

preservation of personal property. In one last example, the norm that a company should not bury toxic wastes in leaking 55-gallon drums is associated with beliefs about the public benefits of a clean environment and the adverse effects of chemical pollution upon family health.

Values, the fourth and last of this pattern of personal criteria that together form the moral standards of an individual, are the rankings or priorities that a person establishes for his or her goals, norms and beliefs. Most people do not consider that all their goals, norms, and beliefs are equal in importance; generally, there are some that seem much more important than others. The important goals, norms, and beliefs are the ones that a person "values," or holds in high esteem.

Values, of course, are often controversial. Why? Because a goal, norm, or belief that one person holds in high esteem can conflict with a different goal, norm, or belief that another person holds in equally high esteem. Generally, there will be little accommodation or compromise, because each person attaches great importance to his or her goals of what people should want to achieve, to his or her norms of how people should want to act, and to his or her beliefs of why people should want to have certain goals and norms. We live in a pluralistic society, with numerous cultural traditions, and in a secular nation, with no endorsed religious doctrines; consequently, we have to live with the fact that goals, norms, beliefs, and values will differ among individuals. These differences can and do lead to conflicts. Similarities, however, can and do lead to people associating in small groups. Those small groups are important in the formation of the law.

2. *Small groups.* People with similar goals, norms, beliefs, and values tend to associate with each other. This is partially the result of those similarities; we all like to be with other people who tend to accept our views on the important issues of life. But, it is also partially the result of the influence of our religious and cultural traditions and our economic and social situations upon our goals, norms, beliefs, and values. We also all like to associate with others who tend to share our traditions and situations. These associations, over time, lead to the formation of small and informal groups of like-minded individuals.

These small and informal groups of like-minded individuals do, through a process called accretion of power, have an apparent though delayed and indirect impact upon the legal requirements in a democratic society. People with closely similar goals, norms, beliefs, and values, and from nearly identical traditions and situations, tend to rely upon the groups to which they belong to forward their views and respect their backgrounds in their interactions with the larger formal organizations and political institutions.

It has to be admitted that these tendencies toward conformity can—and frequently do—lead to exclusion and discrimination. This, we will find, is one of the reasons that the legal requirements of a society cannot be said to be fully based upon the moral standards of all of the members of that society. There frequently has been some ostracism of people who hold diverse standards. But, it also has to be admitted that these small and informal groups of people who share parallel views and compatible backgrounds do wield considerable influence through social and political processes upon the viewpoints of organizations and the requirements of societies. Groups of people, even though their numbers are small and their structures informal,

are generally more powerful in changing organizational policies and societal laws than are single individuals.

There are exceptions to this "groups are more powerful than individuals" dictum, of course. Some individuals are particularly articulate. Some individuals are exceptionally adept. Some individuals are unusually charismatic. And, some individuals are abundantly wealthy. But, in general, it can be said that coherent groups generate greater influence on organizational policies and societal laws than do independent persons, for most of us are not "particularly articulate," "exceptionally adept," "unusually charismatic," or "abundantly wealthy."

3. *Large organizations.* Small, informal groups usually become part of larger, more formal organizations. These larger, formal organizations can be of many different types: business firms, labor unions, political parties, charitable agencies, religious institutions, and veterans' associations. They all share—and this is the reason for the "formal" classification—accepted goals, stated policies, and structured positions. People know why they exist, or claim to exist; how they act, or claim to act; and who's in charge, or claims to be in charge. There are exceptions here, of course. The accepted goals of some organizations tend to get lost over time. The stated policies ("policies" are explicit statements as to what should be done in given situations, and are thus related to norms) tend to get forgotten, and the structured positions ("structure" refers to the hierarchical ranking, or authoritative power, of those positions) tend to get supplanted. But generally, the goals, the policies, and the positions are dominant in the management of large, formal organizations.

The small informal groups that are part of each large and formal organization frequently come into conflict with each other over their distinctive goals, norms, beliefs, and values. Over time, the larger organizations and the small groups either achieve an acceptable compromise on these issues and their resultant standards or split into smaller organizations that can achieve such a compromise. There are alternative theories on the means by which these compromises are formed: autocratic decisions, bureaucratic adjustments, coalition bargains, or leadership influences. Doubtless all these methods are employed to different degrees in different organizations, but the outcome that can be most frequently observed is that many large organizations do eventually display a culture of shared goals, norms, beliefs, and values that do lead to accepted standards of decision and action. Organizations that display such a coherent culture—and remember that these are not just business firms; they include labor unions, political parties, charitable agencies, religious groups, and industrial associations as well—do thus tend to have considerable power in the political institutions that formulate the laws and establish the legal requirements of the society.

4. *Political institutions.* The political institutions—governmental units at federal, state, and local levels—are the means by which the goals, norms, beliefs, and values, and the resultant moral standards, of individuals persons, small groups, and larger organizations are formalized into law. The political process by which this transmission occurs can, once again, be seen basically as a means of resolving conflict. Individuals, groups, and organizations obviously have different opinions on what should be achieved in the future (goals), what should be done now (norms), what should be the supporting rationale (beliefs), what should be the order of priority (values), and what are the standards that should be applied (morals). These different views have to be