

WILLIAM E. ODOM

# The Soviet Volunteers

*Modernization and Bureaucracy in Public  
Mass Organization*



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## **The Soviet Volunteers**



**The Soviet Volunteers:**  
**Modernization and Bureaucracy**  
**in a Public Mass Organization**  
**By William E. Odom**

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*to Anne*



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## **Preface**

This book is about politics in a large voluntary organization. It was written not only for the specialist in Soviet affairs but also for any student of government. It may seem rather specialized, but it is related, nonetheless, to the central concepts and questions in the study of political life. A narrow research focus should not limit the broader relevance of a study if it helps us tie concrete experience to the general vocabulary of politics. Only thus can we improve the analytical value of that vocabulary. Such a viewpoint has guided my analysis.

The entire volume need not be read in order to appreciate single portions. The Introduction presents the analytical perspectives. Part One can be read alone as a policy study or simply as history. Parts Two and Three describe the voluntary organization. Part Four is about organizational politics, but it requires at least some scanning of the preceding parts in order to be understood properly. The same is true of the Conclusion.

Selecting those persons whom I should thank for assisting me in the preparation of this book is not unlike the social scientist's task in identifying "causes" of human events. The more the social scientist reviews the evidence, the more causes he is likely to find. In some respect he must be arbitrary if he is to limit them. So it is also for me in choosing persons who have influenced this book. I choose, therefore, to be arbitrarily restrictive—even if unjustly—in proclaiming my debts.

Brigadier Generals George A. Lincoln and Amos A. Jordan, Jr., professors of the Department of Social Sciences at West Point, allowed me time to begin the study while I was teaching in their department.

Professor John Hazard supervised an earlier version of the study from its inception to its completion as a doctoral dissertation at Columbia University. During this period Professor Joseph A. Rothschild also read and criticized the manuscript.

Professor Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, Director of the Research Institute on Communist Affairs at Columbia University, provided me support and encouragement in carrying the study to completion. The resources of the Institute and its intellectual environment greatly facilitated my work.

Harvey A. Garn, a friend and mentor, will find his critical influence reflected here and there in the text. And my wife, Anne, lent assistance at every stage of the manuscript's preparation as critic, editor, and typist.

In proclaiming my debts I am not distributing responsibility for weaknesses and faults in the book. I alone must answer for them.

## Glossary

<i>aktiv</i>	Those voluntary members of Osoaviakhim who were especially active in programs and were therefore recognized as distinct from the rank and file.
<i>Aviakhim</i>	Society of Friends of Aviation-Chemical Construction.
<i>Chusosnabarm</i>	Extraordinary Deputy Council of Labor and Defense for Supply of the Army. Existed only until 1921.
Corner	A propaganda and literature display.
Dobrokhim	Society for the Friends of Chemistry.
GTO	"Prepared for Labor and Defense"; a status awarded for passing certain military and physical fitness tests.
<i>khozraschet</i>	Cost accounting. A system used in the Soviet economy to enforce financial and material accountability.
KVZ	"Circle for Military Knowledge"; a small study or training group.
<i>kustarnichestvo</i>	Amateurish work; used particularly to describe local initiative in Osoaviakhim that did not conform to standard patterns.
MTS	Machine and Tractor Station.

XIV GLOSSARY

NARKOMFIN	People's Commissariat of Finance.
NKVD	People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs.
ODVF	Society for the Friends of the Air Fleet.
OSO	Society for Assistance to Defense.
Osoaviakhim	Society of Friends of Defense and Aviation-Chemical Construction.
<i>otchet</i>	Production reporting; a term used to describe reports of all Osoaviakhim activity to higher authorities.
Practical organization	Any organization, installation, or other structure used in Osoaviakhim programs and training activities.
Pre-inductee	A young male of draft age engaged in elementary military training required for all youths before being inducted into the regular military forces. Not all pre-inductees were called up, usually only about one in every six.
<i>Revvoensovet</i>	Revolutionary Military Council.
Section	A staff section on an Osoaviakhim council staff.
Sector	A functional line of Osoaviakhim work or training; also used in place of "section" as the label for a staff section or group of staff sections.
<i>subbotniki</i>	Days of labor freely given to the state on holidays.
Training points	Small Osoaviakhim training installations located in factories, schools, villages, and collective farms.
<i>unevoiskovik</i>	A person fulfilling his military training obligation not in the regular forces but in the militia and through

	periodic attendance at summer training assemblies.
VNO	Military Scientific Society.
VNOS	Air Observation, Notification, and Communication Point; part of the passive air defense scheme.
<i>voenkomat</i>	Military commissariat; part of the military department's regional structure under the military districts. It handled a variety of measures among the most important being the annual call up for the Red armed forces and local plans for wartime mobilization.
<i>vseobuch</i>	Universal training; this acronym gained currency in connection with the decree in 1918 that all members of the toiling classes were obligated to receive elementary military training even though they might not actually serve in the Red Army. The bureaucracy created to administer <i>vseobuch</i> also went by that name but was abolished in 1921. Later the term was connected with pre-inductee training, which was universally mandatory from 1925 on.
<i>uchet</i>	Production accounting; a term used to describe all techniques for measuring the results of Osoaviakhim programs and activities. <i>Otchet</i> , production reporting, was based on data from <i>uchet</i> .





## **The Soviet Volunteers**



## Introduction

Founded in 1927, the Society of Friends of Defense and Aviation-Chemical Construction<sup>1</sup>—or “Osoaviakhim,” the acronym by which it was known—became the largest mass voluntary association in the Soviet Union before World War II. This study of Osoaviakhim in its first decade is not simply a discursive historical essay. It is a study of the politics of a mass organization in a modernizing society. It is an inquiry into the realities beneath the rhetoric of slogans and public assertions about the purposes and practices of Soviet mass voluntary societies. It is inspired by several questions. Are such organizations simply a lot of public sound and fury? Or do they have substantive programs? How are programs materially supported? How do their activities fit into the scheme of the political system? Are they truly unique or do they have counterparts in several political systems?

Answers to these questions require that we have a strategy for selecting relevant comparative concepts before launching into the records and evidence bearing on the case. Our basic analytical approach is to look for middle range generalizations about politics and organization, choosing those that are appropriate for the available evidence and that promise insights. For greater methodolog-

<sup>1</sup> *Obshchestva druzei oborony i aviatsionno-khimicheskogo stroitel'stva* is the Russian name. It was broken up in 1948, but three successor organizations were united in 1952 to form DOSAAF, a voluntary society similar to Osoviakhim.

ical specificity, Osoaviakhim is treated as an organization, a social structure, a set of individuals concerting actions for particular goals. The literature on organization theory, therefore, is relevant as a source of conceptual tools. The mass voluntary society is also viewed as an instrumentality for the authoritative allocation of Bolshevik political values. In this connection, Osoaviakhim's general political environment is one of rapid modernization of a traditional society. The literature on political development and modernization, accordingly, provides the second major source of comparative concepts. Although this study treats only a single organization, it is comparative in the sense that it brings general concepts to a particular case. Where they seem to fit the evidence, a comparative perspective is achieved insofar as the concepts have been derived from empirical studies of one or more organizations elsewhere. Where the concepts do not fit the evidence, we have identified either uniqueness or a limitation in a concept's heuristic value.

The study is divided into four parts. Part One examines the context in which the policy decision to establish Osoaviakhim was made and the political process leading to the founding of the organization. The purpose of this part is to discover the organizational goals in all their complexity and ambiguity and to reveal as far as possible the objective and subjective factors from which the political leadership derived the criteria that Osoaviakhim was believed to fulfill. This starting point has not been chosen arbitrarily. Talcott Parsons suggests that, "as a formal reference point, *primacy of orientation to the attainment of a specific goal* is used as the defining characteristic of an organization which distinguishes it from other types of social systems."<sup>2</sup> Basing his conclusions upon this postulate, he contends that "the main point of reference for analyzing the structure of any social system is its value

<sup>2</sup> "Suggestions for a Sociological Approach to the Theory of Organization," *Complex Organizations*, ed. Amitai Etzioni (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 33. Italics are in the original.

pattern." Although "value pattern" is not an easy concept to make operational, surely in the case of a formal organization, it must include first of all the organizational goals. To make sense of the Osoaviakhim structure, Osoaviakhim's goals, expectations, and the policy makers' perceptions of their environment must be illuminated.

Part Two is a descriptive study of Osoaviakhim's structure. Its purpose is to elucidate the formal relations of the organizational parts, to explain the organization's special vocabulary, and to trace important linkages between Osoaviakhim and other public institutions. The reasons for this are perhaps self-evident. Such a description provides a graphic understanding of the complex structure and supplies much of the empirical data on which later analysis is based.

Part Three deals with the formal organizational process. It offers a view of Osoaviakhim as an economy, following Phillip Selznick's suggestion that any organization can be looked at from that standpoint as distinct from considering it as an adaptive social structure.<sup>3</sup> Inputs of resources are distinguished by type and source. The system of planning, assigning tasks, and checking outputs is examined to show how the organization functioned and to discover as much as possible about the analytical rigor characterizing planning and decision-making in Osoaviakhim. Thereby something may be learned of the potential efficiency of the organization in attaining its ends.

Part Four deals with the dynamic dimensions of the organization. Technical, material, and cultural factors that constrained the organization's growth and adaptive behavior are searched out and interrelated. Then the problem of human behavior and exercise of individual choice within Osoaviakhim is addressed. In this connection, the dynamic characteristics are explained as the consequence of organizational politics, the struggle for influence and power within the structure. It will be argued that power was diffused significantly throughout Osoaviakhim and

<sup>3</sup> "The Foundations of the Theory of Organization," *Complex Organizations*, p. 20.

that an understanding of organizational change can be gained only to the extent that the available evidence permits us to discover the rationale with which groups and individuals exercised choice and discretion for their own ends.

*General Characteristics of Mass Voluntary Societies*

Placing a study of Osoaviakhim in a comparative context requires that we clarify what we mean by the terminology "mass voluntary society." Some general characteristics are suggested here as a definition. They may be thought of as defining a subtypology of voluntary associations, but if they are not entirely persuasive in that respect, they still can provide points from which to view such organizations analytically. In other words, they present propositions and concepts used in this study and are perhaps also useful in examining mass voluntary associations in other political systems, particularly in states where modernization is only beginning or not long under way.

a. *Mass membership.* That mass membership is an essential feature of such organizations is evident from the name, but it should not be taken to imply indiscriminate recruiting. In democratic political systems, the discriminator is often thought to be a common interest.<sup>4</sup> There are other criteria, however. An organization may seek to deny affiliation to certain subgroups of a society. Organizational goals will most often inherently lead to selective recruiting, sometimes in a permanent way, ruling against ethnic identity for example. Or they may rule against changeable characteristics such as affiliation with other organizations, social status, lack of a certain skill, or particular attitudinal orientations. In these cases, it may be part of the organization's strategy to draw people away

<sup>4</sup> Arthur Bentley, *The Process of Government* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1908), p. 211. "There is no group without its interest."

from other affiliations, to entice them to accept new attitudes or to acquire new skills.

The question may also arise, how many make a "mass"? For comparative purposes it seems wiser to answer that it is not the number of members but the recruiting aims of the organization that distinguish it as a mass organization. To qualify, it must aspire to recruit great numbers, to increase its size if it is small, to involve large numbers of people in its activities. The qualification can be made more restrictive by insisting that the organizational goals must require large numbers of volunteers as a necessary resource for goal attainment.

To the extent that discriminating criteria for recruitment are restrictive, they obviously work against achievement of mass membership. Friedrich and Brzezinski have pointed out this ambivalent feature in the recruitment practices of totalitarian political parties. The mass membership may dilute the elite quality of the party. The reverse is also true; emphasis on elitism tends to undercut the mass character. Hence a series of expansions and contractions may be observed in the history of such parties.<sup>5</sup> Not all mass voluntary organizations necessarily experience the trauma related to this ambivalence, unless the leadership chooses to pursue one criterion more vigorously than another. The ambivalence can assume a mild form, one criterion being invoked occasionally, but not with excessive fervor, to check the dominance of the other recruitment criterion.

b. *Voluntary membership.* The organization must avow that membership is voluntary although practice may be quite at odds with the avowal. The affirmation of voluntarism is wrapped up in the problem of acquiring power

<sup>5</sup> *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1956), pp. 27-39. It should be noted that communist parties, technically speaking, do not consider themselves as "mass" organizations. Our point remains valid in any case.



for pursuing organizational goals. If "mass" is an index of strength, voluntarism can be equally important as an element of power even in highly authoritarian political systems. The political, economic, and social strength of large numbers is amplified considerably when the members voluntarily share like-mindedness about ends. This amplification of potential organizational power is so important that the formality of voluntarism is believed worth maintaining when it is quite far from reality. The appearance of voluntary membership can give the leadership advantages in dealing with other persons and groups outside the organization. This leverage may be used for various kinds of bargaining, not the least of which is further recruitment on a more genuine voluntary basis. The mass voluntary image can serve to persuade potential recruits to accept the institution in a voluntary way, to accept its values and aims, to commit their personal resources to its purposes.

If the values of a mass voluntary organization were already in widespread acceptance, questions might be raised about the need to give them organizational expression. When an organization does arise to express them, it is generally intended to defend them from encroachment or to spread them even more broadly. It is the avowal of voluntarism, the image of voluntary membership, then, that is truly important as a distinctive feature. The leadership seeks to gain support for values and goals by exploiting man's gregarious and conforming nature. Initially, the organization may be able to gain a start because a small number of persons do share common values and aims. At first it may genuinely embrace voluntary membership, but a frequent purpose for giving an already existing consensus organizational expression is to generate broader support and to make potential bargaining power real. An organization is not to be excluded from this typology, therefore, if it uses tactics in recruiting that are hardly consistent with the ostensible voluntary nature of membership. The only limitation in this respect is the

point where such tactics effectively prevent recruitment by inspiring successful evasion on the part of potential members.<sup>6</sup>

This limit will vary according to the political system in which the organization exists. In an open society where a single party does not monopolize the means of mass communications, coercive tactics must be more subtle; but in an authoritarian system, the possibilities to restrict evasion are much greater, and the limit on coercive measures for recruitment in mass voluntary organizations is less extensive.

c. *Public societies.* For the definition of voluntary associations developed here, private associations are not included. Drawing this line may seem somewhat arbitrary, but a case can be made for such a distinction, particularly in connection with (a) the hierarchical and anti-democratic tendencies in voluntary societies, and (b) their emergence as instruments of public policy in states where modernization has only recently begun. If a typology is developed to include both public and private societies, it can become so general that it serves little purpose in revealing distinctiveness in structure and activity. If only private voluntary associations are chosen, the typology has no comparative utility for the study of organizations in communist political systems. For example, a study by Sherwood D. Fox, which classifies over 5,000 voluntary associa-

<sup>6</sup> James G. March and Herbert A. Simon, *Organizations* (New York: John Wiley and Son, 1958), pp. 83-93. Coercion may be an inducement factor in the March and Simon model of organization equilibrium for participation. Coercion simply shifts the "zero point," that point where inducements and distractions tend to be equal in the member's mind, leaving him indifferent to the question of quitting or remaining associated. See Amitai Etzioni, *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations* (New York: The Free Press, 1961), pp. 4-16, for a relevant discussion of coercive, remunerative, and normative power for organizational control.

tions in the United States, rules out public- or government-sponsored societies.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, public voluntary associations do persist in both pluralistic or democratic systems and communist systems.<sup>8</sup> What is more, a typology of public societies is useful as a comparative category especially because it can be used across the analytical boundary that has come to surround communist political systems.<sup>9</sup> Selznick has indentified the conceptual basis on which such a typology can be developed:<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> "Voluntary Associations and Social Structure," Harvard Ph.D. Dissertation, 1952, p. 8.

<sup>8</sup> For examples of government-sponsored voluntary associations in the United States, see Philip Selznick, *TVA and the Grass Roots* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1953), pp. 219-20. The TVA and the Agricultural Extension Service have sponsored voluntary associations. Fox, *op. cit.*, lists the 4-H Club and the Future Farmers of America as private organizations, which, technically speaking, they are, but they receive professional leadership and installation facilities from several federal and state agencies.

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of the need to perforate if not remove this boundary, see a series of articles in the *Slavic Review*, 26 (March, 1967), 1-28. Especially appropriate are John A. Armstrong's remarks on the advisability of beginning with sub-systems and middle-range theory already elaborated for non-communist systems. Organization theory may prove to be the most fruitful means for breaking the isolation of the study of communist political systems. Herbert A. Simon declares that "today the Communist bureaucracies provide most valuable objects for comparison with Western public—and private—bureaucracies." See his "The Changing Theory and Changing Practice of Public Administration," *Contemporary Political Science*, ed. Ithiel de Sola Pool (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), pp. 86-120. T. H. Rigby, "Crypto-Politics," *Survey*, No. 50 (1964), 192, suggests that analogous problems may be identified in Soviet and Western bureaucratic behavior and used for guiding study. In developing comparative concepts, Fritz Morstein Marx, "Control and Responsibility in Administration: Comparative Aspects," *Papers in Comparative Public Administration*, eds. Ferrel Heady and Sybil L. Stokes (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1962), pp. 145-71, includes

It is useful to think of the cooptation of citizens into an administrative apparatus as a general response made by governments to what has been called "the fundamental democratization" of society. The rise of mass man, or at least the increasing need for governments to take into account and attempt to manipulate the sentiments of the common man, has resulted in the development of new methods of control. These new methods center about attempts to organize the mass, to change an undifferentiated and unreliable citizenry into a structured, readily accessible public. Accessibility for administrative purposes seems to lead rather easily to control for the same or broader pur-

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Soviet administration with cogency. Of course, two basic works on management in Soviet industry are Joseph S. Berliner, *Factory and Manager in the USSR* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), and David Granick, *Management of the Industrial Firm in the USSR* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954). For an interesting comparative study in the context of organizational management, see John A. Armstrong, "Sources of Administrative Behavior: Some Soviet and Western European Comparisons," *The American Political Science Review*, 59 (September, 1965), 643-55. For some comparative concepts see Merle Fainsod, "The Structure of Development Administration," *Development Administration*, ed. Irving Swerdlow (Syracuse University Press, 1963), pp. 1-26. At a very high level of generalization Alfred G. Meyer explains the Soviet political system using the modern Western industrial corporation as a paradigm in *The Soviet Political System: An Interpretation* (New York: Random House, 1965). Jerry Hough, *The Soviet Prefects: Local Party Organs in Industrial Decision-Making* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), provides an important study of local administration and offers suggestions about comparative concepts. For musings on methodology, see Frederic J. Fleron, Jr. (ed.), *Communist Studies and the Social Sciences: Essays on Methodology and Empirical Theory* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1969), and H. Gordon Skilling and Franklyn Griffiths (eds.), *Interest Groups in Soviet Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971).

<sup>10</sup> TVA and the Grass Roots, pp. 219-20.

poses. Consequently, there seems to be a continuum between the voluntary associations set up by the democratic (mass) state—such as committees to boost or control agricultural production—and citizens' associations in the totalitarian (mass) state.

It may be objected, of course, that this formulation implies a cynical reluctance to acknowledge the more humane character of democratic systems in the West, or that it is a retreat to Robert Michels' "iron law of oligarchy."<sup>11</sup> The problem here, however, is not one of deciding which system is preferable but rather of finding common empirical properties of organizations with electoral systems which can become the basis for taxonomies and comparative analysis.<sup>12</sup> But if a typology for voluntary associations is restricted to public, government-sponsored organizations, the entangled debates about democratic initiative and oligarchy can be largely avoided. Political parties, interest groups, unions, churches, and the plethora of private associations are excluded from theoretical consideration. The included associations are by definition in the hands of ruling oligarchies, and they are dedicated to the pursuit

<sup>11</sup> *Political Parties* (New York: The Free Press, 1968).

<sup>12</sup> The issues raised by Michels, Mosca, and others on the incompatibility of democracy and hierarchy are quite real. Kenneth Arrow's formal proof in *Social Choice and Individual Value* (New York: John Wiley and Son, 1951) of the impossibility of starting with individual values and deriving a community preference without an element of dictatorial imposition puts the matter beyond dispute. How to manage that element and minimize it has been the concern of continuing endeavors to state an empirical theory of democracy. Mancur Olson, Jr., in *The Logic of Collective Action* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), offers a pertinent formal treatment of the problems of public goods and collective action. For some review pieces on bureaucracy and individual freedom, see Otto Kirchheimer, "Private Man and Society," *Political Science Quarterly*, 81 (March, 1966), 1-25; Alvin Gouldner, "Metaphysical Pathos and the Theory of Bureaucracy," *Complex Organizations*, pp. 71-82.

of goals selected by the ruling elites. The problem of democracy within organizations does not arise in a way that can render the typology inconsistent. Rather democratic doctrines and participation techniques become features more or less successfully used by both the governmental elites and the membership in deriving a preferred allocation of values.

Another reason for classifying public voluntary societies in a separate category is found in the nature of the modernization process. It has been observed frequently that private voluntary associations are most numerous in Western democratic countries. Tocqueville and James Bryce are commonly credited with noticing this phenomenon, and others have insisted that it is the most characteristic distinction between primitive and modern societies.<sup>13</sup> Many of the stabilizing features of traditional societies—limited communications and mobility, kinship and religious groups, cultural factors, and the low degree of urbanization—seem to impede the proliferation of voluntary associations.<sup>14</sup> The government, among all other institutions in such societies, is in the best position to initiate voluntary associations. When these associations arise in developing states, therefore, it is likely that the initiative will most often come from the government and that they will be used to implement government programs. In these cases, the manipulative advantages of avowed voluntarism can be extremely important to modernizing elites which believe they need all the power they can accumulate for carrying out programs.

d. *The nature of goals and programs.* There are few if any categorical limitations on the goals public voluntary societies may seek, but there are considerations that may

<sup>13</sup> Fox, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-8, 443. Fox follows Robert M. MacIver and others on this point.

<sup>14</sup> For a theory of the failure of voluntary societies to develop in backward societies, see Edward Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1958).

guide our judgment in anticipating the kinds of programs that will most likely be chosen and can aid in explaining why certain aims and programs were selected.

First, by definition, the official aims of a public voluntary society will not be the advancement of a non-ruling faction's interest in the sense of trade union, interest group, or any other specifically private goals. Public voluntary associations may be used for limited and narrow purposes, to be sure, benefiting a special sector of the society or a particular region—The Friends of Children in the USSR and the voluntary associations sponsored by the Tennessee Valley Authority being examples. The aims of these organizations, nevertheless, were chosen by state officials, members of the ruling elite, and ostensibly they were selected with the public interest in mind as those elites perceived it. This analytical distinction does not rule out, however, the cases where factions within the ruling elite effectively control the program choices for the advantage of factional power. Almost always factional disputes lie behind goal and program choices, especially when the choice is not amenable to rigorous analytical methods, or when there is "no one best way" to select and accomplish a task.<sup>15</sup> The point here, the purpose of making the distinction, is to clarify the location or arena where bargaining takes place. In the case of public voluntary programs, the political processes for selecting them remain largely within the government or ruling bureaucracy, giving the ruling elites an upper hand in goal and program selection.

Another consideration for program choice has to do with the functional roles public voluntary societies can play. In other words, in what meaningful way can they be used

<sup>15</sup> See Michel Crozier, *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 154-59, for a discussion of the implications of "no one best way" in policy-making and program execution. March and Simon, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-49, 156, on the same point advance a proposition about the inverse relationship between analysis and bargaining in decision-making.

in a political and social system? Sherwood Fox argues that private voluntary associations in the United States are essentially "compensatory" and "interstitial mechanisms" that aid integration of societal functions.<sup>16</sup> Selznick implies as much about public voluntary associations in his discussion of the need "mass" states find for voluntary associations. Looking at programs and goals from the functionalist point of view is certainly instructive, but the integrative characteristics it puts into relief are by no means the whole story. Dysfunctional programs may be chosen and sustained, even in the face of valid feedback information, because those programs are deemed to increase or secure the policy makers' power.<sup>17</sup> There is no reason why successful integrative programs implemented through public voluntary societies may not frequently coincide with the power interests of the ruling elites. In any case, the compensatory or interstitial character of programs is to be expected since it makes little sense to duplicate programs of non-voluntary institutions. Osoaviakhim programs, nevertheless, did duplicate and overlap in many instances the programs of non-voluntary institutions.

What are examples of public voluntary programs? Welfare services, education, political socialization, and some kinds of economic production are certainly possible. Where welfare alone is the task, the organization is likely to be little more than an apparatus for collecting a voluntary tax

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>17</sup> On this point Fox provides the best sort of evidence against his own thesis by recounting an episode in which he had recently investigated a voluntary association that ostensibly served educational purposes by funding grants for economists to spend time in business firms. He warned the faculty of his college that the organization was actually a front for concealed interests of twenty large business corporations. But he fails to say whether such associations truly perform an integrative function for the social system although his moral indignation leads one to infer that he believed the concealed aims to be dysfunctional for society. *Op. cit.*, pp. 92-94.



(contribution) although it may also redistribute such income by criteria that require considerable organizational complexity.<sup>18</sup>

In cases of education and political socialization, programs can be much more complex, requiring both the member's time and money as well as large cadres and material for training.<sup>19</sup>

Although all kinds of programs have economic ramifications, some may be more directly concerned with production activities. For those that are, programs requiring a low capital-labor ratio seem more probable because mass voluntary societies, if they recruit effectively, are rich in labor. If the program demands capital intensive activity, the use of membership simply as a tax base would be more sensible, as is the case with many private societies devoted to medical research.<sup>20</sup> Labor intensive programs certainly appeal to modernizing elites in developing states where capital is relatively scarce, and thus one would expect to find public voluntary societies with economic production goals more frequently in backward countries where a modernizing elite has consolidated power and is implementing rapid change. But the interchangeability of capital and labor has real limits as the Chinese Communist program of small backyard blast furnaces vividly revealed in the late 1950's.

As a last point, it must be noted that goals and programs are tied up with incentives for voluntary participation, especially where coercive means are limited (either due to cultural attitudes or the lack of administrative ca-

<sup>18</sup> Soviet organizations such as the Peasant Society for Mutual Aid, The Friends of Children, and The International Society for Aid to Revolutionaries are examples of the tax-collecting kinds of societies. Some aspects of the Social Security Program in the United States meet the criteria for this category.

<sup>19</sup> Osoaviakhim in the USSR and the Job Corps, the Youth Corps, and Head Start in the United States are examples.

<sup>20</sup> See David Sills, *The Volunteers* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1957), for a study of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis.

capacity for exercising coercion). It is tempting to suggest that the more attractive the goals appear, the more volunteers are apt to participate in programs for public interests. Mancur Olson, however, makes a strong case for the view that a rational person will not contribute to a group program aimed at achieving a collective benefit.<sup>21</sup> The rational individual will participate only where non-collective benefits can be attained. Voluntary associations, then, must offer some kind of non-collective benefit to the individual to the extent that they depend on volunteers. Shrewd leaders may secure participation without paying for it in every case. Richard M. Merelman suggests an analogy in learning value symbols between teaching rats to run a maze at the flash of a light and teaching political symbols to a public in order to use them in manipulating support for public policies.<sup>22</sup> The reward, or non-collective benefit, for running a maze, is cheese, and the reward that mass voluntary societies can grant for participation ranges from material incentives (salaries for cadres) to social approval and moral approbation. In the case of rats, after several rewarded runs, the light alone is sufficient to stimulate a run. But if occasional reinforcement learning through rewards is not practiced, the light loses its "legitimacy" as a stimulus. The promise of social acclaim can be symbolized in slogans, badges, ceremonies, and praise for individuals in the press. But if the prevalent cultural values are at odds with the symbols, either material rewards or coercion must be used. In developing states, material rewards are scarce while modern value symbols and traditional values are likely to be in serious conflict. Teaching the legitimacy of programs and goals, therefore, will require coercion. If goals can be chosen that minimize the cultural conflict, the leadership has a greater chance for securing participation for a cheap and abundant resource substitute: moral approbation expressed in badges and

<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 2-12.

<sup>22</sup> "Learning and Legitimacy," *The American Political Science Review*, 60 (September, 1966), pp. 548-61.

public attention. Several corollary propositions could be worked out here, but enough has been said to reveal the complex connections between programs and incentives for voluntary participation.

e. *Organizational structure.* Certain structural and administrative characteristics are commonly found in voluntary associations. They do not usually take people away from their normal place of employment and abode except perhaps for short periods. The mass membership is looked upon as a source of support, the major resource input, not a liability or a cost to the organization. Physically the organization is apt to be dispersed, spread out through the entire society, not concentrated in the sense in which a school, a cooperative, or a large enterprise is.

The permanent bureaucratic core of the organization is proportionally small yet also physically dispersed in order to maintain supervision over the areas of the society that provide the mass membership. The technology of communications and the degree of institutional discipline among the cadre become two crucial constraints in the capacity of a mass voluntary organization to pursue its aims. The cultural and skill levels of the cadre are equally important, especially in backward states.

Although there may be democratic rules for the selection of personnel to assume the cadre roles, the bureaucratic leadership does not generally look to the mass membership for guidance in value choices and policy decisions. Recruitment of leaders is by cooptation in fact if not in theory. By its nature, the organization is not governing a group at the group's behest and in terms of goals established by the mass. Rather its purpose is connected with exerting the influence of the center in order to generate resources for the center's ends, for gaining mass acceptance of the center's value allocations. The appearance and style of the hierarchical relations between the cadre center and the mass can vary greatly, but the levers of control and the authority to allocate values are not fully dependent on the mass membership. The most the mass can usually do to exert influence is to deny their resources to the

organization. Such behavior may constrain the center's policy choices and thereby indirectly allow a role for the mass in policy making, but the role remains passive.

Policy and program initiative is effectively a prerogative of the cadre. Because of this feature, mass voluntary organizations are apt to be more significant in polities where the leadership believes that social and economic change can be rapidly wrought through conscious political action. Passive or conservative leadership is most likely to beget apathy in mass voluntary organizations. Spontaneity on the part of the mass membership is hardly able to produce coordinated and coherent organizational programs.<sup>23</sup>

Where and in what kinds of societies are public mass voluntary organizations most likely to be found? Certainly not in those states that Edward Shils classifies as "traditional oligarchies" and "theocratic oligarchies,"<sup>24</sup> that is, not in states where the leadership is not committed to modernization and change. Where political and social mobilization is virtually nil, and not desired, the mass voluntary organizations have little appeal as instruments of public policy. Leaders in developed states may find them useful, but highly differentiated societies, as these states are, tend to have a variety and complexity in institutions that leave less room for the improvised quality of mass voluntary organizational techniques. It is where polities are in transition, where the political leadership is breaking down traditions, building new social patterns, restructuring the productive forces of the society, building new in-

<sup>23</sup> All of the points made here on structure have been noticed frequently by students of politics and organization theory. See especially Philip Selznick, *The Organizational Weapon* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1960), pp. 96, 114-26; James Bryce, *Modern Democracies* (New York: Macmillan, 1921), II, p. 542; Sills, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-20; David B. Truman, *The Governmental Process* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951), pp. 141ff; Michels, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-80.

<sup>24</sup> *Political Development in the New States* (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1966), pp. 75-91.

stitutions, experimenting with organization, seeking to make social strides in mass education in short periods of time, and in possession of relatively abundant labor forces that mass voluntary organizations seem especially appropriate.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Soviet scholars have not ignored taxonomy and theory of the role of mass voluntary associations, especially their contributions to modernization or "construction of communism." See particularly Ts. A. Iampol'skaia, *Obshchestvennye organizatsii v SSSR* (Moscow: 1972). Iampol'skaia's typology shares several points with our own and identifies certain analogies between Soviet "public" organizations and "bourgeois" voluntary associations. See also the volume she edited with A. I. Shchiglik, *Voprosy i teorii obshchestvennykh organizatsii* (Moscow: 1971). She declares, however, that public voluntary organizations have only recently received scholarly attention in the USSR and that their proper legal and sociological classification still needs refinement.

# **Part I**

## **The Origins of Osoaviakhim**