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CONFLICT STRATEGIES RELATED TO ORGANIZATIONAL THEORIES
AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

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This report describes in theoretical terms the relevance of management systems theory to the problem of conflict management. Possibilities for resolving conflict constructively are seen as residing in the use of an interaction-influence system characterized by a participative-group structure.			

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CONFLICT STRATEGIES RELATED TO ORGANIZATIONAL THEORIES
AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS¹

Rensis Likert and David G. Bowers

Human nature, it is said, never changes. This leads some persons to conclude that wars and other forms of violent conflict are inevitable since they believe the urge to fight is part of human nature.

If we define human nature as that which man brings into the world with him when he is born, i.e., his inherited capabilities and motives, human nature has changed little, if at all, in tens of thousands of years. But there has been a tremendous change in the past thousands of years in what man has learned and has passed on from one generation to another. Moreover, these changes continue as experience and insights enrich learning.

Mankind's ability to organize human effort, activity, and cooperation has undergone a tremendous development in recorded history. Ernest Dale describes one significant step:

"Delegation is a major problem which goes back to Biblical days. The lack of it was the major cause of Moses' failure to reach the Promised Land in his Exodus from Egypt. Having wandered for 40 years in the desert, he found he had covered only half the distance between Egypt and Palestine. He consulted his father-in-law, Jethro, and when the latter saw that Moses 'stood by the people from morning unto evening,' he said:

'The thing that thou doest is too heavy for thee...
thou and thy people will surely wear away.'

"Moses, as leader, had all the departments reporting to him.

Figure 1 shows the structure.

"Organization counsel, in the person of Jethro, prescribed the remedy. Figure 2, straight from the Bible, shows the new organization he devised.....Moses no longer needed to settle all the details himself; he was provided with staff assistance. This is the earliest example of a general staff.

"What were the results? The organization plan was adopted at Elath, about half way from the Red Sea to the Promised Land. It took almost 40 years to accomplish the first half of the journey before the organization plan was introduced; only a few months for the last half."²

Progress in Recent Centuries

For a long period of human history the use of naked power by individuals or small social units was common. Whenever a disagreement or conflict occurred and one of the parties had sufficient power to settle it in the way he wished, and had no qualms about using this power ruthlessly, he forced the solution he desired on the other party. The defeated party may have been resentful, bitter, and motivated to strike back whenever the opportunity occurred, but for the moment the conflict was suppressed or "settled." To resolve a conflict in this manner, the victor had to have sufficient power to win, his values had to be such that he had no scruples in using this power, and he had to feel that he could safely live with such consequences as the continued or increased hostility and bitterness which his behavior created in the defeated party.

Mankind appears to have found power used in this kind of ruthless and unchallengeable way unbearable. This power had a highly corrosive effect on those who possessed it and their behavior became intolerable.

CHART No. 1

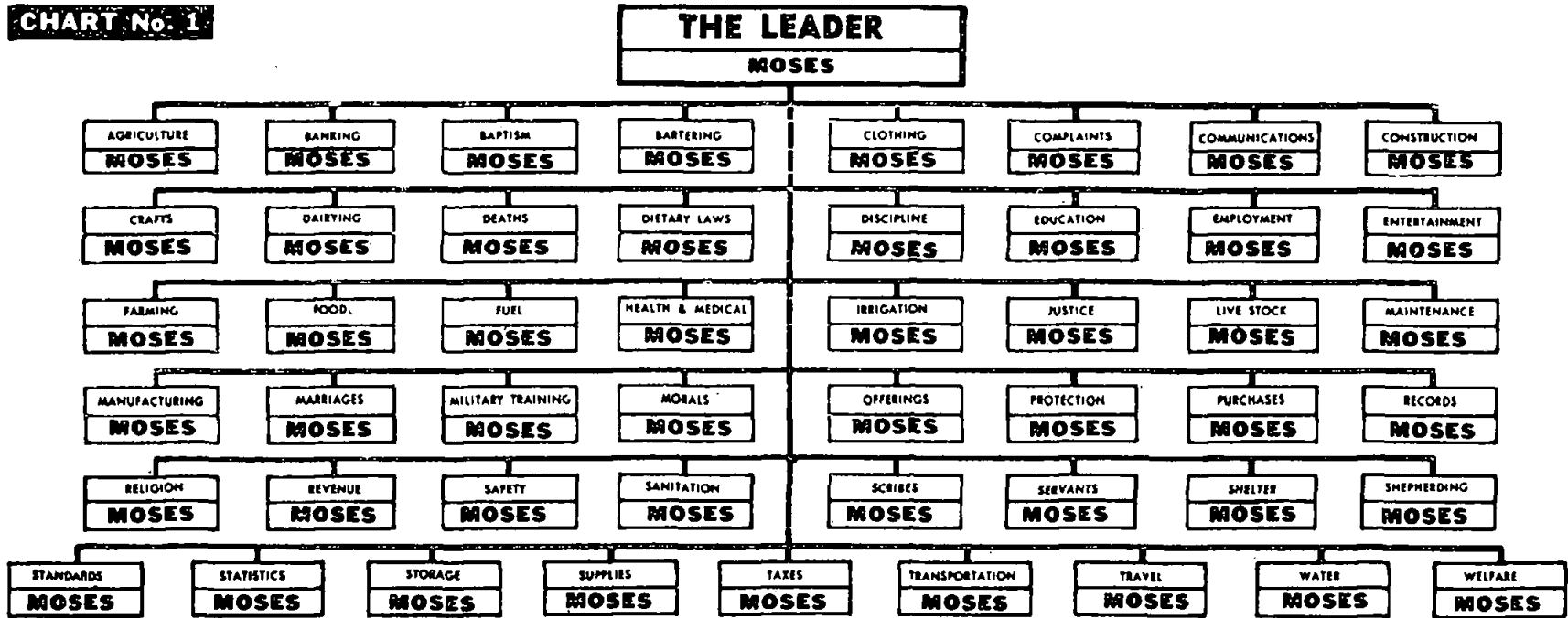


Fig. 1. (After Ernest Dale, Delegation, Enterprise, April 1957, 36-37. By permission of author.)

CHART No. 2

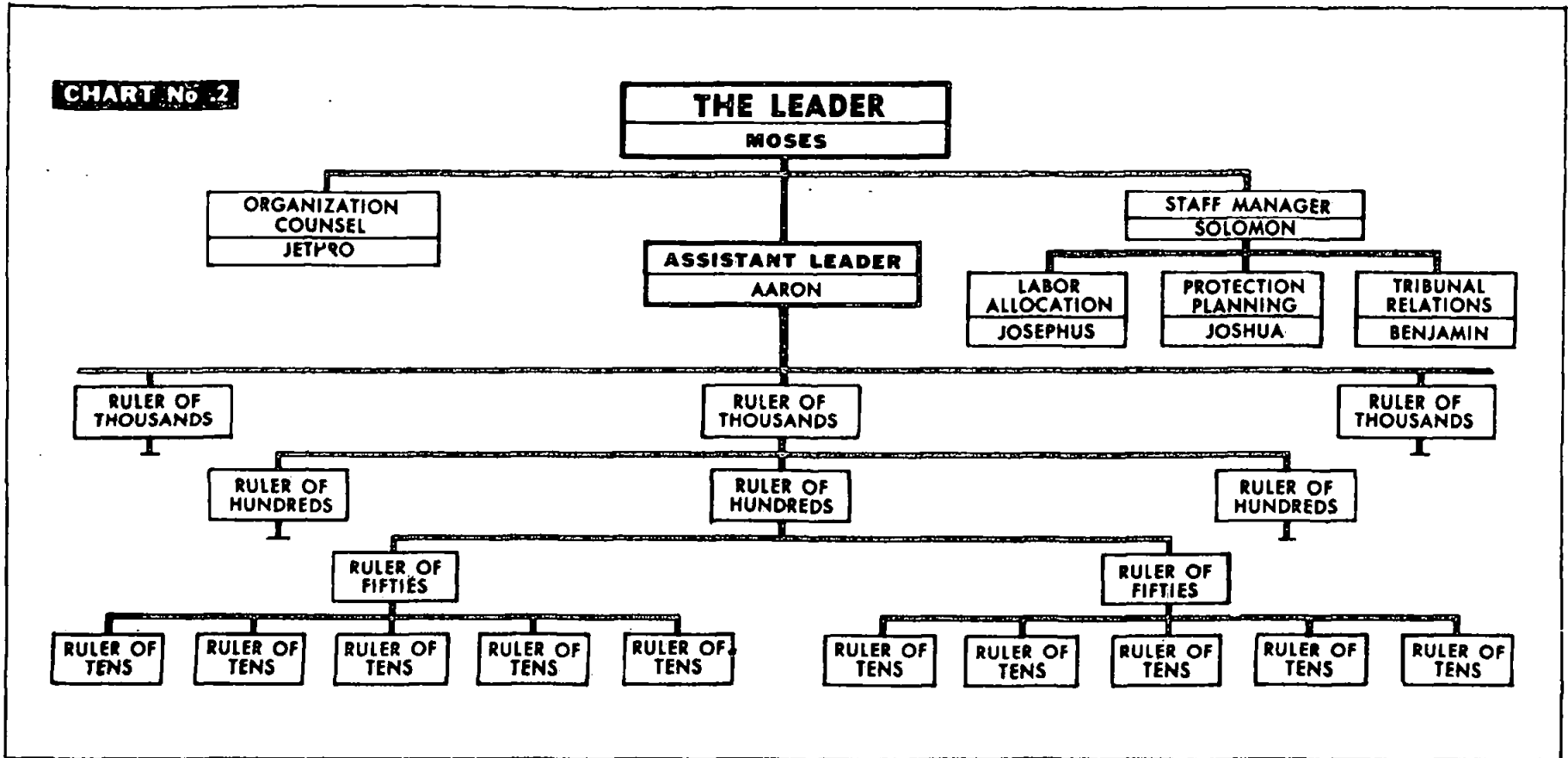


Fig. 2. (After Ernest Dale, Delegation, Enterprise, April 1957, 36-37. By permission of author.)

To prevent this, mankind, over many centuries, has sought, fought for, and largely won the establishment of checks and balances as a safeguard against the abusive use of power in political, industrial, and governmental systems. Related major social inventions such as majority rule and parliamentary procedures also were created in mankind's struggle for freedom and justice. The history of the development of political systems and their administration and of industrial enterprises reflect this gradual, painful change from unchecked power to organizations and systems which rely on such social inventions as checks and balances, majority rule, and parliamentary procedures.

The invention of checks and balances, majority rule, and parliamentary procedures represented great human progress. Gaining the acceptance of each was a major step forward in mankind's social evolution. There is need, however, for further social evolution since checks and balances, majority rule, parliamentary procedures employing Roberts' Rules of Order, and the advocacy concepts of the law are all based on the win-lose approach to resolving conflicts. This approach does not result in all parties being pleased by the outcome and prepared to live by it. Because one gains at the others' expense, hostility continues and may become even more intense after the apparent resolution of the dispute. Since the win-lose approach is seriously inadequate for managing conflict, any system--political, industrial, or other--based on it is equally inadequate and needs to be revised or replaced by more effective ways. The evidence is widespread in today's society of the need for further social evolution and for the creation of new social inventions which can cope much more constructively with the existing serious and numerous conflicts.

Progress Usually Starts In One Area of Human Activity

Mankind's progress over the centuries has not occurred at a uniform rate nor in a uniform manner. Improvement in such different areas as (a) political, legal and governmental activities; (b) business and commercial activities; and (c) military activities typically has not occurred simultaneously, equally, or in a parallel fashion. Sometimes the progress has occurred first in one area of activity. At another time and in a different society, it has occurred in one of the other areas.

Examples of each come readily to mind. Rome represented a great step forward in man's capacity to organize his military activity as well as to rule through governors whose operations were coordinated but decentralized. The French and American revolutions and the political thinking of that period was an era of important progress in political life. The principles of Adam Smith and the Industrial Revolution and much later the American corporation were major developments in mankind's commercial and business activities.

In every society, however, there seems to be a general trend toward establishing and maintaining a basic consistency in values, principles, and procedures among all of its different areas of activities--political, legal, governmental, educational, business, and military. When any one area of activity, for whatever reason, develops a significantly better mode of operation, this improvement and the underlying concepts and philosophy upon which it is based is generalized sooner or later and applied to all of the other activities of that society. This may require a considerable span of years, but, within a society, this trend among areas of activity toward an internal consistency appears to occur sooner or later.

The Nature of a Society Is Reflected In Its Management of Conflict

This general trend toward a consistent pattern means, of course, that the strategies and principles used by a society and all of its organizations for dealing with disagreements and conflict reflect the basic values and philosophy of that society. A primitive society uses primitive procedures for coping with differences and conflict; a feudal society employs feudal concepts and principles. A modern, industrialized nation's approach to the management of disagreements and conflict reflects its basic philosophy, values, and social system as do all of the other principles and procedures employed by organizations within that society.

This same consistency is found also within large organizations. All of the component activities within an organization, such as its leadership, decision-making, communication, motivation, and control tend to be consistent, one with the other, as well as to reflect the values and organizational concepts of the society of which it is a part. A large number of organizational studies of leadership, management, and organizational performance demonstrate that organizations in all of their operating characteristics, including their customary procedures for resolving disagreements and conflicts, display orderly and internally consistent patterns.³

Since the management of conflict is a major function of every organization, all aspects of the manner in which conflict is handled tend to be consistent with the organization's basic management philosophy, principles, and interaction processes. This applies to conflicts within the organization and to conflicts between it and other organizations. Progress by an organization in developing and using more effective organizational

theory and systems will lead, consequently, to improvement in its handling of conflict since organizations tend to maintain internally consistent procedures.

Quantitative Research Accelerates Development of Improved Social Systems

Social science research is accelerating vastly the social evolution of appreciably more effective but more complex organizational systems. This research using quantitative methods was started about three decades ago shortly after the basic methodology required for it became available (R. Likert and J. M. Willits, Morale and Agency Management, 1940). It is substituting rigorous quantitative measurement for crude judgment and trial and error. Since 1945 the volume of this research on leadership, management, organizational performance, and organizational theory has increased greatly.

The bulk of the research has been done by universities and most of it has been conducted in business organizations because of the precise measurements of performance which can be obtained in many business enterprises. Other studies, however, have been undertaken in governmental agencies, hospitals, and other non-business organizations.

Probably the most extensive and sustained research on organizational systems and theory since 1945 has been done by The University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. The central objective of this research has been to discover more effective ways for a human organization to define and accomplish its goals efficiently. This has been basic research to discover more effective ways of organizing and operating a human enterprise or institution.

The Institute for Social Research's studies show that, on the average, in widely different industries and for widely different kinds of work, the

same basic principles for managing human activity are used by the managers who achieve the highest production, lowest cost, and most financially successful operations. these principles differ significantly from those used by those managers who achieve below average productivity, costs, and earnings.

Although the principles used by the highest producing managers are essentially the same from industry to industry or for different kinds of work, the specific methods for applying them usually differ markedly from situation to situation. These principles are applied in what might well be called a culturally relative manner. Able managers use methods for applying the basic principles which are appropriate for that particular industry, job, and personnel, and which are consistent with the traditions of the individual firm.

A General Theory Based on Principles of the Best Managers

The basic principles used by the highest producing managers have been integrated into a general organizational theory. A brief description of this theory follows:

The human organization of the firm is made up of interlocking work groups with a high degree of group loyalty among the members and favorable attitudes and trust among peers, superiors, and subordinates. Sensitivity to others and relatively high levels of skill in personal interaction, group problem solving, and other group functions also are present. These skills permit effective participation in decisions on common problems. Participation is used, for example, to establish organizational objectives which are a satisfactory integration of the needs and desires of all members of the

organization and of persons functionally related to it. Members of the organization are highly motivated to achieve the organization's goals. High levels of reciprocal influence occur, and high levels of total coordinated influence are achieved in the organization. Communication is efficient and effective. There is a flow from one part of the organization to another of all the relevant information important for each decision and action. The leadership in the organization has developed a highly effective social system for interaction, problem solving, mutual influence, and organizational achievement. This leadership is also technically competent and holds high performance goals.

This organizational theory which is based upon the principles used by the highest producing managers and which makes full use of cumulative cooperative motivational forces has been labelled "System 4" for ready reference.

In comparison with more traditional organizational theories and systems of organizing human interactions and activities, System 4 is a more highly developed and complex system and represents further social evolution. It requires those using it to learn more complex leadership and interaction skills. As might be expected, however, it displays all of the characteristics of a more effective form of organizing human interaction and efforts. A rapidly growing body of research findings shows that it is appreciably more effective in enabling an organization to decide upon its objectives and to accomplish them efficiently, e.g., S. Seashore and D. Bowers, The Durability of Organizational Change, 1970; D. Bowers, Applying Modern Management Principles to Sales Organizations, 1963;

D. Bowers and S. Seashore, "Predicting organizational effectiveness with a four-factor theory of leadership," 1966; R. Guest, Organizational Change, 1962; R. Likert, "The relationship between management behavior and social structure--improving human performance: better theory, more accurate accounting," 1969; R. Likert, The Human Organization: Its Management and Value, 1967; A. J. Marrow, D. Bowers, and S. Seashore, Management by Participation: Creating a Climate for Personal and Organizational Development, 1967; and K. H. Roberts, R. E. Miles and L. V. Blankenship, "Organizational leadership, satisfaction, and productivity: a comparative analysis," 1968. When an organization shifts to System 4 from a traditional organizational theory, performance improves, costs are reduced, and improvement occurs in the satisfaction and health of the members of the organization, e.g., L. Coch and J. R. P. French, Jr., "Overcoming resistance to change," 1948, and Marrow, Seashore, and Bowers (above).

Recent results reveal that the greater effectiveness of System 4 in comparison with more traditional organizational theories is much more clearly demonstrated when trends over time in productivity, costs, earnings, and other end-result variables are examined rather than measuring all variables simultaneously (R. Likert and D. Bowers, "Organizational theory and human resource accounting," 1969).

A small but growing body of research findings supports the view that in every kind of organization, a shift to System 4 improves significantly the capacity of the organization to achieve its goals successfully. The System 4 theory, moreover, provides more effective processes than traditional organizational theories for handling successfully all of the different kinds of conflicts which arise in organizations.

Human Organizations Can Be Described Quantitatively

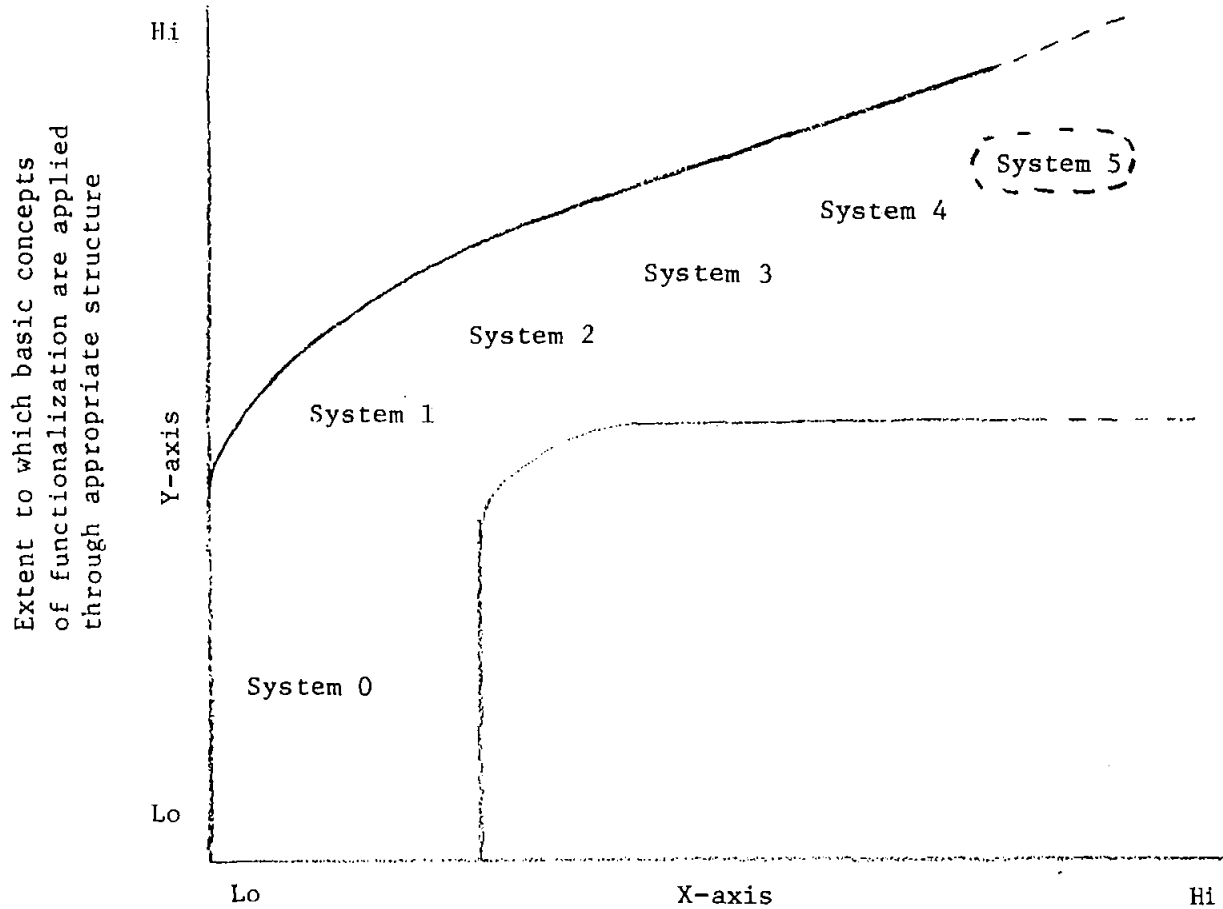
The extensive research over the past quarter of a century which has provided the findings from which the System 4 theory was derived also has yielded the methodology for measuring any organizational system. Any management or organizational system, consequently, can be measured and described in terms of well-defined variables. Moreover, the scores of an organization on these variables can be related to measurements of its performance, its success in achieving its goals, and its capacity to resolve conflicts constructively.

The methodology for measuring the management system of any organization employs an orthogonal framework for two of its major dimensions. This framework can be applied to any organization in an industrialized or moderately industrialized nation. It has been used successfully for this purpose in such areas of the world as the United States, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Asia, and Latin America.

Employing the customary x and y axes, organizations are arrayed on the y axis according to the degree to which they employ the elementary concepts of functionalization. Organizations at the lower end of this axis are relatively amorphous masses. There is little differentiation in function, an excessive span of control, considerable confusion about each person's role, and, in extreme cases, chaos and anarchy. These organizations, as shown in Figure 3, are viewed as using System 0 (zero).

The x, or horizontal axis, is used to reflect the basic motivational forces which the organization seeks to employ, the manner in which they are used, and the extent to which they are cumulative and reinforcing.

In essence, this axis reflects the degree to which the basic human motive sources are employed by the organization in a socially evolved rather than



Extent to which major innate motive sources are used in ways that reinforce rather than conflict with one another

Figure 3

Schematic Location of Systems 0 to 4
In Relation to Motivational Forces Used

in a primitive manner. In a modern, highly industrialized nation, the more socially evolved management systems, i.e., those more toward the System 4 end of the continuum in Table 1, achieve appreciably higher motivational forces focused on accomplishing the organization's goals than do the less evolved, more primitive systems, i.e., those toward System 1.

The items in Table 1 indicate the nature of the motive sources which different management systems use and the resulting motivational forces and consequences. At the System 1, or left, end of the continuum, the motivational forces rely on punitive treatment of members of the organization. At the right end, labelled System 4, the motivational forces are based on supportive treatment. Punitive treatment yields hostile attitudes and restriction of production. Supportive treatment yields favorable attitudes and cooperative, responsible behavior which seeks to accomplish the organization's goals.

The Jewish nation prior to the time that Moses, using Jethro's advice, reorganized it, would be classified, of course, as a System 0 organization. It would fall at the lower end of the y axis (see Figure 3).

After the reorganization, it would fall much higher on the y axis, but since Moses and his nation relied heavily upon fear and punishment as major motive sources, his organization would have fallen well over to the left end of the x axis, i.e., toward System 1. The punitive character of the Mosaic Law reflects this orientation.

The operating characteristics of the different management systems are revealed in greater detail by the items in Table 2. As will be observed, the range along the x axis in Table 2 varies from the left end of System 1 to the right end of System 4. Each organizational variable in the table

Table 1*

MOTIVATIONAL FORCES OF DIFFERENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

	System 1	System 2	System 3	System 4
1. Underlying motives tapped	Physical security, economic security, and some use of the desire for status	Economic and occasionally ego motives, e.g., the desire for status	Economic, ego, and other major motives, e.g., desire for new experience	Full use of economic ego (e.g., desire for a sense of personal worth or importance) and other major motives, as, for example, motivational forces arising from group processes
2. Manner in which motives are used	Fear, threats, punishment and occasional rewards	Rewards and some actual or potential punishment	Rewards, occasional punishment and some involvement	Economic rewards based on compensation system developed through participation. Group participation and involvement in setting goals, improving methods, appraising progress toward goals, etc.

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Table 1 (cont'd)

	System 1	System 2	System 3	System 4
3. Kinds of attitudes developed toward organization and its goals	Attitudes usually are hostile and counter to organization's goals	Attitudes are sometimes hostile and counter to organization's goals and are sometimes favorable to the organization's goals and support the behavior necessary to achieve them	Attitudes may be hostile but more often are favorable and support behavior implementing organization's goals	Attitudes generally are strongly favorable and provide powerful stimulation to behavior implementing organization's goals
4. Extent to which motivational forces conflict with or reinforce one another	Marked conflict of forces substantially reducing those motivational forces leading to behavior in support of the organization's goals	Conflict often exists; occasionally forces will reinforce each other, at least partially	Some conflict, but often motivational forces will reinforce each other	Motivational forces generally reinforce each other in a substantial and cumulative manner

displays this same range. Under each system heading, there is a brief statement describing that system for that particular variable.

An examination of Table 2 will reveal that any organization which has sufficient functionalization and corresponding structure to fall within the System 1 to System 4 band can be categorized readily on that continuum. In a modern nation, the overwhelming majority of organizations in business, government, education, and elsewhere will be found, of course, to have sufficient functionalization and structure to fall somewhere along the System 1 to System 4 continuum.

In Figure 3, System 5 is shown in a dotted ellipse. This is intended to suggest that social science research will help evolve in the next few decades an even more effective, complex, and socially evolved management and social system. Some experiments already are providing a glimmering of what this system may be like.

Relation of Interaction-Influence Networks to Conflict Management

The profile of an organization obtained by using Tables 1 and 2 is a quantitative description of that organization's interaction-influence network and the manner in which it functions. The interaction-influence network of an organization is concerned with its structure and with the character of all such processes within the organization as those dealing with leadership, communication, motivation, control, decision-making, coordination, goal-setting, evaluation, and conflict management.

One of the essential functions of the interaction-influence network of an organization is coping with conflict wherever it may occur either within the organization or between it and others. The manner in which an organization copes with conflict is consistent with the operating characteristics of its interaction-influence network and the management system

Table 2*

PROFILE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Organizational Variable	System 1	System 2	System 3	System 4
1. To what extent do superiors have confidence and trust in <u>subordinates</u> ?	Have very little confidence and trust in subordinates	Have some confidence and trust, such as master has in servant	Quite a bit of confidence and trust	A great deal of confidence and trust
2. To what extent do superiors behave so that subordinates feel free to discuss important things about their jobs with their immediate superior?	Subordinates do not feel at all free to discuss things about the job with their superior	Subordinates do not feel very free to discuss things about the job with their superior; do it guardedly	Subordinates feel rather free to discuss things about the job with their superior but may be somewhat cautious	Subordinates feel very free to discuss things about the job with their superior and do so candidly

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Table 2 (cont'd)

	System 1	System 2	System 3	System 4
3. How much responsibility is felt by each member of the organization for achieving organization's goals?	High levels of management feel responsibility; lower levels feel less; rank and file feel little and often welcome opportunity to defeat organization's goals	Managerial personnel usually feel responsibility; rank and file usually feel relatively little responsibility for achieving organization's goals	Substantial proportion of personnel, especially at higher levels, feel responsibility and generally behave in ways to achieve organization's goals	Personnel at all levels feel responsibility for organization's goals and behave in ways to implement them
4. To what extent do superiors willingly share information with subordinates?	Provide minimum of information	Give subordinates only information superiors feel they need	Give information needed and answer most questions	Seek to give subordinates all relevant information and all information they want
5. Are there forces leading to accurate or distorted upward information?	Powerful forces to distort information and deceive superiors	Many forces to distort; also forces for honest communication	Occasional forces to distort along with many forces to communicate accurately	Virtually no forces to distort and powerful forces to communicate accurately

Table 2 (cont'd)

	System 1	System 2	System 3	System 4
6. How much cooperative teamwork is present to achieve organization's goals?	Practically none	Slight amount	A moderate amount	Very substantial amount throughout the organization
7. To what extent are subordinates involved in decisions related to their work?	Not at all	Practically never involved in decisions; occasionally consulted	Usually are consulted but ordinarily not involved in the decision-making	Are almost always involved in decisions related to their work
8. To what extent is there an informal organization present and supporting or opposing goals of formal organization?	Informal organization present and opposing goals of formal organization	Informal organization usually present and partially resisting goals	Informal organization may be present and may either support or partially resist goals of formal organization	Informal and formal organization are one and the same; hence all social forces support efforts to achieve organization's goals

TABLE 3*

CHARACTERISTIC PATTERNS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

	System 1	System 2	System 3	System 4
1. How open, candid, and unguarded is the communication and interaction between the conflicting parties?	Extremely guarded	Quite guarded	Some guarded; some candid	Open, unguarded and candid
2. To what extent do the conflicting parties seek to deceive or to inform the other correctly?	Parties try hard to deceive	Parties often try to deceive	Sometimes try to deceive; sometimes try to inform correctly	Strive to inform correctly
3. To what extent are efforts made to build or restrict channels of communication, interaction, and influence between conflicting parties?	Extensive efforts to restrict except through top leaders	Some efforts to restrict; little interest in building	Sporadic efforts to build, especially at top levels of organization(s)	Extensive efforts to build at all levels of organization(s)
4. What methods of resolving conflicts are used?	Suppression	Some suppression; win-lose confrontation and compromise	Win-lose confrontation, negotiation, and bargaining	Creative problem-solving using consensus

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TABLE 3 (cont'd)

	System 1	System 2	System 3	System 4
5. To what extent is each conflicting party striving to gain power <u>over</u> others or seek mutually satisfactory solutions <u>with</u> others?	Strives ruthlessly for power over others	Strives primarily for power over others	Seeks some mutually satisfactory solutions but still strives for power over others	Seeks mutually satisfactory solutions through joint efforts with others
6. How well are the solutions accepted and implemented?	Strong covert resistance except by victor	Some overt acceptance; appreciable covert resistance	Over acceptance; some covert resistance	Overt and covert acceptance; full implementation sought

upon which its interaction-influence network is based. Table 3 presents many of the variables involved in a conflict situation and describes for each variable the characteristic mode of dealing with it in organizations using different interaction-influence networks ranging from those based on System 1 to those based on System 4.

Table 3 was built in the same manner as was the original version of Tables 1 and 2 which, in a longer form, was first published as Table 14-1 in New Patterns of Management (R. Likert, 1961). These tables were created by examining, in a large number of studies, the pattern of relationships among the kinds of items included in the tables and also the relationship of these items to such performance variables as productivity, costs, and earnings. Based on the general pattern observed, the specific wording for each item was prepared for each of the different management systems. Table 3 is, essentially, a detailed elaboration of the conflict portion of Tables 1, 2, and other longer tables such as Appendix II in The Human Organization. It presents in considerable detail an array of items dealing with conflict.

Conflict Managed Best In Most Highly Developed Social System

There is an orderly progression in the development of social or organizational systems from System 0 to System 4. To date, System 4 is the most socially mature and developed form of human interaction and provides the most highly developed and effective means of managing conflict. System 0 is, of course, the most primitive. Without doubt this development over time will continue, and as suggested previously, an even more sophisticated, complex, and effective system will emerge gradually in the form of System 5 and provide even better resources for handling conflict constructively.

Each of these systems and its corresponding interaction-influence network, moreover, has its own characteristic way of handling conflict. This was made evident by the comparison suggested above, of Tables 1, 2, and 3.

These different patterns of managing conflict illustrate the major propositions of this paper:

1. Every conflict, other than those internal to a particular individual, involves an interaction among persons, groups, organizations, or larger entities and occurs through an interaction-influence network.
2. The extent to which a conflict is likely to be resolved constructively depends directly upon the effectiveness of the interaction-influence network used during the conflict.
3. The effectiveness of an interaction-influence network depends upon its social maturity as measured by the extent to which it approaches System 4.
4. The nearer an interaction-influence network is to System 4, the greater is the probability that the conflict will be resolved constructively.
5. To function well, a completely new interaction-influence network has to shake down into a well-knit, smoothly running entity. Cooperative working relationships need to be established.
6. Effective, synergistic interaction-influence networks based on System 4 can be created and can be used in every conflict situation by those who wish to have the conflict resolved more constructively and successfully.

- a. The use of System 4 interaction-influence networks requires an understanding of System 4 principles and skills in applying them effectively.
- b. In most situations, e.g., universities, race relations, union-management, and international, a period of time is required to build an effective, synergistic System 4 interaction-influence network before the full potential of the System 4 approach can be used to manage a difficult, emotionally laden conflict. For this reason, it is desirable, insofar as possible, to build a System 4 interaction-influence network and have it in an effective operating condition before a major conflict erupts.

Obsolete Social Systems Used In Attempts To Resolve Conflict

Some feeling of the potential for improvement in the management of conflict through the use of more effective interaction-influence networks based on System 4 can be obtained by answering Table 3 to show how a particular conflict is being handled now and answered a second time to show how you would like it to be. Do this by selecting any major conflict you wish and answering Table 3 with an n on each line to show how you feel the conflict is being dealt with now. After completing Table 3 in this manner, answer it again with a w on each line to show how you would like it to be managed. Draw a line connecting all of the n's and another line connecting all of the w's. You are very likely to find your n profile much to the left of your w profile. If this is the case, the implication for changes to improve the management of the conflict is clear.

This use of Table 3 in a conflict situation reveals inadequacies which may be present both in the structure of the interaction-influence

network, e.g., in the adequacy of the communication and problem-solving channels, and in its operation. When inadequacies become evident in the existing interaction-influence network, substantial improvement can be made in the management of the conflict by strengthening the interaction-influence network at the points of revealed weakness.

Effective Interaction-Influence Networks Absent in Red China-United States Relationships

The interaction-influence network used by the United States and Red China to cope with their differences is so primitive and inadequate that it is surprising the conflict has not worsened. News such as the following extracts from an AP dispatch from Warsaw, Poland, dated January 8, 1970, describe the present situation:

"WARSAW, Poland (AP) -- U.S. Ambassador Walter J. Stoessel, Jr. and Lei Yang charge d'affaires at the Communist Chinese Embassy, conversed over tea for two hours at the American Embassy here today, but the session was not classified officially as a formal meeting.

* * * *

"There was immediate speculation that the conversation may have centered around a date for the resumption of full-scale Chinese-American ambassadorial talks, which have been held in Warsaw since 1958 but were canceled by the Peking government in the last two years.

"The last session--the 134th--was held exactly two years ago.

"The United States and Red China do not recognize each other diplomatically.

"Officials in Washington indicated a few days ago that the United States was ready to resume the talks. Asked by a newsman, the

U.S. spokesman said today's meeting was not the 135th.

"But it was the third contact between Stoessel and Yang since last Dec. 3 when the American sought out the Chinese diplomat at a Yugoslav reception and apparently suggested a resumption of talks.

"The two met again Dec. 11 at the Chinese Embassy. The subject matter of these contacts was never disclosed."

If one scores the existing relationships between the United States and Communist China using Table 3, many of the items yield a System 1 score. Several other items which deal with the adequacy of the interaction-influence network between the United States and Red China make one realize that a System 0 score is most appropriate because of the virtual absence both of this interaction structure and of efforts to build it.

Black-White Relationships Lack Effective Interaction-Influence Networks

A picture almost as dismal as the United States-Red China interaction-influence network emerges if black-white relationships in major metropolitan areas are scored. In the cities where major riots have occurred, such as Los Angeles (Watts), Cleveland (Hough), Newark, and Detroit, there was a huge interaction-influence void between the white and black communities and between the more affluent and the poverty-stricken sectors of these urban areas. Even today one is impressed, unfortunately, more by the gaps in the interaction-influence network of our big cities than in its strength. With regard to black-white relationships, this applies to both the gap between the black and white communities and the many gaps in the interaction-influence network within each of these heterogeneous sectors of urban life. Systems 0, 1, and occasionally System 2 appear to be much more characteristic of the pattern of black-white relationships than System 4.

This conclusion is equally true of the pattern of relationships between the affluent and the poverty-stricken in our urban areas.

Large Universities Lack Effective Interaction-Influence Networks

A similar picture emerges if we analyze, with the aid of Table 3, the interaction-influence networks of our large universities and especially those where disruptive or destructive student riots or sit-ins have occurred, often with some faculty support. The scores on Table 3 reveal that the formal interaction network between each of the three major sectors of the university--students, faculty, and administration--is seriously deficient. None of our large universities appears to have an interaction-influence network embracing all parts of the university through which efficient communication and problem-solving can occur. Moreover, once decisions are reached, the interaction-influence networks of these universities do not create the levels of motivation and felt responsibility among all, or virtually all, students, faculty, and administrators to assure that the decisions will be effectively implemented. The present interaction-influence networks of our large universities are as inadequate for creating widespread felt responsibility as they are in their communication capabilities. There are serious communication and responsibility gaps.

The kinds of conflicts which we have just examined using Table 3 give painful evidence that the present management of some of our most serious conflicts relies upon obsolete models of social systems and interaction-influence networks. The present interaction-influence networks are extremely inadequate and reflect very primitive forms of social systems. There is, obviously, an opportunity for improving the management of these conflicts substantially. If more effective interaction-influence

networks were used based on more socially evolved social systems such as System 4, the improvement would be great.

Substituting a System 4 interaction-influence network for a System 1 or System 2, however, is not done easily, especially in complex conflict situations. Fortunately, findings from current research on the dynamics of changing attitudes and behavior are directly applicable. This is especially true of studies in business firms on how most efficiently to aid an organization to shift to System 4. These studies are yielding principles and procedures which can accelerate substantially a shift to System 4 in the management of any conflict and thereby resolve the conflict faster and better than is possible otherwise.

FOOTNOTES

¹This paper is a condensed version of Chapter 2 of Managing Conflict by Rensis Likert. To be published by McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. in 1971.

²From "Delegation" by Ernest Dale as printed in April 1957 issue of Enterprise, magazine of the Young Presidents' Organization.

³These data have been reported in Chapter 7 and Appendix I of The Human Organization, R. Likert, 1967.

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