DEFINITION OF ORGANIZATION
(part 1)

A lecture given on 8 November 1956

Thank you.

Tonight, I haven't got very much to talk about. But I did want to talk to you something about a subject which I haven't even added up in my own head or in my own environment – which, of course, makes me an authority.

An authority is somebody who knows nothing loudly. It's an absolute requisite – absolute requisite – for an authority to know less about a subject than anybody else, more importantly. And the subject must always be a subject about which nothing is known.

To be a real authority you would have to pick up a subject which was nonextant, you see, and become quite resounding on that subject. Then you would be a real authority, particularly if you said nothing ever. A real good authority simply sneers quietly, whatever is said. That is very, very effective – very effective. It's a tactic I recommend to you if you ever get in there with a medico or something of the sort and you don't know what to do, why, just sneer effectively. You know, sort of... like that, you know? Just a touch of...

Now, this is a subject – about which I'm going to speak here – about which I know very, very little, very little. Because very few things are actually well organized, to know anything about organization is therefore practically an impossibility since practically nobody has ever seen any. You see? But you could easily become an authority about organization because there is apparently such a thing in the world as organization.

And I didn't realize that organization didn't exist, actually, until 1950. And I noticed then that it didn't exist with an exclamation point! Now, I'd rather suspected its existence before, but I had never totally suspected the exclamation point. The fact of no organization in 1950 was quite interesting, and I thought it was something peculiar to the people and organization with which we were dealing. I assigned it to us personally. I couldn't look far enough to blame it way over there. So I said, "Well, the thing to do about these organizations..." I said, "The thing to do, obviously, is to hire some experts" – see, hire some experts. And then we really did go to hell!

We had one of the fanciest managers that ever managed anything. He had been a howling success. I suppose the people that he had managed for before are still howling. Now, we had press agentry and promotion experience which had been so valuable in Hollywood that Warner Brothers practically collapsed the moment that this man left their promotion department. We had skill, but unfortunately without an exclamation point.

I'm sure these gentlemen could have worked, had they known what an organization was. Well, some people are very fast. They pick up their cognitions rapidly. Some people are capable of understanding a cognition when they see it and so on. I run comm lags myself, and it sometimes takes me a little longer to find out that I don't know about something or that I do know about something, or do recognize it. But when I do – or don't – I'm honest about it. Perhaps that singular difference there makes up something for the comm lag.

But it's taken me about six years to find out thoroughly that man doesn't know anything about organization and that there is a camouflaged hole there that has been filled up rather adequately by experts. And nobody can glibly tell you a definition for an organization. Nobody can rapidly give you the size and shape and general pattern for an organization. They'll give you some patterns, but are they for an organization? See, that's a little bit different.

Now, what belies this: we have such organizations as General Motors and Westinghouse. And these are running concerns. They do get things done. There's Boeing Aircraft and big, big companies. They do build things; they do ship things away, and so on. And obviously these companies have people in them that know about organization – obviously, or they wouldn't run.

Well, I say obviously they know all about organization until you go to work for them, and then you get another view. You say, "How do these airplanes ever fly?" "How is it that electric motors made by this concern ever run at all?" We talk to their personnel and find this personnel caught up in some kind of an incomprehensible paper chain which seems to run this way: They originate a despatch which comes to them for answering.

This is very common in the United States Navy, for instance. My good friend and one-time close pal Robert Heinlein, the science-fiction writer, was in Philadelphia and he was in the aircraft factory. They pulled in all the science-fiction writers they could lay their hands on during the war – they even tried to pull me in – to Project Space Opera. And they were trying to design various items and units, and so on, out of science fiction into the world of reality. And naturally, the boys all dived back on the track and picked up already-conceived patterns and presented them. Unfortunately, we didn't have the materials with which to build most of these things. But it's interesting that the suit that is worn today by jet-plane pilots was designed by that unit. It was designed as a spacesuit by that unit, and it is worn today by jet pilots.

Many other bric-a-brac such as the satellites that we hear about every once in a while (not the Red satellites but the pink ones that Dr. Eisenstein is going to throw up there to confuse us)... Anyhow, other things came out of this project. But what mainly came out of the project is illustrated by this little story about Robert Heinlein.

He heard that there was somebody in the country that knew about rocket-orifice pressures – how big a pressure you got at what velocity for what opening. He heard that this was known, that there was an expert somewhere in the country that could give him these figures. So he originated a communication. Of course, it was a naval-aircraft factory, and so he originated the communication, put it through the proper channels and got all the

endorsements. It went out to Chicago and came back into Washington and got here and there and so forth, and eventually he discovered the name of the expert: it was Robert A. Heinlein.

Well, organization is an interesting thing. It's interesting enough that if you ask a preclear simply to mock up an organization, he inevitably mocks up confusions. It's one of the ways of running confusions, is just to say to the preclear, "Mock up an organization. Mock up an organization." You just keep this up for three or four hours – somebody that worked for Philco or somebody – and he line-charges. I don't know why he line-charges, but he does! There must be something in those organizations which belie the word organization.

All I am seeking to do here is to show you that we are starting from scratch. It is very seldom that one can work away from virgin ground, but we seem to be doing that just now. We are starting with known data. A word, organization, exists. See, that's known data. The rest of it's wilderness. You see, we look out this way and this way, we see nothing but desert stretching in all directions without even wrecked Egyptian tanks on them.

Well anyhow, we look over this, and we find out then that we are in that comfortable state of mind of having a tremendous amount of elbow room. That's always a nice thing to have when you're starting out on a subject.

Well, is there anything to know about this subject at all? One must always ask this question: Is there anything to know, or must one invent something to know about it? Well, actually there is a great deal to know about the subject, and actually it seems possible that an organization can exist. It seems possible that an organization could be defined. It seems possible that the running of an organization could happen, not by accident, but by plan. And it seems possible that one could ferret out these various rules of organization so that one was not always running from the general's latest idea on how the organization ought to run.

That's awfully embarrassing to an army at all times, and it's equally embarrassing to an electrical plant or something to have an executive vice president who is issuing communiqués consistently and continually about the subject of organization modification when none has been built in the first place. You see, that's very hard to do: to modify a nonexistent object.

The U.S. Navy has been modifying a copy of the British Navy now since 1772, or whenever it was formed. And it's been doing a very, very good job of modification. Someday they'll wake up – oh, any day now they'll find out they don't even have a navy now, see? Actually they're over in the Pentagon building at this time, and so on. They've practically modified themselves out of existence with their communication lines.

For instance, they have a terrific file system. This is the most brilliant file system I have ever read. Gorgeous. The manual to operate it is about that thick. It's to operate a navy file system. It's just gorgeous. You never saw such order, such neatness. Every number in that system has significance, oh boy! Wow! Man, are you impressed – right up to the moment you walk up to a naval yeoman and say, "Uh... son, could you let me see the personnel report sheets for last month?" Well, of course the file system fails at that instant. But it's very, very pretty – very pretty there in that big, thick book – very pretty.

I like that file system. It is the neatest and best plan not put into action that I have ever inspected. Of course, it's a court-martial offense not to head your letters out of that file book.

Oh, I am sure that men can be court-martialed, even shot. I think it's perfectly all right to run away from the enemy, give admirals a lot of lip, wear your stripes backwards, or almost anything else. But don't omit those right numbers there at the top of that endorsement or at the top of that letter. That's pretty serious. That shows a disrespect for the Bureau of Naval Personnel. Very serious thing.

Well, there are several numbers and letters in a line. Very hard to memorize. I know I can't recall a single one offhand. But when the numbers get up to about that big, why, it makes a cross-file system the like of which you've never... See, every number in it means a different folder or subject.

Now, you take officer's raincoats. Nobody could ever have such a thing as "officer's raincoats," but you look in the file manual, it's there! "Officer's raincoats: OA52." They got you, haven't they? Now, you wouldn't think there would be "officer's raincoats – torn," would you? But you turn over here to "torn" and you'll find it's OA52-3.

Now, you wouldn't think there was "officer's raincoats – torn; belonging to reserve officers," would you? They got you. When you get the number about that long you've got the history of the United States!

Now, I'm sure somebody in the Navy Department keeps a file system of some sort because – I'll just show you how good they are. I'll show you how good they are. You know, there's a lot of cavil about this. They say that after World War II and the Korean War that they lost a lot of personnel. Well, that was actually World War I they did that. A chap was ordered up to the Brooklyn Shipbuilding Company, and he was up there until 1936 before somebody found him in the files and sent him orders to tell him that World War I was over. That's actually happened. They just skipped him, you know, and he stayed on duty as an inspector of nonexistent ships. And nobody ever could order him out because they couldn't find his name in the files, you see; they'd lost the files.

But I'm sure somebody keeps a file, because I myself have been solicited for a Tommy gun. A rather unusual thing to be solicited for, but they knew my name and they knew where I was located. Isn't that terrific? I mean, it's really phenomenal. I mean, they did; they knew my name; they knew the item that was missing and so forth. Of course, it was the wrong navy, but that didn't make any difference at all. It really was the wrong navy. It was "L. R. Hubbard, Royal Australian Navy, Lieutenant Commander," I think it was; something like that. "Please return to the United States Navy the sub-Thompson machine gun which was borrowed from the USS Chicago" – that was the wrong ship, but that didn't matter; it was the Travis – "Please return it," and so on. Now, how they got onto this, I don't know, because the Travis got sunk, you see? And I don't know how they got into this, but somebody keeps a file! That, I'm sure.

Now, you look at these numbers up on these letters and you have, actually, the total concept of organization normally existing, plus one thing, a command chart. No service, no electrical company's office, nobody, should be without one of these command charts. I'll show you what they look like. They're square – I mean, an oblong, a rectohedron or something, because everybody on them at the top is pretty thick. And you have written across the top here, it says Board of Directors, or Joint Chiefs of Staff, or it says something at the top here. It's very impressive. That's in bigger letters, see? And then you have two little dingle-dangles

that drop down from this and other signs are appended to that. And one of them says Secretary of Navy, and the other one says the War Department or something. And then this dingle-dangles down into, well, other boards, you see: Bureau of Naval Personnel, Chief of Naval Operations, Chief of Staff, so forth. And this dingle-dangles down to another thing that says Regiments or something, you see, Fleets or something like that. And then this goes down to Commanding Officers Of. You got that. That's pretty smart. And then this goes down to Officers Of, and this goes down to Petty Officers Of, and this goes down to the army and the navy, see – rank and file, see?

That's how they do this. That's how they do this. And you've got this beautiful... You know, it's... well, it's beautiful! You never saw the like of these things. They're pretty. You know, they're usually done on mahogany, Philippine mahogany, something like that, you see them. Or they're done in great things: you open up a manual and you keep unfolding, and you unfold them down like this, and you fold them up like this, and there it says across the top Joint Chiefs of Staff, see? Boy, is that... Tsk! That's it! We've got something here. We know who's boss around here. Obvious, it's the Joint Chiefs of Staff; they're boss.

A private wants to go on leave, he knows where he is supposed to go. He isn't supposed to go up there at all; that's too high for him. He's supposed to go see these people right above him, see – his petty officers. And the petty officers, they're supposed to go see the officer. The officer is supposed to go see the commanding officer. The commanding officer is supposed to go see the Fleet. And the Fleet is supposed to go see the Chief of Naval Operations. Chief of Naval Operations is supposed to go over here to the Secretary of the Navy, and the Secretary of the Navy is supposed to go over here to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. You see, that's the way it goes. Got it? Yeah. And then they say whether or not he can have some leave.

Now... All right. Now, they forward this back, see, and it goes like this: the Joint Chiefs of Staff up here, and then it goes down to the Navy Department here, and then it of course goes over to the Chief of Naval Operations, then it goes over here to Fleet, and that goes down here to captains, and the captains go to the officers, and the officers go to petty officers, and they get down to the man, and he knows he can't have any leave. See, it's simple! See, the whole thing works out. It's obvious, this whole thing works out.

You think I was just indulging in some mockery, something like that, but I wasn't; that's a command chart. It says who's boss. And if you didn't have one of those things the whole place would go to pieces, you know that! Nobody would know who to salute. Nobody would know who to send the paychecks to, for whom to... Well, nobody would know! That's all. You see? I mean, you'd just be lost, and maybe it'd be a good thing.

Because the only thing difficult with this command chart is the moment the guns start going, the little dingle-dangles vanish. They just go missing. See, they... Before the first sentry takes off – before the first sentry takes off not to confront the enemy – these things disappear amongst the boxes. So you have Joint Chiefs of Staff standing in the – well, they never stand in a first line – but you have Joint Chiefs of Staff, or something, sitting someplace else. They're not any longer on the chart. I know; I've looked on the chart. You have troops

down at the bottom of one of these command charts. You can talk to one of these charts by the hour and it won't shoot. Won't do a thing.

And I've been in the interesting position of sending a message up through one of those things for a very important piece of information that should have gone right on up to the top, since I was operating a comm center. It was very interesting. Just as in any company or something, somebody says, "A machine is broken down. All production will now be delayed for the next ninety days." He'd want to report that, you know. He'd think it'd be a good thing. Somebody up at the top is liable to notice the whole factory isn't running or something.

And so I tried to report this through one of these chains of command, and I found out that I was really getting there. Only they knew that that particular post and area had been wiped out and taken a long time before, so they never bothered to answer. I asked some chaps right here in Washington, I said, "Why didn't you ever reply to those despatches? What was the matter?"

He says, "Well, you were wiped out a long time before that."

And I says, "I was!" It was obvious. It was right there on his chart that those command channels didn't any longer exist.

Well, the very funny part of it is, the moment that action was engaged, why, one found himself finally doing what I did: I picked up a telephone, called the Secretary of Navy. See, and I said, "I'm tired of this place. I'd like to leave."

And he said, "Yeah."

I said, "Yeah, I've got some important despatches. As a matter of fact, we've got enough despatches here to practically sink the Japanese navy if they had to carry them. There's a lot of traffic and stuff like that, and so forth."

So he sent his plane down and picked me up and flew me home. You think I'm just talking through my hat but that is exactly what happened. Everybody knew the phone systems were out, and everybody knew the command chart didn't exist anymore, so it was very easy to pick up a receiver and say, "Give me Washington." They wanted to know Washington where. I said, "Washington, DC." I said, "Give me the Secretary of Navy." I couldn't think of anybody else. That's quite a phone call from down in the South Pacific through, and you just think that doesn't exist.

But then you think something else is wrong too. You think these command charts exist. Well, they exist on a piece of paper, but in actuality they are command charts and nothing else! That is all they are. And that's the first thing you want to know about organizations, is that they have command charts and that they are command charts and not communication charts! And when you try to put a communication through a command chart, you're in the soup, inevitably wind up in Campbell's chicken with noodles.

Now, obviously we have to know who's boss, but this is no reason at all why all channels should run through the bottleneck of the whole organization who is always the boss. Do you see that if we ran all communications through the Joint Chiefs of Staff, if every officer in the South Pacific who was tired of being there and couldn't see any of his own

people left anyhow, and was fairly suspicious that those snapping sounds in the air weren't bees, had simply picked up a telephone and had found an operator on the job, of all people, who was capable of putting in a transatlantic phone call and said, "I want to go home now, and I've got some despatches. Send me an airplane," and if every one of them had been given an airplane, you would have had that many Secretaries of Navy to take care of that many officers, you see? So it doesn't operate as a communication chart and it won't ever operate as a communication chart. And that is the first thing wrong with organizations, is they take a command chart and say it is a communication chart, and it's not.

A communication chart doesn't even vaguely look like a command chart. Let me assure you, if the boss had to know everything there was going on in the organization you'd have no organization at all. It would make him so mad! The only possible survival an organization can have is just to keep as many communications as possible away from him. They bottleneck; he's arbitrary; he's not on the ground; he doesn't know the situation; he has policies he's executing which were originated in 1890. The best thing to do is just keep the show on the road, obviously, not follow a command chart. Pretty obvious, isn't it?

You start following a command chart, you start bottlenecking. Therefore, all initiative in the organization is destroyed. And if it is the purpose of a command chart to destroy all initiative, then it should also be used always as a communication chart. The command chart of an organization, when it becomes the communication chart of an organization, results in the absence of all initiative throughout the entire organization; everybody is being policed. And that is just about 99 percent of what is wrong with most existing organizations, is they have no knowledge of organization.

Now, let's look at this. Let's look at this. A man is put on a job to do a thing. He should have a stable datum for what he's supposed to do. If he has a stable datum for what he is and what he's supposed to do and what he's supposed to be, and if he really has that as a stable datum, then he will be able to handle all confusion that approaches him. He'll have comm lines. He will act. But if that individual does not have a stable datum then he is not a communication terminal. He will stop no communications, and the command chart gets pushed into being.

If every sailor put on a post, or every soldier put on a post, or every mechanic and laborer in a plant was put on a post and couldn't hold that post or decide for that post, then naturally, he would fall back on his next superior. And if that man couldn't hold that post and wasn't a stable datum and felt insecure he would fall back on his superior. And if he couldn't hold that post and everything seemed to be confused around him and he didn't know what he was, then he'd have to fall back on his superior. And the next thing you know, you're at the general manager, chief of the board, Joint Chiefs of Staff or whatever you're going to call the top of the chart. Why? Because nobody anywhere lower on the chart is a stable datum; nobody can stop a communication anywhere on the chart. And so command charts in that wise, in a very aberrated fashion, then become communication charts, and so they are in this world we live in today.

Unless, then, we know these principles and so forth, then all communication charts will be these command charts and every organization there is will be run by one man only, and he'll run himself to death and develop ulcers and that'll be the end of that. Follow me?

Why does a communication chart turn into a command chart? Because none of the communication points on it are terminals in fact or actuality. Nobody there can stop a communication, so they all collapse on the chief Got it?

Now, in times of abnormal confusion you would expect some of these points to fall back and say, "Hey. What do I do now?" But they ought to be certain enough in themselves and on their post that when it's said to them "Well, our policy at this time is just to ship everything we've got," they should say, "Well, that's good enough for me. All right, this is your stock. It belongs to somebody else, but I am on this point and therefore I will just start shipping everything we've got. Thuh-buh-wuh-wuh. All right, that's fine."

You could give all of these communication terminals a new policy without unsettling their own stability, if that stability existed.

So we find the first and foremost thing of organization of course would be a definition of organization. What is an organization? But to find out What is an organization, we have to look at what composes an organization, and we find that an organization optimumly would be composed of communication terminals. And if we look it over and find an organization is composed of communication terminals, then we decide that a communication terminal had better have a communication line. So we find an organization consists of communication terminals and communication lines associated with a common purpose or goal. And that is the definition of an organization and that is all there is. Now, if you look for anything else, you're going to get wound up in MEST. You're going to go splat against the walls or something. That's all an organization is.

Evidently an organization is a number of terminals and communication lines with a common purpose. The purpose associates and keeps in contact with one another, the terminals and the lines. That's all an organization is. It isn't a factory. It isn't a house. It isn't a machine. It isn't a product. It's not a command chart. That's all it is. And if you look it over in the light of that simplicity, you can actually form one and get one to function. One will actually function.

Now, there are several rules that go with this:

Every set of communication lines (being two: one going in and one coming out) must have a terminal. Every set of communication lines must have a terminal, and every terminal must have communication lines. Isn't that idiotically simple? But unfortunately, very few organizations ever follow this, and all their confusion and randomity result therefrom – all of it. Because if there are too many lines and too few terminals, the lines will snap on those terminals. If there are too few communication lines and too many terminals, terminals will snap on the lines. You can't get a communication terminal separate from communication lines; you can't get communication lines separate from a communication terminal. They go together. And there have to be as many terminals as there are lines, and as many lines as there are terminals.

Now, we find in every organization somebody who wears fifteen hats, and he doesn't know it. He's the complaint department, and he's the file clerk, and the shipping manager, and this and that and a lot of other things. Now look, there's a set of lines for every one of those functions. If this man does not know he is one of these terminals, if just one is missing, then he'll use his body for it. The lines will actually snap on to his body. He's got to put his body in there the moment that he's missing a terminal.

He's fifteen terminals. If he knows all fifteen terminals and has a title for them, and he's got some exact geographical location where he says the terminal ends, he's all right. I mean, the lines end. He says, "That's a terminal. That's the complaint manager and here is the shipping manager and over here is the floor sweeper." He can do all of these things as long as he is all of these things. He's got himself separated out, in other words. He doesn't get tired. This is the oddest phenomenon you ever saw.

So you say is there any practicality in reviewing this subject of education organization-wise? Is there any practicality to it at all? If he has a set of lines that he doesn't think he owns – that he has no terminal for, in other words; he got the lines but he has no terminal – he resents it. He begins to buck back against the lines. He takes his body and shoves them into the lines – tuh! After a while he says, "Work is so tiring. Work is so tiring."

That's quite an interesting phenomenon. A person is what he is. Anybody could hold down two hundred jobs as long as he knows he's holding down two hundred jobs. He must have the job compartmented as a terminal to match every set of lines that runs in toward that job.

I'll give you an example: Somebody in this organization was actually operating very thoroughly and very well, most of the time, with a maintenance terminal – maintaining buildings and things like that. This person was actually wearing a hat called Maintenance and had never suspected it. Never knew this person had anything to do with maintenance at all. Was there anything there connected with maintenance? "No, I have nothing to do with maintenance." And yet all the time this person was handling two lines, a set of lines which said Maintenance. Person had to ask these questions perpetually: "Is that necessary?" "Can't we have that?" "How much does this cost?" all in the line of Maintenance. Job was wearing him out! Hidden job. Missing. The job was missing. There it was. There was no job there. So what happened? Every time something came in about maintenance – somebody says, "Should we get these new carpets?" why, that person would say "No!" or "What carpets?" "What are you talking to me about? What are you talking to me about carpets for anyway? Why are you talking to me?" Get the idea?

Well, the reason they were talking to this person is because this person had everything to do with maintenance that was really important and didn't know it. The job had been assigned to somebody else who never wore the hat. Over in a dusty corner of a place there was a hat, all crumpled up, and it said Maintenance.

Well now, can the communication lines run to that unoccupied hat? No. There was no terminal underneath that hat and as a result the lines went and found somebody to run to. Got it? In other words, a loose set of lines will all of a sudden go dahh. Get the idea? They'll say, "Ah! Buddy! Huh!" All right.

Now, the other phenomenon which happens, doesn't occur to be quite as important until you really look it over and have it happen. You've got this amazing thing, you see? You have a terminal with no lines, see? You've said to this person he's Maintenance. And now he has no lines. There aren't any visibly set-up lines. There's nobody to pass any communications to. There are no vias. There are no further relay points, no lines at all. What's this person do? This person at once does something very fantastic: he snaps on to another set of lines. So here are your lines, you see? Your lines are running very smoothly and everything is going along, and all of a sudden, dah-dah-dat! "What's the matter with my communication lines? Why don't they function?" Well, they're stuck on the terminal called Maintenance. What did he do? He didn't have any lines of his own so he took to tossing stuff in your baskets. He started using your lines. The terminal then found some communication lines. None were set up. Got it? There's an affinity between these things called terminals and these things called lines which don't permit them to exist separately. But that affinity should not result in a total, balled-up confusion the way it does in most organizations.

You go into most organizations, you say, "Who takes care of supplies here?"

"Oh, the office over there. The office over there."

All right, fine. Go to the office over there. "Who takes care of supplies here?"

"Well, what did you want?" Wonder why they never answered the question. People don't ask themselves that. "What did you want?" they say.

"Well, I wanted to know where to deliver this package."

"Oh, just leave it right there."

"Well, all right. I'll leave it right there, so forth. Who signs the receipt?"

"What receipt?"

"Oh, the receipt for the package, the delivery of the package?"

"I don't know. Uhm... I don't know. We'll have to ask Mr. Smithers. He's out to lunch just now. Here, I'll give you... I'll give you some directions here. The gateman usually does that. I just remembered, the gateman does that. You go out and get your signature from the gateman."

You go out. The gateman says, "I don't do that. What am I doing? You mean, I sign for something? Where is it?"

"Oh, I left it back there on the porch."

"Oh, you did?"

You go back and it's gone. Well, anyway...

You say that was an unusual moment for that organization. No, it wasn't. That's the way things go on all day long.

"Who's in charge of maintenance here?"

"I don't know."

"Well, who ordered their telephone fixed?"

"I don't know. Mine's working all right."

There's probably nobody wearing the hat.

Well, what happens? The outside world goes out of communication with such an organization. Now, the outside world – the public at large – is so unused to anything these days that looks like organization that they demand that everybody in the organization, whenever buttonholed, wear all hats, Now, watch this one.

Everybody in the organization, every person there, has got to wear all hats inside the organization. So they come in, they want some – give you the idea – they want to buy a new set of paints. So they grab ahold of the fellow in the bedding department and they say, "How much are your paints?"

And he says, "I don't know. You'll have to go over to the paint department."

"Well, do you have a lot of paints?"

"Well, I don't know, ma'am. You'll have to go over to the paint department to find..."

"Well, are... I don't know whether I really uh... should place an order with this store or not. Uh... uh... what uh...?"

You listen to it sometime. Public walks in the door and they insist that the fellow in charge of bedding sell the paints. They insist that the fellow who is on the information desk (he should know) should be able to tell them the quality of the bedding, see? They're very certain that the elevator man is of course totally cognizant with everything connected with the administration, whereas the only thing he knows is the floors. And we get this continually: The public, being uneducated into the organization at all, keeps hitting it, and they insist that every terminal in it...

Now, they themselves consider themselves a particle on a line at best. They're a particle on a line, you see; they're not really a terminal. And they come in and they snap on to any existing terminal. And we have to consider them lines, not terminals. And they just snap on to any terminal which exists, unless we have signs about that high that we put in front of everybody as he comes in and the sign says "INQUIRY THAT WAY."

And then we have somebody thoroughly educated in Scientology from the word go that gets hold of them, remedies their learning rate, and asks them then what they want in such a way that they will actually say what they want, because in ten or fifteen minutes auditing he will have found out enough about the person so that the person will have found out what they want. You see? And then you could direct them that-a-way toward the exact terminal they are looking for. You got the idea?

But this is how, then, organizations get that way. They get that way by being pounded out of shape by random comm lines that hit the outside. So, what does it take? The whole organization, then, has to have outside comm lines too, and is itself a single terminal. It's a group of associated comm lines and terminals which is itself a single terminal, and it has in-go and out-come lines. You got it?

So that an organization which is being hit this way is actually missing its first rampart. A particle, when it hits a terminal, should stop. That's in theory. It says right there on the backtrack, it says "Space opera orders number so-and-so and so-and-so. All particles when they hit terminals stop." That agreement had to be made a long time ago or nobody would have known or been certain about terminals at all, and you wouldn't have had any universe; and maybe that would have been a good thing. Anyway...

Here you have, then, organization. It is simply a group of associated terminals and communication lines, associated with a common purpose, and the organization itself must itself be a terminal with communication lines. And if you do that you got it made in the shade. You can actually bury the command chart and install an auditor.

What would the auditor do? Fascinating. It is an auditing job. Now that we have a definition for it, now that we see what is going on... We have particles and information and packages and tanks, or anything you want, traveling up and down these comm lines to these various terminals. We don't care what goes on the comm lines; we've just laid the pattern. There's got to be something there for it to run on. All right.

Now, what does this organization at large do to get itself in that condition that it can follow that definition and can be an organization? What would it have to do? It'd have to go hire a Scientologist. I'm afraid that's the only thing it could do. Because I don't know any other way to do it. I'm stupid maybe. I've had to do with a lot of organizations. I never noticed anybody around there doing it.

I used to think I was confused. I'd walk into a big publishing company, for instance – a big company, you know – and I'd try to find the managing editor, naturally. And I'd get the managing editor, I'd get his ideas concerning the release of copyrights or something, and we'd have a talk, and we'd do this and that, and transact business and so on. Well, I got a idea after a while I was confused because I could never find a managing editor that would say he was the managing editor who would handle the business he was supposed to handle. He always wanted to pass it down the hall to somebody else, who wanted to pass it up the hall to the managing editor. And all of my business usually floated between the guy down the hall and the managing editor, you see?

Occasionally I would work it in this fashion: I would merely pretend to have gone to the managing editor – get his secretary to forge his signature or something of the sort, you know – go to the fellow down the hall and fall on his head, you see, on the basis that something or other, something or other, and we have to have a decision on this, and then I was all set, you see? There was nothing to it. I never did that, but I would have had to have done it to have gotten anything really done at any time or anything decided.

So I used to think I was confused, and maybe I was, but I was not anywhere near as confused as the environments I was walking in. Everybody was wearing everybody's hats.

I was working for North American one time – Aviation. I was working there – short time; very short period of time – till I found out what I was doing, and I left. It's interesting to find out what you're doing, after you've been put on a job after a while. I was having an awful time, and I decided I didn't learn fast. Imagine my surprise to discover after a short period of

time that there wasn't anything there to learn! Now, you see, it's very often possible for you to consider yourself stupid because you can't learn something, but at the same time there might not be anything there to learn at all. Don't you see this? It might be that you feel adrift in the army. They used to call it "nervous in the service." You might feel that way, wen, because you were sort of stupid. You just didn't seem to be able to get the hot dope on which way you went and why. And maybe you did and maybe you didn't find out that you were singularly in the majority. See, you were in the majority there. Nobody else knew either.

Now, let's go a little bit further than this. Maybe there was no system to know. See, maybe in the flesh there was no system to know. Maybe it was just all on paper. Maybe the order was all on the order sheets but didn't exist in actuality at all, and maybe what you saw when you saw tanks lined up or packages lined up or something of the sort, and all going off very neatly, was simply the initiative of some sergeant or second lieutenant, see? Maybe that was just the initiative of somebody who had decided he'd better get the job done there anyhow, regardless of what was happening.

Well, I found this out one time, by the way, and before somebody got wise to it and stopped me, I'd practically built half of a ship. Found out we had orders to the tropics, and the war had been a long war, so I decided I would put an air-conditioned apartment up on the signal bridge. I did. I really did.

I mean, by that time I knew that everybody else didn't know there was nothing there anyhow to know. All you had to do was pretend there were terminals and pass communications on pretended communication lines and you were all set. All you had to do was walk in with a sufficient atmosphere of urgency, see? Everybody ran on an emergency. So you rushed in with an atmosphere of emergency with a very official looking piece of paper in your hand and you said, "That's it." And then before anybody could question you, particularly, you walked out, and they didn't know who they'd heard from, but they knew it was sure important.

It's very disruptive when you get somebody around an organization who knows this. It's a vicious thing to have in an organization, particularly if the organization isn't one by our definition.

The only organization you could really wreck thoroughly and 100 percent would be an organization which didn't match up to this definition.

Now, how would you get it in that kind of a condition? Very simple, you would put people on the post. You would say, "How many people are you? How many hats do you wear?" You would just keep at him like an auditor, you know? It's auditing. It's organizational auditing. "Come on. How many hats do you wear? Come on, let's make a list of them. Come on. Are there any more?"

"Well, yes, and there's also wastebasket supervision."

"Ah, all right. Fine. Fine. Sure there are no more hats that you are wearing?" "

"No. No. I think that's about all. Oh, of course, except Director of Processing, that's my main job."

I mean, this is a silly thing. You ask somebody to start making a list of all the hats they're wearing and they come out with some number. Well, the funny part of it is, all right, so there are that many hats. It's perfectly all right for one body to be wearing two hundred hats as long as the hats aren't being worn on top of that body. Let's get them out here, two hundred hats, and let's make sure they all got comm lines – otherwise they snap on each other.

Maybe you change post; maybe you put somebody new on the post. This person doesn't know he's wearing two hundred hats – whole organization eaves in on that spot. Why? The person didn't have any idea of it at all. There was no label sitting up there saying "Wastebasket Emptier." You know, this, that, the other thing, so on, all these labels. The funny part of it is there was no basket sitting there.

Now, what's this thing called a basket? A basket is something silly. And you know what a basket is for, that's to keep things in that you don't want to read yet, and wouldn't pass on anyway. A basket is a low-order accumulator, and you're waiting for the wastepaper drive of the next war. But the only basket that actually accumulates is a basket which has no comm lines to it. The second you put comm lines to baskets properly, they empty.

Now, a basket can sit there with nobody knowing that it is a terminal or with it being twelve terminals and nobody knowing it, and it'll stay in a confused condition. Nobody's ever sorted it out. So, the Scientologist comes along and he says, "All right. How many hats are you wearing " And he writes all these things down. "You sure these are all your hats? Well, do any of these hats combine with any of these other hats?"

"Oh, yeah, yeah. Oh sure, this combines with that and so... Well, I guess that's really just one terminal: wastebasket emptier and incinerator burner. I burn things in the incinerator and the waste in the wasteb –. I guess that'd be one terminal."

"We'll group that under Manager of Disposal."

"Yeah, that's right. Come to think about it, if anybody died around here, I would be the one that would dispose of the body too. So that's right. That's a better terminal." See.

"So you have to say anything that's going to be thrown away around here, I am the thrower-awayer or disposer-ofer, and that is my unit. If anybody wants to dispose of something they see me. That's correct. Yeah, what do you know!" You know?

And they get a higher stable datum for each one of these terminals or their own function. And you keep working it over and working it over and working it over with this person until they finally get the idea of what this terminal is supposed to do.

Now, you ask them for a stable datum for the action of that terminal. What is that terminal now supposed to do? Then they say this, and they say that, and they say something else, and they say something else. And then they say some – and then they correct themselves and they don't figure it's that. And then they say it's something else, and it's something else, and it's something else. And then they say, "You know, I probably could state that more succinctly." And all of a sudden, "Say, you know, a chief disposer would have the task of getting rid of things. Yeah, that's it. That's it. That's the stable datum for that terminal. That's what that terminal does. Oh, yeah, and there are four other things that go under that here, too.

Yeah, and that's what this job is. Yeah, that is what this hat is. All right, we'll put the hat on that very nicely."

Now we make sure that these baskets have communication lines. That is to say, they get emptied, people come and put things in them, that there's action connected with that underneath that hat.

The stable datum will then as-is the confusion in the vicinity of that terminal to the point where it will simply settle down to two lines. It's magic, utter magic.

If a fellow finds his job confusing or the organization confusing, what I've told you here seems fantastically simple, but it fantastically works. It does fantastically work.

Now, it doesn't matter what's traveling up and down the lines, with one exception: verbal messages.

Telephones are psychotic. They don't remember a thing. I know, I picked up my phone upstairs the other day and I said, "What was that auditor's-conference report about three days ago?" and it didn't know. Didn't have a word to say. It just said, "Mmmmm." So they're all awfully, awfully confused. Well, anyway.

What do you do about these verbal things? Well, actually they aren't a communication which can travel along the lines of an organization, and no matter how smart people are – and the people in Scientology are a lot smarter than people in most organizations – no matter how smart these people are, verbal communications flying along these lines will somewhere or another break down, and they have a great tendency to break down. They break down with thoroughness, and when they break down they leave an area of confusion around them.

Somebody walks in and he says, "Bill just called. He wants you to phone him back about those books."

And somebody says, "Thanks." He's busy on a pantograph machine or something of the sort, you know, and it's going bangity-bangity-bangity-bang. "Thanks, yeah."

A couple days later meets Bill. Bill says, "What the hell is wrong with you people out there!"

"What are you talking about?"

"Well, those books!"

"What books? Oh. Oh, yeah." It's very interesting.

Now, this all comes under the heading of even flow on the lines.

The way executives get ulcers is another story, but truth of the matter is that a written communication is far preferable to a spoken communication. They can be brief. They can be terribly telegraphic. They don't have to be fancy. They don't have to look nice or something, but they must be recognizable as a communication of some sort. They must have some sort of a destination and they must be from somebody, and they will travel, then, along lines. And the funny part of it is a fellow can get things done. He can sort these things out easily. Because you can start and stop a piece of paper, but you can't start and stop a verbal message.

A verbal message has the frailty of being an immediate and urgent thing, and if everybody uses verbal messages, we have left nothing but emergency. There's nothing but emergency left anywhere throughout the organization. Nobody can start and stop these things. You can't stop and start verbal messages. You have to park them yourself all up and down the time track, remembering all these vast details and so on, and it shouldn't happen. Shouldn't be, because it disobeys, in the first place, the proper-communication-lines-and-terminal rule which is set up.

Supposing we suddenly take a body out – a body is missing for a short time; we have to put another body in its place – where would we get all the verbal... I mean, in the body that's missing now there are a lot of verbal messages. He can't file them in this guy's skull – not, at least, by current technology. The replacement doesn't know them. Hasn't a prayer. He hasn't an idea. Furthermore, he doesn't know what the stable datum is for the job unless it's written down someplace.

All right. It's quite important to know what an organization is. It's quite important if you're in an organization to know what the organization consists of and what it's trying to do. It is extremely important that you know how many hats you're wearing and that you have a terminal for each hat. And it's extremely important that you stay in communication with the remainder of the organization along its recognized despatch lines, and if you do so everything runs very smoothly and the organization will function. But if you try to go on command lines, then you, or you and somebody else, are wearing all the hats, and it's all bunched up, and it's all very confused. And this would be all right if the thing would run. It's perfectly all right to be confused if things would still run, but they don't.

The whole study of organization is one of the most intricate things I have ever tried to look into, so I have thrown it all away and given you this lecture.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[End of Lecture]