which is zoned agricultural would have to be rezoned urban before it could be so developed. However, the developers could still develop it for large lot (two acre) residential use without any rezoning because of the peculiar manner in which agricultural zoning is legally defined.

Thus the situation at the beginning of 1974 was such that the landlord had clear legal title and the legally unchallengeable right to sell the land and evict the tenants. The potential developer had the right to develop the land into a luxury residential area without having it rezoned and/or to apply for rezoning to permit small lot residential development. Historical precedent in recent years found more and more rural areas of Oahu being rezoned urban and developed to accommodate the growing population. There was a continued need for new housing but there was also great and growing reluctance to take land out of sugar or pineapple production because of their importance as cash commodities. Thus valleys like Waiahole and Waikane appeared particularly vulnerable to future development.

The entire weight of law, economic rationality, and past precedent lay on the side of those seeking development. This was supplemented by the great wealth of the potential developer. The residents did not appear to possess any resources that would enable them to successfully resist. They also possessed the social characteristics (e.g., low education, low income, and minority status)

which are believed to be associated with a high degree of sensed powerlessness. This would be especially expected in a state which is so completely controlled by a small economic oligarchy as in Hawaii. Thus any reasonable social scientist would anticipate that the land would be sold to developers, the tenants evicted, and the region developed for residential purposes. Let us now contrast these perfectly reasonable expectations with the actual course of events.

#### The Community Response

Subsequent events may be broken into three time periods. The first is one in which the community sought information and organized itself to protect its interests. The second is one in which the community residents carried its cause to the larger Hawaiian public and sought support. The third period is one in which the community residents transformed the nature of their struggle. They came to see it as one segment of a larger struggle and sought allies who were committed to the larger struggle and, in its pursuit, each would aid the other in their own particular causes. All of this took place against a backdrop of landlord and developer maneuvering, governmental deliberations and the actions of outsiders. This is not the place for a full account of such events but they will be related to the extent that they bear upon our present concern with the concept of power and the social consequences of powerlessness.

Phase One. The landlord's letter of intent to develop Waiahole and Waikane was not made public. The valley residents did not know of its existence. However in January and February of 1974 they noted an increasing frequency of large, expensive cars driving down their rural roads with passengers who appeared to be businessmen from Japan. It was also about this time that Robert Anderson was conducting his alleged "objective academic study" of the area. People began to feel increasingly uneasy. They were not sure what was happening but they sensed

that something was going on and that it was not likely to be in their interests. They feared that the land might be sold to Japanese investors and developed for tourist or commercial purposes. They were uncertain as to how to find out just what was happening.

In the course of discussions among tenants and residents it was discovered that Sei Serikaku, a farmer who leased land in the valley from the McCandless heir but lived elsewhere in windward Oahu, had a nephew who was an experienced community organizer and who was currently running a religiously oriented youth project in Kahaluu (the valley immediately adjacent to Waiahole). Bob Nakata, the nephew, was approached and agreed to do what he could to discover what was going on. He went to the Land Use Commission and discovered the letter of intent to develop the area. Meanwhile Nakata was also involved in a survey of farming practices on windward Oahu. Waiahole and Waikane were scheduled to be surveyed in the near future and it was hoped that this might generate information useful in resisting development and eviction.

Phase Two. Word about the prospective development was spread to the various tenants and small landowners in the valley and discussions began as to how to best resist. A general meeting of Waiahole and Waikane residents was held on April 8, 1974, and the Waiahole-Waikane Community Association (WWCA) was formed, a steering committee organized and monthly meetings scheduled. Bobby Fernandez was elected president at the meeting on May 6. The WWCA brought together and represented the interests of a wide range of people of diverse backgrounds. It included some small landowners in the valley, along with tenants of the McCandless heirs. Some of the latter lived in the valley, while others farmed valley land while living elsewhere. The ethnic makeup of the WWCA was quite varied and included Hawaiians, Filipinos, Japanese and haoles. All felt that their interests would be adversely affected by the proposed development and all were determined to



fight it. The steering committee was composed primarily of small landowners and large farmers. They developed a strategy of opposition and sought public support. Some early support was received from residents of Kahaluu valley, Bob Nakata and others associated with the Ethnic Studies Program at the University of Hawaii. More will be said about the latter a bit later in this paper. For the most part, however, the valley residents were alone in their struggle.

The full implications of the development plans became more apparent with the submission of a revised rezoning request on June 30, 1974. It and subsequent elaborations described the development program as involving three five-year stages. The first stage would be the construction of approximately 1,450 housing units in Waikane. Stage two would involve the construction of approximately 1,500 units in Waiahole. The third and final stage would add to the number of housing units and introduce a number of commercial buildings. The final development was anticipated to include some 6,700 housing units and a total residential population of about 20,000 persons. The WWCA worked to make the general public acquainted with the details of the plans and to force them to consider the implications. It became easier and easier to attract supporters to the cause of the valley residents as more and more of the public pondered the implications for urban sprawl, environmental damage, increased congestion on the highways, destruction of agriculture and the accelerated demise of what has been loosely described as the "Hawaiian life style."

The tremendous growth of Oahu's population has combined with increased tourist pressure to cause drastic changes in the environment in a relatively short space of time. The urban concentration has rapidly spread outward from the center of Honolulu. Rural valley after rural valley has been taken over for either residential or tourist use. Water quality has rapidly deteriorated. Kaneohe Bay (on the windward side) was clean and pure a decade or so ago and now

is polluted and rapidly dying. Little of its once famed coral beds remain alive. Beaches are becoming less safe for swimming. There are claims that pockets of smog can be seen periodically. Highway congestion has long since gone beyond the tolerable stage and there is no place to build highways without massive destruction of both environmentally and historically important sites.

The environmental movement had been very strong in Hawaii during the sixties and continued to have an important influence. Perhaps here more than elsewhere people are aware of their surroundings. Much time is spent outdoors. Many remember what life was like in Hawaii until very recently. They know what attracted all of the visitors and many new immigrants and they do not want to see this destroyed. Hawaiians of all ethnic identities are quite responsive to any new threats to the environment. The certainty that the proposed Waiahole-Waikane development would produce increased erosion, flood threats, more pollution for Kaneohe Bay and also would remove two more of the few remaining natural areas on Oahu was precisely such a threat.

Hawaii is an island state with almost a single crop economy. Its major sources of income are from tourism, sugar production and governmental (military) expenditures. Pineapple is a distant fourth. Thus, there is total concentration of the best agricultural land in sugar and pineapple. Hawaii has to import most of its food as well as manufactured products. It is obviously highly vulnerable to interruptions of shipping such as those which may be caused by dock or shipping strikes. Attempts at controlling the strike threat through legislation have been less than successful. Consequently, much lip service has been paid to the attempt to make Hawaii agriculturally self-sufficient. Thus, resistance to the attempt to remove from agriculture two productive valleys (producing over half of the sweet potatoes grown in Hawaii as well as the majority of Oahu's bananas and papayas) could be expected.

The activities of the supporters at this point in time deserve a few comments although we are not primarily concerned with strategy and tactics in this paper. The supporters were drawn from a variety of middle class and student groups. They were, for the most part, sincerely concerned individuals with a respect for law, order and government. They wished to influence decision-making but wished to do so in an orderly manner. Thus they were willing to express their beliefs, contact politicians, sign petitions, make donations, and do what they could to retain the present character of Waiahole and Waikane so far as possible within the limits determined by legality and good taste.

For the most part this is the segment of the public from which the Steering Committee attempted to elicit aid in persuading the representatives of the State of Hawaii and the City and County of Hawaii to prevent development and protect their interests. A series of important legal deliberations and decisions ensued. The State Land Use Commission held hearings on the proposal to rezone Waiahole and Waikane on October 10 and 21. Many valley residents and their supporters attended the meetings. Public support had been influential in getting Honolulu's Mayor Frank Fasi (the two valleys are legally part of the city and county of Honolulu), Hawaii's Governor George Ariyoshi, and other public figures to indicate varying degrees of support for their cause. On December 20, 1974 the State Land Use Commission voted without dissent to deny the rezoning request. However, this did not end the matter.

The McCandless heirs apparently anticipated the ruling and on October 29 proposed a compromise to the WWCA which would set aside a certain amount of land for agriculture and make some concessions to the tenants' desire to remain. This was rejected. On December 31, the McCandless heirs assigned all of their interests in Waiahole and Waikane to one of their members, Mrs. Loy McCandless Marks, in exchange for land which she held on leeward Oahu. In May all tenants

were notified of the change in ownership and that their leases would have to be renegotiated at higher rentals. On May 22 it was announced the developer Joe Pao had purchased the 2,868 acres owned by Mrs. Marks in Waiahole and Waikane. Details of the sale were not released but subsequent events revealed that only a small portion of Waikane was purchased outright with options to buy negotiated for the remainder of Waikane and all of Waiahole. The exercise of the options was apparently to be dependent upon development possibilities.

Waikane tenants received a letter from Mrs. Marks on June 2, 1975, informing them of the land transfer and notifying them that existing leases were cancelled and new ones would have to be negotiated with Pao Investment Corporation. The next day Waiahole tenants received letters informing them of rent increases ranging from 50 to 75 percent. The WWCA membership agreed not to pay the new rents but instead to deposit rent at the old rate into a trust account pending resolution of their situation. The formation of a new group of investors (Windward Partners) to develop Waiahole and Waikane was announced on July 16. A move was made to destroy the unity of Waiahole residents when Mrs. Marks offered new one-year leases at lower rents than previously set. It appears that only a portion of Waikane was scheduled to be developed during the first five-year phase of the project. This offer was accepted by a few tenants but most rejected it.

Phase Three. The confrontation took on more of a legal character in August when the Waiahole tenants who had not signed new leases received eviction notices. On the same day Joe Pao filed a request with the City Department of Land Utilization to develop 130 large house lots in Waikane. This request was rejected on January 24, 1976. Pao submitted a revised request which was also rejected in March. This series of events had a profound impact upon the membership of the WWCA and led to some rather significant changes in orientation, activities, and relations to outside groups.

The valley residents became increasingly sophisticated in their understanding of the nature of power and the workings of law and the government. They came to believe that particular decisions on rezoning or land utilization were final only if they lost. Every time they won the developers would simply back off for a while and then submit a revised request which might stand a better chance of approval. The developers had sufficient money and other resources that they could put Waiahole and Waikane on the back burner to be periodically reheated. In the meantime they would use their influence backstage upon commission members, politicians and other key influentials. Commission members could ultimately be replaced if not influenced.

However a single decision against Waiahole-Waikane would mean the end of their struggle if they chose to be law-abiding, respectable citizens. Consequently, a struggle emerged within the WWCA as to the best line of activities. Disagreements emerged over which outsiders should be linked up with, over ultimate objectives, over strategy and tactics, and even over ideology. A group developed within the association calling itself "Up In Arms" and advocating a more militant, class-oriented line. They sought to unite with other worker and community groups in common struggle for shared interests and they forged closer ties with radical groups in Hawaii.

A committed group of political activists had been developing in Hawaii ever since the 1960s. These were people with a sophisticated political orientation, a commitment to building a just society, a dedication which would be reflected in almost total involvement in any struggle once undertaken and a willingness to risk their own personal wellbeing for a cause in which they believed. This group resembled in many ways the people who built the ILWU in Hawaii, the CIO on the mainland and which had been at the forefront of every struggle for human rights. This band of radicals was a most important catalyst in helping to pull together the

entire Waiahole-Waikane movement. One such person was Pete Thompson, associated with the Ethnic Studies Program at the University of Hawaii and having a history of activism in support of community groups fighting in their own behalf. Thompson was among the first to offer his services to Waiahole-Waikane in 1974. He then left for an extended trip to the Peoples Republic of China but resumed his association with the WWCA upon his return.

There were several organizations of radicals in Hawaii but the most significant in terms of the Waiahole-Waikane struggle was the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP). A number of radicals who had previously been associated with the Revolutionary Union joined together with other activists to form the RCP in the Fall of 1975. Very early in its existence the RCP defined the Waiahole-Waikane struggle as a key element in the emerging class struggle in Hawaii. These political activists offered their services to the WWCA but at no time did they attempt to take over leadership and give directions. Advice was given when requested. Decisions were made by the WWCA steering committee and membership. However the activists carried the decisions out to the larger community and helped to put them into practice. They helped to develop a broad base of class allies throughout Oahu and in some of the outer islands. Those who were workers carried the message of Waiahole-Waikane back to the workplace with them. The unemployed talked to other unemployed workers. Students started an educational campaign on the campus. G.I.'s communicated with other G.I.'s. Gradually an entire set of support organizations was built all across the state, representing persons from a variety of walks of life but mostly workers, students, the unemployed and welfare rights advocates.

In each case it was the members of the political cadre who were able to work out the political analysis and interpretation of the events so that people could see the manner in which their own cause related to that of Waiahole and

Waikane. The residents of Waiahole and Waikane, in turn, were always willing to lend their support to other struggles in exchange for the opportunity to talk about their own situation. A broad-based movement of workers with feelings of class solidarity emerged out of this program. One might also note that the level of political consciousness and sophistication of the WWCA membership grew as the struggle continued. It is impossible to state whether it was the presence of the political cadre or the nature of the struggle which caused this development, but it can probably be traced to the two factors in interaction.

There was a gradual alteration in lines of activities within the WWCA. Initially there was a division of labor with some elements participating in increasingly militant demonstrations while others sought to continue the more respectable attempts to influence key politicians. The former group increasingly formed alliances with the newly emerging support groups and increasingly defined themselves as participating in a common class struggle. This transition became complete with a change in composition of the steering committee early in 1976. Many, but not all, of the small landowners and larger farmers left the steering committee to be replaced by workers who had been part of Up In Arms. With this shift in leadership the WWCA became fully committed to carrying on the fight for Waiahole-Waikane as part of a larger class struggle and the working relationship with the Revolutionary Communist Party was strengthened. Many of the middle class supporters remained as supporters but the new working class allies became of greater overall significance. I shall return to the importance of the distinction between supporters and allies in the concluding portion of this paper.

The battle continued meanwhile. A series of dates were set and reset for the eviction of the Waiahole tenants. An application was made to rezone a portion of Waikane for urban use. The tenants affected by the proposed Waikane changes were granted a delay in their eviction date until all legal appeals were

ruled upon. Proposals and counter proposals were made but January 3, 1976 was eventually set as the date to evict some 86 Waiahole tenants. On January 2 a tent city was set up in Waiahole valley. Tents were erected by student groups (the Revolutionary Student Brigade and Students United for Land and Housing), worker groups (representing pineapple workers, sugar workers, the unemployed and civil service workers), youth groups, G.I.'s and supporters without affiliation. On January 3 the sheriff served writs of possession effective immediately. The writs were accepted but the road leading into the valley was blocked by an arm-linked mass of several hundred people extending from the entrance to the road as far as one could see. It is not surprising that the police did not arrive to enforce the order that day.

By Tuesday, January 4, people began drifting away and the force in tent city became token. Teams were sent out to leaflet and picket throughout the city during rush hours. The public was informed of events and asked to phone public officials and ask their intervention to stop the evictions. Around 11:00 p.m. on January 4 word came to the camp that the police were on their way in force to carry out the eviction order. The tenants, the camp residents and an "on-call reserve force" mobilized and blocked a half-mile stretch of the Kamehameha Highway, preventing all access to the valley. This blockade also stopped traffic on windward Oahu as the highway is the only auto route connecting it with the rest of the island. The blockade lasted for over an hour until trusted police sources gave assurance that no police eviction team would come. On January 6, Mrs. Marks sought a writ of Mandamus which, in effect, would order the Honolulu police to show cause why they had not evicted the tenants and could cite them for contempt if they did not proceed forthwith.

Public pressure forced the governor to intervene and ask Mrs. Marks to withdraw her court action or to, at least, delay it for 24 hours. He set up a meeting



for Friday, January 7, for further discussion. During that meeting Mrs. Marks agreed to delay evictions until March 1 while an attempt was made to work out a final non-violent solution. This left the valley residents with approximately 50 days in which to continue the pressure to force an acceptable solution and to prevent the withering away of support from those who initially believed that the battle was won.

The 50 days were event filled. The State Land Use Commission held hearings on February 9 and 10 on the application to rezone a portion of Waikane for urban use. A large number of Waiahole-Waikane residents, their allies and supporters attended the hearings. Both the State of Hawaii and the City and County of Honolulu testified in opposition to the rezoning request. Rallies and demonstrations were held and new compromises were proposed. Finally on February 26, 1977, Governor Ariyoshi announced that the state would buy 600 acres of Waiahole valley for six million dollars. The state would develop the mountainous terrain at the head of the valley for recreational use and would develop the remainder under a village agricultural scheme. A new residential village would be constructed, land would be developed for agriculture outside the village, long-term leases would be granted, and first priority would be granted to present tenants.

This plan was not a complete victory for the WWCA. The state could not purchase the valley unless Pao and his development corporation failed to exercise their purchase option which expired in mid-November. It was generally assumed that Pao would buy Waiahole if Waikane were rezoned urban but if development proved impossible then the option would be allowed to lapse. Late in July the State Land Use Commission rejected the rezoning request. To date no subsequent action has been taken with regard to the option. The state plan did not include the land on the ocean side of Kamehameha Highway in Waiahole (affecting about 12 families) and left out the nine families threatened with eviction in Waikane.

Efforts are continuing to bring them into the plan also giving them priority standing but it is hoped that the prevention of any development would eliminate that need.

#### Discussion

Thus while they did not get everything they wanted, the WWCA won a major victory. In January 1974 it was clear that the valley residents were powerless and as a consequence would lose their land and be forced to relocate. They would probably have to move to the city as rural land was rapidly becoming non-existent. Yet by 1977 they had sufficient power to coerce the state into buying a valley for six million dollars and committing another large but unspecified sum to its development. They also were able to prevent either valley from being rezoned for urban use. This is a tremendous change in objective levels of power possessed over three years.

It is important that we as sociologists have a theoretical and conceptual scheme which enables us to analyze what happened. This power came from somewhere. It was not created out of thin air. The residents of Waiahole and Waikane valleys did not suddenly gain control of large amounts of Base resources which they did not previously have. The source of the new power has to be located in the social organization which was created and the allegiances which were formed in the course of the struggle. It is precisely this type of phenomena which existing social psychological work on powerlessness and political sociological work on power are incapable of handling. Arthur Field had proposed the concept of "people power" for precisely this purpose but neither he nor anyone else ever developed it.<sup>17</sup>

It is only in the oft maligned area of collective behavior and social movements that even the rudiments of a viable, complete approach to power can be

found. The collective behavior - social movement area provided us with a useful starting point. There is a general recognition that power is a collective attribute. Social movement analysts examine the mobilization of segments of a class, nation, or community which normally lack the ability (are powerless) to force the existing social order to respond to its collective needs. The scholars in this field analyze the techniques through which movements attempt to create power where none existed previously and exert sufficient leverage so as to coerce a desired response from representatives of the established order. At its best, this type of analysis takes place within a framework of concern for the larger process of social change. It is precisely this type of approach, when combined into a larger theoretical framework, that could enable us to make sense out of the Waiahole-Waikane experience.

#### Historical Background

Any understanding of Waiahole-Waikane would have to be historically based.<sup>18</sup> It would have to begin with an understanding of the nature of the Hawaiian land system under the monarchy in which title was vested in the monarch but possession was granted to those who would use it for subsistence without destroying it. When the missionaries came they opened the door for, or in some cases became, traders and planters. They came to believe that successful capitalist exploitation of the land would not be possible without private property in the Western sense. They exerted pressure upon the monarch to create a system of private land ownership and then proceeded to acquire the bulk of all useful land for themselves. Thus the Hawaiians, for the most part, were stripped of their<sup>a</sup> land and proletarianized. However sugar production necessitated far more labor than could be extracted from the Hawaiian people so workers were imported from China, Japan, and the Philippines under contracts which served the planter's interests. Work

was hard, working conditions bad, and worker rewards minimal. Many workers left the plantations and moved to urban areas as soon as possible. Others sought refuge in an agricultural way of life.

Each group, other than the haoles, could understand their own situation in relation to the history of their national group. Each could readily understand that they were exploited by a small group which they usually defined as haoles rather than as capitalists. Thus they tended to develop a sense of national consciousness and to perceive their collective interests in national terms. This was only partially offset by the development of labor unions immediately after World War II. Hawaii had a history of national or racial unions. The ILWU moved in with a radical ideology and program of class unity and class struggle. They were successful in organizing both rural and urban workers into a strong union and in achieving many major advances through united struggle. However, much they were able to develop class consciousness among workers they were never quite able to eliminate national consciousness. There remained a tendency on the part of many people to think in terms of the dualism of nation and class.

Hawaii prior to World War II had a tightly knit, narrow based power structure. Six major corporations controlled all elements of the economy and the polity. The rise of the ILWU after the war challenged their dominance over the economy. The war also stimulated the political consciousness of the Japanese-Americans, especially those who had been active in the military. They came together to form a vital and powerful political force. The ILWU and the Japanese-Americans joined together to build the Democratic Party into a powerful force which eventually usurped political control of the islands from the old oligarchy. The economic dominance of the old elite was further undermined when capitalists from the United States and later Japan began making investments in Hawaii.

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Problems for Waiahole-Waikane

Land remained narrowly concentrated in the hands of the old ruling class but orientations toward land changed. It was now possible to see land as something which could be developed for profit rather than retained as a capital investment and status symbol. Consequently the McCandless heirs considered the possibilities for profitable development of Waiahole and Waikane. The residents of Waiahole and Waikane had no real power base from which to resist this attempt. [The community was multi-national in a state with a high degree of national consciousness.] They were, for the most part, non-haole and saw the current situation as a continuation of past patterns of oppression by haoles.

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A number of factors aided them in overcoming national (racial) differences. First they were fortunate in the outsiders who offered aid. Bob Nakata was a Christian lay person who combined his religion with a variety of class analysis. He was acceptable because he was local in the sense that he was raised on windward Oahu and had gone to school with many of the residents of Waiahole-Waikane. Pete Thompson possessed a class analysis and was acceptable as part Hawaiian with a history of community activism. There also had been previous attempts by rural residents to keep from being evicted by developers which served as useful examples. Several years earlier the residents of Kalama Valley were driven off their land when nationalism caused a breakdown of class unity and destroyed the resistance movement. One of the young women from Waiahole-Waikane had, while a high school student, participated in the Kalama Valley resistance and was aware of the damage which could be caused by narrow nationalism. Thus the combination of having the experience of living and working together as members of a multi-racial community, having had demonstrated the dangers of narrow nationalism, and being blessed by good advice from trusted outside sources, enabled the Waiahole-Waikane residents to unite and build a solid movement despite the possible impedi-

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ments posed by national differences.

#### Waiahole-Waikane Creates Power

The first step toward the development of power came with the self-organization of the community and the formation of the WWCA. This by itself would not have been enough. Even with the community solidly organized and willing to fight, it is unlikely that Waiahole and Waikane could have stood off the political clout of developers or prevented legal evictions. As is often the case the group which was initially activated into positions of leadership was the higher status and economically better off segments of the community. They pursued strategies designed to attract supporters from the co-optable public and to influence actions of state and city agents. Turner's classic analysis of movement strategies does an excellent job of laying out the relation of a movement to the public.<sup>19</sup> However he fails to distinguish between supporters and allies. The WWCA at this stage attracted supporters from that segment of the public which empathized with their problem and were willing to lend aid. This aid was useful but was restricted to that which was legitimate and respectable. In contrast, after the leadership of the WWCA changed to include more workers the entire orientation shifted. The WWCA then sought allies who would unite with the WWCA because they recognized that the struggle of the WWCA and their own struggles were part of a more general one. They united as class allies in a larger struggle against capital. The degree of commitment of allies is much greater than that of supporters. They also can demand a similar commitment in return.

The WWCA did not develop any significant amount of real power during the period of moderate leadership and middle class support. They were able, with the aid of their supporters, to generate sufficient influence to entice government agencies to make desired decisions. However it was generally believed by the

larger public that the landlord and the developer had the law on their side and that they would ultimately win. However, a degree of real power was created once the movement took on a clear class character and the WWCA had developed class allies. The WWCA and its allies were able to coerce the state into purchasing the land and the developers were permanently halted. It was no longer a case of persuasion but one of coercion through confrontation. It was clearly demonstrated that the people united can create power where none existed previously and that this power can be used to bring about some social change no matter how limited.

#### Conclusions

This has been just a brief sketch of the type of theoretical approach that could be used to analyze developments such as Waiahole-Waikane. It requires the use of a concept of power which is defined in objective terms and which is located in social collectivities or classes rather than in individuals. The definition of power used by Alford and Friedland is appropriate for use here providing that it is modified to recognize the dynamic fluid nature of power. It must allow for power to grow, shrink, be created and be destroyed. The approaches to the study of power utilized by political sociologists in community power studies can provide useful information regarding power structures as they exist at any given moment in time but it must be recognized that these are merely stop action views of a dynamic process. This type of research can also provide useful information regarding those vested interests that will attempt to marshall all of their power to resist social change and loss of privilege.

The social psychological approach to powerlessness can be quite useful in analyzing the mobilization of participants and the attraction of allies in the course of movement development. One can gain an understanding of the process of recruitment providing one is careful not to confuse individual perceptions of

power or powerlessness with actual power which is always possessed by collectivities. Research in this area should also attempt to ascertain the relationship between ideological systems, perceptions of power, and recruitment into change-oriented movements. A closely related problem area is the relation between class consciousness, national consciousness, and either potential for developing actual power or subjective perceptions of power.

This paper has not gone very far in developing the requisite theory or in analyzing the single case of Waiahole-Waikane. Neither of these was my primary objective. Nor would either task be possible in a paper of this limited scope. My objective was to clarify a bit more the nature of the concept of power, how it must be defined, and the type of theory into which it must be integrated, before we can meaningfully attempt to determine the social consequences of powerlessness. I believe that I have accomplished this limited objective.



Notes

<sup>1</sup>Melvin Seeman, "On the Meaning of Alienation," American Sociological Review 24 (December, 1959):783-791; Melvin Seeman, "Alienation and Engagement," pp. 467-527 in A. Campbell and P.E. Converse (eds.), The Human Meaning of Social Change (New York: Russell Sage, 1972).

<sup>2</sup>Seeman, "On the Meaning of Alienation," op. cit.; Melvin Seeman, "Alienation Studies," pp. 91-123 in Alex Inkeles (ed.), Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. I (Palo Alto: Annual Reviews, 1975). These two works include good bibliographies including reference to several "state of the field" papers.

<sup>3</sup>Seeman, "On the Meaning of Alienation," op. cit., p. 472.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 476-491.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 507.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ronald N. Lippitt, N. Polansky, and S. Rosen, "The Dynamics of Power," Human Relations 5 (No. 1, 1954):37-64.

<sup>8</sup>David F. Hunt and R.H. Hardt, "The Effect of Upward Bound Programs on the Attitudes, Motivations, and Academic Achievement of Negro Students," Journal of Social Issues 25 (Summer, 1969):117-129.

<sup>9</sup>A good summary of the field, an excellent bibliography and reference to other "state of the field" pieces may be found in Terry Nichols Clark, "Community Power," pp. 271-295 in Alex Inkeles (ed.), Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. I (Palo Alto: Annual Reviews, 1975).

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 274.

<sup>11</sup>For an excellent discussion and fine bibliography of this area see Robert R. Alford and Roger Friedland, "Political Participation and Public Policy," pp. 429-479 in Alex Inkeles (ed.), Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. I (Palo Alto: Annual Reviews, 1975).

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 431-432.

<sup>13</sup>An excellent discussion of the field of collective behavior and social movements and an extensive bibliography including references to numerous texts and other "state of the field" essays may be found in Gary T. Marx and James L. Wood, "Strands of Theory and Research in Collective Behavior," pp. 363-428 in Alex Inkeles (ed.), Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. I (Palo Alto: Annual Reviews, 1975).

<sup>14</sup> Neil J. Smelser, Theory of Collective Behavior (New York: Free Press Glencoe, 1963). This proved to be more of a taxonomic scheme than an explanatory theory.

<sup>15</sup> Jeffery M. Paige, Agrarian Revolution: Social Movements and Export Agriculture in the Underdeveloped World (New York: Free Press, 1975).

<sup>16</sup> This is a very sketchy account of events based upon my own research. Information was gathered through participant observation, interviews with participants, newspaper accounts, propaganda literature and official government documents.

<sup>17</sup> Arthur Field, Urban Power Structures (Cambridge: Shenkman, 1970).

<sup>18</sup> Good overviews of the history of Hawaii for the period covered in this summary may be found in Gavin Daws, Shoal of Time (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1968); Lawrence H. Fuchs, Hawaii Pono. (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961).

<sup>19</sup> Ralph H. Turner, "Determinants of Social Movement Strategies," pp. 145-164 in Tamotsu Shibutani (ed.), Human Nature and Collective Behavior: Papers in Honor of Herbert Blumer (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1970).