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Zion City, Illinois: A Case Study of Commitment within a Religious Utopian Community

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ZION CITY, ILLINOIS: A CASE STUDY OF COMMITMENT WITHIN A
RELIGIOUS UTOPIAN COMMUNITY

by

Carol Sonnenschein

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of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment
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VITA

The author, Carol Susan Sonnenschein, is the daughter of Benjamin Meyer Sonnenschein and Lona (Hale) Sonnenschein. She was born September 23, 1947 in Cincinnati, Ohio.

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REFLEXIVE STATEMENT

Moving to Zion, Illinois in 1976 with no prior knowledge of the town's history as a theocracy, I was fascinated by the bits and pieces of Zion's story that I heard from neighbors. Although Zion City was one of the largest utopian communities in the United States, it is rarely mentioned in the literature on utopian experiments [1]. Many current residents know little of the town's history despite the fact that the founding church survives and maintains the largest congregation in the city.

The story of Zion cannot be told apart from the story of its founder, John Alexander Dowie. An understanding of his role in the conception, realization and demise of the utopia is important to any study of the community. Dowie was an evangelist who organized the Christian Catholic Church and the Zion movement in an attempt to transform the whole society in accordance with what he claimed to be God's plan for the world.

This study will be limited to the years leading to the founding of Zion City in 1900 and the seven-year period in which the community functioned as a relatively closed system. The research is exploratory and descriptive and relies heavily on material published by the church such as the periodicals over which Dowie had complete control. Reliance on this type of data tends to present a view from the top. We are shown Zion as Dowie wishes us to see it. My purpose, however, is not to explore the motives of those who joined the Zion movement. By

focusing on the social history of Zion I intend to examine the way Dowie translated his ideology into the social, legal and economic processes of the Christian Catholic Church and Zion City and the part these played in building commitment among members. The definitive research on commitment to utopian communities is that of Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1972), who argues that the success or failure of a community is dependent upon the number of commitment-building mechanisms incorporated into everyday life in the form of concrete social practices. In her study of nineteenth century communes Kanter found that successful communities (those which survived for at least twenty-five years) tended to employ a greater number of such commitment-building practices than those which were unsuccessful. Although the community at Zion City incorporated most of the commitment-building mechanisms identified by Kanter, the group was unable to withstand the crisis which brought the end of the community's utopian era after only seven years. I will explore the patterns of social interaction which characterized life in the early years of Zion's history by applying Kanter's criteria for measuring commitment. In this way I hope to identify some of the factors which prevent Zion City from conforming to Kanter's model and suggest some modifications to her thesis. There is no question about the value of Kanter's work in any attempt to understand why some utopian communities are so short-lived while others manage to survive despite overwhelming odds. What I am suggesting, however, is that factors which were not emphasized in Kanter's analytic framework had a great deal to do with the failure of the original community at Zion City. The autocratic leadership style of Zion's

founder and his mismanagement of the community's economy led to a situation in which some members felt constrained to leave the community entirely. Those who remained engaged in a bitter contest which resulted in a splintering of the group into opposing political and religious factions. As an exception to Kanter's rule, Zion City may specify some conditions under which factors such as these should be considered.

THE PROBLEM OF COMMITMENT

Durkheim argues that the collective sentiments of a society are embodied in the symbols which represent it. But "the emblem is not merely a convenient process for clarifying the sentiment society has of itself: it also serves to create this sentiment." Durkheim sees religious sentiment as the wellspring of group identity. In contrast to the monotonous aspects of life which he classifies as profane, the sacred form of social life is created when the group comes together in collective exaltation. In "moments of effervescence" the community experiences such intense interaction that there is a fusion of the people into a single organism. During these periods of collective enthusiasm the everyday world is transcended and the ideals of the group regenerated. Since the intensity of this kind of experience causes mental agitation and interferes with an individual's ability to function normally, he says, such periods of enthusiasm cannot be sustained. Collective memories of such events, however, may be reinforced by holidays or festivals which commemorate them (Durkheim, 1961:262).

Durkheim's concept of the sacred corresponds to Weber's notion of charisma. Weber describes the role of charismatic leaders in moments of collective enthusiasm which occasionally interrupt the process of rationalization. Such leaders are people who possess such extraordinary personal qualities that followers are willing to submit to their authority. Commitment to a charismatic leader may be sustained as long as followers remain convinced of the leader's right to lead them. But the lack of bureaucratic institutions to provide rules for

such processes as advancement in the organization, compensation or the election of a new leader means that groups based on charismatic authority are inherently unstable. (Weber, 1946:246-7).

Vollmer (1957), in his examination of member commitment to two religious orders (Benedictine and Jesuit) explores the consequences that different types of social processes may have in terms of commitment. Looking at the emphasis placed on socialization and social control in organizations, Vollmer constructs a typology of social structures based on four aspects of commitment:

- 1) total commitment through socialization
- 2) partial commitment through socialization
- 3) authoritative control
- 4) ideological control

Vollmer suggests that these four dimensions may be used to explain success or failure to realize goals within any formal organization.

Shepherd and Shepherd (1984) use six categories of commitment (sacrifice, investment, renunciation, communion, mortification and transcendence) in a content analysis of addresses given by Mormon leaders during the 150-year history of the church. They discovered that while the relative salience of commitment categories varies over the years, transcendence remains the most important category in every period.

Kanter argues that the persistence of social groups depends on their ability to engage individuals in social roles. In order for communal relations to be sustained, she says, there must be a reciprocal relationship between a member and the community. The core of commitment to a community is the affinity between what the group asks

of an individual and what is seen by the person as an expression of his true nature. Commitment is the link between self-interest and what must be done to insure the survival of the social system (Kanter, 1972:65-66). This attachment of the individual to the requirements of the group is achieved by resolving three problems of commitment: the retention of members, group cohesiveness and social control. These are analytically distinct from one another, according to Kanter, and may have independent solutions. A member may be committed to remaining within the group, for example, but be uncommitted to obeying the rules. Kanter identifies three types of commitment: instrumental, affective and moral. These have different implications for the maintenance of the social system. Groups in which people have formed instrumental commitments, she says, are more likely to retain members over a longer time than groups in which this is not the case. Communities in which people have strong emotional attachments to other members should be better able to withstand threats to the survival of the system. Communities in which members have made moral commitments should have less difficulty maintaining social control than groups without the strong moral commitment of members. These three areas correspond to the concepts in social action theory of cognition (the consideration of relationships in terms of rewards and costs), cathexis (emotional gratification) and evaluation (morality) (Kanter, 1972:71). Kanter submits that systems which have all three types of commitment from members should be able to maintain their existence longer than communities which have not gained as much commitment in these three essential dimensions (Kanter, 1972:68-69).

Kanter identifies six processes which facilitate the building of commitment in communal societies: sacrifice, investment, renunciation, communion, mortification and transcendence. In her analysis of thirty nineteenth century communities (1968,1972) she found that successful groups (those which remained in existence for at least twenty-five years) tended to translate these commitment mechanisms into concrete social practices to a greater extent than communities which were comparatively short-lived. The strength of a group (measured by its ability to endure crises without disintegrating) is a function of the way abstract ideals such as brotherhood and harmony are translated into concrete social arrangements (Kanter, 1972:75-76). Kanter's primary interest is not in looking for the origins of particular social arrangements within a community but rather in determining whether or not the arrangement is functional for the survival of the group (Kanter, 1972:250). In this kind of neo-evolutionary functionalist approach, successful groups are defined as those which manage to survive. Survival is a function of commitment and commitment is a function of the mechanisms which translate abstract ideals into concrete social practices.

Using Kanter's data on nineteenth century communal groups, Hall (1988) discovered two distinct causal pathways of commitment which correspond to two types of utopian groups - the "community" and the "other-worldly sect". In the community, commitment of members is grounded in the process of communion, which grows out of ethnic solidarity. Ethnicity seems to facilitate the formation of a boundaried status group in which social and economic benefits are

limited to members. The problem of social control (and the threat posed by "free riders") is resolved in this kind of group by the desire of members to protect their interests. The other-worldly sect, on the other hand, does not generally have an ethnic basis for communion. In this type, a spiritual hierarchy legitimized by prophecy and ideology identifies leaders who are authorized to reward and punish. Cohesion tends to be problematic for the other-worldly sect since the principle of spiritual hierarchy contravenes ethnicity as the basis of communion (Hall, 1988).

Kanter argues that sacrifice, investment, renunciation, communion, mortification and transcendence are the processes which promote commitment to a community. By looking for ways these were (or were not) practiced in Zion City, I hope to identify some of the reasons for the demise of the original community which were not included in Kanter's thesis. Looking at the social context in which the community was created may suggest additional reasons for the disintegration of the group.

Before examining the mechanisms of commitment in Zion City, I would like to give some attention to events which led up to the organization of the Zion movement.

THE EARLY LIFE OF JOHN ALEXANDER DOWIE

John Alexander Dowie was born in 1847 in Edinburgh, Scotland. When he was thirteen his family emigrated to Adelaide, Australia. Although he demonstrated considerable aptitude for business (Halsey, 1903:311), at the age of twenty-five he hired a private tutor and began to study for the ministry. After fifteen months of preparation he returned to Edinburgh to enter the university as a student in the Arts program. Before he had completed his course of study, however, he was called back to Australia by his father, whose business was threatened with bankruptcy, and applied himself to the task of straightening out his father's affairs.

Although he lacked formal seminary training, he eventually was offered a position as pastor of a church in New South Wales and ordained as a Congregational minister in 1872 (Lindsay, 1986:17). Influenced as a child by the growing temperance movement in Scotland, Dowie preached vigorously on the evils of alcohol and tobacco. This aggressive attack on the popular vices bred resentment among members of the congregation and caused him to offer his resignation after one year.

Moving on to a church at Manly Beach, Dowie launched an attack on political corruption and the liquor trade. Dismayed by the misery he saw in nearby Sydney, he wrote: "In all classes there is a terrible flood of moral evil, and while men are discussing mere externals in religious matters, vast numbers of souls are hardening in vice and are wholly slaves to bodily and corrupt passions" (Lindsay, 1986:20).

In 1875 Dowie was offered a larger church at Newtown, a suburb of Sydney. He escalated his war on those he believed responsible for the social problems of the times, making formidable enemies among influential citizens of the city.

During Dowie's tenure in the Newton church an epidemic swept through Sydney and he was called to the homes of the suffering and bereaved. As he prayed for guidance in ministering to his people he claimed that "...the words of the Holy Ghost inspired in Acts 10:38 stood before me all radiant with light, revealing Satan as the Defiler, and Christ as the Healer" (Lindsay,1986:23). He was convinced by the experience to preach the gospel of healing and claimed that by doing so he was able to prevent the deaths of additional members of his congregation during the epidemic.

Dowie was becoming increasingly disenchanted with the Congregational Church and the complacency of mainline churches in general. Determined to reach out to the masses of urban poor and working-class people whose needs were not being met by the established churches, Dowie sold his collection of paintings and some household furnishings to raise enough money to rent the Royal Theater in Sydney. Although he was eventually constrained to move to smaller, less expensive halls, he managed to attract audiences who came to hear him expound on the unorthodox ideas they had read about in the literature he disseminated throughout the city.

He continued his efforts to form a new kind of church. At the urging of friends and with the support of temperance groups he ran unsuccessfully for a seat in the Australian parliament. If the

campaign was a valuable lesson in political strategy, it was an expensive one. Saddled with debts, faced with declining attendance at his religious services and rumors about misappropriation of funds [2] he wrote his parents to say that he intended to give up the mission in Sydney.

Destitute and without a church, Dowie accepted an offer to serve as an interim minister in a church at Melbourne. During his brief time there he seems to have regained much of his optimism and vigor. Soon he was mobilizing followers and resources and in 1883 he announced the creation of the Free Christian Church. Within a year he had built a revival tabernacle in the central part of Melbourne. Making "divine healing" the foundation of his ministry, he organized the International Divine Healing Association which soon had branches in other parts of Australia and New Zealand as well as connections to healing missions in Great Britain and the United States. His confidence grew throughout the decade of the 80's and his efforts expanded into social reforms such as public ownership of utilities, free compulsory education and as always, prohibition. Newspaper coverage of the more colorful aspects of his work contributed to the growth of the enterprise (on one occasion his church was bombed by outraged liquor dealers who also succeeded in having him jailed for violating the city ordinance against holding street meetings) and before long he claimed to have thousands of supporters (Wacker,1985:498).

An invitation to attend an "International Conference on Divine Healing and True Holiness" to be held in England prompted Dowie to "go forth on a pilgrimage carrying leaves of healing from the Tree of Life

to every nation" (Lindsay,1986:86). On March 3, 1888, accompanied by his wife and two children, Dowie began the "world tour" on which he planned to visit New Zealand, the United States, Canada, England and some European cities. When the party landed in San Francisco in June, reporters familiar with some of the more controversial facets of Dowie's work in Australia visited him in his rooms at the Palace Hotel and recounted his claims of healing powers in the press.

Soon he was being sought by those looking for relief from a variety of ailments. He appears to have gained some popularity among the elite of San Francisco, although he found their worldly attitudes distressing. Calling them "fine-feathered birds with polluted hearts" he directed them to change their sinful and frivolous behavior before asking to be healed. Unaccustomed to such brusque treatment, they left to spread the word that Dowie was "one of the most attractive of men up to a certain point and then he was a terror" (Lindsay, 1986:90-91).

Despite this reputation (or perhaps because of it) the halls of the hotel filled with people waiting for an opportunity to speak with Dowie. He began to hold meetings in other cities, traveling up and down the Pacific coast to organize chapters of his International Divine Healing Association.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

As McCarthy (1987) points out, the social infrastructures of religious groups in the United States have often provided the basis for social movement mobilization. Dowie took advantage of this infrastructure by offering to speak as guest minister in mainline Protestant churches. His message was a plea for a return to "apostolic Christianity", a reform effort aimed at breaking down the denominationalism which he viewed as detrimental to Christianity. He urged congregations to accept the "gifts of the spirit" such as "divine healing" which were promised in the Bible. These gifts were possible, he said, whenever a channel appeared to bring these blessings down into human societies. Using existing networks, Dowie drew people to the regular services he instituted on Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings. He urged that they continue to attend their own church services on Sunday morning but use his gatherings as a way to remain involved with other Christians in their communities. Establishing chapters wherever he found a receptive audience, he built a constituency which would become an important source of financial support in his future endeavors.

After campaigns in California, Seattle and Portland, Dowie began to work his way east, stopping for a time in Salt Lake City to observe the Mormon community (Heath, 1977:102). He arrived in Illinois in the summer of 1890 and settled his family in Evanston. Although he visited other cities to spread the word of his healing missions, his headquarters remained in Illinois.

The adjacent city of Chicago was in the midst of preparations for the World's Fair and Dowie was not blind to the possibilities offered by the Columbian Exposition. He had a makeshift "Zion Tabernacle" built near the gates of the fair and moved into the city in 1893. The tabernacle (sometimes referred to as the "little wooden hut" by Dowie's critics) was across from Jackson Park, where Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show was camped [3]. Although this auspicious location brought streams of people past his door, Dowie later said that he was unable to attract many sincere listeners during the fair. If anyone noticed the Zion Tabernacle, he said, they noticed it "with supreme contempt and passed on through the gates into Vanity Fair" (Lindsay, 1986:104). This account is contradicted by other observers, however. One reporter, who made no attempt to conceal his disapproval of Dowie, believed that

Hundreds of thousands must have crowded into [Dowie's] "Little Wooden Hut" during the months of the World's Fair. Sometimes more than a thousand persons came in a week to have his hands laid on them...His success was not limited to cases of hypochondria... Pilgrims came on crutches and went away whole. Paralytics were borne in on litters, and literally 'took up their beds and walked' (Wacker, 1985:499).

Whatever the attendance during the Fair, it appears that the hard times which soon followed provided the fertile ground in which Dowie was able to sow the seeds of Zion. The fair was forced to close, Dowie recalls, "amidst horror, and blood, and ruin, financial and moral on every side. It was followed by that terrible crash which brought to beggary millions of people" (Lindsay, 1986:104). Throughout the winter of 1883-4 he held services, moving his small group to a back room of the tabernacle. By spring, however, the numbers had increased so that

"We moved back into the main part of the tabernacle again . . . Long before we opened the meetings the aisles in the tabernacle would be crowded" (Lindsay, 1986:105).

Dowie rented the Central Music Hall in Chicago to accommodate larger audiences and began operating "healing homes" which provided inexpensive lodging for those who came to follow his prescribed program of prayer, Bible study and religious services. By this time he had begun to add the title "Doctor" to his signature in correspondence.

Heath argues that many of the accounts which exist of Dowie's "divine healings" suggest that patients were suffering from addiction to the drugs such as alcohol, opium, and morphine which were major ingredients in the patent medicines so frequently used at the time. Dowie himself remarked that the principal disease of many he saw was addiction to drugs. His technique for handling those who were addicted involved segregating them from other types of cases and using individual and group therapy within a controlled, drug-free environment (Heath, 1977:105).

As Dowie's admirers grew in number there was a corresponding increase in those who saw him as a threat. Many clergymen, physicians and pharmacists were vocal in their opposition to this preacher who told his followers that other ministers failed to follow true Christian principles and who described physicians as "surgical butchers" and pharmacists as "sorcerers" [4].

The opening of several "healing homes" in Chicago provided Dowie's critics with concrete targets for their outrage. The Chicago press, discovering that Dowie's name boosted circulation, enthusias-

tically joined the campaign against him. Reporters outdid one another in their fanciful accounts of life within the healing homes, which were variously described as houses of prostitution, lunatic asylums, and hospitals from which dying patients were forcibly ejected. The Chicago Dispatch informed its readers that

Dowie is wise. Dowie is foxy. Death has no terrors for Dowie if he has secured the dying person's money. But Dowie's wisdom and foxiness tells him that death must not occur at his homes. The patient must be thrown out, bundled away, for all are not imbeciles and there are those who are sufficiently worldly-wise to penetrate the mask of religion and see the criminal behind (December, 13, 1895).

Pressure on the Chicago Board of Health resulted in the passage of a city ordinance requiring the presence of a licensed physician in any facility which provided care for the sick. In 1895 Dowie was prosecuted by the State of Illinois on the charge of practicing medicine without a license. Although (by his own account) he was arrested on nearly one hundred warrants and appeared in court on one hundred twenty-six occasions that year, he was able ultimately to win the cases and appeals [5].

The publicity he received brought even larger crowds to his services. One newspaper reported that

all classes, the poor and the rich, were represented in the congregation numbering 2,000 that occupied the chairs, stood in the aisles, fringed the walls, and, standing outside, hoisted the windows and craned their necks, not to see, but to hear (Williams, 1963:6).

An even more important factor in his successful recruitment of followers and supporters was the publication of the Leaves of Healing, a weekly newspaper which he began to publish in 1894. Investing in the latest printing equipment, Dowie made the periodical the foundation of

his work outside of Chicago [6]. The Leaves of Healing contained transcripts of his sermons, news of the activities of his organization, editorials, and the testimonials of those who claimed to have been restored to health after attending Dowie's services. The paper was mailed to subscribers in all parts of the United States as well as to thousands in Canada, Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand. A reporter for the New York Journal claimed that in many remote communities the Leaves of Healing was the only reading material available in English (Cook,1970:15). German, Dutch and French editions were also printed.

By the end of 1896 Dowie was filling the Chicago Auditorium and his mail was arriving at the rate of two thousand letters per week (Heath,1977:107). He announced that he would withdraw from the International Divine Healing Association and on January 22, 1896 presided over a "General Conference of Believers" which was assembled for the purpose of organizing a church based on the apostolic principles of first century Christianity. He named his creation the "Christian Catholic Church" (using "catholic" in the universal sense) and promised that the broad, all-embracing nature of the church would prevent its deterioration into merely one more narrow division of Christianity. Dowie presented the basis of fellowship to his followers at the close of the convention:

- 1) That we recognize the infallible inspiration and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures as the rule of faith and practice.
- 2) That we recognize that no persons can be members of the church who have not repented of their sins and have not trusted in Christ for salvation.
- 3) That such persons must also be able to make a good profession, and declare that they do know in their

hearts, that they have truly repented, and are truly trusting Christ, and have a witness in a measure of the Holy Spirit.

- 4) That all other questions of every kind shall be held to be matters of opinion and not matters that are essential to church unity (Lindsay,1986:156).

MOBILIZATION FOR CHANGE

It is important to consider the larger social and economic context in which Dowie was organizing his church. The period of rapid industrialization after the Civil War had transformed American society. As Bellah points out, the old moral order was unable to encompass new social developments which resulted from such sweeping change in economic and social patterns. Many feared that the unchecked greed of industrialists was "destroying the fabric of democratic society, threatening social chaos by pitting class against class" (1985:43). Farmers' alliances in Southern and Plains states during the 1880's reflected the discontent which later grew into the Populist movement of the 1890's. The 1886 Haymarket riot had shaken the poor and working classes and convinced many of Chicago's wealthy that revolution was a real possibility. The Homestead Steel and Pullman strikes as well as the Panic of 1893 were harbingers of the worst depression the United States had yet endured. By the end of 1895 more than one hundred sixty railroads had gone bankrupt.

Countless banks and businesses had collapsed and the doctrine of laissez-faire was being seriously challenged by some Protestant ministers who startled their middle-class congregations by proposing that Christian tenets be applied in dealing with social problems. Some even suggested that a restructuring of society according to Christian principles was necessary in order to eliminate the gulf between the rich and the poor. The intellectual foundations of this Social Gospel movement had been laid by Washington Gladden, a Congre-

gational minister from Massachusetts (Working-men and Their Employers, 1876, Applied Christianity, 1887 and Tools and Men, 1893).

Economist Henry George proposed the redistribution of wealth in the United States, arguing that unearned profit from the increase in land values was the primary cause of social problems (Progress and Poverty, 1884). Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward became an immediate success when it was published in 1888. How the Other Half Lives (Jacob Riis, 1890) shocked middle class readers with graphic descriptions of tenement life, and Charles Sheldon (In His Steps, 1896) suggested that people ask "What would Jesus do?" when confronted by the suffering of the poor.

Dowie's work should also be seen in the context of the National Holiness Movement which had begun shortly after the end of the Civil War and reached its peak during the 1880's. Although the movement included Presbyterians, Baptists, and Congregationalists, much of its growth occurred as various factions formed and broke away from traditional Methodism. These groups revived the "camp meetings" of earlier years. From 1867 to 1883 fifty-two "national camps" were conducted, attracting thousands of participants. By 1885 the more radical holiness doctrines were being promoted by traveling evangelists in the South and Middle West. These new doctrines emphasized such things as "marital purity", "sinless perfection", abstinence from coffee, pork and the evils of "doctors, drugs, and devils" (Synan, 1971:46-47).

Dowie's ministry also had ties with the Pentecostal revival which occurred after the turn of the century. Whether Dowie's

teachings had a significant impact on the emerging pentecostal movement or whether he merely incorporated some of the ideas of others into his own scheme for Zion City and the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church is an issue which will not be resolved here. What is known, however, is that many of the most influential leaders of the Pentecostal revival of 1906 had some association with the Christian Catholic Church in Zion (Blumhofer, 1985:145). This will be discussed in greater detail when we consider the events which followed Dowie's demise.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF PLANS FOR THE COMING CITY

One of Dowie's first acts as head of the newly organized Christian Catholic Church was to form groups of seventy members each and train them to go door-to-door distributing church literature. These "Seventies" were sent "two by two into every street of this city of Chicago..." Dowie instructed them to

Hand your little message and say "Peace be unto this house", and if they say, "Thank you", you say, "Would it be convenient for me to enter; will you let me tell you about Jesus?" And if you can get an entrance, go; and if you are shut out, go away, but be sure to come back again. Always come back, no matter how you are sent away (Lindsay,1986:159).

The Seventies went into tenements to distribute food and clothing as well as to cook, clean and care for the sick (Cook: 1965:43). This type of systematic, door-to-door evangelizing, of course, has been a primary recruitment strategy of the Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses. Beckford suggests that the method may result in a similarity of class backgrounds of recruits to both groups. But he also argues that the general intellectual and emotional attitude adopted by a proselytizing group's organization is at least as important as the social situation of members in determining its growth (Beckford,1975:162,40).

Dowie was able to hold the interest of many by addressing the anxiety they felt about financial security, big business and questions of morality. He focused attention on the "robber barons" and malefactors of great wealth" who lived in luxury while the working classes struggled to feed their families. It is possible that Dowie's success lay in his ability to define and orchestrate the grievances of

his audience, incorporating these into an ideology which they could accept as valid [7]. He combined faith healing, "primitive Christianity", millenarianism and his own brand of economic and social theory into a unique cosmology.

Peter Berger proposes that a plausible theodicy permits an individual "to integrate the anomic experiences of his biography into the socially established nomos and its subjective correlate in his own consciousness" (1969:58). Dowie provided answers to many questions that were being debated during a time when it seemed that the old formulas could no longer be applied. His scheme was presented as having the potential to solve every imaginable human problem. For example, he promised that

Christianity will wipe out the political boss whether it is in the precinct, in the ward, the city, the county, the State, or the Nation, and restore America to political liberty, which is now throttled by thugs from the saloons and the slums, who slug their bloodtracked way into place and power (Heath,1977:107).

This transformation of society was still far off, however, and Dowie had begun to discuss plans for the creation of a community of Christians that would be isolated from the political and legal constraints of Chicago. In this community, which would be called Zion City, all things would be held in common. Industries would be built which would benefit the laborer. A system of profit-sharing would ensure that every worker received his or her proportionate share in the profits of the community. There would be no Rockefellers in Zion, Dowie promised. Everyone would have the opportunity to live a clean life away from the defiling influences of the world and to enjoy happiness and prosperity in a community of like-minded believers. On

February 22, 1899 he announced the organization of the Zion Land and Investment Association, in which shares would be offered for \$100 each with a guaranteed annual dividend of six per cent. By this time he had quite a list of potential investors as well as a well-organized community of believers in Chicago. The Christian Catholic Church had leased the Imperial Hotel, an eight-story building at Michigan and 12th Street. The building served as residence for the Dowie family and had rooms which were used for prayer meetings. The Zion Bank, which handled the financial affairs of the church, was located in the building along with those departments which dealt with the more bureaucratic aspects of the organization. Another building nearby was used for training sessions for the "Seventies" and housed a religious school attended by the children of members. Missionaries were sent to England, Europe, China, Australia and South Africa [8]. One history of Zion puts the number of world-wide followers during Dowie's lifetime at 40,000 (Taylor, n.d.:4) although the actual number was probably closer to 25,000 (Blumhofer, 1985:127, Wacker, 1985:502).

Plans for the building of Zion were promoted in a newspaper called The Coming City, which circulated throughout North America and abroad [9]. Meanwhile, Dowie sent his agent to search for an appropriate site on which to build.

The concept of a model city had been evolving in Dowie's mind for some time. As early as February, 1895 he had considered a move to another location, announcing that a gift of land in Indiana would enable him to "lay out a town, radiating from the new Zion Tabernacle as a center" (Cook, 1965:34). This did not materialize, however. A

parcel near Blue Island, Illinois, had also been considered in 1895 but the sale fell through when sellers found out that Dowie was the interested buyer (Halsey,1902:322). In order to avoid such problems, as well as to prevent farmers from inflating prices, Dowie was careful to remain anonymous. There was speculation that the Carnegie Iron Works might be behind the sudden interest in land in the Waukegan area, but the identity of the interested party remained a mystery. According to some accounts, Dowie dressed as a tramp and scouted the area before he gave the order to buy. Throughout the summer and fall months of 1899, his agent bought or secured options on hundreds of acres. By the time negotiations had been concluded, 6,500 acres had been obtained for the building of Zion City (Blumhofer,1985:130).

Meanwhile, the Christian Catholic Church in Chicago continued to expand. The organization had added a college (offering commercial courses as well as theology, Hebrew and church history), an orphanage, a residence for working girls, the Home of Hope for Erring Women (which may have contributed to reports in the press which accused Dowie of operating houses of prostitution) and a four-story healing home. Notices in the Leaves of Healing advertised the church's "Bureau of Labor and Relief of Poor", which was described as an agency set up to aid both employers and employees. Money poured into the Zion Bank (Lindsay, 1986:175).

On December 31st, 1899, the congregation gathered for the church's traditional "Watch Night" service. Missionaries from as far away as Africa, Australia, Japan and Korea had returned for the occasion (Cook,1965:46). The Zion White-Robed Choir sang and the

usual chants, anthems and prayers were followed by a long sermon and communion. But the focus of everyone's attention was the large twenty-five foot screen which had been suspended from the ceiling. A map of the world with the words "I will bring you to Zion" hung in front of an elaborate painting of the proposed city. With his characteristic flair for the dramatic Dowie allowed suspense to build until 10:15, when he asked the unconverted in the audience to leave the room. As midnight approached and the new century was about to begin, Dowie revealed the large painting of Zion City. Broad boulevards radiated from a central point on which a magnificent domed temple stood. Homes stood on tree-lined streets, large expanses of open space provided parks for recreation and a grand marina graced the lakefront on the eastern edge of the city. The congregation listened with rapt attention as Dowie gave a detailed account of his plans for the building of Zion.

THE BUILDING OF THE CITY

On July 14, 1900, the dedication of the temple site took place. Eleven trains were required to transport church members from Chicago for the groundbreaking ceremony (Cook,1970:10). Building progressed at an amazing pace. The Elijah Hospice was constructed to house visitors and those who were building homes.

A lace-making operation was imported from Nottingham, England along with the skilled workers required to run the sophisticated machinery. Dowie had become somewhat familiar with the lace industry as a young man in Australia and had decided to make this the foundation of the Zion cooperative industries. Wooden structures were hastily built and production began even as permanent brick buildings were being constructed to enclose the original wooden ones (Cook, 1970:9). A commercial bakery, candy factory, lumber mill, printing and publishing works and the Zion Stores were soon open as well. A mail order center and showplace for Zion Products opened in a building owned by the church at 12th and Michigan in Chicago. Administration buildings were completed and members pitched tents on their lots as they built homes. Some built makeshift wooden houses at the back of lots, intending to replace these with brick structures as soon as they began to enjoy the profits from their shares in the community (Lindsay,1986:175-176).

By the end of 1902 Shiloh Tabernacle had been erected on the central temple site. Built to accommodate 6,000 people, it was conceived as a temporary structure which would eventually be replaced

with a larger and more magnificent church. Schools opened and the large Zion College Building was erected. In some ways Zion schools were very progressive. A great deal of planning went into early education, for Dowie viewed this as the means of instilling Zion values and ideals in the children who were to be a "royal generation" (Cook, 1970:13).

There seems to have been a general feeling of enthusiasm and sense of dedication to Dowie and the church among members during these first years. Even critics had to be impressed with the rate of growth of the city. The concrete evidence of Dowie's success increased subscriptions to the Leaves of Healing and other Zion publications. At least thirty groups were meeting regularly in England to discuss what they had read in the Leaves and to try to apply the gospel according to Dowie in their own lives (Cook,1970:15). Although Dowie claimed that 10,000 permanent residents lived in Zion City, the best estimate is probably closer to 7,500 [10].

By 1902 it appeared that Zion City was destined to become the thriving, prosperous community that Dowie had promised his people. But Zion's amazing rise was to be followed by an even more precipitous fall. By 1906 Dowie had been expelled from his office as leader of the church and Zion City. He died on March 9, 1907, a virtual outcast in his own community.

The sequence of events which led to the dissolution of the original community will be examined below in the context of Kanter's theory.

COMMITMENT-BUILDING MECHANISMS IN ZION CITY

Kanter defines a group as "utopian" only as long as "all relevant relations among members were centrally controlled by a single organization" (1972:245). The end of the Oneida community, a nineteenth century group organized by John Humphrey Noyes around the principles of primitive Christianity, is judged by Kanter to be the point at which the economic system became more conventional and leaders gave up control over the social and marital relationships of members. Therefore, although the secularization of Zion has been a gradual process [11], according to Kanter's criterion the end of the original community came in 1906 when Dowie was deposed and a significant proportion of the membership moved out of the community. At this point in Zion's history a group of "Independents" formed an alternative church within the city's boundaries and an alternative political party ran against Dowie's Theocrats and won political control of the city. Although some of the original Zion Industries continued to operate into the 1960's, outside businesses began to move in as early as 1906. The events surrounding the demise of the original group will be described in greater detail when I propose how Kanter's thesis might be modified.

As Dowie's utopian vision was being actualized in Zion City a number of the commitment-building processes identified by Kanter were incorporated into everyday life.

SACRIFICE

Kanter found that successful communities were more likely than unsuccessful ones to require members to give up something as the price of joining the group. This tends to increase members' motivation to participate, she says, and may be explained by a principle from cognitive consistency theory which states that "the more it 'costs' a person to do something, the more 'valuable' he will consider it, in order to justify the psychic 'expense' and remain internally consistent ... Sacrifice for a cause makes it sacred and inviolable" (Kanter, 1972:76).

Sacrifice in the form of abstinence was promoted by Dowie as insurance that members would not be affected by the social and health problems associated with alcohol, drugs and tobacco. Pork and shellfish were forbidden in compliance with Old Testament dietary law. Members were not permitted to visit theaters or dance halls or to seek the services of physicians or pharmacists. Novels, Sunday recreation, and profanity were banned and Zionites were not allowed to patronize stores outside of Zion City. These stringent rules governing behavior enhanced the distinction between members and non-members. As they do in groups such as Orthodox Jews and Jehovah's Witnesses, clearly defined laws of behavior reinforce identification with the group and maintain boundaries between members and the outside world.

Celibacy is a sacrifice mechanism associated with some of the better known nineteenth century communities. The Shakers required sexual abstinence of all members while other groups, such as the Amana,

permitted marriage but conferred a higher spiritual status on those who remained unmarried. Many of the successful nineteenth century communities adopted celibacy at some point in their histories, including the Oneida, who later used group marriage as a way to prevent close relationships which would deflect energy and attention from the needs of the group (Kanter,1972:77-78). Although Zionites were permitted to marry, Dowie reserved and exercised the right to prohibit marriage in cases which he deemed unsuitable.

Austerity was a fact of life in most nineteenth century communities caused by food shortages, illness, harsh climate and hard physical labor. An austere lifestyle, according to Kanter, serves as a sacrifice mechanism which builds commitment. Just as a vow of poverty functions to contribute to commitment to religious orders, she argues, the joint sacrifice of members keeps commitment strong. Since relative austerity among communities is difficult to quantify, Kanter used the construction of buildings by the members themselves as an indicator. Not only does the hardship of manual labor foster commitment, but the structures serve as tangible symbols of the communal commitment required to build them (1972:79).

The building of Zion City was accomplished at a pace which impressed even newspaper reporters, who grudgingly described its rapid growth. Much of the admiration and affection of Dowie's followers is expressed in terms of the building of the city, which provided ample evidence that their leader was capable of producing the wonders he promised.

INVESTMENT

Kanter proposes that the time, energy and material resources invested in a community provides a member with a stake in the fate of the group. Nearly all of the successful communities in her sample required members to donate money and/or transfer property to the community, while more than half of the unsuccessful groups did not require or encourage this kind of investment. Groups in which investment was irreversible were even more successful in obtaining commitment from members. In some communities no record was kept of the original investment while in others records were destroyed after an initial period. Successful communities were less likely to reimburse defectors, making continued membership a condition for sharing the rewards and profits of the group.

Although Dowie advocated a "true and faithful Christ-like communism in material things" (Sheldrake,1912:38) he was careful to clarify this:

Now do not misunderstand me. That does not mean an Equality of Division, because that would be the most stupid thing in the world. You do not lose your rights of ownership by making it Community Property. You make it more profitable to yourself. You receive your proportionate share in the Community Profit, and as the community prospers, you get the proportionate blessing which comes to those who have added the value of their property to the common property (From a sermon entitled "A Christian Commune", Leaves IX:302).

Dowie's definition of "Christian communism" did not include the notion of voluntary poverty. "Poverty is a curse", he told his followers. "Jesus came to make people rich" (Cook,1965:98-99). The Leaves of Healing was scattered with advertisements which emphasized

the economic benefits of investing in Zion. Stock could be exchanged for Zion real estate and those who had the foresight to purchase early were assured of getting "the first increase in value of the best lots" (Cook,1965:96). Readers were also encouraged to invest for the spiritual satisfaction they would enjoy just by knowing that they were part of such a magnificent project. One advertisement quoted a New York shareholder who claimed that his investment had brought him such satisfaction that whether he received any results from it or not "it was a happy experience for him to help build up a City which...would be a light to the world" (Cook,1965:99).

Converting shares into Zion real estate, however, did not give Zionites clear title to the lots on which they built their homes. Homeowners agreed to the conditions of the Zion lease, a unique legal instrument which enumerated the community's restrictions against such practices as "hog-handling" and entitled the resident to live on the lot for 1100 years. Dowie reasoned that Jesus would return to earth by the year 2000; the lease allowed for a 100-year period for the Lord's return and 1000 years for the millennium.

Dowie urged his followers to sell their property and move to Zion City. Interviews that have been done with early residents indicate that many invested nearly all their resources in shares of Zion stock and real estate (Cook, 1965). This gave them a material stake in the success of the community. Members invested more than worldly goods, however, since they were also required to give their time and labor to the group. The lace factory was chosen specifically as an appropriate industry for women. Dowie predicted that the lace mill would even-

tually provide 50,000 jobs (Cook,1965:74). Zionites were also expected to participate in activities such as the various service organizations, missionary projects or the 500-member White-Robed Choir.

RENUNCIATION

Renunciation is the process in which relationships which might impede cohesion among members of the community are relinquished. Renunciation also serves to intensify the relationship of the member to the group. Kanter identifies three categories of relationship which may be regulated by a community: 1) with the world outside 2) within the couple and 3) with family members (Kanter, 1972:82-83).

Renunciation of the outside world, with all its evil influences, was a major theme of Dowie's addresses. Zionites were warned against relationships with people who were not "born-again Christians." Dietary laws and rules which governed dress and behavior set Zionites apart from those who lived outside the community [12].

The choice of a rather isolated location for the site on which to build Zion City contributed to what Stinchcombe calls the "ecological segregation of group life." The physical boundaries of the community were clear. The building of the Zion City railway station, however, facilitated contact with the outside world since members living in Chicago could attend services in Zion. The trains also allowed reporters and curious non-members to hear Dowie and see Zion City for themselves. The trains were an especially important part of the group's missionary projects. The Zion "Seventies" would gather at the station in the morning as a train of day coaches was backed in from Waukegan. One Zionite recalls that:

Elders and deacons shouted commands, snow-plastered figures, laughing and chattering, pulled themselves up the steps and into the cars. Each coach contained a "Zion Seventy" and its leaders. During the run to Chicago, hymns were sung, prayers were offered,

bundles of Leaves of Healing and other Zion literature were distributed, and territories were assigned. From the old Wells Street Station, Zion Seventies scattered, north, east, south and west. Some attacked homes of the wealthy in Lake Shore Drive and its neighborhood; middle class homes and flats on the North, West and South Sides drew the majority; others sought the ghettos and other foreign-born districts near the river and stockyards; still others penetrated the haunts of segregated vice in South Wabash Avenue and Twenty-second Street (Newcombe,1930:216). 36

Evangelism brought some members into frequent contact with outsiders. Like the Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses, Zionites were trained and dispatched in pairs, so that the presence of a fellow member tended to insure adherence to the standard teachings of the church. As Beckford points out in his study of the Jehovah's Witnesses, constant evangelism is not merely a means of maintaining and reinforcing the individual member's personal commitment to the goals of the movement but also "serves to promote and preserve among the Witnesses a strong sense of the whole group's corporate involvement in pursuing the same ends" (Beckford,1975:163).

Members who were not part of the "Seventies" or other missionaries were discouraged from venturing outside the boundaries of the community. The institutional completeness of the city was designed to meet the needs of members. Dowie did his best to portray the nearby cities of Milwaukee and Chicago as places of such danger and evil that they would hold no fascination for members who might otherwise be tempted to visit the wicked towns he referred to as "Beer and Babel".

Kanter found that successful communities were more likely to use a distinctive language or jargon that was not generally used in the host society. Some of the successful groups in her study had been formed by German immigrants. The use of German within such communities

served to reinforce boundaries and enhance group cohesion. Zionites used some jargon, especially in relation to their unique institutions. One of the obvious differences between Zion and the world outside was the traditional Zion greeting "Peace to thee" and the response "Peace to thee be multiplied" [13].

Members took pride in distinguishing themselves from other groups which held somewhat similar religious beliefs and were labeled "Dowieites" by those involved in the contemporaneous holiness-pentecostal movement. Where Zion City is mentioned in the literature on Pentecostalism, it is often dismissed as an aberration - a lunatic fringe which remains an embarrassing footnote to the movement. Synan, for example, argues that Dowie provided effective ammunition for ministers and theologians who were critical of the holiness sects:

Wherever [Dowie] traveled and whatever he said made headline news, most of it ludicrous and damaging to the holiness movement. Unfortunately "Dowieism" became associated with "holy rollerism", perhaps because both emphasized divine healing. The result was much ill-informed criticism of the holiness movement, though little of the American aspect of this movement had any connection with Dowie" (Synan,1971:92).

This contradicts Blumhofer, however, who argues that Dowie played a significant part in determining the context out of which the leadership of the Pentecostal revival arose (1985:126-146).

The Los Angeles Times entertained readers with an ongoing account of life in Zion City, calling Dowie a "fakir" and a "colossal humbug" and reporting that Dowie had been offered \$1,000 a week to perform in vaudeville (Synan,1971:96). Members' profession of belief in divine healing was ridiculed frequently in the press. One reporter quipped that Zionites claimed that their leader had healed them of

every ailment short of decapitation and rigor mortis (Wacker, 1985:506).

Dowie did not try to shield his followers from all the slings and arrows of his detractors, but often used outside criticism to enhance social cohesion within Zion. Although the term "Dowieite" was nearly always applied as a pejorative by outsiders, those within the community took pride in the term, which to them represented faith in their leader and his teachings. A few of the original members retained this sense of loyalty all their lives. As late as 1964 one of them proudly confided, "I am still a Dowieite" (Cook, 1965:37).

The most successful nineteenth century communities set limits on intimacy and exclusive attachments, particularly sexual relationships, which were viewed as threats to group cohesiveness. Successful groups often had policies of celibacy or free love. These may be viewed as functional alternatives in the attempt to prevent formation of "intimate dyadic relationships" that deflect energy and loyalty from the group as a whole (Kanter, 1972:86-89). The family, too, may be seen as a threat to the community. Successful groups were more likely to separate children from parents (Kanter, 1972:90-91).

Divorce in the Zion community was permitted only in cases of adultery. Marital differences were worked out with the counsel of church officials. There is some evidence that Dowie was planning to initiate the practice of polygamy in Zion City but backed away from the idea when he sensed that he might encounter serious opposition from members [14].

COMMUNION

"Connectedness, belonging, participation in a whole, mingling of the self in the group, equal opportunity to contribute and to benefit" - these are the qualities which strengthen feelings of communion among members of a group, according to Kanter (1972:93). A cohesive, emotionally involving, and satisfying community is facilitated by those mechanisms which develop equality, fellowship and group consciousness. Kanter found that successful communities were more likely to have members from similar religious, class or ethnic backgrounds. Members of successful groups also tended to have some prior contact with one another before forming their communities. Successful groups incorporated communal sharing, communal labor and maintained regularized group contact (Kanter,1972:93-103).

Although most Zionites had come from Protestant backgrounds, they did not have a common national or ethnic heritage. Dowie welcomed all Christians who were willing to accept his beliefs, saying: "God forbid that we should refuse Citizenship in God's Zion on earth to a single citizen of the Heavenly Zion. Neither race, nor color, nor education, nor position, nor wealth can be a barrier to fellowship" (Cook,1965:38).

Approximately two hundred black members were among the original settlers of Zion (Dorsey,1986:54). Dowie called for complete racial integration in all sectors of community life. He announced that when Zion's full complement of Twelve Apostles had been named one or more of them would be black, since "primitive conditions exclude race

prejudices" (Wacker,1985:504-505).

Dowie defended interracial marriage in a 1903 sermon called "The Rights of Ethiopians in America: Zion's Solution to the Problem of the Races", basing his views on the story of Moses' marriage to a Cushite woman. "I defend Miscegenation", Dowie told his congregation. "I will teach it, and I trust that in a proper manner Zion people will practice it". He spoke out on the lynching of blacks in the South and called for the sending of federal troops to deal with such violence (Leaves, V, Dec 10, 1898:125-127).

Although intermarriage did not become common in Zion, there is no evidence of widespread dissatisfaction among members concerning Dowie's views on racial issues even though these were at odds with those reinforced by the dominant culture. In fact, Cook (1965) reports that the congregation stood in unanimous support at the end of his sermon on interracial marriage. The election of Dr. James Brister, a black dentist, to the city council and school board suggests that race was not a divisive issue among early members of the community. The Leaves published the photographs of other black members who claimed to have been healed by Dowie, and there is evidence that black families moved to Zion seeking refuge from the racism of the outside world (Cook,1965:246, Dorsey, 1986:54-55, Zion Banner,3-24-03).

Dowie was critical of other religious groups for treating women as second-class members and wasting their talents on frivolous activities (Heath,1977:110). He was an advocate of women's suffrage and Zion women voted in city elections, although it should be noted that candidates for civic office were male. They were selected by

Dowie for his Theocratic slate and ran without opposition.

Women were encouraged to participate in the progressive educational system as fully as men (Coming City, Vol. I No. 6:85). Infants were delivered at home by a midwife who moved in with the family during the mother's confinement to assist with baby care and household duties. A nursery was built and free child care provided for mothers working in the Zion Industries.

Communal sharing facilitated a sense of communion in nineteenth century groups. A communal economy in which the material welfare of members is a concern of the whole group allows members to focus their attention on spiritual growth, according to Kanter (1972:94).

Before Zionites exchanged their material wealth for shares in Zion they were informed that the finances of the church and the city were under the "absolute control and direction of Dr. Dowie." Dowie's attorney, describing the advantages of this arrangement in The Coming City, explained that Dowie's followers had such complete confidence in the leader that they would be unwilling to invest in the enterprise unless they could be sure that Dowie had "supreme, unquestioned and untrammelled authority in all matters" (The Coming City, December, 1900). Dowie often reminded his people that Zion City was in no sense a democracy. "Zion denies the right of the people to rule themselves," he said (Aims and Methods, 1900). "It is not the rule of the people that will bring peace and blessing. Authority and power come from above, not from beneath" (Leaves, 5-21-97:9).

Communal labor, says Kanter, emphasizes the joint efforts of members. Everyone in Zion was expected to work and received a salary

in exchange for labor. Ten percent of a member's salary was to be returned to the church as a tithe.

Communion is promoted by the institutionalization of group contact. This may be facilitated, Kanter says, by holding regular meetings of the collectivity and by group participation in ritual observances (Kanter, 1972:99). Life in Zion City was punctuated by prayer. Workers prayed together before beginning their tasks for the day. The Leaves of Healing printed a "Prayer Reminder" chart with a clock displaying time differences around the world so that Christian Catholic Church members abroad might pray with Dowie at nine o'clock in the morning and nine in the evening. One resident described the scene on a Zion street when the steam whistle on the powerhouse signaled the time for prayer:

At the sound every vehicle stopped, every pedestrian stood in his tracks, clerks and shoppers in the stores seemed turned to stone, the boys' shouts were silent and they became a group of statuary, every workman grounded his pick or shovel. Every boy's and man's hat was removed. Sounds from other parts of the city were stilled, and for a moment the sudden silence was like a blow. The whistle blew again and everybody came to life (Newcombe, 1930:202).

Throughout the week services were held in Shiloh Tabernacle and Sunday meetings occupied a good part of the day. The Watch Night service on the last evening of each year became a traditional homecoming which brought members who lived far from Zion to renew their solidarity with those in the city. The highlight of any religious service seems to have been Dowie's sermon. The transcripts of sermons which appear in the Leaves of Healing provide evidence of his charismatic speaking style. He frequently led an emotional litany in which

the congregation repeated a phrase as he led them by his own logic to the desired conclusion. One observer described him as "humble, reverent, poetic, devout..." His congregation was

moved by music, ritual, and eloquence, in the solemnity of that hour...were receptive, suggestive...The kneeling people, even those who had been sobbing and praying, scarcely breathed. Their emotions at the breaking-point, three thousand souls were as one--and that one wholly in their leader's hands. With his merest whisper he could have sent them, cheering, into the jaws of certain death" (Newcombe,1930:70-72).

In 1901 Dowie organized a conference similar to the Methodist "camp meetings". Promoting the event in the Leaves, Dowie promised to put up "miles of tents" in Zion City, urging his readers to participate in the "July Festival and Encampment." This was advertised as a vacation, business and religious event, and was made even more attractive by the special arrangements Dowie made with certain railroads for discount fares to Zion from across the country (Cook,1965:119). This annual event became known as the "Feast of Tabernacles" and was observed as a celebration of the redemption of the chosen people out of bondage" (Cook,1965:99).

Kanter proposes that persecution enhances communion and cohesiveness, functioning as a kind of "social vaccination" which strengthens a group's resistance to future attacks. A group which has experienced persecution, she argues, should be better able to survive other types of threats to its existence than a group which has not (1972:102).

In a study of four utopian communities in Kansas, Weeks (1980) suggests that hostility from outside the community serves to enhance member commitment by forging a common perception of reality within the

group. Weeks attributes the disintegration of the Kansas communities primarily to the friendly acceptance of non-members who lived on neighboring farms and provided tools, animals and labor for the groups. The absence of an outside enemy to divert energy and attention from internal problems led to the dissolution of the communities.

Dowie was adept at generating and using outside hostility to bind his people to himself and to one another. There are many tales of his use of the press and other outsiders to his advantage and the evidence suggests that Zion people did respond to perceived persecution with increased internal cohesion (Lindsay, 1986:161-169).

Cohesion was fostered in other ways as well. Music played an important part in generating feelings of solidarity among members. The White-Robed Choir and Zion City Band performed frequently at community rituals and celebrations. Thousands of individual voices joined in congregational singing reinforced feelings of belonging to a large, powerful collectivity. A description of the groundbreaking ceremony on the temple site provides a glimpse of the kind of ritual and pageantry that characterized Zion events:

At two o'clock the band struck up Haydn's "Austria" and another ceremonial was begun. Slowly marching, two by two, came hundreds of robed and uniformed figures. The great audience was silent... Behind the choir came robed officers in long double lines. Last of all strode John Alexander Dowie, General Overseer of the Christian Catholic Church in Zion Throughout the World. As he passed, a high solemnity upon his bearded face, the people swayed toward him - almost worshipped, almost prayed to him... Fifty instruments and thousands of voices shook the hill with the exultation of "Jerusalem the Golden!"

Then the procession formed again. This time the robed officers were followed by all Zion's employees, each with a broad silken sash of gold, white and blue - Zion's colors - over his or her right shoulder. In front of the band went a detachment of Zion Guard bearing a huge silken banner. . .

This procession toiled three times around the site of Zion Temple" (Newcombe,1930:154-157).⁴⁵

MORTIFICATION

Mortification processes, Kanter says, reduce a member's sense of a "separate, private, unconnected ego" and provide a new identity for the individual "based on the power and meaningfulness of group membership". Mortification processes give members a different standard by which the self may be judged; "they reduce all people to a common denominator and transmit the message that the self is adequate, whole, and fulfilled only when it lives up to the model offered by the community" (Kanter,1972:103). Mortification builds moral commitment by connecting an individual's inner feelings and evaluations to the norms and beliefs of the community. This may be accomplished through confession and mutual criticism, sanctions, spiritual differentiation and de-individuating mechanisms (Kanter,1972:106-111).

Confession and mutual criticism in Zion City were interwoven with Dowie's teachings on divine healing. "Sin is a cause, of which DISEASE, DEATH and HELL are the inevitable effects and consequences," Dowie said (Blumhofer,1985:128). Confession was necessary if one expected to avoid these logical consequences of sin. Members believed that

No one for whom the General Overseer prayed died except of weak faith or unpurged guilt... Good Zion people confessed their sins to those they had wronged and to the General Overseer as soon as possible after they were committed - if they knew they had sinned. People who got sick began a search of heart and life. Any word or act even suspected of being sin was confessed (Newcombe,1930:144).

Newcombe reports that worse than fear of death for some was fear of what death might reveal. When the death of a much admired and

respected deacon from pneumonia caused alarm among members, Dowie explained the death as the result of unconfessed and therefore unforgiven sin. By interrogating the widow Dowie was able to uncover the cause. In a moment of weakness "the deacon had yielded to importunity and given ten dollars to his old Church - the apostate Presbyterian!" (Newcombe,1930:143-44).

The death of Dowie's daughter in 1902 shocked the entire Zion community. An accident involving a curling iron heated by means of an alcohol lamp caused the fuel to spill onto her clothing and ignite. Delivering his daughter's memorial message, Dowie explained that her death was the logical consequence of disobedience to her father's prohibition of the use of alcohol in any form. He explained to the people of Zion City that

My darling daughter disobeyed, and for that one step from the straight road of obedience God permitted the Devil to strike her down...When I reached her on Wednesday morning she had already confessed her sin to God and had the witness of the Holy Spirit that she had been forgiven (Newcombe,1930:227-228).

Mortification processes "strip away aspects of an individual's identity" and create dependence on authority for direction and doubt as to appropriate behavior (Kanter,1968:512). Dowie frequently reminded Zionites that every member had a responsibility to make known anything which would jeopardize the purity and progress of Zion City. The community "exercises the severest and yet most loving kind of discipline," he said. "Every defilement, therefore, of the flesh and spirit, must be instantly and absolutely put aside. Any return to these Zion will visit with instantaneous severity" (1900:3).

The morals of community members were a constant concern of the

authorities and it was not uncommon for "spies" to be appointed to watch certain Zion families. At the end of the first year, however, the police magistrate reported that there was a minimum of vice and crime in the city and that no one arrested had been a member of the Christian Catholic Church (Zion Banner, 4-23-02:1). The Zion Court reported in December of 1904 that after two years and seven months in existence only about one tenth of one percent of the population had been subject to the action of the court.

One reason that the names of more Zionites do not appear in police records may be that expulsions from the community could occur without the offender having been formally arrested. Dowie announced from the pulpit one Sunday that

We have had to remove from our fellowship an evangelist who had been hanging around low places, even theaters and conversing with harlots. Although we were unable absolutely to prove any overt act of iniquity, we were compelled to remove that person from our fellowship because we held that it was impossible for a man to continue to be a faithful member of this church and find any pleasure in such associations (Leaves, 9-27-02:1).

It is possible that the desire to maintain an exemplary record in Zion led to more warnings to church members than were given to outsiders. On one occasion an elderly deacon momentarily forgot himself and spit on the street. The police took his age into consideration and he was sentenced to spend ten days at home (Waukegan Daily Sun, 1-25-05).

With the rules of the community so clearly stated and generally supported, however, even a minor infraction might be sufficient to label a Zionite as a deviant. Being spotted in the theater in Waukegan could result in the loss of one's job in the Zion Industries. One

group of people in Zion was exempt from many of the rules of the community. Most of the English lace-workers were Roman Catholics who were not persuaded by Dowie to convert. Their independence was tolerated (even though they refused to give up smoking) because their experience and technical knowledge was essential to the industry in the first years. The primitive conditions of life in the new city, however, had little appeal to this group and many of them soon moved out of town to live in the nearby towns of Waukegan and Winthrop Harbor (Cook,1965:9).

Stratification by means of spiritual differentiation, with the more "spiritual, moral, committed, or zealous members receiving greater deference" was found in more than half of the successful communities in Kanter's study, but in only 15% of the unsuccessful groups. Spiritual differentiation, she suggests, rewards complete mortification and encourages members to become more committed (Kanter,1972:109).

Spiritual distinctions in Zion were made between those who had come into the community with titles from their former religious associations and those who had not. A number of ministers, apparently disenchanted with the complacency of their mainline churches, saw in the Christian Catholic Church an opportunity to renew their sense of purpose. "A minister in the old church is like a trolley off the track," one explained. "In Zion he is on, and connected with a 10,000 horsepower dynamo" (Cook, 1965:6). These men were often given positions in the educational institutions or appointed directors of mission posts. The most distinguished citizens were given the title "Over-

seer". Elders, Evangelists, Deacons and Deaconesses were ordained and fitted with caps and robes. The overseers wore bishops' gowns "but with black silk instead of the white lawn sleeves distinguishing the General Overseer's [Dowie's] costume. Those who had scholastic degrees wore appropriate hoods" (Newcomb,1930:153).

The Zion City engineer's plans for the proposed city show that the community was designed to be zoned into separate areas for "highest class, middle-class, laboring class and business" (Taylor,8). One of the rewards of high spiritual status was a house on "Apostle's Row". This was the name given to a block of large homes belonging to church officials who enjoyed their proximity to Dowie's own residence, which was the largest of all.

Transcendence originates in the belief of members that being part of the group allows them to find fulfillment in ways that are not possible for an isolated individual. The charisma attributed to many leaders of utopian communities (such as Ann Lee of the Shakers and John Humphrey Noyes of Oneida) functions as a way of transmitting the "experience of great power and meaning residing in the community" (Kanter, 1972:113). In order for a community to survive beyond the lifetime of its founder, however, charisma must somehow be distributed throughout the group. Kanter refers to this as "institutionalized awe."

Institutionalized awe requires an "ideological and structural system that orders and gives meaning to the individual's life, and which attaches this order and meaning to the organization" (Kanter, 1972:113).

Kanter reports that a hierarchy limits members' access to the leader and serves to enhance their sense of awe. It may also protect the leader's reputation of infallibility, since riskier tasks may be assigned to a subordinate. Leaders of successful communities studied by Kanter were likely to live in a special residence and enjoy special privileges. They tended to be addressed by special titles and have sole right to make ultimate decisions affecting the community (Kanter, 1972:117-120).

The ideology of successful communities tended to invest power in persons who were perceived to have special or magical powers. Dowie's "gift of healing" served as evidence of his special relationship to

God. The focal point of Shiloh Tabernacle was a wall decorated with the discarded crutches and braces of those whom Dowie had "healed". As he stood in the pulpit this display served as a graphic reminder to members of his great and awesome power. By becoming a member of the Christian Catholic Church, an individual could share this power, for Dowie taught that the spiritual gifts he enjoyed were available to any Christian who believed strongly enough in the doctrines of the church.

By the time Dowie organized the Christian Catholic Church in 1896 he had worked out a complex ideology which explained the universe to his followers. The foundation of this ideology was "the infallible inspiration and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures as the rule of faith and practice" (Lindsay:156). Members were assured that Zion was built upon the rock of Biblical truth [15]. Scriptural references were used to legitimate the structure of the community as well as the more mundane rules of behavior. Dowie used his knowledge of Greek in an exegesis which justified the organization of the church and city and convinced members that church doctrine was based on the principles of "primitive Christianity". His restorationist approach was originally intended to encompass all the offices and gifts enumerated in I Corinthians, including the divine calling of an apostle from within the church. In 1896, when it was proposed to Dowie that he might have been chosen to fill this office, Dowie responded:

. . . with no mock humility, I say to you from my heart, I do not think that I have reached a deep enough depth of true humility; I do not think that I have reached a deep enough depth of true abasement and self-effacement, for the high office of an apostle . . . But if my good Lord could ever get me low enough . . . then I should become an apostle by really becoming the servant of all! (Lindsay,1986:155).

THE DEMISE OF DOWIE

As his efforts to establish a church which would exceed even the power of the early Christians, Dowie's view of his personal role in history began to change. In 1899 he announced that he was the "Messenger of the Covenant" mentioned in the Book of Malachi.

In 1902 he announced to his audience that he was the final manifestation of the prophet Elijah, who had first appeared in the Old Testament, next in the person of John the Baptist, and who had returned as the restorer of the true Christian Church. He proclaimed that

Zion City is but the first of a number of Zion Cities to be established near the great cities of the earth in the latter days of this dispensation, under the direction and leadership of the Messenger of God's Covenant, Elijah the Restorer, Reverend John Alexander Dowie, the General Overseer of the Christian Catholic Church in Zion. These Zion Cities will at last find their own capital and consummation in Zion City, near Jerusalem, the city of the Great King, which shall be the Seat of the Empire of Jesus Christ the Son of God when He comes to reign as the All-Conquering Sovereign of the entire world (Leaves, May 3, 1902:66).

Although Jesus would reign from Jerusalem, Dowie explained, Zion City would be the real center of world government. He promised that After the rapture, when we come back, we shall own the earth, and proceed to take possession of it. We will walk right back into the dear old Temple in Zion City and say "Here we are again!" (Wacker, 1985:505).

Dowie announced that he was disbanding the Zion Seventies and reorganizing them into the "Zion Restoration Host", which would consist of those willing to pledge that they would

obey all rightful orders issued by him directly or by his properly appointed officers, and to proceed to any part of the world, wherever he shall direct, as a member of Zion Restoration Host, and that all family ties and obligations and all relations to all human government shall be held subordinate to this Vow, this Declaration, and this Promise (Newcombe,1930:239).

The Elijah declaration seems to have been initially accepted (or at least not overtly challenged) by the people of Zion City. Ministers and theologians from outside the community, however, were outraged. The conflict between Dowie and other clergy became increasingly caustic. In 1903 Dowie led 3,000 members of Zion to New York City for a two-week crusade in Madison Square Garden and intensive door-to-door evangelism [16]. The Literary Digest reported that "The spectacular descent of John Alexander Dowie and more than 3,000 followers upon New York City to wrest it from the grip of Satan has transfixed the attention of the entire country" (October, 1903, 27:547-548).

The people and press of New York, however, were not won over and the principle effect of the trip seems to have been to empty Zion's coffers of \$250,000 (Hollenweger,1972:117).

In 1904 Dowie stood before his congregation and made yet another startling revelation. An ornate costume, embroidered with many colors and meant to resemble the priestly robes of Old Testament figures, had replaced his simpler black robe. Declaring himself to be not only the Messenger of God's Covenant and Elijah the Prophet, but also the "First Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ", he proclaimed: "Clothed by God with Apostolic and Prophetic Authority, I now have the right to speak as the instructor of the Nations" (Lindsay,1986:235). He instructed his astonished followers that he was to be addressed thereafter as "First Apostle". The name of the church was to be changed to Chris-

tian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion Throughout the World.

Dowie then embarked on a journey to Mexico, where he is said to have been received by President Porfiro Diaz, who was interested in encouraging development of some of the country's uninhabited areas (Lindsay,1986:236). Dowie was considering the expansion of Zion to include "Paradise Plantation", a colony he envisioned would provide a more hospitable climate for those who would immigrate from countries such as Africa. He saw the possibility of employment during the winter months for those who were out of work in Zion City because of the seasonal nature of their jobs. Agricultural products from Mexico would complement Zion's industrial production (Cook,1970:16).

Members of the Zion City community were less interested in new projects than they were in perfecting the existing city. Anxiety about the city's future increased in Dowie's absence. Concerns about the prophet's health arose when, on his return to Zion City, he suffered a stroke as he stood before his congregation and had to be carried out. Before leaving on another trip to Mexico to work on his "Paradise Plantation" venture and recover from the paralysis caused by the stroke, Dowie sent for one of his most trusted assistants, Wilbur Glenn Voliva, who had been serving in a Zion mission in Australia. Convinced that Voliva would protect his interests and competently run the city, Dowie left for Mexico.

By the time the new year of 1906 had begun, Zionites were openly discussing their lack of confidence in Dowie's ability to lead the community. His glowing reports of progress in Mexico were met with skepticism by those in charge of Zion's finances who knew there was no

capital for the project and who were growing more and more concerned about the viability of existing industries.

Creditors were demanding payment for goods which had been shipped, several Zion factories had to be closed down for lack of materials, and publication of the Leaves of Healing was suspended for want of paper to print it on (Lindsay, 1986:241). The policy of operating Zion Industries and stores without credit could not be maintained and coupons were issued to workers in lieu of pay.

By the spring of 1906 rumors that Dowie was suffering from insanity began to spread throughout the city. His obvious paralysis undermined the faith of his followers in his ability to perform "divine healing". There was gossip about the extravagant lifestyle of the leader which included allegations that Dowie was purchasing expensive imported wines for his own consumption. Tales of marital infidelity circulated in which Dowie was said to be involved with a young single woman in the community. Some suggested that the trip to Mexico was an attempt to establish a Zion City in a country where Dowie could practice polygamy without legal sanction.

An elder in the church suggested in Shiloh Tabernacle that the Zion empire might be headed for failure. Two Mormons from the adjacent town of Winthrop Harbor began calling on the citizens of Zion and apparently had some success in winning converts (Cook,1965:361).

Before he left for Mexico Dowie had conferred power of attorney on three of the top officials of the city. With the leader out of the country and the new deputy overseer (Voliva) on his way from Australia, these three seized the opportunity to make some changes in the struc-

ture of the community. Since neither shareholders nor workers had benefitted from Dowie's profit-sharing scheme, they decided that the time had come to encourage private businesses within the Zion City.

In December of 1905 a privately-owned garment factory had begun operation. In January, 1906, the photograph gallery, soap factory and greenhouses were leased to private individuals. The manager of the Zion Publishing House announced that control of the city "will not be restored to Dr. Dowie until he fully regains his health and the affairs of Zion City are in first class condition" (Cook, 1965:359-360).

The new policies were formalized in a letter printed in the Leaves of Healing (XVIII 12-23-05:302-303), which informed church members that new methods were necessary because Dowie had been overburdened with details of the organization. By leaving the business transactions to "men who are fitted to such work by long experience outside as well as in Zion", they said, Dowie would be free to devote more time to the ecclesiastical branch of his work.

Deputy General Overseer Voliva arrived with his wife and daughter from Australia to find these unexpected changes in Zion City. The new leaders had begun to encourage unemployed members of the community to take whatever jobs they could find in nearby towns. When Dowie's demand for financial support for the Mexican project was not met, he ordered the dismissal of some officials and named replacements whom he believed would follow his orders without question. Voliva, after assessing the situation, agreed with the officers that Dowie was no longer fit to lead the community. Although he was permitted to return and live in his home in Zion City, Dowie never regained the

support of the majority of the Zion people. His health continued to deteriorate and he died on March 9, 1907.

Fighting over ownership of the city and its industries had been going on even before Dowie's death. Demands made by creditors in the Chicago courts resulted in a receivership pending the outcome of the issue. By court order, an election was held to determine who would hold the title of General Overseer of the Christian Catholic Church. Out of 1918 votes cast in the 1906 election, 1900 voted against Dowie (Cook,1965:396). Voliva was formally installed as General Overseer of the Christian Catholic Church in 1908.

CONCLUSION

Certainly Kanter's thesis helps to explain how Zion was able to survive as a town even after the original utopian scheme failed. Members' investment in Zion stock and real estate left many with virtually no alternative to staying on and making the best of their situation. Renunciation processes had limited their contact with the world outside. Mortification mechanisms such as surveillance by leaders and swift punishment of deviants had created and reinforced members' new identity as Zionites. Kanter suggests that successful communities tended to be those which were most centralized and rigidly controlled. Groups in Kanter's study had an average of two hundred members and she maintains that the close personal contact and participation in decision-making may help explain the variation between centralized organizations which are authoritarian and alienating and those in which members are actively engaged (Kanter, 1972:130-131). Zion's approximate size of 7,500 certainly would have made active participation in day-to-day decision-making problematic. But participatory democracy was not what Dowie had in mind when he created the community and this was made clear to members from the outset. Obedience to the will of their leader was the price Zionites were expected to pay for the benefits of living in the community. What may be relevant to a discussion of Zion's failure are the problems encountered when a theocratic experiment is undertaken within a nation that emphasizes the civil rights of individuals. The willingness of members to participate in and abide by the results of the court-ordered election in April,

1906 indicates that they did not share Dowie's aversion to democratic processes (Heath,1977:113).

Kanter's theory of commitment contributes to an understanding of how Zion managed to survive for the first few years. An explanation of its failure, however, requires more than an analysis of the functions of commitment-building processes.

It is important to consider the social context in which a community is created and maintained. The Christian Catholic Church was organized in an era of social and economic upheaval when there was general acceptance of the need for new solutions to social problems. By using networks which existed among Protestant congregations Dowie was able to mobilize the human and material resources necessary to build a large international organization. Easy induction into the church and the community, however, may have resulted in weaker commitment to the group than that found in similar refuge-type organizations which make membership a more difficult and lengthy process.

Although Dowie drew on ancient biblical themes which were familiar to his audience, his fusion of these images with ideas about industrialization, communism, millennialism and healing resulted in an ideology which was different from that of other religious leaders. His ability to use this in his orchestration of the grievances of people in the middle and working classes may have been the secret of his success in attracting a large following.

Our understanding of commitment to a community may be augmented if we consider the meaning that behavior has for the members of a

group. The meaning which Zionites assigned to commitment-building mechanisms such as the rituals of daily life and religious ceremonies seems to have been in harmony with the interpretation of events provided by Dowie. As long as members saw impressive buildings rising around them in Zion City, listened to the testimonials of new converts to the Christian Catholic Church and witnessed the effects of their leader's practice of "divine healing", commitment was not difficult to sustain. When Zion City began the downhill slide toward dissolution, however, Dowie's view of reality began to be questioned. Cognitive dissonance among members seems to have been inevitable, for example, when the "divine healer" himself was stricken and unable to recover from paralysis.

One of the factors which seems to be most critical to an understanding of the demise of Dowie and the original community was the instability of the economic structure. This suggestion contradicts Kanter's argument that the failure of a community will not be a function of economic crisis. Devotion to one another and the will to survive, she argues, will enable groups to remain intact even in the face of severe financial problems (Kanter, 1972:128,158). According to Kanter's reasoning, Zion's failure should be accounted for in terms of insufficient commitment-building. The evidence, however, suggests that this was not the case.

Although Dowie incorporated concepts of Christian communism and community ownership of property into his sermons, Zion City's economic structure was actually a joint stock company patterned after those in the capitalistic system that Dowie so often attacked. There was never

any suppression of the fact that Dowie claimed ultimate authority over all expenditures. Advertisements in the Leaves of Healing show that prospective investors were well-informed of this. Whether Dowie was guilty of outright fraud or was simply too optimistic is a question which is disputed in Zion even today. What is clear, however, is that the entire scheme suffered from exhaustion of capital and poor management. So much money was poured into the building of the city and its various missionary projects that eventually there simply was no money to keep the operation going. Bankruptcy was the logical consequence of Dowie's autocratic and extravagant style.

The man who replaced Dowie as General Overseer of the Christian Catholic Church and the city, Wilbur Glenn Voliva, is generally remembered as a mean-spirited person who also claimed absolute control over the community but who lacked the charismatic qualities which had attracted many members to Dowie. Nevertheless, Zionites who remained in the community were quick to install Voliva as their leader and to confer upon him the power to control the city. This seems to have been primarily due to their confidence in his ability to ameliorate the grim financial situation.

Confidence in Voliva's business capabilities was not the only reason he was able to maintain the support of a majority of people of Zion City, however. As head of the Christian Catholic Church, Voliva had the authority to fire members from their jobs in the Zion Industries or even to force them to move out of the community for disobedience to his orders. Although a small minority did remain loyal to Dowie, the social and economic consequences of not supporting the

new leader were potentially disastrous for those who wished to remain in the community (Blumhofer, 1985:135).

The spiritual void left by the collapse of Dowie's leadership left the community in a state of social disintegration. Rituals of everyday life lost their relevance when the world which had been constructed by Dowie crumbled. The Waukegan Gazette commented on the climate of restlessness and tension in the community in October, 1906, suggesting that "the people in Zion are not in need of temporal power. They are starving for want of a spiritual leader" (Blumhofer, 1985: 137).

Blumhofer proposes that Dowie's restorationist themes and his emphasis on the Holy Spirit, holiness and healing created a context in which people were particularly receptive to the message of the Pentecostal revivalists. Pentecostals had attempted to gain a foothold in Zion City as early as 1904 but Dowie had effectively prevented them from much contact with his people (Synan, 1975:87). News of the Welsh revival and other events which were part of this "Latter Rain" period of Pentecostal history, however, had reached Zion City. A group of Zionites who had heard of the ministry of Charles Parham in Kansas invited Parham to come to Zion, where he received an enthusiastic response. Parham had visited Dowie in Chicago in 1900 just before launching his religious school in Topeka and his message was based on similar principles. Zionites were eager to listen to this preacher who offered hope for the renewal of the community. By the end of his first week in Zion Parham was attracting several hundred members of the community to his three daily meetings and General Overseer Voliva

complained that Parham was "winning some of our most faithful people" (Blumhofer,1985:136).

By the time Parham left Zion several months later, Pentecostalism had taken root in the community. Some of those who had held influential positions under Dowie became the leaders of this new movement in the city. The bitterness of the battle which was waged for the hearts and minds of Zion people caused deep divisions between those who accepted Pentecostalism and those who remained within the Christian Catholic Church.

Berger suggests that

the marginal episodes of human existence reveal the innate precariousness of all social worlds. Every socially defined reality remains threatened by lurking "irrealities." Every socially constructed nomos must face the constant possibility of its collapse into anomy. Seen in the perspective of society, every nomos is an area of meaning carved out of a vast mass of meaninglessness, a small clearing of lucidity in a formless, dark, always ominous jungle (Berger,1969:23).

Dowie's dream of utopia offered hope to people who were searching for such an oasis of meaningfulness in a world which seemed to be shifting under their feet. When this social world began to fall apart, however, members needed to find new ways to define reality. The social, economic and religious context in which they were situated was an important factor in determining the direction their search would take.

The failure of the original community at Zion City suggests that the survival of utopian groups cannot always be explained by an analysis of commitment-building mechanisms. In the case of Zion, several factors converged to bring the end of the community. Concen-

tration of power at the top and mismanagement of the economy combined to create a system which was inherently precarious. Dowie's physical and mental deterioration undermined the belief in faith healing which had served to reinforce the ideology of the group. The hardship brought on by food shortages and the loss of jobs in the Zion Industries created fear and uncertainty about the future. These factors produced a climate in which Voliva and his associates could effectively wrest control of the community from Dowie.

Dowie's charisma, his strong convictions, and his unbridled ambition brought him great success in attracting disciples who were willing to cast their lots with his. But these same qualities led to the establishment of a city in which nearly all power and authority rested in the hands of the leader. Mismanagement of the economy was possible because there were no checks built into such a system. His autocratic leadership style ultimately formed the basis for his rejection by the people of Zion City.

The irony which pervades the story of John Alexander Dowie and his dream of a holy city is that the very qualities which lay at the heart of his success in turning his vision into reality seem to have contained the seeds of his own destruction.

NOTES

1. The Mormon colony, with approximately 15,000 members in the 1840's, was the largest group of this type in the United States. The Shaker settlement of Union Village, Ohio claimed a total membership of 3,873 between 1805 and 1912. Zion's population of 7,500 would make it the second largest such community (see Wacker,1985:497).
2. Lindsay (1986) gives a sympathetic account of Dowie's part in fueling rumors. Dowie was allegedly taken in by a swindler who promised to donate 20,000 pounds toward the construction of a tabernacle for the fledgling congregation.
3. On one occasion Buffalo Bill's niece, Sadie Cody, attended Dowie's evening meeting and claimed that Dowie was able to completely heal her of a disease of the spine (Edwards, 1982).
4. Dowie's experience as a young chaplain in Edinburgh had taken him to the clinics of John Simpson, a pioneer of modern surgery. This exposure to the crude and often deadly medical practices of the time probably contributed to Dowie's conviction that doctors were frauds who preyed upon the weak.
5. Transcripts of his court appearances were published in his publication, the Leaves of Healing, and provide evidence of his quick wit and gift for debate.
6. In his study of Jehovah's Witnesses Beckford explains how C.T. Russell, the group's founder, expanded his base of support in much the same way. By transferring a printing plant from one of his privately held businesses Russell was able to exploit markets outside the United States while keeping costs at a minimum (Beckford,1975:10). Dowie's in-house publishing operation was a major factor in mobilization of the people and capital he needed to build Zion City.
7. In their analysis of social movements, McCarthy and Zald argue for a shift away from the view that frustration is a necessary pre-existing condition for social movement activity. They suggest that in some cases "grievances and discontent may be defined, created and manipulated by issue entrepreneurs and organizations (McCarthy and Zald,1982: 1215).

8. Some of these efforts resulted in branches of the Christian Catholic Church which still exist. One of the more interesting offshoots exists in South Africa, where a syncretism of African beliefs and Dowie's brand of Christianity continues to be practiced. (See W. J. Hollenweger, The Pentecostals: The Charismatic Movement in the Churches (1972:116-122,149-158) trans. by R.A. Wilson. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, and also James W. Fernandez, "Zulu Zionism", Natural History (1971:44-50).
9. The Coming City found its way into fiction; a character in Ulysses finds an old copy blowing about in the streets of Dublin and briefly considers a move to Zion.
10. This is based on a reconstruction of residential patterns in "Zion, Illinois: An Attempt at the Theocentric City", (M. Kusch, Ph.D. diss. University of California, Los Angeles, 1954) quoted in Wacker (1985:497).
11. The influence of the Christian Catholic Church has gradually waned over the years since Dowie's death. In the 1930's, for instance, public schools were opened which were not under the church's direct influence. Vestiges of Zion's utopian origins persist, however, and occasionally create tension between those who feel that the constitutionally-guaranteed separation of church and state is being breached and others who argue that Zion's unique history makes it exempt from such proscriptions. A battle over the constitutionality of the city seal, which incorporates the words "God reigns" and Christian symbols such as a cross and a dove, is currently being waged in the Illinois courts (Waukegan News Sun, February 20, 1990:1).
12. Non-members, as well, acknowledged the boundaries of the community. Even today older residents of Lake County remember the detours non-members took to avoid traveling through Zion City, where police were only too eager to detain outsiders who violated Zion ordinances such as the prohibition against smoking.
13. This greeting became so routinized that a farmer who lived outside of Zion was shocked when he visited the community in 1906 and was greeted by a Zionite with "Howdy-do!" He interpreted this as a sure sign that the utopia was in trouble (Cook,1965:368).

14. See, for example, Newcombe, pages 281-283, 338-339, as well as Dowie's denial and self-defense in his "Statement of Conditions in Zion City, Illinois", pages 16-19.
15. Dowie used the term "Zion" to refer not only to the community of Zion City, but also to the entire world-wide membership of the Christian Catholic Church.
16. See "Dowie host in New York", October 24, 1903, 75:430-1, and "Meetings in New York", October 31, 1903, in Outlook and also "When Dowie invades New York" in Munsey magazine, April, 1903 29:42-7.

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

4/2/90

Date

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