FIRST INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL CONFERENCE ON PARTICIPATION AND SELF-MANAGEMENT

PREMIERE CONFERENCE SOCIOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE SUR L'AUTOGESTION ET LA PARTICIPATION

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WORKERS' MOVEMENT AND WORKERS' CONTROL

ZAGREB 1973

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MOUVEMENT SOCIAL ET STRUCTURES SYNDICALES EN EUROPE OCCIDENTALE

Entre la fin des années 50 et les débuts des années 60, la plupart des chercheurs se consacrant aux relations industrielles constataient la diminution constante et régulière des conflits industriels dans tous les pays économiquement avancés (avec droit de grève). Dans les premiéres six décennies du siècle, en chaque décennie le nombre d'heures de grève par membre et le nombre de journées moyennes pour chaque grève ont été inférieurs à la décennie précédente. On remarquait en outre une diminution du nombre de journées de grève par chaque inscrit au syndicat. Autour de 1960 la situation dans les principaux pays industriels était telle que le conflit industriel semblait désormais destiné à être en large mesure institutionnalisé, et par conséquent à se développer presque totalement autour des tables des négociations collectives.

L'ensemble de causes qui amené à de telles situations se rapportait généralement aux phénomènes suivants:

a) La stabilité organisationnelle de plus en plus forte des syndicats, et souvent leur centralisation croissante; parallèlement la reconnaissance sans réserves des syndicats aussi bien de la part des entrepreneurs que des pouvoirs publics.

b) La présence croissante de l'Etat aussi bien comme régulateur de l'économie que comme arbitre dans les conflits industriels.

c) La définition de plus en plus précise des objectifs économiques et partant la prévisibilité des procédures contractuelles, en général la stabilisation des systèmes de relations industrielles.

d) Les rapports constants et organiques des syndicats avec les partis au gouvernement ou susceptibles de monter au gouvernement (partis laboristes, socialdémocrate, et aux U. S. A., bien qu'avec des modalités différentes, le parti démocrate) qui, d'une part assuraient aux syndicats la possibilité d'influencer la politique gouvernementale, de l'autre les y faisaient participants et donc, en quelque sorte, garants de la collaboration de la classe ouvriére avec le gouvernement — du moins dans les grandes lignes.

Ces hypothèses générales furent ensuite affirmées par toute une série d'hypothèses plus spécifiques qui prenaient en considération divers variables. Ici, il est seulement intéressant de mentionner, pour l'employer dans les hypothèses qui vont suivre, la distinction entre conflits syndicaux économiques et conflits syndicaux organisationnels ou de »reconnaissance«. Les premiers

*) Ce texte entend présenter un projet de recherche multinationale à l'heure actuelle en cours de rélisation en France et en Italie et en préparation en R.F.A, Grande-Bretagne et Belgique.

visaient exclusivement à obtenir des améliorations salariales pour les inscrits au syndicat; les seconds visaient à renforcer les organisations syndicales ou à en forcer la reconnaissance de la part des employeurs. Ce second type de conflits caractériserait surtout les phases de formation ou de rénovation des organisations syndicales.

Dans la décennie passée, et surtout dans les dernières quatre ou cinq années, nombreux signes, notamment en Italie et en France, mais aussi dans d'autres pays industriels, semblent indiquer que les hypothèses formulées à la fin des années 50 sont devenues insuffisantes à expliquer les tendances des conflits industriels et des politiques des syndicats.

Les conflits de travail sont devenus plus intenses et répandus; la combativité ouvrière surtout en Grande-Bretagne, mais aussi en Suède, en France, en Allemagne, en Italie et en certains cas isolés également aux U.S.A., a débordé le cotrôle qu'en ont normalement les syndicats; de nouvelles formes de conflits entraînant des incidences plus fortes sur la production se sont fait jour; les cas de grèves non officielles ont fortement augmenté, tandis que le nombre des grévistes — bien qu'il n'en existe pas encore de statistiques globales — tend à devenir beaucoup plus important.

Outre ces phénomènes communs, et particulièrement en Italie et en France, d'autres éléments, parfois tout à fait inattendus, se sont manisfestés depuis 68:

a) On a vu apparaître des revendications salariales de caractère égalitaire renversant par là la tendance des dernières vingt années.

b) Les mouvements sociaux ont, la plupart du temps, ignoré délibérément la législation du travail existante; le caractère sauvage du mouvement ne s'est pas seulement manifesté par l'apparition de conflits non contrôlés par les organisations syndicales mais le plus souvent par la caution apportée par celles-ci à des formes d'action illégale (occupation d'usine, séquestration de cadres et de directeurs, refus de tenir compte des préavis de grève). Cette tendance généralisée en Italie et en France depuis 68 a, au cours de la grève des mineurs, gagné la Grande-Bretagne.

c) Le caractère des revendications mises en avant a souvent changé fondamentalement de nature: celles-ci portent sur le contrôle des barèmes d'établissement des salaires, la répartition des postes de travail et surtoût les cadences et, d'une façon générale, l'organisation du travail dans l'entreprise. En outre, dans la plupart des cas, ces revendications se traduisent par une transformation de fait des conditions de production existant dans l'usine imposées par les ouvriers et négociées ensuite avec les directions.

d) Le dernier point est un considérable renforcement de la démocratie syndicale à la base — que celle-ci prenne la forme d'assemblées générales d'usine et d'ateliers, avec élection directe de délégués chargés de conduire le mouvement (situation devenue générale en Italie mais qui se répand aussi en France, en Grande-Bretagne, en Allemagne fédérale, en Suède et en Belgique).

Par ailleurs, les politiques de participation conflictuelles tendant à amener les organisations syndicales à accepter, soit au niveau de l'Etat, soit au niveau des branches industrielles ou des grandes entreprises des accords contractuels entre patronat et syndicat, accords qui avaient force de loi pour l'ensemble d'une branche ou d'un secteur, se trouvent aujourd'hui totalement

remises en question. Les accords paritaires sont redevenus dans la majorité des cas de simple accords d'armistice sanctionnant les positions de force acquises à un moment ou à un autre et susceptibles d'être remis en question dès que ces conditions se transforment (et ceci tant du côté patronal que du côté syndical.).

Enfin les centrales syndicales au sommet tendent à s'orienter vers des revendications politiques exprimées directement à travers l'organisation syndicale elle-même et destinées à être négociées directement entre les syndicats et le gouvernement: cette situation est particulièrement nette en Italie; elle est la base de la politique de la CFDT en France, mais elle s'élargit rapidement à des organisations syndicales qui avaient jusqu'ici tendance à faire passer leurs préoccupations politiques par le relais des partis politiques ouvriers. C'est ainsi que l'on peut constater l'autonomie politique de plus en plus grande de la CGT française par rapport au Parti Communiste, des TUC (Trade Unions Congress), de la FGTB belge par rapport aux partis sociaux démocrates de ces pays. Si, en Allemagne et en Suède, cette tendance se trouve limitée par la présence des partis sociaux démocrates au pouvoir, elle s'y manifeste pourtant également.

Le syndicat agit comme un acteur politique se souciant d'obtenir des résultats d'une concession gouvernementale et non plus seulement d'une concession patronale; dans cette action politique, sa combativité, supérieure à celle de n'importe quel autre acteur politique, a mobilisé de grandes masses de travailleurs.

3) Face à ces tendances nouvelles, ce qui manque pour le moment, ce sont soit des modèles d'interprétation basés sur un nombre suffisant d'observations, soit une élaboration systématique des connaissances disponibles. Mais il existe diverses hypothèses qui pourraient nous orienter au moment de cerner les données à recueillir et de les ordonner.

A) Le premier type d'hypothèse interprète la récente explosion de la combativité ouvrière et le renforcement du pouvoir contractuel des syndicats comme une expression du retard économique et politique de certaines régions de l'Europe occidentale, récemment entrées massivement dans le développement capitaliste généralisé; ce pourrait être en particulier le cas de l'Italie, caractérisé par la création récente dans le Nord d'un prolétariat d'origine rurale déraciné du Sud du pays, comme celui des conflits provinciaux qui ont tenu la vedette de l'activité sociale en France au cours des deux derniéres années, conflits dont les acteurs ont été pour la plupart des travailleurs d'origine rurale autochtone ou immigrée. On pourrait retrouver ce même type d'hypothèse à propos des grèves sauvages qui se sont développées dans les Flandres belges.

Cette hypothèse ne nous fait pas sortir des perspectives théoriques des années 60 (celles du syndicalisme de participation conflictuelle); la composante organisationnelle »de reconnaissance« de l'organisation syndicale y serait prédominante et cela rendrait compte des formes violentes et massives de la combativité ouvrière.

Si cette hypothèse était vraie, une fois dépassée cette phase critique, nous nous acheminerions vers une nouvelle stabilisation du système des relations industrielles et la recrudescence actuelle du mouvement social ne rendrait compte que de la brutalité de l'expansion économique qui, durant les années

50 à 60, a prolétarisé la majeure partie de la paysannerie européenne et obligé l'industrie de ces pays à faire appel à une main-d'oeuvre rurale en provenance des pays sous-développés.

Le sociologue serait ainsi amené à reconnaître l'existence d'une sorte de seconde phase d'accumulation du capital, au cours de laquelle le mouvement ouvrier retrouverait spontanément les formes de ses origines.

Cette explication comporte certainement une large part de conclusions vérifiables, mais elle ne permet ni de rendre compte de la nouvelle forme de politisation de l'action syndicale au sommet, ni de celle qui se manifeste à la base, ni d'assurer la liaison de revendications politiques avancées à travers des formes d'organisation spontanées.

B) Le second type d'hypothèse se réfèrerait à des variables du système politique plutôt qu'au système de relations industrielles.

Elles soulignent l'importance que l'action directe, c'est-à-dire non filtrée à travers les organismes politiques parlementaires, est en train d'assumer en plusieurs pays industriels avancés.

Au fur et à mesure que se répand l'action des mouvements au niveau de la société, l'action ouvrière, tant celle mobilisée par les syndicats que celle en quelque mesure spontanée, assume une force nouvelle et des caractéristiques nouvelles. A l'origine de cette situation, on trouve des changements généraux dans les systèmes politiques des sociétés industrielles avancées qui peuvent être sommairement signalées comme perte de représentativité et de capacité de mobilisation de la part des organismes politiques traditionnels. Les syndicats, bien qu'ils constituent en certains cas des structures traditionnelles, seraient à même, grâce à leur contact plus direct avec les masses, d'assumer la pousée combative et de l'utiliser pour accroître leur pouvoir. C'est ainsi que s'expliqueraient les nouvelles formes de politisation vers lesquelles semblent s'orienter certains syndicats.

Cette hypothèse nous suggère de cerner les variables du système politique général: degré de répresentativité et degré de capacité de mobilisation des partis; rapports entre les partis et les syndicats; existence d'autres mouvements capables de mobiliser certaines catégories de la population; leurs rapports avec les syndicats; types d'organisation spontanée de la base (à l'intérieur de la classe ouvrière ou d'autre catégories de la population).

C) Le troisième type d'hypothèse en appele aux changements structurels qui se vérifient dans les économies industrielles avancées. Comme conséquence du progrès technologique, de nouveaux centres de travail, surtout de nature technique, s'élargissent de plus en plus, alors que d'anciens centres disparaissent. Très sommairement, l'on peut dire que l'on est en train de vérifier une polarisation qui accroît l'importance, parmi les travailleurs dépendants, de nouvelles catégories techniques d'une part et de l'autre des ouvriers non qualifiés. Plus ce processus est rapide, plus ce phénomène tend à avoir une expression politique. Ceci expliquerait pourquoi la conscience politique de ces ouvriers est plus forte en France et en Italie qu'elle ne l'est dans des pays comme les USA, où ce phénomène est certainement beaucoup plus avancé.

La rapidité du processus de polarisation mettrait en crise le système de relations industrielles et les procédures traditionnelles d'institutionnalisation de conflits. De nouveaux objectifs et de nouvelles méthodes de revendications mettraient les syndicats dans l'alternative ou bien de laisser échapper les

nouvelles catégories d'ouvriers, ou bien de renouveler leurs méthodes d'organisation et d'action.

Cette hypothèse suggère de faire attention aux différences entre les divers secteurs industriels et entre les industries ayant une composition différente de la main-d'oeuvre et de cerner, dans les processus de formation, des objectifs et des plate formes de revendication, la part qu'y prennent les diverses catégories de travailleurs.

D) Une vision plus générale du développement des mouvements sociaux en Europe occidentale nous amène d'autre part à faire entrer en ligne de compte les difficultés de réalisation des politiques de plein emploi institutionnalisées, qui avaient semblé prévaloir dans ces pays au lendemain de la guerre 1939/45.

La rapidité des mutations technologiques, la concentration des entreprises industrielles, y compris au niveau international, ont rapidement débordé les ébauches de planification de l'emploi mises en place dans les différents pays d'Europe occidentale. Elles ont entraîné une très forte insécurité incitant les travailleurs salariés de toute catégorie (y compris les cadres et les techniciens) à une extréme méfiance vis-á-vis des procédures institutionnalisées existantes, la tendance au contrôle des conditions de travail et de l'embauche exercé directement sur les lieux de production apparaîtrait comme la conséquence de cette situation. La vérification de cette hypothèse nous amènerait donc à analyser l'importance exacte du phénomène.

E) Enfin, une autre caractéristique, la plus récemment apparue de toutes, des divers mouvements sociaux, est leur extension en dehors du champ de l'entreprise et des rapports de production au sens strict. Ces mouvements, qui mettent en action non seulement les travailleurs des entreprises mais bien souvent de larges couches de la population non ouvrière, portent sur les conditions de vie existant généralement dans les grandes cités et établissent une liaison directe entre les conditions de production et les conditions de vie. C'est en particulier le cas des luttes pour l'organisation des transports en commun, contre la pollution, etc. Ces luttes, à base ouvrière, tendent à rejoindre la contestation de plus en plus large qui, dans les milieux intellectuels, met en question les finalités générales de la production industrielle.

Au niveau des luttes sociales, elle tendrait à faire apparaître une sorte de conscience diffuse de la non concordance entre mode de vie et niveau de vie, celui-ci traditionnellement évalué en termes capitalistes fondés sur le développement du produit national brut, alors que la première notion doit au contraire mettre l'accent sur la libre disposition du temps et de l'espace. L'expression de cette prise de conscience pourrait se trouver sous-tendre la fameuse distinction entre revendication quantitative et revendication qualitative qui, notamment en France et en Italie, constitue à l'heure actuelle le fond des désaccords entre les différentes organisations syndicales.

Pour résumer cette problématique, nous devons donc prendre comme variable principal les champs de recherche énumérés dans les hypothèses précédentes. Nous devrions ainsi être en mesure de vérifier si les organisations syndicales peuvent contrôler l'ensemble des luttes plus haut inventoriées et leur assurer une orientation stratégique générale ou si, au contraire, elles risquent d'être débordées par ces luttes.

Dans le premier cas, les organisations syndicales tendront à renforcer leur pouvoir contractuel, mais ce ne serait que dans la mesure où elles

réussiraient à rénover le mode de représentation de la classe ouvrière et à fournir de nouveaux contenus et de nouvelles techniques à la conduite des revendications syndicales.

Dans le second cas, le système de relations industrielles et institutionnalisées des conflits entrerait en crise et l'on assisterait à la naissance de nouveaux mouvements ou de nouvelles organisations qui assumeraient alors la représentation des groupes et des catégories de population qui ne trouveraient pas dans l'organisation syndicale traditionnelle la possibilité d'exprimer leur situation.

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THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND WORKERS' CONTROL

The founder of cybernetics, Norbert Wiener, was keenly aware of the waste of human capacity involved in modern industry.

»In my mind« he wrote »use of a human being in which less is demanded of him than his full stature is a degradation and a waste. It is a degradation to a human being to chain him to an oar and use him as a source of power, but it is an almost equal degradation to assign him to a purely repetitive task in a factory, which demads less than a millionth of his brain capacity. It is simpler to organise a factory or a galley which uses human beings for a trivial fraction of their worth than it is to provide a world in which they can grow to their full stature«[1]

But the »full stature« of a human being is a developing stature, in which intellect, passion and will are all free to assert themselves. Wiener's theory of pain for the people who are mutilated in our society is in no way novel, and has antecedants in moral philosophy which date back at least as far as the thought of Immanuel Kant.

The dictum of Kant »always treat humanity in your own person and in others as an end and never as a means merely« holds out a criterion for human behavior which, while it retains its appeal, is quite clearly inoperable in our society. All economic activity, all productive organisation in capitalist industry is based upon the systematic violation of the categorical imperative. In every factory, mine, office and government department we find that men and women are compelled to labour to realise goals wich have been determined by others, to augment the power and prestige of others, to enrich others and enlarge their influence and status. Employees are not merely subordinates: they find their subordination intensified by the fact that their interests and aspirations can be imposed or manipulated by social forces quite beyond their individual or collective control. Most workplaces do not even leave their work-people free to fix even their own speed or rhythm of toil, while often their own pauses and rest-breaks, postures and work-dispositions are externally, and all to arbitrarily, determined. Legions of workers are driven deaf by noise-levels which are insupportable by normal human beings, or have their sight impaired, or suffer physical mutilation by the inexorable side-effects of indusrial processes. It is impossible for these who administer this state of affairs to claim that the maxim »do as you would be done by« is even remotely applicable to their conduct.

Yet the opponents of this state of affairs are in no stronger position to act upon the Kantian prescription than those against whom they react. Trade

[1] Norbert Wiener, **The Human Use of Human Beings**, Boston, 1950, p. 16,

unions and political parties, if they operate within the established structures, must strike a daily progression of compromises with forces which are based upon the use of men as objects, as tools in some greater purpose of capital aggrandizement. Even those who reject the given system completely, and opt for its revolutionary overthrow, can have no immediate use for Kant. They require to establish counter-institutions, an alternative division of political and military labour, in which it is quite impossible to treat every man as »an end in himself«. This fact was recognized by Trotsky, who wrote:

»A means can only be justified by its end. But the end in turn needs to be justified . . . and the end is justified if it leads to increasing the power of man over nature and to the abolition of the power of man over man.«[2]

The English sociologist Ginsberg[3] saw this notion as purely Kantian in its scope. However, there are good grounds for judging it to be quite different from Kant's injunction: it is applicable to our present problems, while Kant's is not. By introducing a distinct component of relativism, and by transferring its prescription from the present (as edict) to the future (as ultimate aim), Trotsky sets out a line of march, rather than an initial commandment. But such a line of march can be pursued in different formations, at different speeds, and with means by no means uniform with those Trotsky felt to be imperative. The struggle to overcome the power of one man over another will certainly recur in capitalist industry: it has by no means exhausted its impulse, and to think it could cease would be to imagine that humanity was capable of choosing helotry at a time when its technical capacity for freedom had never been greater. What is clear, however, is that struggle will take experimental forms, as it will essay a whole variety of initiatives, learning all the time that it acts.

In this sense, the movement for workers' control of industry is profoundly revolutionary, even while it pursues the most limited reforms. At the same time, if any socialist movement represents the continuation, development and realisation of the basic liberal criteria of democracy, it is this one, because it is impossible to agitate for the growth of democratic forms complex enough to govern the enormous scope of modern industry without comprehending every struggle to impose accountability upon the governors of political institutions.

Quite clearly, it is absurd to speak of real democracy, of real accountability, in institutions which are dominated by property. In today's industry, a handful of owners not merely command obedience from a vast mass of employees, but have so arranged affairs that the most active productive efforts of their subordinates can only intensify their dependence.[5] The greater their productivity, the greater the augmentation of hostile powers which may be used against them, even to the point of their own displacement from labour itself. The reality of this process has been made abundantly plain in Britain, where in recent years, between 1963 and 1971, indices of employment have

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[2] Leon Trotsky, **Their Morals and Ours,** Pioneer Books, New York, 1968.

[3] Morris Ginsberg, **Evolution and Progress,** Heinemann, London, 1961 pp. 252—3.

[4] We have documented some of the wide variety of these firms as exemplified in the recent history of the British labour movement, in K. Coates & A. Topham, Industrial Democracy in Great Britain, MacGibbon & Koe, London, 1968 (subsequently issued in a paperback edition by Panther books of London under the title **Workers' Control).**

[5] For a discussion of the English evidence on this matter, see Michael Barratt Brown: The Controllers of British Industry in **Can the Workers Run Industry?** ed. K. Coates, Institute for Workers' Control, Nottingham, 1968. Also Robin Murray's two articles in **The Spokesman,** Nos. 10 and 11, 'The International Company' and 'The State and the Internationalisation of Capital'.

moved from 100 down to 94.5, while those of productivity have moved from 100 up to 117. Not to put too fine a point on matters, the associated labours of work people in Britain have thus produced an alien power which has precipitated something like one milion of their brethren out of work altogether.[6] Unfortunately, this story repeats itself in other countries wherever the same conditions apply. Even when operating at its most efficient optimum levels, capital can only intensify the subordination and degradation against which Wiener was raging. The signs today seem to be that this optimum, with its concomitant »affluence«, is in increasingly acute peril. No doubt this partly explains the renewed interest in socialism and in industrial democracy.

Advocates of industrial democracy fall into two species. There are those who either wish to embellish a fundamentally undemocratic structure with decorous descriptions, or who are gulled into accepting such pretences for reality. And there are those who wish to socialise private property in productive organisations, and to extend to industry the same presumptions which are alleged to govern political institutions in most advanced capitalist democracies. The first category speaks a great deal about »workers' participation in industry« whithout ever impinging on the hard realities which impel workers not to participate. Their strategems were summarised in the wall-poster which appeared in Paris during the 1968 upsurge:

»I participate
Thou participatest
He participates
We participate
You participate
They Profit«

The second category do not usually speak about »participation«, although when they do, they mean something more than subordinate consultation. They usually speak of »workers' control« as their prescription for the erosion of arbitrary power in plant, industry and economy in capitalist society, and of »workers' self-management« as their goal for a socialist society.[7]

Of course, this terminology is by no means universally accepted, so there remain possibilities for semantic disputes. On one side, workpeople are apt to take the promises of »participation« or »consultation« seriously, so that frequently demands which might legitimately be characterised as claims for more control are made under the formulae of insistence upon »fuller participation« or »proper consultation«.[8] At another extreme, some socialists use the term »workers' control« to describe their norms for the administration of socialised economics, and simultaneously decry the more conventional trade union demand which organizes itself around the same slogan, as at best a palliative, at worst a delusion.[9] Yet there is very consi-

[6] John Hughes: **Behind the Dole Queue, The Facts about Unemployment**, Spokesman pamphlet No. 23, 1971.

[7] For an extended discussion of these problems, see my **Essays on Industrial Democracy**, Spokesman Books, 1971.

[8] As has been explained by Ernie Roberts in Workers' Control and the Trade Unions, published in **Can The Workers Rum Industry?** 100. cit.

[9] The »palliative« view has been expressed by some leading british communists, and can be found discussed in The Debate on Workers' Control published by IWC, Nottingham, 1970. The »delusion« view has been strenuously argued by certain Marxist-Leninist (Maoist) leaders in Britain, notably by Mr. Reg. Birch, in the journal The Worker, October, 1970.

derable evidence that various controls can, within limits, be encroached from the unilateral disposition of management by alert trade unions in certain favourable conditions. Of course, all free collective bargaining denies unilateral managerial control over wages, hours, and certain types of working conditions. But in every advanced western European country some trade unions have gone far beyond imposing such elementary restrictions, to establish varying degrees of control of hiring, firing, training, speeds and dispositions of work, health, safety regulations and their enforcement, and in some cases, over access to accounts and apposite financial information concerning the prospects of the firm.[10] In many cases, legal powers for limited controls may be secured by trade union political pressure, as in the notable instance of the legally established workmen's inspectorate in the British coal-mining industry. It should be stressed, however, that all attempts in Britain to extend similar powers to workers in manufacturing industry, or oven to employees in the notoriously dangerous deep-sea fishing fleets and the merchant navy, have so far proved fruitless.

In the word of Hugh Scanlon, President of the British Engineers' union, the AUEW:

»There already exists, particularly in fully unionised concerns, a considerable degree of workers' control in individual factories, if 'workers' control' is defined as effective control by organised workers over the arbitrary powers of management. This is indeed 'the seed of the new society inside the old'. Shop stewards prefer, and seem to get more out of, workshop bargaining than the type of 'consultation' favoured by management. This radical move away from the defensive mentality of the past is graphically shown in the fact concerning the causes of industrial disputes. It has been shown that between 1940 and 1960, the proportion of strikes (excluding strikes in the mining industry) not directly concerned with wage-increases, but connected with disputes such as those about working arrangements, rules and discipline, have risen from about one-third to three-quarters of the total. In 1960, a TUC survey showed that only 32% of strikes were directly about money, 29% were about dismissals alone. In this brief survey it is clear that the changes in the Labour Movement since the 'thirties are making nonsense of the concept of a purely 'economic man', limited to actions in defence of his standard of living. Far wider isues are involved today.

Yet even the extension of the current type of 'workers' control' can be seen as holding only a watching and limiting function on the 'rights' of management. Workers are demanding an effective voice in management policy. This aspiration is particularly concentrated in regard to the nationalised industries, where obviously the greatest scope is offered to the demand that management be obliged to obtain the consent of workers in all matters of industrial policy. Trade unions envisage a radical extension of the scope of collective trade union action, from a point beyond wages and salaries to human conditions of employment in their broadest aspects.«[11]

Similar views have been expressed by many British Trade Union leaders, notably Jack Jones,[12] the secretary of the largest union in Britain, the

[10] Some of the evidence on these matters is to be found in the forthcoming study by Coates and Topham: **The New Unionism**, Peter Owen, London, 1972.

[11] Cf. Hugh Scanlon: **The Way Forward for Workers' Control**, IWC, Nottingham, 1971.

[12] Cf. Jones' contribution to the Labour Party debate on industrial democracy, in Coates, Barratt Brown and Topham, **The Trade Union Register**, Merlin Press, London, 1969.

Transport and General Workers' Union; Ernie Roberts, the Engineer's Assistant Secretary; Alan Fisher, the Public Employees' leader, and spokesmen of the Post Office and Technicians' union. Demands along the same lines are particularly evident in the agendas of some of the most dynamic white-collar unions, where physical proximity to managerial personnel and close familiarity with some of the crucial problems involved in decision-taking clearly have no noticeable effect in damping the appetites of employees for a non--servile status.

This current of thought is by no means confined to British Labour. Perhaps the most coherent statement of trade union aspirations for industrial democracy, and the most integrally thought-out strategy to achieve such aims is to be found in the programme which was adopted in 1971 by the Belgian Socialist Unions, organised in the General Federation of Belgian Workers. This programme insists:

»For the FGTB, participation necessarily implies the maintenance of union autonomy. It is in this context that we can describe workers' control in the following manner:

1. Who?

The FGTB considers that workers' control cannot be effected except by the workers organised into unions. Solidarity and cohesion amongst the workers in their unions is the guarantee of the defence of their interests; isolated workers cannot enjoy such benefits.

2. When?

The essential conditions for workers' control are that they should be informed in time, that is, that they should be informed previous to any decision being taken and never be faced with a fait accompli.

3. Of What?

Of all the factors in any given economic and social situation. Thus it is not a matter of information limited to a few texts or other items, but on the contrary, the sum of elements must be presented to allow a rounded judgement of the situation.

4. Why?

So that there is the possibility (not the obligation) of exercising the right of dispute, that is to say, of presenting, if need be, our own alternative propositions. It is important to insist on the word »possibility«; this means that the union reserves for itself the right to choose the time, the conditions, the duration and the issues with regard to which it might decide, completely autonomously, to exercise its right to dispute.

5. On What Levels?

Workers' control must be exercised at all levels (enterprise, groups of enterprises, region, industrial sector, nation...) in close association with all the workers concerned.

6. How is union freedom to be safeguarded?

The union must at the same time safeguard its entire freedom of industrial action, its entire autonomy. The right of dispute does not only consist

[13] The British have long preached a doctrine of workers' control and have in fact published a large number of pamphlets on the question ever since the heyday of Guild Socialism in the immediate post-war years after 1918. The reorganisation of the Post Office under the Wilson administration brought about an exchange of recriminating polemics between the responsible minister and the UPW, on precisely these questions. Cf. **Bulletin of the Institute for Workers' Control,** Vol. 1., No. 1., 1968.

in safeguarding union autonomy, but also in promoting settlements which render this freedom of union activity technically possible.

Workers' Control consists of continual limitation of arbitrary action on the part of the employers, thanks to measures permitting the intervention of the workers in areas which, previously, escaped them — by progressive conquests within the framework of the unions which preserve the autonomy of their rights and powers, which are continuosly being renewed, assuring for the workers progressive mastery over economic and social life at all levels.

In a certain number of cases, management decisions concerning investment, for example, risk limiting the real margins for workers' claims. It is therefore essential for the unions to be able to advocate a settlement which re-estabilishes this margin for social progress.«[14]

Naturally, the tug-of-war involved in »encroachment« of this kind is by no means a one-way affair. When conditions are ripe for employers to act, they will attempt to erode the powers temporarily ceded to their workpeople. In every West European country, when employers have lost too much ground to the unions, there have been attempts at political intervention to subordinate the unions to governmental regulation. Perhaps the most graphic instance to date of such intervention is the British Industrial Relations Act of 1971, which attempts to weaken the powers of unions at the shop-floor level by a variety of expedients. At the moment of writing, the TUC is resisting the enforcement of this law by a general policy of non-co-operation, and its effect must therefore remain subject to doubt, real though its intentions certainly are. Whether the unions will be able to frustrate those intentions by withholding co-operation remains to be seen.

Yet throughout the political turmoil in which this Act was produced, and during the whole length of the discussion of its provisions in Parliament, the struggle for the extension of trade union control powers was continually developing in Britain. To take one example: the Confederation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Unions repudiated a procedural agreement which had been imposed on their industries ever since the 1922 lock-out of engineering workers. In negotiating for a new set of procedural arrangements, they insisted that any change whatsoever initiated in working conditions by management should, before implementation, be subject to criticism and objections from the shop-floor and recast in their light. That is, the status quo must apply during all such negotiations. Obviously, this has significant implications for workers' control at plant level, for it implies that the workers would have the right to veto the unilateral and arbitrary decisions of management over a wide range of issues — dismissals, redundancies, discipline, alternations in speed and content of work, manning arrangements, and so on. The status quo demand, which received the backing of the TUC in 1969, is a crucial practical way of strengthening plant level workers' control, and goes a long way towards disentangling shop stewards and unions caught up in the meshes of post-productivity bargaining 'participation'.[15]

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[14] Cf. **A Trade Union Strategy in the Common Market**, Spokesman Books, 1971.

[15] Although negotiations between the CSEU and the Engineering Employers' Federation have broken down, leaving the industry with no nationally agreed procedure, for handling disputes, nonetheless the unions are actively pursuing local agreements with such employers as are ready to settle, all of which must be based upon the acceptance of the »satus quo« principle, Cf. Coates and Topham **The New Unionsm**, Peter Owen, 1972.

To take another example: in the fight against unemployment, which passed the half-milion mark in the middle of the term of office of the Wilson administration, and has since risen continuously to its present level, not only have trade unions continued to recruit additional members from a declining labour force, but quite novel forms of struggle have been devised to defend work-opportunities. The most famous of these is the »work-in« of shipbuilders on the Upper Clyde,[16] in which general subscriptions by the labour movement have enabled the relevant shop stewards' movement to maintain on a trade union payroll, large numbers of workers declared redundant by their bankrupt firm and so to effectively veto their employer's »right« to dismiss his staff. Work-ins are only possible where the nature of the work involves long-term construction projects, and attempts to imitate the Clyde action in the motor cycle factory of BSA in Birmingham were a failure. But similar actions at a Sheffield Steelworks were highly successful. Another Scottish plant which was »closed« by the Plessey telecommunications company has been occupied by its workers ever since: and the example of this »sit-in« has had a wide spread effect. The outbreak of such struggles has had a particularly galvanising effect upon employed workers in Scotland, surrounded as they are by extremely high levels of male unemployment.[17]

Building on these examples, as we have explained at greater length elsewhere,[18] shop stewards and rank-and-file trade unionists become increasingly concerned to elaborate strategies to erode managerial monopolies of information, which are traditionally defended under the appeal to business secrecy, and to create powers of representation, veto, and supervision over production decisions in general, as well as those concerning employment.

»In order to safeguard gains made in this way, the active trade unionists have to work hard to improve democratic relations between themselves, the members they represent, and the union to which they belong. Reporting back procedures, and the right of members to call their delegates and representatives to account, and to dismiss them if necessary, are all vital insurances against the dangers of rank-and-file union incorporation into management's ethos. The other crucial requirement for advance is that national and local trade union centres gear themselves to effectively service the shop floor initiatives.[19] The whole strategy of encroaching control requires a big expansion of trade union education, and of research and accountancy services which are both available to trade unionists, and at the same time accountable to them. If the union bargainers at plant level are really to make a challenge for access to information on, and powers of veto and supervision over, the employers' investment plans, they need to acquire self-confidence in handling a whole new range of ideas and facts. All the experince of adult education confirms that workers are of course perfectly capable of acquiring this self-confidence if they obtain the opportunities to do so. But plant bargaining, and plant-level controls over procedure, are not enough. They are

[16] Cf. the following publications of the Institute for Workers' Control: Eaton, Hughes, Coates: UCS — **Workers' Control: The Real Defence Against Unemployment is Attack!** Nicholson: **UCS — An Open Letter.** Fleet: Whatever Happened at UCS. Also Murray: UCS: **The Anatomy of Bankruptcy,** Spokesman Books, Nottingham, 1972.

[17] In April 1971, before the UCS crisis revealed itself, there were 30,000 unemployed men in Glasgow, a rise of 40% in one year.

[18] In **The New Unionism, op. cit.**

[19] A careful study of the state of trade union democracy in Britain was made by John Hughes for the Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations which worked under the chairmanship of the late Lord Donovan. It was published as an occasional paper by the Commission. Cf. Also Richard Fletcher: **Problems of Trade Union Democracy,** IWC, 1971.

the base on which much wider frames of reference may be built. If workers do not look beyond their own plants, their view will inevitably be a narrow one. On the crucial question of employment opportunities and redundancies, the trade union side in plant bargaining finds itself compelled to take a wider view than that dictated by the immediate short-term interests of those workers in the plant who will be retained in work. Even when 'no redundancy' promises are made, the goal of modern management is normally saving on labour cost, and this may be achieved in the context of improved productivity by natural wastage, retirement and labor turnover. The result is, of course, that job opportunities for new entrants into industry are reduced, and overall unemployment rises. It is very difficult to see this perspective solely from the plant; if, however, a District Committee of a union, or a Trades Council, did some arithmetic and added together the loss of job opportunities from labour-saving agreements made in the major plants in their locality, the point would quickly be appreciated.«[20]

In this way arises the question of the need for a trade union »social audit«. Giant steps forward in this direction were taken during the Upper Clyde dispute, when the Scottish TUC initiated a full scale enquiry into the social costs of closure of a major part of the Glasgow shipbuilding industry. This enquiry summoned vital witnesses, and met for nine days under a considerable blare of publicity in the Scottish press. The Institute for Workers' Control submitted important evidence on the scope of a »social audit«,[21] and testimony was taken not only from economists and experts on shipbuilding, but also from planners, welfare workers, and other persons with knowledge of the total social effect of the closure decision. In a number of other disputes which have taken place since the Scottish enquiry reported, workers have proposed similar investigations, in which employees of universities and other public bodies have willingly participated.

In all these examples, it is clear that the detailed work of defining the meaning of workers' control is very much a task for workpeople themeselves. When one comes to look at the problems of socialist societies, and the demand for self-management of both industry and plan, this is no less true.

Workers' control, as discussed above, however agressively pursued, expresses a series of basically negative democratic restraints upon the exercise of authority in industry. Taken to its ultimate conclusion, it does certainly raise the question of new forms of social ownership and democratic administration. But the establishment of such new forms is a political labour, which, however it is accomplished, will necessarily amount to a social revolution. Models for self-management in such a new society clearly require not only to establish sound criteria for social planning and industrial development, but also to relate these to real criteria for full democracy in decision--making at every level, which cannot possibly exist without the widest freedom of criticism, openness of the press and communications media, and freedom of political association.

Since societies which call themselves socialist are often rather backward in encouraging democracy of any kind, leave alone selfmanagement, it is still necessary to look at the arguments for selfmanagement in relation to the experience of workpeople in the advanced capitalist democracies.

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[20] Cf. **The New Unionism,** Chapters on workers' control.
[21] **UCS: The Social Audit,** A special report by the IWC, 1971.

»No man is good enough to be another man's master« wrote the English socialist William Morris. But in a world in which masters dominante, the social arrangements over which they preside are so arranged as to obscure its truth. Myths are created, with the prime object of justifying the right of rulers to rule, owners to own, managers to manage, These myths cannot succeed in their prime object, however, if they do not, at the same time, achieve a secondary effect: the underminig of the self-confidence, critical judgement and independent initiative of all those over whom rule is exercised.[22]

This is a common story. In the United States black people have been dominated, ever since the overthrow of direct slavery, as much as by their own carefully implanted sense of inadequacy as by the force at the disposal of authority. When Malcolm X and his friends began to preach »Black is beautiful«, and the movement for Black Power started rolling, the first and key element in the upsurge of the black population was a new self-recognition. Black people had to recognise themselves, but they also had to learn to like what they recognised. In the same way, the movement for Women's Liberation has to begin with an attack on all the complex attitudes held by women which contribute to their subordination. And with the working people things are not fundamentally different. Whilst workers take for granted their right to political suffrage, they are prevented, by attitudes which pervade their whole upbringing, from conceiving industrial suffrage as natural or just. The first and main protectors of arbitrary power in our society are not the public guardians of law and order, but the policemen who operate in the heads of the people who are held in subjection. What are these mental policemen? In the old days there were savagely distorted religious ideas, which not only placed God over Heaven just as the King ruled the State, but went farther, to uphold the notion that the King derived his own authority directly from God, to whom alone he was accountable. If there are modern workers who believe in God, there are few among them who would be prepared to accept that He appointed the Chairman of the Board of Directors, and fewer still who see the lineaments of divinity in the inconsiderate and impolite fellow who, all too often, is entrusted with the immediate supervision of their work. More subtle myths, rationally founded, are required to justify the present industrial order.

We must necessarily examine two of these. The first is the myth of 'intelligence'. Some men, we can all see, are cleverer than others. You have to be clever to run a factory. If you are clever, provided you're not too clever, you'll get on. All these common-sense perceptions have now been systemized into an extensive theory of intelligence, which, however often it is questioned or discredited, still persuades many people that they are too stupid to know how to conduct their own collective affairs. The theory, in its crudest form, states a number of propositions. One is that intelligence is a quality which is secreted in individual heads. Another is that the capacity to secrete it is determined genetically, so that it can be inherited. A third used to be that this capacity was fixed, and unchanging, so that it could be objectively measured by an intelligence quotient. An extension of it, commonly made, is the fourth proposition that people in subordinate roles occupy them because they are inadequate in intelligence, and could not do otherwise than they are doing. All four propositions are questionable. We would be wise to regard

[22] The analysis of all such myths needs to begin with a study of the first chapter of Karl Marx' Capital, in which he discusses the nature of commodity-fetishism.

intelligence as a social product, resulting from the social interaction of people. Whilst all kinds of characteristics can be inherited, most people who are not mentally handicapped — in a strictly medical sense — are capable of learning up to the highest standards, provided that the learning starts early enough, that the teaching is effective and that the process is not subject to counter-influences from the labour market, which discourage the learner and distort the role of the teacher. Because it is a social development, the capacity of people to show 'individual inteligence' is very variable indeed, and can be drastically affected by changes in the social environment. And people in subordinate roles occupy them because people who aren't in them like to keep things that way.

Yet it remains true that workers need to learn much before they can manage their own factories. If learning facilities were made available to them by the factories, they could acquire the right knowledge relatively simply. But factories are organized in ways which prevent them from being taught, so that the whole process of management appears to be out of reach.

The second myth is that property is the whole basis for a free society. This myth used to be a great deal truer than it is today. In the Middle Ages, when 'town air was free air' and the guilds were at their height, a workman would own his tools, his shop and his product. Apprentices would learn their skills and subsequently become masters. Property in scissors, needles and cloth was indeed the very foundation of the freedom of the tailor, or the glover, in such a society.

But the property in the vast concern of machines which are currently working towards the manufacture of the RB 211 aero-engine is a very different story. Those who own this equipment can only do so at the expense of freedom of all those who have to work it. Unless this ownership becomes truly social, that is to say communal, it is bound to restrict the general freedom, not advance it.

None of these arguments prevents many workers from seeing things differently. If you ask ten engineers at random whether they believe in, say, the socialization of the engineering industry, at least three or four of them will say 'No': and when pressed for a reason, answer »How would you like it if you worked all your life to build up a sweetshop, and the Government came along and took it?« Of course, sweetshops aren't aircraft industries, and might well be left for ages to the control of individual shopkeepers, who might, indeed, feel the freer for the fact. But when workers make this equation, which is wrong, they do so because it corresponds to the 'normal' assumption of the culture they inhabit. It is 'normal' for factories to be privately owned and autocratically managed. It is 'natural' for workers to be allocated jobs which do little or nothing to develop their capacities, and subjected to disciplines which are calculated to restrict their intiative to minimal levels. If these things are usual, then they all too easily become accepted as unavoidable and, even when resented, may well be seen as, in a sense, 'fair'.

Yet the idea that no man is good enough to be another's master constantly recurs. It can be traced throughout the history of industrial capitalism, from its very dawn. The goal of social self-management has never really been purged from the body of the trade unions, or the political parties of Labour. With every crisis of the established order, it is wont to reappear. It is repeatedly announced to be dead, out-dated or primitive. Men who have renounced

it repeatedly secure preferment after the fact. Its partisans are frequently reviled and sometimes presecuted. Nonetheless, it keeps coming back, and has done so ever since the beginning of the socialism.

In Britain it was the very heart of the revolutionary unionism of the Owenites, so that when the workers of Derby were locked out in 1834 they appealed to their colleagues in surrounding townships to »look out for machinery« so that they could immediately establish the co-operative commonwealth in their city.[23] After the defeat of the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union, and experiments with political action for the suffrage, it recurred in the industrial co-operative movement, which made valiant effort to overcome capital starvation before it failed. The First International preached it day and night, until it recognised the fruits of its agitation in the Paris Comune. It flared up internationaly with compelling force in the early days of the Russian Revolution, and the mystique which it created sufficed to camouflage the rise of totalitarianism in the Soviet Union for millions of workers throughout Europe for as long as two or three decades. It was set back, profoundly, when the appreciation of these tragic events were translated into the savage half-truths of the cold war. It was given renewed stimulus by the experiments of the Yugoslavs, and has, in our own immediate time, demonstrated its enormous vitality in the Czechoslovak Spring od 1968.[24] If its future in Eastern Europe will be turbulent, it is, for all that assured. Even without exemplars in the West, the peoples of Eastern Europe cannot solve their economic and political problems without unleashing the forces of popular participation, which cannot be safely manipulated in an advanced society in which the myths which sustain a mental police force have all been largely dispelled. If arbitrary rule is to survive in such circumstances it needs real policemen, in growing numbers, because the mental ones have been demobilised. There will be a new Prague Spring, and a Moscow one, unless the monstrous apparatus of the cold war can be reactivated to prevent them, by legitimating oppression in the cause of national and social survival. Of course, in the event that German or British or Italian workers break through to establish a self-managing socialist democracy in their own territories, its example can only hasten this process. If the dead hand of authoritarianism could exert its baneful influence within the socialist movements of the world during all the years in which social stalemate was the rule in the West, so the enlivening influence of a socialist experiment in any of the advanced capitalist democracies will transmit itself with inexorable force across all frontiers and barriers whatsoever.

This vision has been expressed with considerable clarity by Hugh Scanlon, in words which do much to reveal the quality of the new generation of trade union leaders which is emerging in Western Europe.

»One cannot give any kind of detailed blueprint for such a radical transformation as a transition to a socialist society under full democratic workers' self-management; what we can do is to analyse certain tendencies and safeguards that can be the basis of proposals to map our route without falling into the twin traps of local free-for-alls and excessive centralisation. Certainly with nationalisation, workers must not be made to feel, as they certainly do at present, that there is only a political change while there remains an

[23] Cf. Raymond Postgate: **Revolution,** Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1960, pp. 80—90.
[24] Cf. The special number of **Autogestion** dedicated to the Czechoslovak Reform Movement and published in 1970.

industrial status quo. Fundamentally, the aim within public ownership is the wearing down of sides in industry, with no 'superiors' or 'inferiors' but only differences and functions based on knowledge and ability. Only through public ownership could there be this real will to co-operate.

There need be no real contradiction between the necessity for integration and centralisation of resource planning in a modern developed economy, and a structure of democratic decision-making that allows flexibility and the development of local initiative. It seems a false assumption to counter-pose the two. Indeed the decentralised 'market' criteria of the Yugoslav pattern constrain the workers' freedom in work (irrespecitive of works-council decisions) and hamper the development of the economy. A caricature of a market economy cannot give workers effective decision-making powers over an economy. At the other extreme, a 'national plan' run purely by a small circle of bureaucrats at the top as well as being unacceptable to the democratic aspirations of the British labour movement, is also economic nonsense in an advanced, highly complex industrial system. The consumer, although having no formal industrial rights, has a vital part to play in exercising controls over prices, quality and choice. Indeed the election of consumer committees at all stages of price and production determination would help to direct industry to the service of the community.

A central planning medium needs the democratic participation of works committees and consumers, as well as specialist advice. Communication in industry in national, as well as plant planning, is a necessity. Ideas, aspirations and intentions need to have full access and be encouraged upward, whilst explanations, snags and problems should be moved downward for discussion and the creation of an informed working populace. The works' committees, rising through industry to national planning need the safeguards of full political democracy in order to discuss and decide upon alternative plans for economic and structural development. Even where there is full workers' control in the industrial plants, workers will be left in a purely passive executive position if they cannot effectively discuss, and draw up the central plan itself, and have the opportunity to modify or change it in tune with changing circumstances or needs. Here the element of flexibility becomes all-important.

There must obviously be a recognition that specialists would play an important, and possibly more vital role under a structure of workers' self-management. Staff appointments, carrying such duties as design, experiment and research would remain with a high degree of autonomy in their research. Managers with over-all operative duties could work under the guidance and eventual control of representative bodies of workers, holding the power of appointment, promotion and dismissals. Every workshop or department could elect, by secret ballot, representatives to deal with managerial functions and in turn consult frequently with workers. Large factories might require inter-departmental committees but for smaller plants the next stage would probably be factory administration. Administration would embrace different functional divisions, comprising members of primary committees together with consumers. Administrative factory committees could be endowed with power to select managers who in turn would appoint supervisory grades, at least in the initial stages. Representatives from Factory Committees, elected to Industrial Councils could be enabled to work out policies relating to the whole industry, and provide a link with other industries and planning authorities. The necessity for control must be balanced by the

freedom which enables individuals to apply their own ideas, while keeping in mind, and making allowances for, the wider needs of the community.

It has often been argued that a centralised planning medium of this character will inevitably lead to a new ruling caste of managers and bureaucrats. This is obviously a point that needs to be carefully examined, in particular to see what safeguards both organisationally and inherent in the structure of the society itself, would militate against this. Obviously the maintenance of political freedom to democratically discuss conflicting views of planning would be a powerful safeguard. But this by itself is not enough. The trade unions' role in a nationalized economy can also be an important factor in this direction. There is an essential need to preserve trade union independence. The unions must not be directly involved in controlling industry. The value of the unions will lie in their ability to take independent action to redress industrial grievances and act as a media for protection against injustice. Even in the content of a plan, there is scope for unions to act as bargaining agents and to play a role in determining wages.

Institutional cheks can be introduced to halt any tendency towards an irresponsible bureaucracy. The right of recall of representatives by the membership and the interchangeability of positions, would go a long way in this direction. However the main check to the growth of administrative autonomy by specialists would be provided by the benefits of a socialised economy and would lay the basis for a tremendous increase in material resources, leaving room not only for a swift reduction in the working day (with the use of automation) but allowing, on the foundations of rapid economic growth for a great extension in educational facilities. Obviously one cannot induce democratic involvement in industry by a stroke of the pen, but an effective participation needs a technologically educated workforce. One cannot afford to examine the viability of workers' self-management in a static sense; technological advance could be more than equalled by cultural advance through the growth not only of administrative experience but of vastly improved educational resources. A reduction in the working day to allow time for study, would greatly accelerate this process.«[25]

The possibility that such changes in our industrial order may be accomplished is a very real one, which no-one should imagine to be utopian. If anything, such a transformation is overdue. It will not solve the many outstanding problems of our age, which require an end to underdevelopment in a majority of the nations of the world, and quite new approaches to the exploitation of the human environment. But in moving towards a liberation of all the talents whichs have hitherto been thwarted and oppressed in industrial civilisation, it will at least open up the opportunity for men to create a world fit to live in, and a style of life which they need not be ashamed of.

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[25] Hugh Scanlon, ibid.

The ideas contained in this paper are the product of extensive discussion with my colleagues of the Institute for Workers' Control, and notably with my co-author, Tony Topham. The argument is developed at greater length in our book **The New Unionism**, published by Peter Owen in October, 1972.

A modified version of it was delivered at a conference organised by the Metalworkers' Union in West Germany last April.

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THE SOCIOTECHNICAL PRINCIPLES OF WORKERS' CONTROL

Industrial Democracy: Myth and Reality

»A democratic constitution not supported by democratic institutions in detail but confined to the central government, not only is not political freedom, but often creates a spirit precisely the reverse.«
J. S. Mill, Collective Works, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965, p. 944.

THE ISSUE OF DEMOCRATIZATION

Democratization, as applied, among others, to work in industry, is one of the most popular cliches in the modern times. There is plenty of talking about it not only in the Western democracies but even in the countries ruled arbitrarily by uncontrolled elites.

There are several good reasons why the democratization has become a popular public demand. One of them is the growing level of education and sophistication of masses. Another is the objective need to diminish the alienation[1] of an average worker who is unhappy with his current subservient situation. The contradictions of a modern society expose him to all kind of tensions.

The heavy investment in private goods exceeds the current ability of any well developed Western society to deal with such consequences of it as pollution, repair services, construction of roads, etc. The cult of a conspicuous consumption leads to a growing discrepancy between privileged and underprivileged. The traditional emphasis on a pursuit of happiness contributes to the wide-spread personal frustrations.[2] William A. Westley and Margaret W. Westley are right saying that »the effect of affluence and increased education on the status system of modern industry is to erode the legitimacy of this system. This, in turn, means that the involvement of the modern, affluent, highly educated worker is weakened and is unsatisfactory to him. We predict that this dissatisfaction will be expressed in a claim for increased control over the redistribution of profits and over the production process itself. Unions which contain both traditional and modern workers will experience intense internal struggles for power.«[3]

The relative material affluence of North American wage— and salary-earners is not supplemented by enough social and spiritual affluence in the sphere

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[1] See on this issue Joachim Israel, **Alienation. From Marx to Modern Society,** Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1971.

[2] The general estrangement from the dominant society may or may not be followed by the sense of non-identity in the individual. It is possible to talk about 'total alienation' if both these factors appear together — something which becomes common among young people. Mitchell presents this view when he states, »the adolescent will seek out need gratification where it is available even if he must go to subcultures to find it. If the subculture consistenly satisfies basic needs that the larger society or the family structure does not satisfy, it becomes progressively more difficult to dislodge the youth from this particular subculture.« J. J. Mitchell, **Adolescence: Some Critical Issues,** Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1971, p. 84.

[3] William A. Westley an Margaret W. Westley, **The Emerging Worker. Equality and Conflict in the Mass Consumption Society,** Montreal: McGill — Queen's University Press, 1971.

of decision making. »For example, a central aspect of the industrial worker's economic insecurity is management's complete control over shutdowns, layoffs, transfers of operations, and the basic organization of the plant.«[4]

For the U.S. industry it becomes difficult to compete effictively with Japanese and Germans. The U.S. share of world exports declined during the decade of sixties from 16 per cent to 14 per cent, and in 1971 the U.S. started to have for the first time a considerable trade deficit. It is due to large extent to the fact that »the traditional work ethic of the U.S. is showing signs of senility.«[5] In the second half of the sixties the labor cost per unit of output has grown in the U.S. by 21 per cent (in Japan only by 3 per cent). Because of high cost the multinational companies tend to export from the U.S. not so much goods as just jobs by building plants overseas. Even if the productivity of American workers is still higher than in other leading nations, the priority even in this respect becomes difficult to be maintained for a long period.

The question is how to make work a more satisfactory experience. Young people are not willing anymore to submit to authority, discipline and boredom. They want to do more satisfying work which would be adequate to their growing educational level, improved standard of living[6] and higher aspirations. All kind of job-enrichment programs offer only a partial solution.

In the mass consumption economy there is an obvious expectation of people that they would be able to acquire its fruits.[7] Modern workers in comparison with their past counterparts have better education, stronger and wider aspirations, and are much less inclined to accept any kind of paternalism. »The modern blue collar worker, in spite of his competence, his high aspirations and expectations, is unable to find a place in his society and feels alienated from his work and from his union. This frustration can only produce dissatisfaction and restlessness (...). He has a highly modern orientation, a different sense of self, and a much more equalitarian and liberal attitude toward his relationships and responsibilities to others. He does not accept the factory system devised for the traditional worker. He finds the fragmentation and routinization of tasks devised by men like Taylor to make him efficient, repulsive and demeaning. He is dissatisfied with his work, and increasingly challenges the competence of foremen and the rights of managers.«[8]

There is growing evidence that the authoritarian style of management becomes obsolete in the modern society which enters its post-industrial stage. The good quality of performance depends much more on personal satisfaction and performance of workers. Even popular magazines start to bother about it. »Companies that neglect to consider the blue collar workers' worries and dissatisfactions pay a hidden price in low production, goofing off, absenteeism, high job turnover, and union grievances.«[9]

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[4] John Case, Workers Control: Toward a North American Movement, **Our Generation**, 8, 3, 1, 1972, p. 5. On problems of workers control in Canada see Gerry Hunnius, ed., **Participatory Democracy for Canada. Worker's Control and Community Control**, Montreal: Black Rose Books — Our Generation Press, 1971, and **Industrial Democracy and Canadian Labour**, Montreal: Our Generation Press — Black Rose Books, 1970.

[5] Too Many U.S. Workers No Longer Give a Damn, **Newsweek**, 24th April, 1972, p. 65.

[6] Living in suburbs becomes common among younger generations of blue collar workers in the U.S.A. and it has its impact on their mentality. »House owning in the suburbs, higher educational levels, affluence, mobility, and contact with mass consumption and mass leisure values have eroded the class consciousness of the modern worker considerably.« William A. Westley and Margaret W. Westley, **op. cit.**, p. 84.

[7] W. W. Rostow, **The Stages of Economic Growth**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960, p. 10—11.

[8] William A. Westley and Margaret W. Westley, **op. cit.**, pp. 119, 117—118.

[9] The Blue Collar Worker's Lowdown Blues, **Time**, Nov. 9, 1970.
See also The Blue-Collar Blues, **Newsweek**, May 17, 1971.

The dissatisfaction of blue collar workers appears of course not only in the West. In the Soviet Bloc workers have even more to complain about,[10] but they are very limited in expressing their real views. From time to time there is an opportunity to show in public the dissatisfaction — as e.g. in the case of the Polish shipyard workers on the coast of the Baltic sea in December, 1970.[11]

The perspectives of any meaningful industrial democracy depend to a large extent, among others, on the degree of work commitment made possible within a given economy. E.g. the peripheral workers who do not have any stable work places and some clear work commitments, are not interested in self-management just because of their ambiguous employment situation. »An increasing number of workers, young or nonwhite or female, or all simultaneously, swirl around the portals of industry, unable to penetrate the conventional »ports of entry«, condemned to marginal work experiences, tempted to withdraw entirely from the labor force if, like Negro teenagers, they are relatively more disadvantaged than their fellows.«[12] In the middle of the sixties approximately 45 per cent of Americans were in the category of »peripheral« workers, in it more than a half were severely peripheral being employed during the whole year no more than 26 weeks full time or maximum 39 weeks part time.

There is a general trend in the highly developed societies to have in the labor force younger people, more female, more ethnic and racial minorities. This structural phenomenon may be a limiting factor for the progress of industrial democracy. It depends, however, on the social and political consciousness of all mentioned above labour categories. This consciousness may grow to such extent that there will not be any basic difference among various groups of working people.

The »peripherality« is not only the issue of an objective situation, but also a wide-spread feeling of impotence and inferiority. »The typical worker appears lightly commited to his work, and his work appears to grow ever lighter in meaning to him (...) Most of the blue-collarites involved eventually adjust their identity to the erosion of work meaning (acquire an »occupational personality«) or shift out of work roles that excessively punish them.«[13]

The problem of white collar workers' »peripherality« becomes also of great importance, taking into consideration their progressing numerical strength. E. g. in Great Britain between 1911 and 1961 white collars have grown from 19 per cent to 36 per cent the total labor force (the clerks have grown from 4 per cent to 13 per cent). However, »only three out of ten white-collar workers belong to a union whereas five out of ten manual workers are members.«[14] In the private sector only one out of ten white collar workers are unionized.

But even among much better unionized blue-collar workers the present-day labor organizations of the Western world do not help much to overcome the feeling of mediocrity and frustration. Both American and European

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[10] See Robert Conquest **Industrial workers in the USSR**, London. The Bodley Head, 1967; Arvid Brodersen, **The Soviet Worker**. Labor and Government in Soviet Society. New York: Random House, 1966.

[11] See Alexander Matejko, From Peasant into Worker in Poland, **International Review of Sociology**, VII, 3, December 1971. The same also in **East Europe**, vol. 21, no. 6 and 7, 1972.

[12] Dean Morse, **The Peripheral Worker**, New York: Columbia University Press, 1969, pp. 152—153.

[13] Arthur B. Shostak, **Blue-Collar Life**, New York: Random House, 1969, pp. 59 and 58.

[14] George Sagers Bain, **The Growth of White Collar Unionism**, London: Oxford University Press, 1970. p. 37.

labor unions become integrated into the existing system. They are a semipublic institution, but a bureucratized and centralized one. The unions' ties with members are declining[15] and there is little hope for any considerable improvement in this respect in a forseeable future.[16]

Should trade unions extend collective bargaining to such areas as product pricing policies, opening of books on a permanent basis, taking responsibility for the social utility of products? Is it possible to have a real self-management without public ownership? Has the iron law of oligarchy a universal validity? Are trade union leaders right in refusing to share managerial responsibilities in order to secure the trade union independence? Should the trade union bargaining power be kept separated from all kind of self-managerial commitments? What to do with participation in such managerial decisions which make harm to workers? — all such questions are still very far from becoming of a primary importance for labor leaders.

THE THEORETICAL FALLACIES

The democratization as a vital issue does exist in all kind of work and task-achievement situations, but its progress has been slowed down so far by an one-sided interpretation what democracy does really mean. It seems necessary to agree with Carole Pateman when she says that »No longer is democratic theory centred on the participation of 'the people', or the participation of the ordinary man, or the prime virtue of a democratic political system seen as the development of politically relevant and necessary qualities in the ordinary individual; in the contemporary theory of democracy it is the participation of the minority elite that is crucial and the non-participation of the apathetic, ordinary man lacking in the feeling of political efficacy, that is regarded as the main bulwark against instability.«[17]

The democratic method is according to Schumpeter, »that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote«.[18] It is paradoxical that democracy understood this way needs limited participation, and even apathy of voters, in order to work well.[19] The role of multiple minorities is commonly treated by specialists as something normal. According to G. Sartori the governance executed by elites is just unavoidable.[20] The growth of mass participation may lead only to totalitarianism. Also for Eckstein the stability of the system necessitates some kind of an authoritarian leadership.[21]

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[15] See Mark van de Vall, **Labor Organization. A Macro and Micro-sociological Analysis on a Comparative Basis,** Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

[16] The trade unions represent in the anglo-saxon world in reality only a part of the total non-agricultural work force: from a little more than one forth in the U.S.A. (28 per cent) to one third in Canada and two fifths in Great Britain.

[17] Carole Pateman, **Participation and Democratic Theory**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970, p. 104.

[18] Joseph Schumpeter, **Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy,** London: Allen & Unwin, 1943, p. 269.

[19] See B. R. Berelson, P. F. Lazarsfeld, W. N. McPhee, **Voting,** Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954, p. 316.

[20] G. Sartori, **Democratic Theory**, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1962.

[21] H. Eckstein, A Theory of Stable Democracy in **Division on Cohesion in Democracy**, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966, App. B, p. 267.

The major weaknesses of most presently existing participation schemes consist in: locating the participation centers too far from the rank and file, applying the representative (indirect) democracy principles to the situation in which they do not fit, overlooking the actual needs and aspirations of the rank and file, making possible for the 'tacit associations' of people united by some common interest to misuse the participatory form and institutions.

The security and independence of the individual is the obvious condition of an effective participation. People who are objectively insecure are exposed to all kinds of pressures and blackmail. The personal dependence limits the freedom of decision. For Rousseau the guaranty was in a society of small proprietors. For us in the modern world the only possible guaranty is in the multitude of social bonds which match one another.

It is the comunity of equals which allows the public will to become democratically formulated and imposed on anyone without really making him any harm. »The logic of the operation of the participatory system is such that he (the citizen-A.M.) is 'forced' to deliberate according to his sense of justice, according to what Rousseau calls his 'constant will' because fellow citizens can alway resist the implementation of inequitable demands. As a result of participating in decision making the individual is educated to distinguish between his own impulses and desires, he learns to be a public as well as a private citizen.«[22]

The daily experience at the workplace proves to be of crucial importance for the development of the sense of political efficacy.[23] The cumulation of participation opportunities contributes to the general socio-political activization. It seems obvious »that participation in non-governmental authority structures is necessary to foster and develop the psychological qualities (the sense of political efficacy) required for participating at the national level (. . .) The argument of the participatory theory of democracy that an individual's (politically relevent) attitudes will depend to a large extent on the authority structure of his work environment is a well-founded one«.[24]

There is now plenty of empirical evidence[25] that people react favorably to the work situations which allow them to co-determinate issues of the vital importance to them, in which they feel competent and self-assured. Mutual trust and support is of crucial importance for the formation of a group which would be willing and able to practice the collective self-regulation of the task fulfillment pursuits.

Spreading of responsibilities, flattening of formal statuses, commiting of workers to clearly defined goals, sharing of information, and participating in decision, become commonly needed in most of the modern work establishments.

Employees' participation is just a meaningless cliché without substantial change of the traditional authoritarian management structure at work-

[22] Carole Pateman, **op. cit.** p. 25.
[23] See G. A. Almond, S. Verba, **The Civic Culture**, Boston: Little Brown, 1965, p. 294.
[24] Carole Pateman, **op. cit.**, p. 50 and 53.
[25] See Paul Blumberg, **Industrial Democracy. The Sociology of Participation,** London: Constable, 1968; Carole Pateman, **op. cit.**;
E. L. Trist et al., **Organizational Choice,** London: Tavistock Publi., 1963;
P. G. Herbst, **Autonomous Group Functioning,** London: Tavistock Publ., 1962;
Rensis Likert, **The Human Organization,** New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.

places. Persuasion and manipulation should not be confused with a real participation which is »a process where each individual member of a decision--making body has equal power to determine the outcome of decisions«.[26] The power of participation depends on the availability of an adequate information, freedom from external pressures and internal inhibitions, commitment to particular issues which are subject to common decisions, ability to present one's own view and to push it, ability to go well with other members of the team, etc.

All these conditions do exist only in small, face to face groups of a homogeneous nature, established on a voluntary basis, socially integrated and allowing people to express themselves freely. Any direct democracy applied to work relations has to treat small task teams as the focal points of participation. G. D. H. Cole was right advocating the system of functional, and not general, representation which implies »the constant participation of the ordinary man in the conduct of those parts of the structure of Society with which he is directly concerned, and which he has therefore the best chance of understanding.«[27]

The basic units of the work self-government should be according to Cole small and homogeneous enough to make possible the real participation by everyone.[28] The same says Jan Wolski, who like Cole, constructs the whole structure of interconnected participatory units located in various levels of fulfillment and coordination (multi-level federalism[29]).

THE REVIEW OF SOME PRESENT PARTICIPATION SCHEMES

One should make a clear distinction between the consultative procedure, as e. g. offered in the Whitley Report in Great Britain after the First World War, and the direct industrial democracy, which is much less common.[30]

The paternalistic types of participation are based on the assumption that employees should be consulted, which in itself is good, but does not activate enough of social energy coming only from a real participation. E. g. in the John Lewis Partnership in London the level of interest in the representative institutions is low among the rank and file. It is not surprising taking into consideration the fact, that these institutions are only consultative mechanisms, and that they do not cover lower level matters which are of most importance for an average employee.[31]

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[26] Carole Pateman, **op. cit.**, p. 71. In another place she says that »One might characterize the participatory model as one where maximum input (participation) is required and where output includes not just policies (decisions) but also the development of the social and political capacities of each individual, so that there is »feedback« from output to input.« **Op. cit.**, p. 43.

[27] G.D.H. Cole, **Social Theory**, London: Methuen, 1920, p. 114.

[28] G.D.H. Cole, **Guild Socialism Restated**, London: Leonard Parsons, 1920. See also S.T. Glass, **The Responsible Society**, London: Longmans, 1966.

[29] See A. Matejko, **The Self-Management Theory of Jan Wolski**, paper for the First International Conference on Participation and Self-Management. Dubrovnik, 13-17 December, 1972.

[30] It is very unfortunate that the old experience of cooperatives, which have been developed in several countries, is still very little known, except the Israelian kibbutz. There are some very useful and interesting studies published in French (Mouton) under the auspices of Bureau d'Etudes Cooperatives et Communautaires (B. E. C. C.) in Paris. See the French journal **Autogestion**, the British journal **Co-partnership**, the Polish interwar journal **Spoldzielczosc Pracy**, the book in Czeque Frantisek Modracek, **Samosprava práce**, Praha 1921, and other.

[31] A. Flanders, R. Pomeranz, J. Woodward, **Experiment in Industrial Democracy**, London: Faber & Faber, 1968.

In case of the Glacier Metal Company the traditional management structure was left intact and the basic difference between 'managers' and 'subordinates' was still taken for granted.[32]

In the Scott Bader Commonwealth all the factory workers are low or non-participants.[33]

The study done by the National Institute of Industrial Psychology in 157 British enterprises shows that the joint consultation committees received the acceptance in various occupational groups which depended very much on the ability of that particular group to manipulate the committee according to their own interests. The manual workers were relatively pessimistic in this respect. The same even more with foremen. On the other hand the higher managers and the workers' representatives in the committees seemed to be very optimistic.[34] It is, among others, the problem of the nature of socialization experienced differently by occupational groups at various levels of the social hierarchy. As Carole Pateman says, »even in a situation where higher level opportunities are opened up for the ordinary worker, who has been socialized into the existing system of industrial authority structures and who still has no opportunity to participate every day at the lower level, notions such as the election of directors are frequently just not 'available', in the way that they are to higher status workers.«[35]

In the German form of workers' councils,[36] it means in the **Betriebsrat** there appears an evident cotradiction between two goals which oppose one another. On the one hand **Betriebsrat** should represent the rank-and-file, defend their interests and oppose the management whenever it strives to do something oriented against these interests. On the other hand **Betriebsrat** is the only institution which would be able to harmonize the diversified powers of managers, trade unionists, manual workers, white collars, etc.[37]

The German works councils which go back to 1848, but became common only in the early fifties, are useful as a channel between the rank-and-file, management, and trade unions. The representatives elected to the councils (joint election among all employees or separate elections for blue-collar and white collar workers) participate in decisions dealing with the work schedule, social services, vocational training, and even some personnel matters. They also enjoy the information right in economic matters. However, the real role of the council is limited to mediation between more important institutions than itself. »From an organizational point of view the works council is an appendage of the structure of the undertaking and its functioning is dependent upon a successfully functioning management (...) After having overcome its initial reserve and uncertainty towards newly elected members of a works council, management usually attempts to utilize their functions for its own

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[32] See E. Jaques, **Employee Participation and Managerial Authority, London,** 1968. Also J. Kelly, **Is Scientific Management Possible?,** London: Faber & Faber, 1968.

[33] See F. H. Blum, **Work and Community,** London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968.

[34] **Joint Consultation in Practice. A Survey in British Industry,** Paris: European Productivity Agency (no year of edition).

[35] Corole Pateman, **op. cit.,** p. 83

[36] Hans Jürgen Teutenberg, **Geschichte der industriellen Mitbestimmung in Deutschland,** Tübingen 1961; Dieter Schneider, Rudolf E. Kuda, **Mitbestimmung. Weg zur Industriellen Demokratie,** München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1961; **Kritik der Mitbestimmung,** Suhrkamp Verlag 1969; Roland Tittel, **Mitbestimmung,** Köln, Deutsches Industrieinstitut, 1971.

[37] Friedrich Fürstenberg, Die betriebliche Sozialstruktur, in A. Mayer, B. Herwig, eds., **Handbuch der Psychologie** vol. 9 Betriebspsychologie, Göttingen: Verlag für Psychologie, 1970. p. 432. See also Friedrich Fürstenberg, Der Betriebsrat — Strukturanalyse einer Grenzinstitution, **Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie,** 10, 1958; Th. Pirker et al., **Arbeiter, Management, Mitbestimmung,** Stuttgart; Ring Verlag 1955.

purposes and to integrate them wholy into existing social systems of the factory.«[38]

Works councils can influence to some extent decisions of the management, »but lack of comprehensive information and inner conflict make this institution very unstable and consequently leave it open to outside influences.«[39]

In the German mining, iron and steel industry labour directors are appointed in close cooperation with trade unions. They are full members of managing boards. Also, in the above mentioned branches of industry in the supervisory boards almost a half (five from eleven) must be representatives of employees. According to the available survey data, only a small part (one fifth) of employees feel, that such a co-determination has been to their personal advantage.[40] »Trough co-determination in the Federal Republic of Germany has led to the creation of special bodies representing employees' interests, it has not solved the problem of fostering direct initiative and individual participation on the part of employees whose interests are focused on workplace relations.«[41]

Under virtually all co-determination systems[42] the workers' constituency loses its ability to control their representatives. It is very difficult to keep these representatives accountable to their electorate. The power of recall from below virtually does not exist in the reality. The communication between the representative and his constituency is weak. The representatives just become absorbed in the administrative functions to such extent that they alienate themselves from the rank-and-file.

Workers' councils develop their own vested interests which do not have to agree with their original goals. E. g. in the colliery consultative committees in British nationalized mines there are some evident tendencies among miners' representatives to alienate themselves from their electorate. The point of view of the management tends to prevail over other views. In the framework of a nationalized industry trade union leaders, managers and members of consultative committees have a lot in common to share with.[43]

In Great Britain[44] and in Belgium[45] some specific efforts have been done to practice workers' control on the shop floor level. These efforts often meet resitance not only from the side of management[46] but also from the side

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[38] Friedrich Fürstenberg, Workers' Participation in Management in the Federal Republic of Germany, **Bulletin of the International Institute for Labor Studies**, 6, June 1969, pp. 114-115.

[39] Ibid., p. 118.

[40] See V. Graf Blücher, **Integration und Mitbestimmung**, Sennestadt, 1966, p. 67.

[41] Fürstenberg, **op. cit.**, pp. 131-132.

[42] See about the variety of these systems in P. H. van Gorkum, **Industrial Democracy at the Level of the Enterprise**, Brussels: The European Association of National Productivity Centres, (no year of edition); **Participation of Workers in Decisions Within Undertakings**, Geneva: International Labor Office, 1969; **Workers Participation in Industry**, Brussels: International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, 1956; L. Sheppard, Workers' Participation in Management in the U. S., **Archives Internationales de Sociologie de la Cooperation**, 2, 1957; F. F. Ridley, **Revolutionary Syndicalism in France. The Direct Action of Its Time**, Cambridge: At the University Press, 1970; Anton Pannekoek, **Workers' Councils**, Cambridge: Root and Branch Pamphlets; Jaroslav Vanek, The **Participatory Economy**, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971; Jaroslav Vanek, **A Theory of Labor-Managed Economies**, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970; C. B. Benello, D. Rossopoulos, eds., **The Case for Participatory Democracy: Some Prospects for the Radical Society**, New York: Grossman Publ. 1971.

[43] See a very good insight into it in N. Dennis, F. Henriques, C. Slaughter, **Coal is Our Life. An Analysis of a Yorkshire Mining Community**, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1956.

[44] See Ken Coates, **Can the Worker Run Industry?**, Sphere Press, 1968.

[45] See Ken Coates ,ed., **A Trade Union Strategy in the Common Market. The Programme of the Belgian Trade Unions**, Nottingham: Spokesman Books, 1971.

[46] See Ken Coates, Tony Topham, eds., **Workers' Control**, London: Panther Modern Society Series, 1970.

of union leaders who feel endangered by the militancy at the bottom level of the union hierarchy.[47]

In the societies with a particularly strong status-orientation[48] workers' control is very much handicapped by the negative attitude of managers, as well as even trade union and political party functionairies who do not want to diminish their rights and privileges. They are always eager to make people of a lower status »realize their position«. E. g. in India there is still little even of collective bargaining. »There are ... very few employer-employee relationships which are characterized by mutual negotiations and the development of joint machinery and procedures to resolve common problems ...«[49] Weak and divided trade unions, hesitant management, and lack of realism among bureaucrats who try to impose utopian workers' participation schemes upon people and conditions which are highly unfavorable,[50] all these factors work against any real industrial democracy.

The »direct« democracy in the Yugoslav case is often wrongly equalized with opening to the rank-and-file full channels to express their views and exercise pressures.[51] E. g. N. Pasic treats as »the basic institutional forms of direct democracy — assemblies of voters, assemblies of working people and those who utilize services, referendums, etc.«[52] However in the reality such a democracy based primarily on crowded meetings and on plenty of talking does not necessarily mean that people really become masters of organizations for which they work. It is not surprising to find Yugoslav workers lukewarm in their self-governmental activism,[53] if in reality they do not have much say about the resources which are formally at their disposal. The participation is much better in the realm of social welfare where there is really something important and available for workers, e. g. the distribution of scarce housing resources.[54] In other fields all important decisions are out of the workers' factual control. Research data show that manual workers are aware of their much lower influence in enterprises when comparing especially with higher managers.[55]

As Rudi Supek makes clear referring to survey data on participation and motivation of workers, all opinions of respondents »concerning the work and the position in work, regardless of the system of workers' participation in selfmanagement itself, point to a certain alienation in the sense of Marx«.[56] It means that the whole Yugoslav model at the present stage of its development and application is still very far from substantially changing the traditional social organization of work. Rudi Supek quotes research data which show that the structure of power in enterprises »is still very authoritarian, that the direc-

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[47] Andre Gorz, **Strategy for Labor. A Radical Proposal**, Boston: Beacon Press, 1967.

[48] More about this concept see A. Matejko, Task versus Status, The Contradictions of Modernization, International Review of Sociology, VI, 1-3, 1970.

[49] Subbiah Kannappan, Workers' Participation in Management: A Review of Indian experience, **Bulletin of the International Institute for Labor Studies**, 5, Nov. 1968, p. 177.

[50] Ibid, p. 186.

[51] See about the Yugoslav model in general, Ichak Adizes, **Industrial Democracy Yugoslav Style**, Free Press, 1971.

[52] M. J. Broekmeyer, ed., **Yugoslav Workers' Selfmanagement**, Proceedings of a symposium held in Amsterdam, 7-9 January, 1970, Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1970, p. 15.

[53] There is now a lot of data in this respect. Some of them were presented in the paper of Josip Obradovic (Univ. of Zagreb), **The Functioning of Participative Management Systems**, presented at the Seminar on Management Applications of Behavioral Research (European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management and the International Institute of Management), Brussels, 5 and 6 June, 1972. See also M. J. Broekmeyer, ed., **op. cit.**

[54] See Jiri Kolaja, **Workers', Councils: The Yugoslav Experience**, London: Tavistock Publ., 1965.

[55] See Studies done by V. Rus and J. Županov. They are mentioned in M. J. Broekmeyer, ed. **op. cit.**, p. 101-102.

[56] M. J. Broekmeyer, ed., **op. cit.**, p. 232.

tors and the representatives of the specialized services play first fiddle«.[57] Supek relates this phenomenon primarily to the immaturity of the Yugoslav working class[58] but this explanation seems to be not convincing enough. Of course, it is also the question of the socio-organizational context which does not offer enough of specific stimuli and rewards for a real participation.

It seems pretentious to assume, e. g. as Ivan Maksimovic does, that in the Yugoslav self-government the direct producer really »performs the collective function of businessman«.[59] First of all his actual power in using and managing means of production is highly problematic. The latter are public property governed by social agencies out of the individual control. Second, the personal participation of workers in decision making is seriously limited by such factors as: the overwhelming power of managers and experts, lack of an appropriate knowledge and even active interest in several issues of administrative or economic nature, the actual position of just a member of a crowd at meetings, feeling shame to appear in front of others with one's own ideas, vulnerability to all kind of pressures exercised by more powerful people, etc.

In Poland there is a considerable amount of sociological literature describing the experience of workers' councils and of the KSR (Conference of Workers' Self-government).[60] It tells us a great deal about the functioning of these councils, and also about workers' lack of support for them. For example, research carried out in 1964 in four engineering plants indicated that:

> *elementary but basic aspects of the self-governing system, such as the relationship between workers and the administration, or attempts to increase workers' control, occupied the institution only to a minimal extent. This was the opinion of both manual workers and technical staff, both representatives of the work force and members of the KSR... Manual workers see the self-governing system as being chiefly concerned with discipline and with the plant's production schedule; engineers and technicians regard it as concentrating its efforts mainly on the production schedule, and also on the distribution of incentive rates and bonuses .... Emphasis on practical matters differentiates the image of self-government held by the workers surveyed, from the model contained in the self-governmental agreement.*[61]

Research on workers' councils during the period 1956—1958 indicated that workers did not really feel themselves to be in collective charge of their workplaces, and that the existence of workers' councils had achieved no fundamental improvement in this respect. Workers »do not clearly see the council's field of activity as a governing body ... They expect above all the solution of problems of living standards and social issues, while the council chiefly deals with questions of organization and production.«[62] In a survey conducted by the Public Opinion Research Centre in 1961, asking whose interests are

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[57] M. J. Broekmeyer, **op. cit.**, p. 234.
[58] Ibid, p. 235.
[59] M. J. Broekmeyer, **op. cit.**, p. 136.
[60] M. Hirszowicz, W. Morawski, T. Rabska, J. Balcerek, M. Jarosz et al.
[61] A. Owieczko, »Dzialalnosc i struktura samorzadu robotniczego w opinii zalog fabrycznych«, **Studia Socjologiczne** 3, (1966).
[62] M. Jarosz et al., »Samorzad w opiniach zalog fabrycznych« in **Studia nad rozwojem klasy robotniczej**, Lodz Warszawa 1962, p. 146.

represented by workers' selfgovernment, 41% of the manual workers in the power plants surveyed, and 47% in the engineering plants, replied that it was the interests of the management. Only 8% and 5% respectively thought that workers' self-government represents the interests of manual workers.[63] 35% of all the workers (manual and white collar) surveyed by the Public Opinion Research Centre in 1960 thought that the worker has no real influence on what happens at his work place, while a further 32% thought that the situation varies considerably in this respect. Less than 50% of the respondents thought that valid criticism of supervisors served any useful purpose, and only 23% reported their active support of such criticism.[64]

The mass social advancement from the countryside to the cities which occured there in the fifties, brought concrete benefits to many, in spite of all the general and political reservations which must be made.[65] An additional factor was the real hope of advancement to white collar jobs for their children. But as the years passed the incompetence of the system became more apparent. Growing consumption needs, particularly in food and housing, were inadequately fulfilled. The new culture turned out to be a culture of the intelligentsia, and manual workers were left with little except beer parlours, since even the widely publicised schemes for workers vacations were dominated by white collar workers. The growth rate of higher education was insufficient to offer many opportunities to children of manual workers. In any case, social advancement became largely illusory as a result of decreasing wage differentials. And what of relations in the work environment? As mentioned before, no serious change for the better resulted from the introduction of the new institution of workers' self-government. Discontent had for long smouldered among the masses. As late as 1961 a significant proportion of the workers surveyed by the Public Opinion Research Centre complained of the lack of tools (72% in the engineering industry), of their poor quality (55% in the engineering industry, 44% in power plants), of delays in the supply of materials (from 28% to all respondents in various industries), of bad organization of work (from 7% to 32% in various industries), and of disagreements with foremen (from 36% to 61% in various industries).

Workers' councils were formed in Poland in 1956, as an expression of the growing dissatisfaction of industrial Party activists and managerial action groups with what was, in their opinion, overcentralization of the national economy. It was they who suggested the formation of such councils as a means of bargaining with the upper levels of industrial bureaucracy — particularly convenient as they themselves would not be directly involved. The participation of manual workers in management was from the beginning little more than a slogan. The summoning in 1958 of the Conference of Workers' Self-Government (KSR), which co-ordinated all the basic institutions of the work place, including the workers' council, was the logical outcome of the above-mentioned intention. The fact that workers' councils grew into a popular myth of democratic industrial management was caused not by their actual role — they were dominated by technicians and economists, though these were supported by manual workers votes — but by the largescale expecta-

[63] W. Wesolowski, »Robotnicy o swojej pracy i swoich zakladach pracy«, **Studia Socjologiczno-Polityczne**, 12 (1962).

[64] A. Sicinski, »Postawy wobec pracy i wlasnosci oraz ich spoleczne uwarunkowanie«, **Studia Socjologiczne** 2 (1961).

[65] See A. Matejko, From Peasant into Worker in Poland, **International Review of Sociology**, 3, 1971 (also in **East Europe**, vol. 21, no. 6 and 7, 1972).

tions of a significant part of the population in the period after October 1956. The inadequacies of the centralistic model of the economy (much of which is still unchanged) were then so obvious that council activists were relatively easily able to suggest and often even implement real improvements — frequently with the tacit support of management, which was unable to speak out openly against the higher bureaucracy. In this sense workers' councils and Conferences of Workers' Self-Government (KSR) became the instruments of indirect pressure on the part of technocratic-political micro-elites in various enterprises against the bureaucratic macro-elite concentrated in regional committees, the central committee of the Polish United Workers Party, headquarters of industrial associations, and in ministries.

However, as W. Morawski has rightly pointed out

> *the situation of the workers' councils became more difficult as the obvious reserves of productivity were exhausted; they entered a more stabilized phase, and the first wave of enthusiasm waned. Their activity became dominated by matters concerning further organizational streamlining.*[66]

However, since »the role of the workers' council depends on the general situation of the enterprise, on which the council has very limited influence«,[67] the council can in reality achieve little unless enterprises are allowed a considerably greater degree of independence, and unless the market plays a greater role in economic life. At KSR sessions and meetings of workers' councils, counterproposals to the association[68] are formulated with the purpose of facilitating the enterprise's attainment of the targets of the economic plan (as Morawski says, »these measures are as a rule either instigated by the administration, or strongly supported by it«). Whatever cannot easily be done by management (wich is directly dependent on officials at a level above the enterprise), falls to the share of the so-called self-government. Since leaders of the workers' councils participate in association meetings, they are all the better able to play the roles expected of them by management; defender against the outside world, and assistant to the administration within the enterprise.[69]

There seems to be little connection betwen this concept of the workers' council as «a grassroots warning signal of planning inadequacies and an instrument for the correction of plan indices«[70] and the wider concept of it as the nucleus of the collective intiative of all workers, or at least the majority. There are a number of factors contributing to this situation. 1) The KSR and the presiding officers of the workers' council have no actual authority over management. 2) Though both these bodies have the duty of encouraging the work force to increase output, they have no effective means of doing so. 3) The functioning of both these bodies has become ritualised, and they are reduced to imitating the role of management, but without its power. 4) Issues discussed at meetings of these bodies are far removed from those which the average worker finds relevant, and are outside his competence; Morawski

[66] W. Morawski, »Funkcje samorzadu robotniczego w systemie zarzadzania przemyslem« in **Przemysl i spoleczenstwo w Polsce Ludowej**, ed. J. Szczepanski, Wroclaw: Ossolineum, 1969, p. 249.
[67] Ibid.
[68] The Association represents the higher level of an administrative integration (something like a corporation in the West).
[69] Ibid., p. 252.
[70] Ibid., p. 253.

states on the basis of surveys that 86% of workers did not know the subject matter of the most recent KSR session. 5) Departmental workers' councils, which are in principle the lowest level in the workers' self-governmental system, in practice play a wholly marginal role. 6) There is a clearly evident process of alienation whereby a small number of activists in the councils become separated from the rank and file who elect them to office. Collaboration with management and with the plant party secretariat draws the activists into matters far distant from the actual interests of the workers, and favours the development of an elitist orientation.

One must agree with Morawski that

> *The organizational activity of the self-governing system has adapted itself to the limits dictated by the mechanisms of control of the economy. Since it was jointly responsible with management for the work of the enterprise, workers' self-government voted on plans and saw that they were executed in the enterpise. But the role of the enterprise (including workers' self-government) in establishing the plan was for many reasons very small, and the range of decision-making and initiative limited by the pressures of the plan indices. The self-governing body was therefore not so much a centre for the activization of the work community, as a means for intervention, pressure, bargaining etc. outside the enterprise. Instead of being the institution responsible for involving the workforce in the processes of social participation, it was used for carrying out formalized tasks.*[71]

THE FALLACIES OF TOTALITARIANISM

Obviously, the model of industrial democracy needs a favorable socio-political environment in order to be introduced. Some totalitarian systems pretend that they have made a very substantial progress in that respect.[72] It is a fallacy. The development of a true social activism of working masses may happen only in conditions of freedom.

The superficial overview of the social organization of enterprises in the Soviet Bloc countries, or in China, may lead to a superficial impression that working people there have a lot of possibilities of participation and activism. E. g. W. J. H. Sprott was very much impressed by the activism of the rank and file within small groups organized by the Party in China.[73] After all there is in the communist countries a whole network of social organizations and institutions, with the plant Party organization and union council at its head.[74] There are numerous committees and productivity meetings. Activists comprise mostly only a few percent of the total workforce, but their role is essential

[71] Morawski, op. cit., p. 260.

[72] See e. g. about the communist model of organizing masses: Ernest Mandel, The Leninist Theory of Organization: Its Relevance for Today, **International Socialist Review**, 31, 9, December 1970.

[73] W. J. H. Sprott, **Human Groups**, London: Penguin Books, 1958.

[74] See Alexander Matejko, Some Sociological Problems of Socialist Factories, **Social Research**, vol. 36, no. 3, Autumn 1969.

since the attainment of production and other goals by the enterprise depends largely on them. They tend to come from the ranks of workers who are more highly qualified and have better positions. On the one hand, they are more interested in demonstrating their keenness in order to advance their careers; on the other hand, the Party and other organizations in the workplace wish to strengthen their positions by having competent and effective supporters.

Dealing with the social reality, and not just the normative model one must distinguish between the various types of activists: those who wish to further their careers in this way; those who have been forced into participation by a greater or lesser degree of pressure; and finally, those who do not take their »activism« at all seriously. As J. Kulpinska says about Polish activists, »the motives of activism frequently relate to the opportunities for contact with management during meetings and campaigns at a level of relative 'equality'. Linked to this motive is usually that of gaining promotion or other privileges. Activism is treated as the means of advancement in the personnel hierarchy«.[75] People frequently engage in activism only for a limited period of time to achieve a specific goal, e. g. in order to gain enough credit to become eligible for staff housing. Some, however, treat their activism very seriously, and find themselves in trouble by obstinately fighting for lost causes or annoying influential superiors.

It is obvious that neither »activism« as understood in this way, nor to an even greater extent the above-mentioned forms of the ostensibly self-governing system, are sufficiently fuctional. This model of workers' activism has remained largely unchanged since Stalinist times. The fact that it is unsuited to the real situation was ignored for a number of years by the Party elite. In Poland, Gomulka said once that »we have never had a situation in which the working class and the individual work forces of enterprises were completely deprived of opportunities to participate in the running of the national economy and of their workplaces, and in which they did not make use of these opportunities.«[76] It is obvious that Gomulka identified the working class with Party action groups, and that in addition he did not wish to acknowledge the totalitarian essence of Stalinist communism.

Any totalitarian system is based on the manipulation of masses dictated by vested interests of the ruling elite. It has to lead sooner or later to the crisis. In the case of Czechoslovakia this crisis was especially evident. Instead of achieving changes for better, which was expected by the people who joined enthusiastically the Communist Party in the early forties, there was a conspicuous decline in the sixties. A non-competitive **dirigiste** economy promoted the extensive form of growth which became disastrous. Instead of orienting the whole economy to some specific needs of masses, the investment into heavy industry became a self-perpetuating goal. »The Stalinist model implies a 'non-market system' (i. e. in which the normal market regulator of supply and demand is not allowed to operate freely) centrally planned and directed with state ownership of the basic means of production, with the role of self-regulating mechanisms kept to the minimum and replaced by administrative orders, prohibitions and regulations, and with a centrally prescribed Plan, elaborated

[75] J. Kulpinska in **Przemysl i spoleczenstwo w Polsce Ludowej**, Wroclaw: Ossolineum, 1969, p. 275.
[76] **Nowe Drogi**, 6 (1971), p. 10.

in great detail, exhaustively explained and imposed on its recipients, as the aim, method and touchstone of all economic activity«.[77]

The model which had been temporarily useful in Russia when she was in chaos and distruction, could not help Czechoslovakia to achieve the higher level of development. The same is valid for almost all remaining East European countries, except perhaps Albania and Bulgaria. According to Selucky if this model »outlasts the period in which it was needed and justified, a serious danger arises that it will become inwardly distorted through the absence of any effective control from outside; it may function downward well enough, but there will be no feedback, no flow of information upward«.[78]

In the model which reduces ordinary citizens to objects of manipulation, consumers are just supplicants. The same is in reality with producers. »The function of the market as an information link is nullified under a **dirigiste** system by the intervention between market and producer of a detailed plan which provides obligatory 'information' overriding that obtained from the market. Here we have the conflict arising from the disintegration of homo economicus: as a consumer, he helps to create a market demand for goods and services, as a producer, he fails to react to this demand«.[79]

The myth that it would be possible to establish a perfect plan, which would match production to the consumption and vice versa, seems to be far from any reality. The reasons obviously are located in the power structure of the society. The market mechanism, as well as even the imperfect model of a representative democracy, at least provide some check-and-balance mechanisms. Without them the whole society is exposed to secret power struggles of pressure groups each pursuing its vested interests. The plan becomes an object of manipulation by groups which are more powerful than others. Consumers do not have freedom to organize themselves and to match by their own pressures the influences exercised by apparatchiks, planners, experts, military, secret police, etc.

The individual disintegrates because the purpose of his labours is stultified, his consumer needs are not satisfied, and he becomes constantly frustrated in his desire for self-fulfillment. »This is the prime and economic cause of that individualism which drives men, for all collectivist ideology of Stalinism, into isolation, indifference and 'internal emigration', alienates them in a new and specific way from their environment and produces a kind of social schizophrenia among those involved in production. Such people, living theoretically in a collective environment, flee outside office hours into their own private refuges so as to escape at least for a few hours daily the manipulations of the bureaucrats.«[80]

The system is too much closed and at the same time too strong to allow any innovations. Only from time to time, when there is an overt power struggle at the top of the hierarchy, as in Czechoslovakia in 1968 or in Poland in 1956 and again in 1970, some temporary changes may occur. However, all these changes endanger other parts of the whole Soviet Bloc which then exercise their pressure, so far quite successfully. The equilibrium is reintroduced and the whole trend repeats itself. »The average man oscillates continually

[77] Radoslav Selucky, **Czechoslovakia: The Plan That Failed,** London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1970 (first published in German in 1969), pp. 14—15.
[78] Ibid., p. 23.
[79] Ibid., p. 39.
[80] Ibid., pp. 40—41.

between the two possible reactions, occasionally revolting, but on the whole accepting the conditions as part of the setting of life — a harsh setting, yet not so harsh as to make it impossible somehow to survive, somehow to continue some sort of private, alienated and apathetic existence.«[81]

With the growing complication and sophistication of modern society the totalitarian model shows evidently its inefficiency. All members of the society, including rulers, become victims. Of course, it is not in the interest of the rulers and their supporters to admit where really the fault lies. However, the obvious inefficiencies are handy for various groups struggling for power to be used against each other. It was the case of Khrushchev and Gomulka in 1956, Dubcek in 1968, Gierek in 1970.

The present situation in the Soviet Bloc is quite complex, not only because of the growing impatience of the masses, but because the manner of directing society which was inherited from Stalin is becoming more and more anachronistic; not only brutal but frequently absurd. Even in the USA, amidst prosperity and a marked susceptibility to publicity, people are becoming more resistant to manipulation. This is considerably more so in a system which has largely failed to come up to the expectations of the masses, and which was from the beginning based on force.

TOWARDS NEW MODELS OF MANAGING PEOPLE

The resignation from freedom is inherent in virtually any kind of employment. Anarchists may dream about the total abolishment of socio-organizational dependencies but in reality in order to develop any task-oriented team action it is necessary to accept more or less serious limitations of individual freedoms.[82] Therefore the real issue is not **if** to have any kind of authority but **how** to limit its alienative impact.[83]

There are some organizational situations in which authority, i. e. the execution of obedience,[84] may lose its importance. If all involved people know what and how should be done, and if the issue of status does not play any basic role, it may be possible under such circumstances to stimulate effectively the team approach.

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[81] Ibid., pp. 45—46.

[82] On the Anarchist viewpoint see J. Joll, **The Anarchists**, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1964; R. Rocker, **Anarcho-Syndicalism**, London: Secker and Warburg, 1938; E. Pyziur, **The Doctrine of Anarchism of M. A. Bakunin**, Milwaukee: The Marquette Univ. Press, 1955; M. Bakunin **Marxism, Freedom and the State**, London: Freedom Press, 1950; K. J. Kenafick, **Michael Bakunin and Karl Marx**, Melbourne, 1948 ;George Woodcock, Ivan Avakumovic, **Peter Kropotkin. The Anarchist Prince**, Schocken Books, 1971; George Woodcock, **Pierre-Joseph Proudhon**, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956; G. P. Maximoff, ed., **The Political Philosophy of Bakunin**, Free Press, 1953; Peter Kropotkin, **Selected Readings on Anarchism and Revolution**, MTT Press, 1971.

[83] Jan Wolski tries to find a positive answer in this respect suggesting the model of a multi-level federalism. See Alexander Matejko, **The Self-Management Theory of Jan Wolski**, Paper for the Fist International Conference on Participation and Self-Management, Dubrovnik, 13—17 December 1972.

[84] R. Michels has defined authority as »the capacity, innate or acquired, for exercising ascendancy over a group«. **Encyclopedia of Social Sciences**, 1930, p. 319. For Bierstedt authority is »sanctioned power, institutionalized power«. M. Berger et al., eds., **Freedom and Control in Modern Society**, New York: Octagon Books, 1964.

Talking about authority we have here in mind a legitimate use of power resources within a given system. The legitimacy of the authority may be of a legal nature, through tradition, or in the personal charisma (three pure types of authorithy distinguished by M. Weber). What is however crucial for us here is not the source of authority and its social or moral justification ,but the right of office holders to exercise governance over the material and human resources which are under the disposal of a given system.

The question is how to shape the work organization in such a way that would allow people to adapt themselves as well as »**perceive** work as a part of consistent system of behavior«.[85]

The technological variable is of great importance in alienation. R. Blauner shows that especially powerlessness, but even also three remaining types of alienation mentioned by him[86] (meaninglessness, isolation, and self-estrangement)[87] depend very much on the level of technology. We become more and more aware in modern times that even the technological variable may be manipulated at least to some extent to the benefit of workers (job enrichment etc.).

Better human relations may alleviate alienation. However, it is first of all the task group which really counts, and not the set of formal and informal relations with colleagues and supervisors. In order to regain the meaning of his work, the worker must be able to identify with tasks, control them, decide about them, maneuver them according to his capacities and preferences. Because of the intergrative nature of tasks performed on the higher levels of the division of labor, the worker has to act not in an individualistic manner but in close cooperation with other workers. The drive and persistence in work may be generated only by cohesive groups.

> *»We see an organization consisting of small groups engaged in specific tasks. For the most part, these task forces are made up of staff specialists and professional line personnel. The staffers often outnumber the liners in these clusters and, in any case, it is difficult to tell one from the other. As the task on which any group is working is completed, the task force dissolves with its members joining new groups that are constantly forming. The center cluster consists of management along with various support services which the task forces utilize as they feel the need. But managament is now multiheaded, hence there is no subunit in the exact center.«*[88]

However, one should be cautious not to overestimate the virtues of a collective. The pressure of a small group may be quite heavy for an individual. In the Israelian kibbutzim their members, »like monks, are not free. Their jobs, their opportunities for study, their holidays are regulated by organizers and committees against whom the only appeal is to the general meeting. This is the fundamental drawback. It is perhaps the main reason why kibbutz membership is growing by only 2 per cent a year«.[89] It is necessary to add, that kibbutzim utilized to growing extent the hired labor (Arabs as well as Jews), and that on the national average, a quarter of young people do not return to the kibbutzim after completing the military service.

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[85] Stanley H. Udy, Jr., **Work in Traditional and Modern Society**, Prentice Hall, 1970, p. 8.

[86] Alienation in sense of Marx means that the man sinks to the level of a commodity. The problem of alienation has been of common interest for most prominent sociologists also after Marx. See Menachem Rosner, Changes in the Concept of Alienation after Marx, **International Review of Sociology**, 5 ,2, 1969; Erich Fromm, **The Sane Society**, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1955; Richard Schacht, **Alienation**, Allen Unwin 1971; George Lichtenheim, Alienation, **International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences**, Free Press, 1968, vol. 1, pp. 264—268.

[87] R. Blauner has compared four industries which differ in their technological state: printing (craft), textiles (machine tending), automobiles (assembly line), chemicals (continuous process) R. Blauner, **Alienation and Freedom**, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1964; Melvin Seeman distinguishes five aspects of alienation: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and self-estrangment. Melvin Seeman, On the Meaning of Alienation, **American Sociological Review**, 24, 6, 1959, p. 784.

[88] George E. Berkley, **The Administrative Revolution. Notes on the Passing of Organization Man**, Prentice Hall 1971, p. 25.

[89] Walter Schwarz, Crisis in the Kibbutz. The Affluent Communes, **Observer Review**, 23 July, 1972. See also Katherin Whitehorn, Crisis in the Kibbutz. The Open-Plan Family, **Observer Review**, 30 July, 1972.

As Karl Mannheim made clear many years ago in the bureaucratic organizations the substantive rationality, i. e. »the capacity to act intelligently in a given situation on the basis of one's own insight into the intercorrelations of events,«[90] often becomes suppressed by the functional rationality derived by a given organization from its own logic and its own vested interests.

The traditional management epitomizes this functional rationality based on some general principles. Any task activity has its specific rationality adequate to the nature of tasks. The rationality of production is different from the rationality of education or from the rationality of winning wars. However, on the basis of a praxiological thinking it is possible to establish certain general rules of an effective action which may secure maximum effect by minimum of cost. E. g. Tadeusz Kotarbinski proposes the following criteria of a successful action:[91]

a) efficiency in fulfilling the expected goals: »The usefulness of a given action with respect to a given objective is nothing more than the property of making possible or facilitating the attainment of that objective owing to that action.«[92]

b) precision: »The less the product differs from its standard in the given respect, the more precisely is the task performed in that respect.«[93]

c) purity of product: »The greater the purity of a product, the fewer its negative properties, running counter to the main objective or to the secondary objectives.«[94]

d) economy of action

e) simplicity of action

f) degree of skill (in terms of approximation of movements performed to movements intended, as well as in terms of sureness).

g) rationality of action (behaving according to the recommendation of the knowledge which is at the disposal).

There is even now a very strong tendency in the management circles all around the world to assume that its monopolistic power should be unquestionable just because it is allegedly based on principles of a universal validity. However, the differences in external environment[95] challenge the universal applicability of general managerial devices.[96] Therefore what seems to be »general«

[90] Karl Mannheim, **Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction,** New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1941, p. 58.

[91] T. Kotarbinski, **Praxiology,** Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1965.

[92] **Ibid.,** p. 76.

[93] **Ibid.,** p. 78.

[94] **Ibid.,** p. 79.

[95] The management is obviously culture-bound and there is so far little hope that even the studies of it would be liberated from the environmental bias (even in the long run). See Bertram M. Gross, **The Managing of Organizations,** vol. II, New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964, p.894.

According to A R. Negadhi in comparing management it is necessary to take into consideration such elements as: management philosophy (orientation towards external and internal partners), management process (planning, organizing, staffing directing and controlling), management effectivness (profit, market share, price of stock, employee turnover, evaluation of the company by employees and clients). S. Benjamin Prasad, and Anant R. Negandhi, eds., **Managerialism for Economic Development. Essays on India,** Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1968, pp. 72—77.

on the North American ground does not fit into the local condition of Brazil. It is quite obvious that e. g. the social legitimacy of employees' participation in decision making differs substantially depending on the local tradition; it seems that North American workers tend to consider participation as more legitimate than workers in several other capitalist countries.[97] E. g. the comparison of Japanese and U. S. workers shows evidently how much more importance has been given in Japan to meeting the expectations of significant others, accepting formal rules, continuing of employment, following personal advices of supervisors, and consulting views with co-workers.[98] In some of the Japanese enterprises there are now the evident efforts to apply the creative teamwork principle on a wide scale. E. g. in the Sony Corporation the production has been broken down into targets adequate for teams of no more than twenty people each. Operators in each team select their own leader. The team is managed chiefly through meetings of its members. Teams are linked with each other. »The top team was formed simultaneously with the teams at lower levels, and these teams at the top and bottom led to the formation of intermediary teams, like a chain reaction.«[99]

It is possible to say that in most of the developed countries there is now a growing tendency among workers to expect from the management more than just orders and money (stick and carrot). There is an evident egalitarian impulse among the masses. »Indeed, the struggle for equality, arising out of the relationships betwen social classes in a capitalist society, may have been reinforced by the more directly political conflicts which now take place in various spheres over questions of authority and participation in decision making.«[100]

The steering of any workplace consists to a large extent in making use of power. »A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that otherwise B would not do.«[101] Power consists in an ability to change the probability that a person will respond in a certain way to certain stimulus. »The more disagreement and conflict which exist between the wishes of each actor and the behaviour of others, the greater is the motivation of each to find ways of changing the others.«[102]

The need for power depends at workplaces on the strength of disruptive forces which may endanger the unity, integration and position of the particular system. Power of an authority within the particular system has to be sufficiently strong to overcome the centrifugal tendencies coming from without or within the particular system. »Power is essential to the life of the

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[96] See Winston Olberg, Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Management Principles, **Journal of the Academy of Management,** 6, 2, June 1963; Richard F. Gonzalez and Claude McMillan, Jr., The Universality of American Management Philosophy, **Journal of the Academy of Management,** 4, 1, April, 1961; Richard Farmer and Barry Richman, A Model for Research in Comparative Management, **California Management Review,** Winter 1964; Otto H. Nowotny, American versus European Management Philosophy, **Harvard Business Review,** March-April 1964; Kamala Chowdhry and A. K. Pal, Production Planning and Organization Morale, in Albert H. Rubenstein, and Chadwick J. Haberstroh, eds., **Some Theories of Organization,** Homewood, Irwin, 1966, pp. 195—204.

[97] See F. Harbison and E. Burgess, Modern Management in Western Europe, **American Journal of Sociology,** 60, 1, July 1954; John R. P. French, J. Israel, et. al., An Experiment on Participation in a Norwegian Factory, **Human Relations,** 13, 1,; W. F. Whyte, Framework for the Analysis of Industrial Relations: Two Views, **Industrial and Labor Relations Review,** 3, 3, April, 1950.

[98] A. M, Whitehill, Jr., S. Takezawa, **The Other Worker,** Honolulu: **East-West Center Press,** 1968. See also Friedrich Fürstenberg, **Japanische Unternehmensführung,** Zürich Verlag Moderne Industrie, 1972.

[99] Shigeru Kobayashi, The Creative Organization — A Japanese Experiment, **Personnel,** vol. 47, no. 6. November-December 1970, p. 14.

[100] T. B. Bottomore, The Class Structure in Western Europe, in Margaret Scotford Archer, Salvadore Giner, eds., **Contemporary Europe. Class, Status and Power,** London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971, p. 406. Bottomore relates what he says in Alain Touraine, **La société post-industrielle: naissance d'une société,** Paris 1969.

[101] R. A. Dahl, The Concept of Power, **Behavioural Science,** 1957, 2.

[102] R. B. Kahn, E. Boulding, eds., **Power and Conflict in Organizations,** London: Tavistock Publications, 1964.

organization; it prevents the emergence of conflicts which would subvert organizational effectiveness (...) Human organizations are inherently conflict-ridden. Organizations consist of people performing interdependent tasks. Out of that interdependence arises a need for predictability and dependability on the parts of the individual performers; the intrusion of normal variability into their organizational behaviour would render the organization ineffecitive or even uncooperative.«[103]

In all three principal phases of the decision-making process: a) finding occasions for making a decision, b) establishing possible courses of action, and c) choosing among courses of action,[104] there is a constant bargaining process between members of a potential coalition.[105] Constraints related to that bargaining determine goals of the organization.

Quite often when two formalized systems are dealing with each other they neglect to estimate in a realistic way their factual ability to control power. E .g. in the collective bargaining between management and trade union an important fact is often overlooked that real power of labour may be located much more in the informal structure of labour relations than in the formal structure of them. A lot of power may be activated by informal leaders.[106] »The attitudes which are generated in the workplace by the interaction between managerial control systems and the control systems by which workers protect themselves from their possible consequences are outside the control of the unions.«[107]

In many situations it is possible, and very advisable for the sake of an improved employees' morale, to exercise at workplaces the referent (personal) power instead of the coercive power. However, the basic thing seems to be the general increase of the amount of social energy disposed by a particular system. The lack of an appropriate volume of social energy seems to be even more disastrous for the system than an unequal distribution of this power.

Having to its disposal resources of vital importance to all subordinates, the management is in the position to manipulate them effectively. We have here in mind not only the material resources, even if their importance should never be underestimated. There are also other resources related to the human need of safety, belonging, appreciation, self-esteem, self-fulfillment.[108] The appearance of those needs makes effective the application of the employees' participation[109] and most of the human relation techniques. It is up to the management to manipulate the human passions and aspirations on one side, and the social forces of custom, social consciousness and normative order in general, on the other side, having in mind the smooth functioning of the whole workplace. »The more participation accorded an individual, the more he would perceive that he was valued by those who accorded him this participation ... To the extent that the workers considered the partacipation accorded them as legi-

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[103] R. B. Kahn, E. Boulding, **op. cit.**, pp. 4 and 7.

[104] Herbert Simon, **The New Science of Management Decision**, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960.

[105] See Richard M. Cyert, and James G. March, **A Behavioral Theory of the Firm**, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963.

[106] See e. g. for the description of troubles which were met at the Fawley refinery because of the fact that management in bargaining with unions overlooked the informal structure of organization which functioned as intermediary between the unions and the men as individuals. A. Flanders, **The Fawley Productivity Agreements**, London: Faber and Faber, 1964.

[107] T. Lupton, **Management and the Social Sciences**, London: Hutchinson, 1966, p. 50.

[108] Look at Maslow's classification of those needs, R. E. Sutermeister, ed., **People and Productivity**, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963, pp. 71—91.

[109] See R. Likert, **The Human Organization**, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.

timate, it increased their understanding and acceptance of management,«[110] has found J. R. P. French, Jr., in result of laboratory and field studies of power.

The power relationships are quite often based on some kind of quasi-equilibrium, when the managing people follow the 'indulgency pattern' instead of formally accepting all basic social factors of a given situation. We have here in mind all kind of tactics developed by the decision makers in order to preserve power without giving formal recognition to social forces which are constituent parts of the actual social setting. Keeping under police control the intellectuals in such a society which has intellectuals in high esteem, buying or blackmailing union leaders in such a factory in which management-labour bargaining is traditionally under union control, corrupting informal leaders in order to make them harmless — all such tactics are used in order just to preserve the quasi-equilibrium. Some kind of informal practices, buttressed by a strongly entrenched custom of bypassing the formal rules, is closely related to that kind of quasi-equilibrium. There are cases, especially common now in the Soviet Bloc, that the power holders and the subservients, the controlling and the controlled, all are involved in some kind of mutual blackmailing which evolves a lot of dissatisfaction, but on the other hand prevents potential innovators to strive for a new formal establishment.[111] Everybody has some vested interest in not revealing informal practices developed by him in order to satisfy his needs otherwise not acceptable at the level of a formal structure. Everybody is afraid that others know about his informal practices and that he may any time be accused for following them.

The effectiveness of the management depends very much upon finding solutions which would assure some kind of satisfactory equilibrium between objective constrains of the situation (goal versus practical possibility of fulfilling them), nature of tools under disposal (technological constraints)[112] and the preferences of people. Matching all those factors to one another one may obtain various possible authority configurations determined by the environmental conditions of power execution.

The management in most cases so far wants to preserve its monopoly of control, but the authoritarian rule is contradictory to the rising democratic expectations of workers. The distribution of rewards becomes the focal point of strain. The job security of workers is in conflict with the emphasis on rising productivity. The equalitarianism in the socio-cultural background of modern workers clashes with the rigid absolutism of the traditional management, and even with its new manipulative version (the human relations approach). The growing economic and communicational integration of the Western economy stimulates workers to overcome the existing regional inequalities in wages and working conditions (the demonstration effect).'[113]

It is especially the lower level of supervisory staff which quite often feels most threatened by loss of authority.[114] However, also higher levels of

[110] See R. L. Kahn, E. Boulding, **op. cit.**, p. 42.

[111] See Alexander Matejko, The Executive in Present-Day Poland, **The Polish Review**, XVI, 3, 1971. On the Soviet Union see B. M. Richman, **Soviet Management**, Prentice-Hall, 1965.

[112] J. Woodward has shown in her study of management types in the British industry, that the type of production (unit production, mass production, process production) influences to a large extent several important dimensions of the management structure. J. Woodward, **Industrial Organization, Theory and Practice**, Oxford University Press, London 1965.

[113] E. g. »It would be very surprising indeed if Canadian workers were in the long run willing to accept less than parity with American workers.« Westley and Westley, **op. cit.**, p. 109.

[114] E. g. in the Alcan plant in Kingston (Ontario) time cloks have been eliminated, the degree of supervision much lowered, and the wages established on a weekly basis. It was the lower management which has shown most of the resistance against all those reforms. See Industrial Innovations at Kingtson Plant of Alcan, **McGill Industrial Relations Review**, Fall, 1969.

management, as well as even the trade union elites are also hesitant to introduce some basic reforms which may undermine their present authority. The workers have to organize themselves and to exercise some effective pressure in order to procure change. The tactics of work-in practiced by some crews against an employer who wants to close the plant, e. g. as it happened in 1970 in the shipyards on the Upper Clyde in Great Britain or earlier several times in Italy, has taught workers to develop some intiative in self-management.

THE SOCIO-TECHNICAL PRINCIPLES OF PARTICIPATION

Summarizing what was said before, I would like to emphasize that the autocratic control of work groups has not only ceased to function effectively, but in addition has more and more disadvantageous social and political results. As the level of education and aspiration rises, people find it increasingly difficult to reconcile themselves not only to inadequate work and wage conditions, but also to the traditional ways of managing people. It is equally valid to the West as to the East. The egalitarian tendencies become firmly established among the masses, creating a powerful pressure of expectations which are against the framework of a highly conservative and ineffective bureaucratic structure. Time after time this structure begins to crumble under the pressure of the masses' dissatisfaction. The authorities can chose between three basic possibilities: to tighten up control and strengthen autocratic methods (thereby risking an even more violent mass reaction during the next crisis of authority); to transfer responsibility to the lower levels of control and thus exonerate themselves; or finally, to allow grassroots social initiative to individual groups — particularly work teams — enabling them to be self-governing to a greater or lesser degree. This last solution would of course be the most effective one, since it would not only release central administration from the burden of increasingly troublesome responsibilities, but would also contribute to creating authentic creative resourcefulness among the masses, which is indispensable for greater initiative, higher productivity, and the general commitment of people to what they do. For obvious reasons, those in power are reluctant to pursue this course of action consistently, since it is a basic contradiction to the established traditions of managing people. Apart from this, it would of course threaten the vital interests of the managerial elites, reduce their privileges, and introduce new men and ideas into the upper circles.

There is one further difficulty which hitherto has been mentioned all too rarely. The decentralization of power accompanied by the growth of collective resourcefulness among the masses, is not only a matter of suitably radical political reform, but primarily a **socio-technical problem** demanding a great fund of knowledge, patience, experimentation, and readiness to learn from the inevitable mistakes. There is at the present time in Poland a very interesting and creative group of people engaged in work on the theory of effective action (praxiology), and on sociotechnics[115] — a body of scientifically validated directives for the construction and transformation of optimal so-

[115] See A. Podgorecki, ed., **Socjotechnika, Style działania** (Sociotechnics, Styles of Action), Warsaw 1972, and several other books of the same author.

cio-organizational systems. It is difficult to consider effective forms and methods of self-governing systems in general, and workers' self-government in particular, without taking into account these people and their work. Practical experience and the accumulation of knowledge by a process of trial and error, must be supplemented and enriched by sociological analysis, and by an awareness of what has been accomplished elsewhere. But whether any of those in power will be willing to consider the findings of research as relevant to political action, is another matter. Glib phrasemongering about the pseudo-scientific basis of the present system is so convenient, that it will be difficult for the managers to obandon it in favour of a genuinely scientific approach, which demands (particularly in the field of the social sciences), the acceptance of doubt, and a lack of dogmatism. What is needed, is not that the manager should subordinate himself to the sociologists, but that he should be able to indentify the essential, translate the language of scholarship into the language of practical directives, and encourage (but not coerce) the sociologist to study relevant questions.

The relationship of the social sciences to social practice creates several important problems. First of all, it is the problem of an appropriate translation of scientific generalizations into practical directives.[116] Second, it is the question of finding enough fields for the practical application of scientific concepts.[117] Third, it is the problem of finding something common between the language of politics and the language of social research.[118] Fourth, it is the question of overcoming prejudices and distorted views about professional experts, and particularly about scientists.[119] Fifth, it is the problem of finding ways of convincing people in power of the utility of the expert knowledge.[120] Sixth, the problem of the kind of models to use in order to make the relationship between the managerial elite and the experts fully meaningful.[121]

I would like to devote here my attention only to the first of the mentioned above problems, it means to the practical directives which may be derived from all previous considerations presented in this paper. Altogether ten principles will be discussed below. These principles should be treated as proposals which need much further elaboration in the future. Their basic function consists of focussing attention on issues which seem to be of primary importance in the whole field of workers' control and participation.

1. The principle of predominance of reward over punishment.

Encouragement is more effective than deterrence: more can be gained from people by allowing new needs to emerge than by limiting oneself to the

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[116] See A. Podgorecki, R. Schulze, Sociotechnique, **Social Science Information**, 7 (4), 1969.

[117] See D.G. Dean, D.M. Valdes, **Sociology in Use**, New York: Macmillan, 1965; W. G. Bennis, K.D. Benne, A. Chin, eds., **Reading in Applied Behavioral Sciences**, New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1964; A.B. Shostak, ed **Sociology in Action**, Hemewood: Dorsey Press 1966.

[118] See N. Machiavelli, **The Prince**, New York: Hendricks House, 1946; H. Butterfield, **The Statecraft of Machiavelli**, New York: Collier Books, 1962; W.J.M. Mackenzie, **Politics and Social Science**, London: Penguin Books, 1967; R. Merton, The Role of Applied Social Science in the Formation of Policy, **Philosophy of Science**, 16 (3), 1949.

[119] See E.A. Shils, **The Torment of Secrecy**, Chicago: Free Press, 1956.

[120] See L.W. Milbrath, **The Washington Lobbyists**, Chicago: Rand McNally, 1963; J.A.C. Brown, **Techniques of Persuasion**, London: Penguin Books, 1963.

[121] See B. Gross, **The State of the Nation**, London: Tavistock Publ., 1966; J. Burnham, **The Managerial Revolution**, New York: John Day, 1941; M. Young. **The Rise of Meritocracy**, London: Penguin Books, 1958; A. Simirenko, ed., **Soviet Sociology**, Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1966; G. Sjoberg, ed., **Ethics, Politics, and Social Research**, Cambridge: Schenkman, 1967; A.W. Gouldner, S.M. Miller, eds., **Applied Sociology**, New York: Free Press, 1965.

satisfaction of already existing needs. Workers' self-government should attempt to anticipate the needs of people, not evade them as has happened up to now. Only those matters which people regard as understandable, closely concerning them, and subjectively relevant, are suitable objects for workers' self-government. Economic initiatives on the part of the organs of self-government will not become truly meaningful to the workers until their starting point is the living standard of the work force. This cannot, after all, be separated from the issue of productivity, since that decides whether needs can be satisfied. Therefore a reversal of the present scale of values need not be feared; if people have more opportunity for satisfying their own needs and those of their families, they will be more inclined to work efficiently.

There are still far too many negative incentives in the workplaces in the form of penalties and constraints. Attempts by workers to improve working conditions, or even to increase productivity, can involve them in considerable difficulties (especially if this threatens someone's privileges), and as a rule are very poorly rewarded. There is a lack of tolerance for creative people, particularly if their ideas should be the cause of any problems (and yet to put any innovation into effect must involve certain difficulties). Workers are generally able to gain little by trying to make changes for the better, while at the same time they do not stand to lose much by wasting the resources at their disposal. Such a state of affairs inevitably leads to conservatism and inefficient work. Workers' self-government could make many improvements by creating a favourable environment for the emergence of individual and collective initiative.

2. The principle of predominance of integrative over disintegrative tendencies.

Any system must, in order to continue, be fairly cohesive, but not to the extent of becoming rigid. Without the collision of opposing forces there would be no progress — but the opposing forces are always a potential threat of the dissolution of the whole system, if the conflict exceeds certain bounds. Therefore integration must predominate over disintegration if the system is to survive, though without completely eliminating the latter since it is essential for the maintenance of flexibility and ability to change.

A bureaucratic system works against itself by estranging individuals from one another. It is true that the system effectively prevents the formation of hostile coalitions by promoting mutual antagonism and distrust, but at the same time it does not allow the consolidation of social energy within a framework of more or less autonomous human groups. Such a system teaches people to avoid personal responsibility, and to put the onus on higher levels of authority. The increasing division of labour multiplies the number of occupational groups and categories, and makes harmonious co-operation more difficult — particularly since people in different specializations have different types of training and habits of thought.

In the totalitarian systems the monistic worldview preached by a party which monopolizes all power may create uniform integration, but it also fosters intolerance towards everything which is different. As a result, specific socio-occupational differences are insufficiently taken into account by the authorities, which is particularly apparent in attitudes towards the cre-

ative professions.[122] A monistic worldview is by its very nature anti-dialectical, and it is difficult to understand how convinced Marxists reconcile it with dialectic.

To a large exent, the role of workers' self-government is to systematically build a work-community structure in which creative and not destructive conflict can occur. In the first place, the various groups and categories must be given the opportunity of social consolidation. A communication network must then be formed among them which will effectively prevent ossification and particularism. The various occupational groups and categories should constantly stimulate each other to activities which have as their objective the common good. It is necessary to eliminate the fruitless and boring meetings which have until now been the mainstay of self-governmental activity, and instead to develop a number of new and attractive forms of interaction. The gabble of long speeches and the interminable tedium of reports must be excluded. There is no real reason why work should not be interwoven with enjoyment, even within the limits of a normal working day, not to speak of the limits of a week or a month.

The network of cells of the self-governing system should be skillfully joined to the network of already existing social and occupational bonds in the work environment. Only then can the self-governing system be organic and not artificially fabricated. In the course of planning its organizational structure the need to strengthen certain bonds and weaken others must be taken into account. There are groups and categories among the personnel which have a negative effect (e.g. as a result of cultivating an inferiority complex and a collective feeling of powerlessness). The strategy of development of the self-governmental organizational structure should aim at weakening or totally eliminating negative ties, while systematically strengthening the positive. Special attention should be devoted to small groups of not more than about a dozen people. Such groups provide particularly good conditions for the development of solidarity and collective resourcefulness. They should constitute the basic cells of the self-governing system.

3. The principle of predominance of expansionary over conservative forces.

In any system there are two basic types of sociotechnical measures; the first are concerned with the growth of the system, while the second try to maintain the traditional composition on which its existence is based. Both types of measure are essential, but when the latter become dominant the system becomes an end in itself; it is alienated from its purpose and succumbs to bureaucratic ossification.

The responsibility of workers' self-government is to ensure a steady inflow of developmental forces which express themselves in terms of the growing responsiveness of workers to both innovation and to the defects of present arrangements. On the other hand, it must also create a framework which will promote the constant harmonization of new and old. Innovators and traditionalists must have an equal chance of justifying themselves, and

[122] See A. Matejko, **Uslowia tworczeskogo truda** (Conditions of Creative Work) Moscow: Mir, 1970.

of creative conflict[123] when any essential matter is being decided. One group should not be allowed to dominate the other, since this will always damage the equilibrium of the system — unless the whole system is so conservative that it needs to be completely reformed. Care should always be taken to ensure sufficient opportunities for the emergence and development of innovation in the work place.

The psycho-sociological personnel can play an important innovative role in the work place if it interacts skillfully with workers' self-government. The constant analysis of what is happening within the enterprise community, together with the accumulation of data from outside, should produce a rich store of information. This will serve as a basis for incorporating elements of sociotechnical knowledge into the practice of the enterprise, particularly with reference to the use of work teams and their rational direction. Both individual workers and individual work teams should avail themselves of sociotechnical training which will contribute to making them optimally valuable members of workers' self-government.

The flexibility of the whole self-governmental system must be constantly maintained, otherwise it will gradually become unreceptive to to innovation. Frequent changes within the system are desirable to the extent that they reflect altered conditions and objectives, and are not merely caused by a power struggle between dictatorial individuals. A valuable principle[124] is for management to formulate specific tasks (strictly limited in space and time) and then consign them to self-selected teams. It is most important that the duration of the team's continuance is limited to the period necessary for the accomplishment of the task. The object of this is to allow the team to be re-formed to suit the nature of each new task. Even if the composition of the new team is almost identical to the old, the fact that its continuance is task-limited will encourage serious consideration of the personal and organizational implications of the new task. Routine becomes too important in teams which are composed of the same members for too long, and moreover personal and informal factors begin to take priority over objective task-oriented considerations. Professional ties should always take precedence over personal ties in a work team, although the latter are also necessary.

4. The organic principle.

All parts of a system should contribute to the success of the whole. The smooth functioning of any system, including a work place, is possible only by the co-ordination of all the parts. This is achieved by the careful selection of all the interacting elements, by precisely establishing and consequently obeying the rules of co-operation; by uniform and unambiguos instructions; by constant control of the state of integration of the various elements; by the immediate introduction of necessary modifications; and by maintaining the rhythmic nature of work.

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[123] It is like the experimentation in antimatter, (Emilio Segre, Owen Chamberlain, Oreste Piccioni) based on constructing the opposite of an object in order to bring them together and to release a new energy from the confrontation of both of them.

[124] I have developed this further in one of the chapters of **Kultura pracy zbiorowej** (Culture of Team Work), Warsaw, 1962.

Workers' self-government can play an important role in the attainment of these prerequisites, and in the achievement of an organic state. Its tasks should not, however, be unnecessarily confused with the tasks of professional management. Management must have complete freedom in performing its basic functions of motivation and co-ordination, while the role of workers' self-government in this field is to assist by creating the most favourable conditions for management to perform its tasks. For it to take over managerial functions would be ineffectual and lead only to a confusion of jurisdiction. It may be very convenient to the egoistically oriented manager to rid himself of responsibility by transferring the right of decisionmaking to various self-governing committees, but the result will almost always be organizational neglect of the enterprise, and long-winded talk which achieves nothing. J. Wolski rightly wants to eliminate professional »idealists« who want to take over from qualified managerial personnel, but who as a rule perform badly and lower the productive capacity of the enterprise in which they operate.[125]

The application of the organic principle to workers' self-government also means that it should penetrate the whole organization of the workplace. Self-governing elements should be introduced wherever people co-operate in carrying out specific (as opposed to general tasks). R. Likert's proposals are very valuable in this context,[126] as are also J. Wolski's proposals with reference to the Polish case.[127] The latter suggests two fields in which self-governmental processes should be introduced: **task forces** composed if possible of not more than seven people, who develop collective resourcefulness in the course of working together; and **occupational associations** which are concerned with the common interests resulting from the same or similar socio-occupational roles. In Wolski's view the self-governmental system cannot merely be an extrinsic addition to the enterprise, but must constitute its social essence. If we accept this interpretation, then the whole administration of the enterprise must undergo a transformation. The direction of this transformation is seen clearly by Likert, though he does not use the concept of self-government. Likert sees the managerial role chiefly in terms of training, not of power. The basic task of leadership is motivation and co-ordination — not by exercising authority directly, but by welding the subordinates into a team, entrusting the team with as much group decision-making as possible, and maintaining the team as an efficiently functioning unit. It would appear that workers' self-government and a democratic style of management complement each other, and that one is impossible without the other.

5. The principle of two-way communication.

If in a given system information flows only in one direction (generally downwards), then the system will be insufficiently flexible, and the correction of errors will be delayed and costly. In a centralized system of control, the top is as a rule poorly informed of what is happening at the bottom, since each of the intermediate levels filters and distorts the flow of information in accordance with its own interests. The top level often tacitly ignores this process, since it is convenient for it to be unaware of the real state of affairs. The selfgovern-

[125] Alexander Matejko, **The Self-Management Theory of Jan Wolski**, op. cit.
[126] See R. Likert, **The Human Organization**, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.
[127] See J. Wolski, **Spoldzielczy Samorzad Pracy** (The Co-operative Self-Government) Warsaw, 1957.

ing system should contribute generally to a considerable enrichment and diversification of the communication flow. Primarily it is a question of supplementing the present technical and economic-organizational information content with a social and cultural content. Life in the work environment should be systematically transformed and improved, with particular emphasis on self-improvement and self-direction. The exchange of information between the individual cells of the self-governmentalized enterprise should be raised to a constantly higher cultural level. It is also worth thinking of the development of the specific folk lore of each workplace, which would make the social environment of the work community more attractive. It is a question not only of improving the work environment, but of enriching the lives of the workers.

The organizers of the flow of information generated by the self-governing system must constantly have in mind the development of individuals and groups. Hence the need for the spread of educational and training programs, and their close interconnection with the main purpose of the enterprise. People should be educated, but their education should be beneficial to the enterprise. The issue is more complex than it appears at first sight, since in industry it is often difficult to forecast accurately which new qualifications will be needed. But in any case, time and effort should be spent liberally on general education which has no immediate utilitarian aims. Raising the cultural level of the work force is desirable for many reasons.

6. The principle of multi-level resourcefulness.

Encouragement of initiative at all levels of the personnel hierarchy, and a break with the tradition of limiting this initiative to the higher levels, releases a powerful source of latent social energy. The realization of workers' selfgovernment demand socio-organizational conditions in which collective initiative is widespread. For example the initiative of individual work groups must be given extensive scope in the field of assuming and carrying out projects. Instead of wasting time and effort in controlling details, the team should be allowed to operate independently, with inspection of the **final** results of the work, not of its course. Naturally training must be available, but it should not be identified with supervision. Instead of the present heavy and sluggish bureaucratic apparatus, work teams should have expert assistance available if needed. Each team should be responsible for its own resources, and the organization be based on co-operation between a number of more or less specialized groups, each of them concentrating on its own task. There should be freedom of choice in moving from teams which have completed their projects to those which are starting new ones. Teams can and should federate with each other when their tasks are interrelated.

A vital issue is that of enabling individual members to interact positively with each other, and to show initiative in a way that does not lead to conflict. There are many opportunities in this field for individual and group psychotherapy. K. Dabrowski's theory of positive disintegration could find an interesting application in the transformation of interpersonal conflict into constructive self-developmental measures not only for individuals but for whole groups.[128]

The extensive present-day research on the behaviour of small groups, and particularly on mutual relations between members, should be applied to workers' self-government. There is a large amount of valuable data concerning selection of members, division of tasks, motivation, co-ordination of activities, leadership, treatment of deviant members, etc. An effort should be made to translate these general conclusions into sociotechnical directives, which would help self-governing groups to achieve sufficient flexibility and efficiency.

7. The principle of balanced interaction between a system and the external environment, to which the system must adapt itself while at the same time maintaining its autonomy. Too great a degree of external intervention threatens the system with the loss of ability to operate independently and efficiently, so that it ceases to be of much use. Conversely, the lack of a strong and active relationship between a system and outside world will cause it to close in on itself and become alienated.

This principle applies equally to the situation of the self-governing system with reference to the outside world, and to relationships between the system and its individual parts. As regards the first danger, workers' self-government must be assured of full autonomy in its internal affairs, and a reasonable amount of autonomy in external affairs. It must not be hampered by constant interference or by numerous directives. The self-governing workplace community must learn from its mistakes. Naturally, the interchange of information with other workers' self-governments will be useful, and competent training must be available. However, one must distinguish between assistance and the control exercised by the all-powerful bureaucracy. The growth of detailed regulations is of great disservice to the system, since it prevents freedom of action and makes the use of unauthorized mesaures almost indispensable. The attempt to establish rules to cover every conceivable situation is not only absurd, but also crushes at its source all the initiative which would be possible within established limits. Formalistically oriented »specialists« in the work organization have done damage which is now difficult to repair. Instead of encouraging social imagination, they have reduced the question of the work co-operation to a multiplicity of ossified formulas which have separated it from the worker and his real interests. It is significant that these »specialists« are often hostile to sociology, rightly fearing on its part a confrontation of the bureaucratic myth with the realities of life. One may have various reservations with regard to those sociologists who have concerned themselves with the whole question of workers' councils, but they have at least made an extensive cognitive contribution.

Within the system of workers' self-government the voluntary principle must apply to membership of work groups, federation with other groups, internal changes, and the possible dispersal of the team. In reality, only a minimum of general rules is necessary to maintain the groups in a healthy condition and to prevent excessive conflict between them. One of these rules should be the prohibition of exploitation of labour. A situation should not occur in which the work group degenerates as a result of using hired labour, allowing the elite of the group to exist at the expense of others. It

[128] See K. Dabrowski, A. Kawczak, M. Piechowski, **Mental Growth Through Positive Disintegration**, London: Gryf Publ., 1970.

is also necessary to prevent certain groups from monopolizing the most popular tasks.

8. The principle of feedback.

The effects of workers' self-governmental activities must operate on a concrete and convincing way as stimuli for further development. This is a question of first making these effects sufficiently evident, and then transforming them into incentives.

Very often the results of work are so intangible, and their influence on the situation in the work environment so delayed, that work groups cannot receive enough credit for what they do. Clearly evident criteria of work results must be introduced and utilized as the basis of evaluation of group and individual productivity. All reward and credit must be clearly related to these criteria. The fact that relations between the enterprise and the self-governing work teams would be based on the principle of agreements which take results into account, should contribute to effective feedback.

But more than the financial aspects are involed. Everything possible should be done to enable workers to see the results of their work and to take pride in them. Propaganda and publicity can play an important role in this field, so long as they are honest and effective.

9. The principle of providing opportunities for self-development.

The more profesionally competent a work group may be, the greater the caution which should be exercised in outside intervention, and the greater the reliance that can be placed on the ability of the group to improve itself independently. Individual self-governing teams, and also the self-governing system as a whole, should be encouraged to improve themselves constantly. Assignments should always be difficult rather than easy (though of course the degree of difficulty should not be unreasonable). Individual workers should constantly be encouraged (not forced) to develop their abilities and skills. The enterprise should have an extensive network of career opportunities through which workers can advance. Definite encouragement should be given in this matter.

The problem of personality development ought not to be forgotten. There is considerable scope for counselling and assistance by industrial psychologists. The self-governing workplace should become a favourable environment for the development of human potential. All too often people become psychologically deformed by remaining too long in one occupation. Therefore, it is worth encouraging them to change careers from time to time, or at least to change jobs.

10. The principle of humanization of the system.

By this I mean that the enterprise should take into account actual and potential human needs, interests, goals, and ambitions. It should take them into account, but not subordinate all other considerations to them. For the

workplace, by the very nature of things, is not a philanthropical institution; it exists not only to concern itself with the more or less legitimate needs of its workers, but primarily in order to produce. However, it is essential that there should be a basic conformity between the work and peoples' wants, needs, and abilities. The dissonance between formal and informal organization in the workplace should not be too large, particularly as neither of these two organizations can decidedly take priority over the other.

There are creative possibilities in informal organization which can be effectively utilized for the advantage of the enterprise only within the conditions of broadly based workers' self-government. The natural human tendency for concord and friendship should find and outlet in self-governing work groups instead of in cliques, and concern for human beings should become a reality of daily life, instead of being an empty cliché.

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WORKERS' PARTICIPATION AND WORKERS' CONTROL ASPECTS OF BRITISH EXPERIENCE

»In the past workmen have thought that if they could secure wages and better working conditions they would be content. Employers have thought that if they granted these things workers ought to be contented. Wages and conditions have improved; but the discontent and the unrest have not disappeared. Many good people have come to the conclusion that working people are so unreasonable that it is useless trying to satisfy them. The fact is that the unrest is deeper than pounds, shillings and pence, necessary as they are. The root of the matter is the straining of the spirit of man to be free.«
William Straker,
Northumberland Miners Agent,
Evidence to the Sankey Commission on the Nationalisation of the Mines, 1919.

The size and structure of British industry, the nation's original role as »workshop of the world«, the early emergence of a large and powerfull trade union movement, have meant that the ideas and attitudes of organised labour have played a crucial role in the development and consciousness of the workforce. Labour unions affiliated with the Trades Union Congress had attained the 1,250.000 mark by 1900, reached a peak of 6,500.000 in 1920, fell to marginally below 3,300.000 at the depth of the depression and have risen in membership from 6,000.000 to 10,000.000 in the last 27 years.[1] As a result, anarcho-syndicalist demands for the self-administered workshop, which have played an important part in the history of labour movements in less developed countries such as France and Spain, have never gained wide acceptance in Britain. This is not to say that demands for workers control or workers participation have never been made; rather that these have been manifestations of the con-

[1] The TUC figures understate the position since there have always been a number of non-affiliated unions. Taking these into account, we would record some 2,000.000 unionists in 1900, some 8,300.000 in 1920, and a low of only 4,300.000 during the depression. On this see Trades Union Congress. Annual Report. 1971.

sciousness of a mass organised labour movement rather than a political movement on their own account.

In the early years of the last century such ideas seem to have been fairly widespread. Thus in 1833 the Builders' Union in Birmingham wrote to a con tractor in respect of a project thus: »As you had no authority from us to make such an engagement, nor had you any legitimate right to barter our labour at prices fixed by yourself, we call upon you to exhibit to our several Lodges your detailed estimates of quantities and prices ... Should we find upon examination that you have fixed equitable prices which will not only remunerate you for your superintendence but us for our toil, we have no objection upon a clear understanding to become parties to the contract ... after your having been duly **elected** to occupy that office you have **assumed.**«[2] The ideas of industrial unionism later propagated in a more developed form by Daniel de Leon and of the Soviet State advocated by Lenin were also in the air at this time. Thus James Morrison could write in »The Pioneer« of 31st March 1833: »The growing power and growing intelligence of Trade Unions, when properly managed, will draw into its vortex all the commercial interests of the country and, in so doing, it will become .. we might almost say (a) dictatorial part of the body politic. When this happens, we have gained all that we want; ... (if) the union itself becomes a vital member of the state, it instantly erects itself into a house of trades which must supply in place of the present House of Commons and direct the industrial affairs of the country, according to the will of the trades, which composed the association of industry.« »With us, universal suffrage will begin in our Lodges, extend to the general union, embrace the management of trade, and finally swallow up the political power.«[3]

The same idea re-appears during the brief era before the total stalinization of the Communist Party of Great Britain. Thus, William Paul, one of the founders of the British party, writes in his »Communism and Society«, »In opposition to the Parliamentary institution, based upon geographical groupings, the workers will contrive to erect their machinery of government based upon industrial functions by organising the masses upon the basis of functional social service.« »Proletarian revolutions, unlike the bourgeois revolutions« Paul continues in a manner more worthy of Marx than of Lenin, »force their way up from below, through local successes, until the whole centralised machinery of the national Capitalist State has been captured, uprooted, and replaced with the administrative organs of the working class. The social revolution is not a coup d'etat, a sudden stroke carried out overnight by a handful of audacious men; it is rather the masses striving in every corner of the land to build up new social organs which respond to their immediate wants and solve the big problems which history has placed before society.«[4]

The ambitious hopes of pioneers such as James Morrison, went unrealised. The early trade unionists found their energies almost totally committed to the struggle for survival. British trade unionists, after the defeat of the Chartist upsurge settled down to the day to day business of wage negotiation, elaborating a social benefit structure which would enable them to survive over one decade into another. Since union leaders came largely to share the

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[2] Raymond Posgate, **The Builders'History**, p. 90, London, 1923.

[3] James Morrison, »The Pioneer«, 31st March 1833, quoted in J. T. Murphy, **Modern Trade Unionism**, p. 131, London, 1935.

[4] William Paul, »Communism and Society«, pp. 174, 177, CPGB London, 1922. Paul remained a member of the Communist Party until his death in 1958.

ideological views of employers the demand for participation and control vanished from the scene.

The ideas of later socialists although not fully elaborated did not involve projects for the extension of democracy to the point of production. Instead, it was assumed that by transferring the enterprise from private ownership to that of the state the problem of the wage owners' status and condition would be resolved. The growth of unionism in the two decades after 1900 reopened this question once more. A wave of dissatisfaction with an apparently growing gap between union leaders and rank and file coupled with concern at the disappointing performance of Labour in Parliament led to a swing towards syndicalism and industrial unionism, each with its own view of industrial democracy. Guild Socialism, a middle class reflection of these revolutionary workers control views was essentially an echo of this widespread working class sentiment. After the Russian Revolution the Soviet myth, with its promise of industrial government **in being,** won over the larger part of the most prominent adherents of the old Guild Socialist, syndicalist and industrial unionist ideas. The movement went into limbo for some four decades.

In recent years disillusionment with the Soviet myth, perceived inadequacies in the structure of British nationalised industries, the unwillingness of a new generation of unionists to remain within the old narrow bargaining framework, has led to a revival of interest in workers control and workers participation in Britain. Clear signs of the change are to be found in recent policy statements of both the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress on Industrial Democracy and the widespread rash of »sit ins« and »work ins« during the last two years, of which that at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders — UCS is only the best known and most obviously successful. The bright and so far unfulfilled hopes initially attending the foundation, during 1968, of an Institute for Workers Control, were a further indication of this upsurge of interest.

The problem of workers participation is normally, and in this writer's view, incorrectly, seen in an unduly formal and legalistic light. The extent to which the employer's freedom arbitrarily to do as he pleases with his own has suffered serious erosion is generally underrated. As long ago as 1897 George Barnes, the General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers could declare that the employer's »freedom in the conduct generally of business has long since been taken away from him, and that he now only has liberty to conduct industrial enterprise in accordance with public opinion, as embodied in Parliamentary enactment and the pressure of Trade Unionism«. After quoting a series of examples Barnes concluded that the employers' plea »to do what he likes with his own« is somewhat out of date and cannot be sustained.[5]

The limits upon the exercise of autocratic managerial prerogative have immensely increased since Barnes' words were written. To the degree that these limitations have been imposed by union action, to the extent that the exercise of formerly unilateral managerial prerogative, has become a matter for negotiation, then, to that degree organised labour possesses a form of negative control over entrepreneurial decisions. Managerial prerogative remains formally intact. Yet since few important decisions are taken without regard to

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[5] Quoted by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, **Industrial Democracy,** p. 823, London, 1913.
[6] See for example S. H. Slichter ,J. H. Healy and E. R. Naseh, The Impact of Collective Bargaining on Management. Washington, 1960.

probable union reaction, if they are indeed not themselves subject to negotiation, much of managerial autonomy is more formal than real.[6] Changes in the control of property seem to have taken place even although the formal status of property ownership has remained unchanged. This has great significance for socialists, not least those who until now have seen the state socialist model as the only one inheriting the true socialist tradition. Thus, for example, there seems no doubt that the degree of »workers control« exercised by workers, through their unions, shop stewards and convenors, in the capitalist owned British Leyland factory at Cowley, England, is far greater than that wielded over production and payment decisions, by their Russian counterparts, at the new, state owned, FIAT plant, now going into operation at Togliattigrad in the USSR.[7]

The erosion of management prerogative that has taken place in this direction is greatly underrated. Previous gains have now become part of the cultural norm and as a result are not clearly perceived for what they are. In a completely free market economy we may postulate that management ought to be able to hire and fire labour as it pleased (or at the discretion of the market as one prefers); it would be free similarly to decide hours and conditions of labour and, of couse, wage rates. In the organised firms and due to social and legislative pressure in unorganised firms to a large extent as well, these prerogatives have now passed outside the sphere of unilateral managerial decision and are subject to a bargaining process and a joint decision.

An exhaustive list of items which have passed to joint control would be almost endless. Amongst them we would find wages, hour, overtime, piecework prices, production bonuses, conditions of labour, holidays, pensions, guaranteed weekly or even annual wage, cost of living sliding scale, job categories seniority, lay-off procedures, job evaluation systems, anti-discrimination provisions, shop steward rights and privileges, redundancy payments. These encroachments, made for the most part with the aim of safeguarding wage rates and job conditions are no less real encroachments on managerial prerogatives for the incidental nature of their establishment and negotiation.

One needs to take account too, of another phenomenon, not less real, because difficult to measure. In the preparation of management plans a whole series of possible measures, which would once have been a commonplace, are now automatically excluded from consideration because it is well known that the cost of enforcing them against union and workforce opposition would far outweigh any putative economic gains. Bargaining power thus not only limits managerial prerogative over issues which actually appear on the bargaining table: by a kind of pre-emptive strike it also prevents the appearance of some items on the bargaining table altogether.

There are indeed good grounds for contesting the belief that the mode of industrial organisation is objectively determined.[8] The introduction of »stakhanovism« in Russia during the years of the first five year plans and the Great Terror of the 1930's is only partly to be understood as a means of increasing production and stepping up the rate of exploitation of labour. Probably far more important was its role as an instrument for atomising the workforce, breaking down implicit bonds of working solidarity and thus strengthening the

[7] Thus in Turin one hears that FIAT management has from time to time despatched Communist union militants on assignement to the Togliattigrad plant with the specific intention of undermining their faith in Soviet »socialism«.

[8] See, for example, Seymour Melman, **Decision Making and Productivity**, Oxford, 1958, pp. 1—10.

hold of the ruling autocracy over the working population as a whole. Methods of wage payment, time work, piece work, job evaluation, all have »political« consequences for the style of management in the plant. Thus under the »gang« system, which was successfully operated by Standard at Coventry over a number of years, supervision over employee groups of from 50 to 3,000 in size was largely handed over to labour under a form of collective contract. »From the standpoint of production workers, the gang system leads to keeping track of goods instead of keeping track of people . . . There was some increase in the clerical staff required to keep track of the flow of goods through the plant. At the same time, however, supervisory personnel like foremen were decreased in number.«[9] In a similar fashion, job allocation amongst engineers on United States railways is decided by an involved system of »bumping« which disposes of management prerogatives in this field altogether.

Guild Socialism, with its idea of the »collective contract« to some extent anticipated and gave theoretical justification to the »gang« system subsequently applied at Coventry.[10] The workers in a shop within the plant, it was proposed, would negotiate a price for the whole production process, supervision included, and run the whole shop as a self managing enclave within the still capitalist enterprise. The workers by extending the scope of the collective contract would step by step erode the employer's control of his own plant. In the end he would, in effect be peacefully expropriated by his own workforce.

»The Guild Socialist« in G. D. H. Gole's words, »contends, then, that the internal management and control of each industry or service must be placed, as a trust on behalf of the community, in the hands of the workers engaged in it . . .« Similarly, he contends that general questions of industrial administration extending to all industries should, where they mainly concern the whole body of producers, be entrusted to an organisation representing all the producers; but he holds equally that the general point of view of all types of consumers must be fully represented and safeguarded in relation to industry as a whole.[11] Guild Socialism was thus explicitly opposed to the state socialist view, held by both social democrats and communists, that state administration could be equivalent, albeit by proxy, to workers self-administration. In place of state administration the Guild Socialists advocated a producers' democracy. Industry would be administered by self-governing National Guilds. The state as a general protector would »hold the ring«. Whilst the exact mode of transition from one society to another was left open, many Guild Socialists seem to have seen the unions reorganised on an industrial basis as the key agent in the process and envisaged on occasion the reorganised trade union itself as the framework of the National Guild.[12]

The Guild Socialist movement was in large measure a middle class off-shoot of the rank and file syndicalist and industrial unionist outlook which was widespread and powerful before the First World War. The most intellectually developed form of industrial unionist theory was provided by Daniel de Leon, leader of the Socialist Labour Party of the United States and

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[9] Melman, p. 34; for an ilustrating and favourable account written by a worker who has been employed under this system, see Reg Wright, »The Gang System in Coventry«, Anarchy No. 2, London 1961:, »Erosion inside Capitalism«, Anarchy No. 8, London, 1961.

[10] One of the originators, a Scots shop steward named William Gallacher ,later became a leading member of the British Communist Party. For a statement of this view see: J. Paton and W. Gallacher, »Towards Industrial Democracy«, Paisley, 1917.

[11] G.D.H. Cole, **Guild Socialism Re-stated,** p. 39, London, 1920..

[12] **Ibid.,** pp. 174-188

a founder of the Industrial Workers of the World. James Connolly, Irish labour leader, later executed by the English for his part in the rising of Easter 1916 in Dublin, has stated this view very well.

In Connolly's eyes »every fresh shop or factory organised ... is a fort wrenched from the hands of the capitalist class and manned with soldiers of the Revolution to be held by them for the workers. On the day that the political and economic forces of labour finally break with capitalist society and proclaim the Workers' Republic, these shops and factories so manned ... will be taken charge of by the workers there employed, and force and effectiveness thus given to that proclamation. Then and thus the new society will spring into existence ready equipped to perform all the useful functions of its predecessors.«[13]

Syndicalists and industrial unionists were united in the argument that workers should control industry, and both largely agreed that this workers control should be exercised by unions reorganised on industrial lines. Industrial government on lines advocated by Marx and briefly inaugurated by the workers Soviets in the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 was thus to be the outcome of their endeavours.

It may well be as has been convincingly argued by Hugh Clegg that these views underestimated the complexities of 20th century industrial administration and the necessity of an important degree of bureaucratic organisation. Clegg's conclusions are threefold:

3. that ownership of industry is irrelevant to goods industrial relations.[14]
gement.

2. that only the unions can represent the industrial interests of the worker.

3. that ownership of industry is irrelevant to good industrial relations.[14]

Viewed in such a light the syndicalist and industrial unionist proposals for a change of ownership of industry appear as superfluous; their intent to unify union and management in ownership and administration of the plant is dangerous both to the unions and to the whole system of political democracy of which they are a part. Free trade unions are a cardinal requirement for the existence of modern political democracy. Although versions of the collective contract may have real but limited validity, the argument »leads to the conclusion that industrial democracy must for the most part confine itself to protecting rights and interests.«[15] The aim of self-administration ends, in effect, as utopia.

Paul Blumberg has argued powerfully that Clegg's thesis is not adequately sustained by his own evidence.[16] In particular, Blumberg contends that even within Clegg's own intellectual framework trade union action alone is insufficient to produce industrial democracy, since the trade union is »an opposition which can never become a government.«[17] Clegg's analogy between political and industrial democracy, in Blumberg's view, fails. Whilst the present author at least finds Blumberg's criticism of Clegg's formal presentation convincing, he remains unconvinced that trade union management and ownership in industry is in itself a desirable end.

The syndicalists and industrial unionists had agreed that it should not be the state but either the industrial unions or »the workers« as a collectivity

[13] James Connolly, **Socialism Made Easy**, p. 19, Glasgow, 1917.
[14] Hugh Clegg, **A New Approach to Industrial Democracy**, p. 21, Oxford, 1960.
[15] **Ibid.**, p. 119.
[16] Paul Blumberg, **Industrial Democracy**, pp. 139—167, London, 1968.

which would administer production under industrial democracy. South Wales miners in 1917 produced »A Plan for the Democratic Control of the Mining Industry« which proposed that »the State should own on behalf of the nation, and through its appointed Minister or Controller, make certain demands for supply upon the mining industry... The workmen should make their own disposition to meet this demand.« The authors considered that »the Miners Federation of Great Britain contains the necessary skeleton structure« on which production could be effficiently and democratically organised.[18] The South Wales Miners group laid its plan before the Sankey Commission and offered to submit evidence for consideration. This offer was not, however, accepted.[19]

The Miners Federation of Great Britain in its own evidence to the Commission proposed that »for the purpose of winning, distributing, selling, and searching for coal and other minerals... a Mining Council consisting of a President and 20 members, ten of whom shall be appointed by His Majesty and ten by the ... Miners Federation of Great Britain should be established.« The President of the Mining Council, appointed by the Prime Minister, would be the Minister of Mines.[20] Local administration of the industry was to be placed in the hands of District and Pit Councils appointed on the same parity basis as the National Mining Council (21). The Sankey Commission's recommendations for nationalisation of coal mines were however, rejected. Neither the proposals of the Miners Federation of Britain, nor any variant of them were ever carried out.

The failure of Britain's 1926 General Strike, the exhaustion of the miners union by the agonising lock-out which followed, led to a shift away from the ideas of direct action and industrial democracy. The Public Corporation, in its present form is very much the brain child of Herber Morrison. Morrison was presumably influenced by the Russian state socialist model which was the subject of enormous attention at this time. A right wing Labour leader, Morrison shared with the Russian communists the desire to exclude the workforce from any share in managerial decisions, although, unlike the Russian leadership under Stalin, he wished to create a managerial organism, separate and apart from that of a Department of State, Morrison's ideas were first fully embodied in practice with the London Passenger Transport Board of 1934 and this subsequently became the model for the great nationalised corporations set up since 1945 in Nationalised Coal, Transport, Gas, Electricity, and more recently, with modifications, Steel. The Public Corporation whilst committed by its constitution to create machinery for collective bargaining and joint consultation, is run by a band of full-time and part-time members appointed by the Ministers. In terms of labour — management relations the effect has been to »attempt to establish throughout nationalised industries the practice of the better private firms, and within a framework of collective bargaining taken over from private industry.«[23]

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[17] Paul Blumberg, **Industrial Democracy**, p. 145, London, 1968. Hugh Clegg, **Industrial Democracy and Nationalisation**, p. 22, Oxford, 1951.

[18] Industrial Committee of the South Wales Socialist Society, »A Plan for the Democratic Control of the Mining Industry«, p. 8, Porth, 1919.

[19] **Ibid.**, p. 3.

[20] Frank Hodges, **Nationalisation of the Mines**, pp. 151-152, London, 1920.

[21] **Ibid.**, p. 163

[22] William A. Robson, **Nationalised Industry and Public Ownership**. pp. 228—230, London 1960.

[23] Allen Flanders and Hugh Clegg, (ed.), **The System of Industrial Relations in Britain**, p. 242, London 1954.

The pattern of industrial relations established in nationalised industry has been civilised and rational and to some degree a pacesetter for the rest of the economy. Yet the public corporation itself has not in any sense involved a change in worker-management relations of a type envisaged by theorists of workers participation and control.

Apart from a limited number of private schemes which do not properly belong within the framework of this paper, the major initiatives towards increasing worker participation in management have come to the fore during the First and Second World Wars. In each case the demand for limitless production, the acute shortage of manpower caused by the demands of the armed services, placed organised labour in a very strong bargaining position and resulted in a mass influx into the unions. In 1914—18 the virtual integration of union leaders into the government apparatus at a time when rising prices, long hours, dilution and conscription were playing havoc in the ranks, led to the emergence of a powerful rank and file shop steward movement largely indepedent of official union machinery. The leaders of this movement were frequently syndicalists and firm believers in ideas of workers control.

The wartime upsurge of discontent culminated in a spontaneous strike involving over 200,000 workers during the early months of 1917.[24] The Whitley committee, which had been appointed the previous year »to make and consider suggestions for securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and workmen«[25] subsequently made a number of proposals designed to increase »co-operation« between capital and labour. The most important called for the establishment of Joint Industrial Councils with representatives of workers and management meeting at national, local and works levels. Outside the Civil Service the proposals never took firm root. In private industry, few of the intended local or works councils were ever set up or lasted any length of time. Nevertheless, a number of Joint Industrial Councils were established and although many collapsed in the post-war depression, other survived to become a permanent part of the nation's collective bargaining sructure.[26]

»Joint Consultation« is regarded by many as a form of worker participation in the life and activity of the enterprise. Thus in 1942 unions and employers in engineering agreed to establish »Joint Production and Advisory Committees«, their purpose being »to consult and advise on matters relating to production and increased efficiency... in order that maximum output may be obtained from the factory.« The statutes of British nationalised industries also provide for joint consultation but are drawn in a somewhat broader manner. »Safety, health, welfare... and other matters of mutual interest« are included in the subjects thought fit for discussion.

There seems from the beginning to have been a duality of approach to consultation, one side evaluating it by reference to its succes as a tool of management, »incorporating« the labour force in managerial objectives, the others as a step on the road to industrial democracy. Workers' hostility to joint consultation has been in part well grounded in the belief that such schemes were used by management as a device for forestalling or preventing union or-

[24] For the background to these events see: Walter Kendall, **The Revolutionary Movement in Britain, 1900—1921**, pp. 142—169, London, 1969.

[25] Quoted J. T. Murphy, **»Compromise or Independence?** An Examination of the Whitley Report«, p. 3 Sheffield, 1918.

[26] Allen Flanders and Hugh Clegg (ed), **The System of Industrial Relations in Britain**, pp. 211—212, 236 ff., 278 ff., 288 ff., London, 1954.

ganization and reducing labour unrest.[27] In Britain the proposal first became prominent during the First World War, as we have already seen.

Labour shortage and production demand enhanced labour bargaining power in the Second World War as in the First. There was, however, no comparable growth of an **independent** shop steward movement with implicit aims of workers control. This was largely because once Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union had ended the Nazi-Communist Pact, the full weight of Communist Party influence in the plants was switched to a drive against strikes and for more production. Joint Production Committees had developed spontaneously whilst the Communists were still calling for strikes and publicly campaigning for a negotiated peace with Hitler. JPCs now were adopted by the engineering unions and subsequently by the Trade Union Congress. By July 1943, according to the Ministry of Production, some 4,170 such Committees were in existence, covering over 2,500.000 workers. Whilst precise evaluation of the success of these Committees is lacking, there seems little doubt that they did contribute materially to aiding management to get out more production. That they enhanced workers control over the productive process seems most unlikely. The burden of probability is that by their fixed adherence to management rather than to worker goals the committees acted in precisely the opposite way.

In the conditions of scarcity which continued to prevail in immediate post-war years Joint Production Committees retained much of their popularity. As more normal conditions began to return, as the Communist line shifted against industrial peace, there took place a major fall off in both coverage and activity. The decline of Joint Production Committees seems to have been at least in part a delayed reaction to the increase in shop steward representation which took place during the war years.[28] The argument is simple and convincing.

The formation of a Joint Production Committee assumes that there exist matters of »common interest« about which mutually profitable discussion may take place. Once an effective trade union bargaining structure has been formed to deal with issues in dispute within the plant, the utility of the Joint Production Committee is called into question. The shop stewards come to consider »any committee... which cannot reach a decision... as essentially an inferior and inadequate substitute for proper negotiating machinery.« This is especially the case since joint consultation has no effective worker sanctions at its disposal. Employers may reject workers' proposals, but the workers »cannot even register a failure to agree.«

In the words of a research paper submitted to the Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers Associations, »the notion of joint consultation involves... that there are some areas of management activity (i.e wage fixing, hours of work, etc.) which are fit and proper subjects for joint determination by collective bargaining; on the other hand there are other areas (e.g. the introduction of new machinery, the level of output, methods of work arrangement), which must remain the **exclusive** prerogative of management, although they may be discussed with workers' representatives.« »Thus we come to the paradox :it is assumed that management should only agree to share

[27] **Ibid.**, pp. 329—330.

[28] Amalgamated Engineering Union shop stewards increased in number 50% between 1947 and 1961. Membership of the union increased by only 30% during the same period. W.E.J. McCarthy, »The Role of Shop Stewards in British Industrial Relations«, p. 5, London (HMSO), 1967. It may be that wartime Joint Production Committees stirred union interest in plant issues and that in post—war years these matters were taken over and handled by shop stewards rather than Joint Production Committees.

responsibility on controversial and conflicting subjects like wages; on noncontroversial and common interest issues like manning, it cannot do more than consult... Agreements are only possible when the two sides are basically opposed; when they are really united there cannot be any question of agreement.« »These are not the assumptions of shop stewards. They tend to believe that any subject which affects their members is a fit and proper matter for negotiation and agreement: they are also inclined to think that conflicts of interest can just as easily arise over questions such as the introduction of new machines or output levels as they can over wages and hours.«[29]

In 1961 fewer than one tenth of Engineering Employers Federation establishments reported functioning Joint Production Committees.[30] The proportion of these that operated effectively is unknown. On balance, it seems entirely reasonable to believe that given the choice, organised workers prefer bargaining to consultation. Whilst strong trade union organisation exists and peace time conditions prevail, there is no reason to expect a reversal of the present trend. To the extent that trade union organisation increases further, it is likely to do so at the expense of Joint Consultation. Joint Consultation may indeed, as some United States experience suggests, prove to be one step involuntarily paving the way for a stronger union presence in the plant.

The movement for workers participation in management and control which arose before the First World War, quiescent for almost a generation, has now begun to flourish and show life anew. There is on foot a search for new ideas and forms of social ownership which can guarantee that a socialist transformation of British capitalism will bring in their train an extension of human freedom and not a new version of the totalitarian societies that are to be seen in Eastern Europe. There is a concern, too, that the public corporation although economically efficient has done nothing to alter the status of the worker in nationalised industry. A perceived need to renovate the socialist mystique in a society in which rising affluence tends to accentuate rather than to diminish the level of human alienation.

The publication by members of the labour movement's Ruskin College in 1964 of a pamphlet on »Workers Control in the Mining Industry« was one of the first signs of the new revival.[31] The authors of this pamphlet, several of whom were working miners, criticised the National Union of Mineworkers — NUM for its failure to make specific proposals for the democratisation of the industry. »The principle underlying the concept of »line and staff« by which the National Coal Board — NCB is managed«, the pamphlet pointed out »is that the flow of orders shall be from the top downwards and there is no allowance made within it for ideas or alternative suggestions to flow in the opposite direction. The tendency has been for the Board to take its lead from private industry both in applying managerial policies and in its drive to achieve greater efficiency. Because of this the Board has appeared to the miners to be nothing more than the old form of owernship »writ large«. The authors of »Workers Control in the Mining Industry« proposed to pass a large proportion of managerial decisions at pit level over to the control of an elected Workers Council. The NUM, they considered, would continue to negotiate wages and

[29] W.E.J. McCarthy, »The Role of Shop Stewards in British Industrial Relations«, pp. 35—36, London (HMSO), 1967.
[30]. Ibid., 32—36.
[31] »Workers Control in Mining Industry«, Ruskin College, Oxford, 1964. It is interesting to note that many of the original pre-1914 advocates of workers control had been students at Ruskin and participated in a student strike there in 1911.

conditions. Overall wages policy, due to the widely varying degree of economic viability of different pits, would remain a question to be settled at national level.

The NUM, it was proposed, would extend its bargaining function to cover investment allocation, overall and detailed production targets. At national level the proposals called for minority workers representation on the Coal Board to be increased to a majority at a later date. The NCB would be made partly responsible to a 100 strong elected Workers Council, representative of all sections of the coal industry. This Workers Council would have the power to call for reports from the NCB and publicly register opinions regarding them. The workers' representatives on the NCB would be elected by the Workers Council to whom they would be responsible. A widely disseminated and growing fund of skilled expertise would be produced by the establishment out of a tax on NCB sales, of a College of Workers Management. In due course the Workers Council would claim majority status on the NCB.

A widely circulating rank and file paper, VOICE OF THE UNIONS, has since 1963, kept the issue of workers control in front of an important and influential audience. One of its associates, ENGINEERING VOICE, played a major role in the recent shift in leadership of the 1,300.000 strong Amalgamated Union of Engineering and Foundry Workers — AUEW, from right to left. Both Hugh Scanlon, President of the AUEW and Jack Jones, General Secretary of the 1,500.000 strong Transport and General Workers Union, have expressly endorsed the demand for workers control. VOICE OF THE UNIONS has done a great deal to popularize the ideas of workers control amongst the organised working class. Perhaps the most orginal of its demands has been the call for a re-writing of the statutes of the public company on the grounds that the right to »limited liability« confers a quite unjustified privilege on a minority of the population, a privilege only properly to be counterbalanced by giving the workforce at least a 50% share in control. A series of national conferences, the first, in April, 1964, called by VOICE OF THE UNIONS, the latest, the 9th, held in Birmingham, during 1971 have done much to carry the message of workers control to the broadest layers of the trade union and socialist movement. AUEW President Hugh Scanlon made the keynote speeches at the March, 1968 and April, 1969, conferences. 1,000 delegates, the bulk from working class labour movement organisations, attended the conferences of 1968 and 1969.[32]

The Labour Party at its annual conference in 1968 adopted limited proposals for furthering industrial democracy in Britain. Amongst these were proposals to open the books of limited companies wider to public inspection.[33] These in part at least reflected a reaction to pressure from rank and file supporters of workers control who had first brought this demand to a wider public at the time of the seamen's official strike during 1964. »Not Wanted on the Voyage«, a pamphlet incorporating this demand and originating with a group of workers control supporters in Hull exercised considerable influence at this time.[34] The publication of a workers reply to the Devlin Commission Report on re-organisation of British ports, brought the issue home as a practical matter to thousands of trade unionists.[35]

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[32] For printed reports of these two conference, see; »Workers Control« Report of tle 5th National Conference held at Coventry, June 10—11, 1967, Nottingham, 1967.

[33] »Industrial Democracy«, A Statement by the National Executive to the Annual Conference of the Labour Party, 1968.

[34] »Not Wanted on Voyage«, Hull, 1964.

[35] »The Docker's Next Step; An Anti-Devlin Report«, Hull, 1966.

In preparation of the Bill for the nationalisation of the steel industry the Minister found himself confronted with a demand from the powerful craftsmen's unions that elected workers' councils to oversee management decisions should be formed at both shop floor and higher level. The unions further proposed elected committees should, subject to confirmation, control the appointment of shop managers, the deployment of labour, hiring and firing, welfare and general disciplinary matters.[36] These demands were not conceded. Instead, to each of the four operating divisions of the new board there have been appointed three »worker directors«. These »worker directors« whilst retaining their posts at the point of production will at the same time possess the same rights and privileges as other members of the Board. The scheme originally intended to run for a trial period of three years came up for renewal in 1972 and it has been decided to continue its operation in substantially the same form. Proposals have been made for extending the powers and changing the method of selection of the »worker directors« but up to date nothing has resulted from these. It has to be said that this innovation whilst representing a potentially important shift in the attitudes of British Labour Movement to the public corporation has not, so far, engendered great enthusiasm, either amongst the work force, or the population at large.

An unexpected offshoot of the propaganda for workers control, with its implicit premiss that even a private capitalist enterprise is also a social productive organ, and as such, ought on these grounds to be responsible downwards to its workforce, rather than upwards to any capitalist entrepreneur, has been a wave of »sit ins« and »work ins« over the past three years. The first to attract widespread attention took place in September, 1969, when, confronted with large scale redundancies, several thousand workers at the EEC—GEC plants in Liverpool, voted to take the factories over and run them on their own account. Although at the last moment the projected »take over« failed to materialise, the proposal received wide publicity. This undoubtedly served to encourage further ventures of a similar kind. Since 1969, gathering weight in an important degree as a result of government inspired deflation and rising unemployment (now in the region of 1,000.000), »sit ins« and »work ins« have become a popular means of resisting closures and transfer of production from one unit of a multi plant enterprise to another. The best known case is that of the »work in« at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders at Glasgow, which attracted the widest support both from the labour movement throughout the British Isles and from broad social layers of the population in Scotland. The »work in« eventually forced a reversal of government policy regarding the closure and the granting of a very large subsidy to allow the enterprise concerned to continue under new management. Some 50 »sit ins« have already been reported during the first seven months of 1972/73. Perhaps it should be added that these »sit ins« and »work ins« have not taken place at the instigation, or under the leadership of, any political sect or party. They are to be understood rather as a new mode of action resulting from a change in consciousness on the part of the workers involved in the proceedings.

The present movement for workers control amplifies many of the features of that which grew during and after the first world war. In the years after 1920 many of the leading advocates of workers control went over to the Communist Party on the mistaken ground that »soviet democracy« represented the

[36] »Voice of the Unions«, January, 1972.

fullest expression of ther own belief in »industrial democracy«. Party loyalty in due course led to the Leninist cult of the party bureaucrat as the highest embodiment of the consciousness of the working class. This shift in allegience certainly become one important factor in the demise of Guild Socialism during the early 1920's. Since 1956 the Soviet model has become as largely discredited amongst intellectuals as amongst workers. This has meant that a whole range of forces hitherto encapsulated within the prison house ideology of stalinist state socialism, have found more productive outlets in the labour and socialist movement.

A large section of the British work force now has a direct experience of nationalised industry extending over a quarter century's duration. The nature of this experience has not been such as to call forth a natural demand for a widespread extension of nationalisation on a similar model. Yet at the same time the work force is more self confident, better organized and in some ways more conscious than ever before. The willingness of Labour politicians of the calibre of Anthony Wedgewood Benn (who some see as a possible successor to Harold Wilson as leader of the Labour Party), to call for increased workers participation in the decision making processes that govern their working lives, is to be understood as a reflection of the groundswell for workers control amongst the working population at large.

Britain is at the moment experiencing something of a malaise regarding the workings of parliamentary democracy. Experiences of the Labour Governments of 1964—1970 in particular the introduction of legislation (subsequently abandoned) designed to restrict trade union liberties, has led to considerable scepticism inside the labour movement regarding the working of party democracy and to particular dissatisfaction about the nature of the relationship between the Labour Party Conference and the Parliamentary Labour Party. When during the summer, 1972, the Conservative Government endeavoured to bring its Industrial Relations Act to bear against recalcitrant workers the reaction, extending to the threat of a one day general strike by the TUC, indicated a readiness for militant action not seen for several decades.

It is against this background that the present revival of interest in industrial democracy in Britain needs to be judged. A provisional assessment would suggest that at the present time the extent of public feeling has outrun the capacity of the organisers and initiators of the movement for workers control to give it adequate expression. Whether, and on what terms, this gap can be bridged, remains to be seen.

COMPANIES KNOWN OR BELIEVED TO HAVE HAD SIT-INS BETWEEN JANUARY AND JULY, 1972

AEI
Allis-Chalmers Great Britain Ltd.
Bason & Sons Ltd.
Briant Colour Printing Co, Ltd.
The British Oil & Cake Mills Ltd.
British Rail Workshops
British Steel Corporation
Capper Neil
Chesterfield Tube Co. Ltd.
Conveyancer Trucks
Davies & Metcalfe Ltd.
Dawson & Barfos Ltd.
Eaton Transmission
Archibald Edmeston & Sons Ltd.
Ferranti Ltd.
Fisher-Bendix Ltd.
Flexibox Ltd.
Follows & Bate Ltd.
GEC Switchgear Ltd.
GKN
Hawker Siddeley Aviation Ltd.
Hoe Crabtree Ltd.
Laurence Scott & Electromotors Ltd.
Linotype & Machinery Ltd.
Charles McNeil Ltd.
Metal Box Co. Ltd.
Mirrlees Blackstone Ltd.
Molins Ltd.
C. A. Parsons Ltd.
Peart Ltd.
The Plessey Co. Ltd.
Record Electrical Co. Ltd.
Joseph Robinson & Co. Ltd.
Ruston Paxman Diesels Ltd.
Serck Ltd.
Sexton Son & Everard Ltd.
Sharston Engineering Co. Ltd.
Francis Shaw & Co. Ltd.
Simon-Vicars Ltd.
Frederick Smith & Co. Ltd.
Stanmore Engineering Ltd.
Staveley Machine Tools Ltd.
Matthew Swain Ltd.
Tress Engineering Co. Ltd.
Viking Engineering Ltd.
Westinghouse Brake & Signal Co. Ltd.
Wingrove & Rogers Ltd.
Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (Head Office)

LARS ERIK KARLSSON
Committee for Industrial Democracy, Sweden

EXPERIMENTS IN INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY IN SWEDEN

During 1969 several experiments were initiated with various forms of »increased industrial democracy« within both the private and public sectors of the Swedish economy. These experiments are being conducted by bodies such as the Development Council (a joint body of the Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO), the Swedish Central Organization of Salaried Employees (TCO) and the Swedish Employers Confederation (SAF), the Swedish Council for Personnel Administration (an SAF body), the Committee for Industrial Democracy within the Public Administration (for public administration and state-owned public utilities). In addition, sociologists in several universities have beee engaged in industrial democracy projects.

So far, however, it has not been possible to report any appreciable results. Many have wondered why these experiments should take such a long time and why the experiments that are being conducted are of such a modest nature. The only experiment that has been reported publicly, was carried out with the assistance of experts from the Committee for Industrial Democracy. This experiment involves about 30 workers and a foreman in a department in the Swedish Tobacco Company's factory in Arvika. Through a section committee, an elected contact-man and a monthly meeting, the employees have obtained a fairly high degree of local autonomy. Similar forms of organization have been initiated subsequently in other sections in the factory, as in the company's factory in Härnösand. In the latter factory there is a central works committee that meets every week and decides important matters concerning the 200 employees in the factory. In adition to this, each section has a section committee and monthly meetings.

In the private sector developments are very slow. Very little has been reported publicly regarding current activites. The research workers in the Development Council have been working about three years without managing to report any democratization. On the other hand, it has been noted in the press that a large number of companies have started various forms of »socio-technical changes« in workplaces and work organization. All information available points to the fact that the democratic features in these changes are of little significance.

The situation may be interpreted in different ways. It is easily suggested that this experimental field is still too new and untested to have produced any results as yet. One must be patient and wait for the results of this difficult and complicated work. Another interpretation is that there are not yet any realistic theories and methods for the democratization of enterprises, and that the experts who have been engaged in various projects, on the whole, have

been acting very inefficiently. The theories and methods applied are inadequate and do not take into account essential realities in businesses or the structure of capitalist society. The research workers have no opportunity to carry out anything that even with modest pretensions could be called »industrial democracy«.

A theoretical and methodological discussion has taken place in seminars between those who have been engaged as experts and consultants. It is no exaggeration to say that opinions differ to a great extent in many respects. A common ideological and theoretical basis for this activity is lacking. This is to a great extent a reflection of the disagreement on this question that prevails between workers and employers and between different political groupings. The discussion ranges from job enlargement and so-called self-managing groups to the demand for workers' management of the whole enterprise.

Among democracy experts two main schools can be seen. The first has co-operative aims in view and is psychologicah and its advocates are mainly found in the Development Council and the Council for Personnel Administration. The other school is more orientated to the analysis of power and has a more sociological bias. Its advocates are mainly found in the Committee for Industrial Democracy and in certain university institutions. The sociological school criticizes the psychological school from time to time since the latter avoids discussions about power problems. This silence is probably determined to a great extent by consideration for private employers. There is perhaps some doubt as to the effects of sensitivity training and socio-technical methods, but the psychological school does not discuss the questions of power, representation on the board, and other forms of representative democracy.

THE COOPERATIVE STRATEGY

In democracy projects pursued in private companies, the fundamental method has been the »co-operative strategy«. This strategy was developed in the US and Great Britain during the 50's. It has mainly been tested in practice in Norway by Einar Thorsrud, Assistant Professor, and his colleagues at the Work Research Institute in Oslo. The main features of this strategy are as follows:

The company management and the employees have, notwithstanding certain disagreements about the distribution of the economic results, to a great extent, common goals. The most important of these are high productivity and economic efficiency, whereby the owners are guaranteed a profit and the employees good wages and fringe benefits. A positive relation between productivity and work satisfaction for the employees can also be acepted as a common goal. The existing forms of work organization, decision-making and authority are antiquated and should be replaced by other forms that make better use of the employees' resources. Therefore both employer and employees want to develop the work organization towards increased industrial democracy.

The strategy for change should be as follows:

The management contacts the research institutions to get assistance from trained experts. A joint committee is set up in the company. The commit-

tee comprises representatives from both management and workers. The role of this committee is to discuss democratization together with the experts. Their role, in turn, is assumed to be that of advisers who can only influence the members of the committee through their expert knowledge. In situations of conflict they should take a neutral position in order not to lose the confidence of either party.

By influencing the ideas and attitudes of their opponents in the committee, the parties reach a common frame of referance, and joint alternative courses of action are crystallized. A decision is taken to start an experiment and a particular section of the factory is selected as the area of experiment. The experts then go to that department and form a special work-group with representatives from the development group, the workers and supervisors.

The experts investigate the social and technical systems and proposals for organizational changes are put forward. The proposals are forwarded to a central decision-making level and are there approved by the parties concerned, which are mainly those included in the development group but also the management and central organisations. The proposal usually contain limited changes towards partly self-managing groups. The work is organized in such a way that 5 — 15 workers have joint responsibility for a certain section of production. By means of job rotation, job enlargement and participation in planning questions, a freer and more satisfactory work situation is created.

The experimental activities are started and a continuous followup is made by the research workers. If positive results are produced as far as the main goals are concerned, i. e. work satisfaction and productivity, a decision is made to spread the new organizational forms throughout the company. After a year or two a democratic company is thus created.

The above sketch of the ideal cooperative project has, of course, very little to do with reality. A number of conflicts come to the surface and difficulties arise during the process of change. A critical situation arises with regard to decision-making.

The experts clash with one of the parties; the parties clash with each other; the work studies department see their sphere of influence circumscribed and try to obstruct the activity; supervisors refuse to give up their right of decision on crucial questions; the employees do not wish to change the wage system without any wage increases, the production must be decreased or increased due to changes in the market situation; a technological change, which undermines the basis for the proposed organizational changes, is decided upon, etc.

Those who work on industrial democracy projects are most aware of these difficulties, but few consider them insoluble. Unfortunately, however, in several cases the difficulties have caused projects to fail in one respect or another. In one case the development is interrupted and the parties in the company are locked in their bargaining positions regarding wages and wage systems; in another case, they are returning after a preliminary spreading phase, to old organizational patterns; in a third case, the management has simply decided to move the factory, minus the democratic forms; in a fourth case, the management wants to handle the development on their own and institute mock-democratic forms of co-operation.

Notwithstanding the fact that development in this field is still expansive, there are already several notable failures. How then should one interpret

these failures? There are various explanations. The least pessimistic is that the research area is still too new and that the experts have been inadequate in knowing and personality.

Naturally, this type of explanation cannot always be excluded. It is quite obvious that persons who are, from the management's point of view, heavily loaded ideologically and politically, have difficulties in putting over their objective views or views based on balanced criteria. The solution to the problem ought to be a more careful selection of persons and better training of the experts.

Unfortunately, the explanation is not quite as simple as that. In support of the rejection of this »idealistic« interpretation, it could then be stated that the Norwegian research workers have been careful not to expose possible radical opinions, and, furthermore, several of them have very good qualifications as experts. Nevertheless, the experimental work that they have started has failed to develop and projects have been discontinued in a few cases.

Several of the Norwegian research workers have been forced to acknowledge that the co-operative strategy, outlined in the early sixties, does not seem to be a practicable method for the democratization of enterprises.

The explanation may be that the »idealistic« model presupposes that aspects of the projects that provide knowledge and influence attitudes are emphasised, without explaining the initial attitudes of various groups. As soon as a high degree of common goals is presupposed, the parties' negative attitudes towards each other appear to be irrational. This is, like the demands made on the experts, qualified élitist thinking. The knowledgeable and rational experts should convey new knowledge and attitudes to the ignorant and irrational individuals in the enterprises. In order to succeed in this, they must be extremely artful in speech and conduct.

In a situation where the expert is called to the enterprise by its management in order to perform an assignment within the framevork of the existing system, i. e. when it is not his assignment to alter the relations between the parties, this approach is obviously natural. In personal selection, organization of personnel planning, attitude investigations or whatever may be involved, the decisions are made with the management's aims in view (which are seldom identical to those of the employees). This formally impartial role, the scholarly jargon, the progressive attitude towards the employees and the constant emphasis of common goals, satisfy practically all the parties concerned (with the possible exception of the employees). The management gets theoretical support for its measures and regards the expert as worth his price. The employees do not always perceive that they are being deceived and think that it is fun at least to be consulted. The formally impartial role facilitates the management's exercise of power, and it is the exercise of power in various forms that is the foundation of all administration.

Since the situation, thus defined, could hardly be otherwise, I do not want to apply moral criteria to the exertion of power as such. The problem is rather how and by whom the administrative power should be exercised.

If we accept the occurrence of exertion of power, we must also accept the occurrence of a higher or lower degree of incompatible goals between those who exert power and those who are governed by it. Without incompatible goals the exertion of power would not be necessary. In a more demo-

cratic organization there is a lower degree of opposition than in an authoritarian organization, since the members must have a higher degree of identification with the goal of the organization. The tensions appear rather between different factions or sections in the same category than between leaders and members. To prevent the organization from splitting up, the different factions must subordinate their separate interests to the overall goal. In addition, in democratic organizations the members exert a comparatively large influence on the management by the fact that the management is elected by the members. This is the determinant factor for the distribution of power in the organization.

INCOME DISTRIBUTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF POWER

If one assumes that there are conflicting goals between different levels in a hierarchic organization, part of the basis for co-operation strategy is also removed. That the management and the employees in an enterprise organized on capitalist principles and geared to making a profit have different goals concerning the distribution of the economic result, is a principle acceptable to everybody, which due to its obviousness tends to be forgotten in the discussion about democratization. The conflict is sometimes assumed to be cut off from the remaining system and the conflicts are solved in an established negotiating system. Co-operation should be possible on the remaining questions.

In recent years, unrest on the labour market and subsequent discussion, have shown that this is not the case. In addition to the established negotiating system, there is often a number of methods to influence the workers' earnings. (Hart and von Otter who do research work on local wage-fixing, have found that the correlation between annual earnings, with which workers are most concerned, and hourly wages, which are usually negotiated, is very low. This is mainly due to the fact that the annual working hours, which vary greatly owing to the manipulations of the management, determine the annual earnings to a greater extent than other factors).

Among the management's instruments to lower or increase the workers' earnings (the labour costs), one could mention varying overtime stoppages, short-term lay-offs, reorganisation, recalculation of piece rates, reclassification of jobs, changes in the wage systems (in one of the investigated enterprises, the management were able to press the labour cost increases, brought about by a central agreement, from approximately 38,000 Sw. Kr. quarterly down to approximately 20,000 Sw. Kr. through a change in the wage system). The principal method is probably rationalization with the aid of time and motion studies. These are, in addition to the effects of wage policies, also of great importance for the shaping of methods of work and the organization within the enterprise. With regard to the employer's right to direct and distribute work, the management often refuses to negotiate with the workers about matters concerning work organization and work farming. However, non-formalized agreements of a negotiating nature exist in all industries. In exchange for an undisturbed reorganization, a piece-work bonus is given to withdraw certain overtime, etc. If an industrial concern is investigated, one soon finds a host of such unofficial agreements and schemes.

It therefore becomes more or less impossible to isolate the organizational system from the negotiation system. They actually form well-integrated parts of the same system. Thus the employees and the employers have conflicting aims, not only with regard to how the economic result should be distributed, but also with regard to how the work organization should be shaped.

The division of the corporate earnings into profits and wages is determined by a number of factors. Among the economic variables are the market situation, the level of prices and costs in the particular sector, the wage position in relation to other sectors, etc. Within the frame of these external factors the bargaining power of the parties, also plays an important role. Bargaining power depends, apart from the degree of trade-union activity and unity, on the recruiting situation. When there is a shortage of manpower, it is comparatively easy to demand higher wages.

The more indispensable manpower is, individually or collectively, the stronger its position. Well-trained and specialist manpower, for example, has a better chance to increase its wages than the more dispensable routine workers. Besides, the latter are laid off due to rationalization, if they demand too high a wage.

The constant creation of new routine work, which may later be abolished due to rationalization ,is part of a deliberate employer strategy to keep the wage costs down. Short training times (low competence on the part of the personnel) is mentioned as an advantage of work studies with regard to production systems in SAF publications relating to this field. The introduction of, for example, MTM-studied, highly repetitive work, (man is part of the machine), is the first step before the work is taken over by automation.

Even if this strategy is not deliberate, the present work study culture undoubtedly has this effect. An objection could, on the other hand, be raised to the fact without rationalization the wages would, through lesser efficiency, be even lower. This naturally applies, providing it would not be possible to create other organizational systems which would be just as effective, yet at the same time more democratic.

The company consequently applies a work study system which on one hand keeps wage costs down and on the other hand allows wage increases. The result is an uneven income distribution which gives certain groups mostly decreases and others mostly increses. The decreases fall upon the personnel laid off due to rationalization, those who are affected by structural change and the older routine workers. The increases go mainly to the administrative elite, who in ever-increasing numbers fill the new office buildings. The development during the post-war period on the Swedish labour market shows a picture of a body of workers of a stabilized volume and a cadre of technicians and administrators growing enormously. This must undoubtedly be a consequence of the companies' administrative and organizational structure. There will be more and more skilled jobs in and around the management and more and more routine jobs which will be abolished due to rationalization on the workshop floor. The pattern reappears with few variations all over the labour market.

And at the top of the pyramid one finds the managers and their staff with a few hundred thousand kronor annual salary, plus tax-free benefits. This group is mainly responsible for the situation on the labour market and

its economic and social privileges are only one side of the coin, which on the other side has the poor, unemployed or the unskilled workers.

The scarcity of industrial workers, a chronic state in certain sectors, has not, to any great extent, caused the relative wage position for these groups to be forced up. On the other hand, it can be observed that over a fifty-year period there has been a remarkable stability in the wage differentials between different groups on the labour market. This supports the thesis that the wage distribution is primarily institutional, i. e. dependent on training, the nature of jobs, the placing of jobs in the company hierarchy, etc, and is only to a lesser degree affected by the supply and demand of manpower.

It has always been a deliberate policy on the part of employers to preserve the unequal structure of incomes, differences in wages and fringe benefits between salaried employees and workers, etc. Since the employers cannot be regarded as being stupid, this policy has probably been quite profitable for **them.** It remains to be shown whether it has been profitable for the country or for the majority of the population.

The back-bone of a capitalist society is large-scale private companies. Inequalities in the skill required for assignments, training, social status, income, power and health, are embodied in these enterprises. From them emanate the impulses for inequality within the educational system (customer--adapted education), for the administrative bureaucracy (co-operation industry — administrative agencies), for the housing market (managers' luxury homes and low-income slums), for cultural standards (theatre and new novels), for town planning (large banks in town centres), and the use of the natural environment (luxury boats and summer cottages).

HOW IS POWER EXERCISED IN ENTERPRISES

The opportunities for the dominant class (the owners and the administrative elite) to dominate the working masses and the salaried employees are based on several different instruments of power. In my book (»Demokrati pa arbetsplatsen« (p. 65—67) I have tried to show, with a flow model, how two negotiating parties are at the same time interdependent and in a conflict of interests. It is, accordingly, not a question of a total lack of common interests which would result in relations being broken off. The parties are able to influence their relative positions through three factors:

a) access to information

b) ability to solve problems, and

c) means of enforcement (punishment or reward).

INFORMATION MONOPOLY

Access to information in businesses is very unevenly distributed. How unevenly is difficult to say, lacking reliable standards. It can be noted, for

instance, that information systems based on data processing are often extremely centralized. The results consist to a great extent of statistics and reports to the management with regard to the company's situation in different respects. Personnel data including information, which is to a greater or lesser extent kept secret, about people's private lives and mental qualities are the exclusive assets of the company. Time and work reports, wage statistics, time and motion study results, statistics for wages in the particular industry, etc, are also the assets of the company. Through the processing and presentation of wage statistics, the management has the advantage over the workers at local negotiations. Access to experts, whose main task is to analyse information, strengthens the advantage of the company. It is the employer who makes piecework offers, and it is the workers who in most cases are forced to accept those offers. In any case, the workers seldom have a chance to obtain different basic data for piecework. Information concerning the company's sales, costs and financial status, future plans, etc, constitutes the exclusive assets of the management and may be given to the employees by the joint industrial council, at its discretion.

LINGUISTIC HEGEMONY

Even more important in this connection is the fact that communications are maintained in the employer's language. It is his representatives who have the best linguistic training. It is he who chooses and forms the terminological apparatus and the ideology is formed in these terms. Anyone who has heard how an eminent employer has made a group of workers feel small by using shades of meaning and richly diversified terms, should realize that the workers' disadvantageous position is difficult, if they accept the employer's terminology. Fortunately, there often are one or two trade-unionists who are not inferior to the representatives of the employer in this respect. The more open and candid language of the trade-unionists can often take the sting out of intricate discussions. However, in the unofficial negotiating system (work organization) the employers have »hegemonic« domination, they have the choice as to the conceptional formulation of problems coming up for discussion with workers. And the workers might prefer to remain silent rather than risk putting their foot in it by using a language that is not fully their own.

In the discussions, the employer often succeeds in getting his ideology of harmony to be accepted. Some basic concepts in this connection are co-operation, balance of interests, joint actions, mutual interests, etc. The class characteristics of this »co-operation nonsense« are not always clear to the employees' representatives and too often they allow themselves, unfortunately, to be taken in.

SOLUTION AND SELF-REGULATION

The ability to solve problems is, like access to information, unevenly distributed. The companies have staffs of experts who work full-time with the handling of information and prepare new alternatives for the solution of pro-

blems. Education is, as it is for the handling of information and language, crucial for the ability to prepare complicated technical and economic alternatives. In this connection, education means both education in the school system and training at work. The possibilities for an accountant and an engineer to increase their respective competence in work, are often only limited by their own learning capacity, while the semi-skilled worker or the machine attendant is seldom reached by any matter worth remembering.

The training in developing alternatives and in learning new rules of behaviour, is most intense close to the management. Whoever has the chance to produce alternatives for the work organization, machinery design, offers of piecework rates, personnel policy and methods of work, has great possibilities to influence the decision-making. However, workers and lower salaried employees have a first-hand knowledge of their own jobs and their own departments. This is a great advantage on their part. They can develop better tools, methods of work and cooperation patterns than any engineer could ever had time and opportunity to formulate. This is the strength in the self--managing system as compared to the pre-programmed system. The presence of self-determination for individuals and self-management in working teams constitutes a strong basis for negotiation in the unofficial negotiation system, by making the management dependent on the very workers in the department. They cannot simply be dismissed or transferred, without the management suffering unacceptable losses. Each increase in the workers' relative competence, in their self-determination as individuals and in the working team's autonomy, is bound to strengthen the workers' bargaining position towards the management. This may be expressed as follows: Every increase in control over their workplace, in their relative competence, gives the workers a stronger bargaining position. If a team of workers gets complete control over the distribution of information and decision-making as regards the job they, themselves, can decide the price of their own job (compare for instance dentists, doctors and lawyers, whose fees are sometimes limited by their conscience only).

MEANS OF SANCTION

The official and unofficial means of sanction are very unvenly spread between the power-groups. The management has a legal right to employ and dismiss personnel, supervise and distribute work in accordance with agreements and the law laid down in decisions of the Labour Court. The management promotes, transfers (sometimes resulting in lower wages), praises or warns, issues work regulations, rationalizes, sets wage rates (mostly after negotiation), works out jobs, work organization and physical and psychological work environment.

The workers have through their organisations the opportunity to influence the management's decisions in certain respects. The workers are more a limiting factor in the management's freedom of action than an active pressure group presenting its own alternatives. However, during current periods of agreement, the workers do not have the right to resort to their foremost means of sanction, namely the strike threat. This ban tends, however, to

be more and more ignored. Walter Korpi has in his book (»Varför strejkar arbetarna?«) pointed to the fact that the Collective Agreement Act came into force during a period (1928) when, for instance, fixed time rates were much more common than nowadays. The increase of various piece-rate and time and motion systems, which the management easily manipulates, have radically altered the assumptions that prevailed when this law was passed. The employer may, during the period od agreement, effect changes which, in fact, eliminate the agreement. In order not to change the relative strength of the parities to the employers' advantage, the right to strike should be legalized at local negotiations, says Korpi.

In addition to unofficial strikes, the workers have, as means of sanction, working to rule and the introduction of upper production limits, manipulation of job cards and overtime. They can also threaten to leave or to create adverse publicity for the company. However, these means of coercion are weak compared to those of the employers.

To sum up, I must point out that enterprises are unequal social systems, where the management has a completely dominant position as compared to the employees. Its power may be analyzed as

— information monopoly
— hegemonic power
— power to solve problems
— legal and contractual sanctions power

These premisses must lead to a different strategy for change than the idea that two equal parties are involved.

NON-ECONOMIC CONFLICTS

In the above description it has been assumed that the main area of conflict between the parties in the companies and on the labour market is disagreement as to how the economic result should be distributed. I have tried to show how the distribution of this economic result depends on the structure of the company's organizational system. Both employees and management have, however, also non-economic goals for their activities. These goals are also connected with the appearance and function of the organizational structure. The need for security and safety and psychological goals, such as self-determination, self-respect, reputation, prestige, self-realization (development of talent), interesting and meaningful jobs, are important goals for the employees.

On the part of the management, the affiliation to an elite group with high social status and power to make decisions, is probably a value in itself. In addition to the fact that the title of Vice-President or Plant Manager carries with it a high income, it also allows its bearer to take part in the forming of the company policy and a number of social status activities. Notwithstanding the fact that many executive functions are burdensome, it would be difficult for me to understand why so many thinking young men let themselves be

intellectually brought into line at the prospect of becoming the President in some sausage-company, if it were not for the fact that they feel very strongly the need to be regarded as part of the elite. Ambition, social pressure, the desire for action and the wish to have a large income, are other possible explanations for the fact that many people choose the management career.

Naturally, acceptance of the elite ideology is a basic part of the ambitions. The system is based on elitism but constantly generates new elite thinking through pressure exerted on new employees.

The ideology of the employees (at least that of the workers) is to a high degree based on equality and collectivism. By emphasizing co-operation and solidarity instead of competition among themselves, the workers create a means to protect themselves against the demands of their employers.

The management strive in their structuring of the company organization to break the collectives with the aid of individual piece-rates, wage differentiation and an appeal for competition. The old simple maxim — divide and rule — is often practised in a conscious and systematic manner. Also, they are often successful in obtaining acceptance of differentiating measures among the employees. It is of vital importance to the employers that the employees accept certain norms with regard to efficiency, authority and differentiation. A company with an authoritarian structure would probably function extremely badly, if it was not for the fact that the employees to a great extent have been induced to accept the management's norms. The workers will only accept it as natural that others take the decisions and will only submit voluntarily if they have a fairly low educational level and poorly developed self-confidence.

In the tension between the increased knowledge of young people and their consequent passion for criticism and the traditional patterns of authority, many see a movement towards change relations.

THE INADEQUACY OF THE SOCIO-TECHNICAL THEORY.

In Norwegian and Swedish co-operative experiments that have been carried out so far, the »socio-technical« theory has been used as a basis for definition. This theory has become quite the fashion in the Swedish Council for Personnel Administration, the Development Council and the engineering department of SAF. The basic idea of this theory is that the production system consists of two interdependent parts, i. e. the technical and the sociological. The relationship of dependency in the production process, the need for communications and co-operation constitute, within certain limits, the work organization. The system depends on variations in the supply of materials as well as the fluctuations on the sales side and it must at all times be adjusted to these conditions. By considering both the employees' demand for meaning, variation and training in their jobs and the demands of the technological system, one can find solutions which can give a higher degree of work satisfaction and productivity than the traditional work organization (with extensive division of labour and specialization). Fred Emery is one of the research scientists who developed this theory during the fifties. He states that the technical system takes priority over human needs. He maintains that the technical

component plays an important part in the determination of the features of a self-governing work organization, that it functions as one of the principal conditions defining the social system in a work organization. However, by developing group co-operation, production may be more efficient. He concludes that the formation of groups which collectively participate in the final result has proved to have positive effects on performance and morale.

The statement about technology as a limit for the social system is plainly a political one. Economic inequality presupposes hierarchic power relations between different groups of personnel in the company. Emery is well aware of this. He states the necessity for optimal structuring... If rôles, status positions and power are taken as the main elements in the social structure, there must be stability in their distribution with regard to individual persons if an extended social group is to be able to participate in co-operative tasks. The delegation of power must clearly specify **over whom** control is to be exercised, **to whom** the delegate is responsible for the exercise of control and **over what activities** control is to be exercised and how control is to be carried out. This means, in plain language, that if the workers are going to get more freedom at work, then the upward limits in the organization must be clearly shown as not threatening the economic-administrative power. Emery goes on to mention the need for maximum institutionalization. He says that in order to make it work effectively, the social structure needs members who are motivated by their involvment in the goals of the organization. Those who formulate the goals should be those who are most in solidarity with the organization. These are found among the top management who have the »strategic solidarity« that is needed.

This does not indicate any democratic bias in the socio-technical theory. If anything it shows an authoritarian executive ideology. To appoint the undemocratically installed owner and executive group to become a »goal-forming« group and suggest that they are most in solidarity with the goals of the organization, indicates an unawareness of the fact that different parties within the enterprise have conflicting goals and that the goal believed to be that of the organization, on closer examination turns out to be the owner's interest in high profits. It is natural that they are most in sympathy with their own class interest.

However, the socio-technical concepts are, without doubt, useful to throw light on the relationship between choice of products, production engineering and work organization in industry. At the same time they are impaired by such crucial shortcomings that they must be used with wide discrimination:

a) One can hardly optimate at the same time two systems, which have conflicting goals. In a certain technological environment, as for example the assembly line production, it is perhaps, from a technological and economic point of view, most effective with very strong control over the workers. This has produced compromises between the demand for democracy and the technological and economic efficiency. A democratic system can hardly be expected to be the most economically effective system in all types of production. Certain forms of socio-technical analysis may therefore even lead to measures, which intensify the degree of control.

b) In enterprises where production engineering is of subordinate significance (e. g. a more refined enterprise with a high concentration of non-

-manuel workers), the social system can hardly be said to be dependent on a technological system. The customer structure, social norms and legal rules (especially in public administration), probably play a greater role than for example office machinery. The same probably applies to the administration of an industrial enterprise, especially departments which not directly come into contact with production departments.

c) Coordination and control in an industrial enterprise, absorption of interruptions and variations arising from the supply of raw materials, orders, and machinery, usually require some form of hierarchic organization. Through the hierarchic form of decision-making, a controlling authority in the system can coordinate the activities of two subsystems. Horizontal conflicts are converted into vertical conflicts. To this extent the hierarchic form of organization can, in some degree, be said to be necessary and rational in a society in which economic efficiency is accepted as a value. The problem is, however, to what extent the hierarchic control is dependent on these technological and economic norms of efficiency, i. e. to what extent present organizational forms are as rationally founded as their advocates claim, or whether other factors exaggerate the degree of differentiation within the system. It is possible that a large part of the differentiation is a means for those who today control the companies to get advantages for themselves. The management's high salaries and great power, etc, are of course a direct consequence of the stratification within the company hierarchy. The preservation of relatively inefficient but much stratified forms of organization, is therefore inseparably associated with the class interest of the administrative elite and the owners. And the most well-organized, ideologically homogeneous and conscious class in the Swedish community is precisely the owners and the executive group. No group has, in proportion to its size, such wide opportunities unanimously (through SAF and the Federation of Swedish Industries) and effectively to assert their interests within the negotiation system and the Government bureaucracy as the executive group and the owners.

THE PROFIT GOAL AND EFFICIENCY

A discussion of the extent of any discrepancies that may exist between what, with regard to differentiation, would be motivated by economic-technical efficiency reasons and the structure of the class system, should start from a definition of the efficiency concept.

In the enterprise efficiency is regarded as the difference between the returns from goods and services and the costs for manpower, materials and capital, i. e. efficiency is tantamount to profit. There is no reason automatically to accept this concept (the owner's goal) as **the** relevant efficiency concept. A number of alternative possibilities could be considered with the inclusion of, for instance, the goals of employees, consumers and society. The goal of society is today introduced in the decision-making of enterprises through legislation and agreements. However, this seldom amounts to anything more than a few mild restrictions in the decision-making process.

The connection between prices, wages, profits and efficiency is very complicated and subject to economic analysis. To introduce, for instance, the consumer interest and the national interest at this point, without any previous economic discussion, is not very meaningful, whereas the goals of employees are easily introduced into the discussion. The fact that the private owner's profit is a less plausible measure of efficiency is easily illustrated by the presumption that decreased wages in a company will lead to increased profit. Decreased wages do not per se mean an increase in efficiency. A measure of efficiency, in which the amount of wages is used as a credit item and other costs (including the interest on capital) are used as debit items, is bound to be more relevant to the employees.

This could possibly mean, however, that overmanning is regarded as promoting efficiency, which can hardly be reasonable. The assumption then is, that adequate manning has been accomplished through other means. This will best be accomplished if the employees make the adjustment between the number of employees and the wage level, i. e. having some form of worker-administered companies or an extensive profit-sharing system. We are now obviously in a vicious circle, where the condition for the use of a non-capitalist measure of efficiency presupposes the abolition of the capitalist control of the enterprises. The opportunity to make comparisons between efficiency in an enterprise run on capitalist principles and that of an enterprise run on democratic lines is thus small. A way to circumvent this problem is to presuppose that it is possible to fix, through job analysis, etc, the volume of manpower required in a given technical system. In many cases this is also possible. Indivisible units in the production system, especially in processing industries with attendance jobs, make it relatively easy to establish upper and lower limits for the number of employees. In other cases there may be greater difficulties. Companies are at present using MTM-analysis, etc, to determine working load and performance levels. It is conceivable that the workers themselves in a democratic company system could use some type of work measurement to create ergonomically reasonable work-places and an equilibrium between departments as regards the work-load. Medical and ergonomical limit values can for instance be established for various kinds of physical and mental strains.

Suppose now that it is possible to obtain an efficiency measure (index) based on the amount of wages in accordance with what I mentioned above, and that the manning-force can be established by way of work measurement and medical methods. The discussions about whether democratization could lead to higher technical-economic efficiency, as compared to the present system, could then be conducted at a different level than if the profit concept is maintained as an efficiency measure (index). The reason for this is that democratization, at the same time as it leads to a greater physical-economic output per working hour and capital unit, may lead to a lower profit through the shifting of the bargaining positions in the company to the advantage of the workers.

From the view-point of the owners, democratization would be considered as reducing efficiency, while from the viewpoint of the employees it increases efficiency. In such a situation, the goals of the employees would to a greater extent coincide with the »common interest«, as the total production per resource unit increases. A company which is managed with the aim of

giving an outside group of owners as high a profit as possible, should have a built-in tendency to differentiate more between different personnel groups, than would be necessary if, for instance, the total wages per employee were used as an efficiency indicator. The socio-technical frame of reference should, therefore, be supplemented with a power-analytical theory. Otherwise the sociotechnical theory may ignore important aspects of the enterprise that are not included. Suppose, for instance, that in their analysis of a company the experts find that the number of commanding levels and the manning-force on, say, the side of the supervisors, is badly adapted to the claims of the technical system. The analysis presents a solution implying a more equal organization. The management, when examining these proposals, will carefully consider the consequences for their own position, salary, prospects of promotion, etc. By the long-range heavy reduction of whole layers in the organization, the management, in other words, might have to climb down several rungs of the ladder. Motives for additional remuneration for responsibility and distance due to the connection beween authority and payment will be hard to find.

Socio-technical analysis does not offer any guidance as to the treatment of such a power-struggle, which strategy for change should be used, etc. Awareness of the fact that in a democracy project opposition will be encountered from those in power leads to a strategy different from co-operative projects, in which the management in reality has the right of veto against all proposals for change.

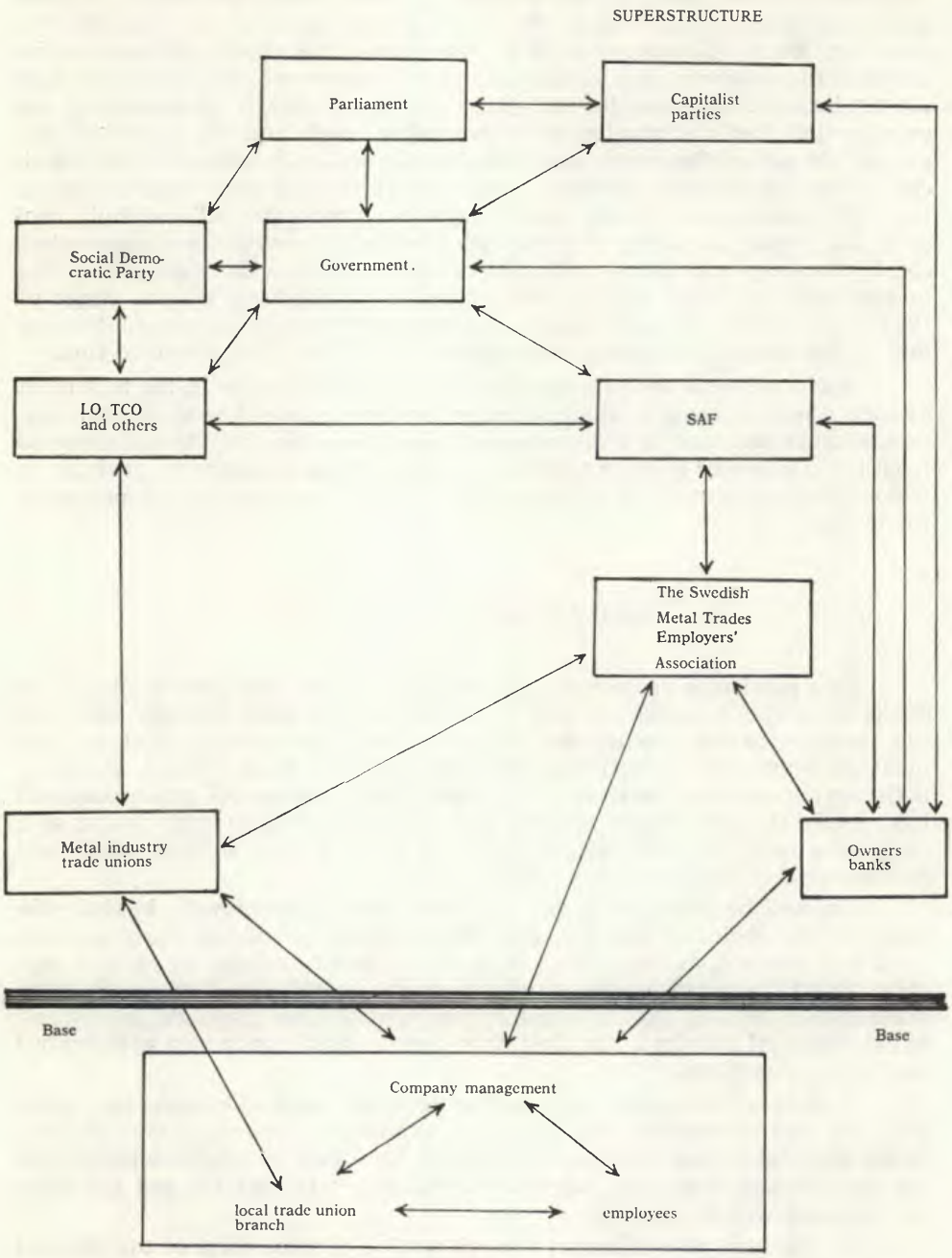
BASE AND SUPERSTRUCTURE

In a particular project the democratic solution may, from a short-term angle, offer the management and the owners advantages through economic superiority over the existing organization, since both workers and management are bound by a superior system with regard to wage politics. However, if the system becomes common, the situation will change. All enterprises will have joined the new efficiency-level, and profit rises will no longer occur as a result of a more efficient organization. Besides, a general shift of power will have occured in favour of the workers.

I would be surprised if the organized class of employees, in their discussions and choice of policy in this field, had not considered these perspectives. SAF has not, as far as I know, actively encouraged the creation of anything that by any reasonable standards might be called a democratic work organization. On the contrary, enterprises which have displayed an interest in experimental activity in the field have been advised not to part with central controlling functions.

A perspective based on an analysis of power tends to become very wide, since the central organizations of employers and wageearners, as well as parts of the political system must be included. If the frame of reference only includes the isolated enterprise, the central policy of SAF and LO and the State for instance will be ignored.

On the next page is shown a rough outline of some parts of the relevant power system for an imaginary metal-working company. The arrows between the parties involved refer to negotiation lines, that is, lines along which there


SUPERSTRUCTURE
Parliament
Capitalist parties
Social Democratic Party
Government.
LO, TCO and others
SAF
The Swedish Metal Trades Employers' Association
Metal industry trade unions
Owners banks
Base
Base
Company management
local trade union branch
employees

are mutual dependence conditions on the one hand, and conflicts of interest on the other. Fundamental to all conflicts of interest in the superior system (superstructure), are the social and economic conflicts existing within companies (base). The dominating position of the company management (owners) over the employees, will be formalized by means of the negotiation system and the political system. Joint-representation committees, joint-action committees and joint organs of different kinds (for instance the Development Council and the PA-Council) are common. In these joint organs, the employers are on an equal footing with the LO and TCO (which means that an employer always has a hundred times the influence of an employee).

In the chain **workers — local trade union branch — the Metal Workers' Union — LO,** there are conflicts of interest, partly deriving from contrasting interests between different groups of members, and partly from the compromises which the LO, the trade union and the union branch are compelled to make in the negotiations with the opposite party. The possibilities of co-operation at the top level are probably facilitated by deficient internal democracy within the trade union movement by means of which the vertical conflicts can be kept under control. The main problem of the officials of the LO and the trade union, is often that of negotiating backwards, that is, to make the members accept the agreement. Members' voting on agreeements has been replaced by the right of veto in strike questions for the trade union leaders. This description may be considered as strongly critical, but it implies no negative attitude to the trade unions on the part of the author. But I do find it hard to understand how things could be very much different in a society, in which **de facto** the dominance of capitalism has been accepted by the labour movement. Similar conflicts probably prevail, for example, in the chain **company management — the Metal Trades Employers' Association — SAF,** with the difference though, that the central organization may be less conservative than enterprises themselves. Deficient internal democracy within the trade unions is only a reflection of the undemocratic basic structure of industry.

Last year's wild-cat strikes have provided quite a few illustrations of the fact that the main ideas in this description are correct. The strikes have often been aimed at both employers and trade union. SAF's advice to employers not to give in to strikers' demands, may be regarded as an effort to strengthen discipline within their domain. A few company managers have had to take the consequences of their surrender to the workers. Industrial peace, meaning the prevention of wild-cat strikes, has become a common super-goal for the central parties.

In principle, similar conditions prevail within the central public administration, where demands from the Social Democratic Party and the Government are balanced against demands from the capitalist parties, SAF, the Federation of Swedish Industries, the LO and other pressure groups. Parliamentary democracy, then, actually means that the principle of one man — one vote, is abandoned, due to the fact that the interests of private industry may sometimes weigh as heavily as the interests of wageearners, for example, in the formulation of laws concerning death duties, income tax, company taxation and labour legislation. The decisions of the Labour Court, upholding the supreme right of the employer to supervise and distribute work, are a reflection of this asymmetric power relationship. The demands channelled through

the Social Democratic Party (the internal structure of which is incompletely democratic) have been mainly so-called »welfare« demands, involving no shift in the relative power positions of the parties.

The system contains a high degree of mutual dependence and »dead--locks«. On the extreme left wing it is maintained that the state apparatus is **solely** an instrument for the dominant owner class and that it is absolutely dependent on relations whithin enterprises. This is a crude caricature, in my opinion, which does not take into account the influence on the development of society actually exercised by the Social Democratic Party and the trade unions. Comparisons with countries which have a weaker labour movement, show that the differences in income and living standards between different social groups, can be much greater than they are in Sweden. France and the United States are examples of countries, where public administration and industry are dominated by the same class. The absence of equality is, consequently, much greater in these countries than in Sweden. On the other hand, it may be said that a society can hardly be controlled centrally by a social class that constitutes the subordinate class at the local level. At the higher levels therefore, the workers are usually represented by persons who no longer themselves work in their own occupation (if they ever worked).

On the Right (see for instance »Ownership and Influence« by the Swedish Young Conservatives) it is generally maintained that this system is fundamentally sound and promotes welfare. It is merely a question of creating flexible co-operation between management and workers, without adding fuel to artificial class conflicts. One should hold out one's hands to one another across the borders of class and income, without demanding any unnatural equality. »Individual good is raised to common good«. The SAF's demands for co-operation may be seen as a demand for a submissive acceptance of the existing class relationships. Every type of co-operative project in enterprises or administration, includes an authoritarian dimension. By means of limited democracy at the place of work, the management might be able to calm dissatisfied workers, without the costs being too high. Why, one might even be able to make a bit of money out of it.

An SAF-memorandum states, among other things:

> The organized labour movement considers that it needs to accentuate the class-conflicts within society. It should be in the interests of industry and industrial peace to counteract the idea of increasing conflicts of interests. The most important ways to achieve this are factual information and a continued development of co-operation in enterprises.

On the whole, the co-operation terminology is treacherous trough its elasticity. At one extreme it may be interpreted as »passively and submissively being of a co-operative disposition«, and at the other extreme it may be regarded as a demand for a change in relationships — »it is not possible to co-operate if the parties are not equal«. By its vagueness, the terminology allows for joint statements and agreements such as »agreement on the promotion of joint action between company management and employees«. The

companies which have expressed their interest in the experimental activity of the Development Council are perhaps hoping for a more flexible method of exercising authority.

PROSPECT OF DEMOCRATIZATION

The prospects od democratizing this corporative power-system, which in many respects is strongly interwowen, must allow for the presence of imbalances, i. e. tensions originating from differences between demands /expectations and social reality. Wildcat strikes for instance, are obvious sings of the existence of such imbalances. The workers' demands for economic remuneration exceed what they receive for their work. High profits within companies lead them to estimate the prospects of wage increases as higher than the centeral parties do. The background of the strikes, however, is not only of an economic nature. In many cases, no doubt, the reasons have been other unsatisfactory conditions, such as authoritarian methods of control, inadequate sanitary conditions and unsafe working conditions, etc. The striking progress implies a reinforcement of the workers' collective spirit with emphasis on the common goals and the egalitarian ideology.

In few cases, however, have the strikes in Sweden resulted in explicit demands for industrial democracy. In cases where such attempts have been made, the demands have been channelled into economic and social problems. No doubt this is connected with the fact that the employers can accept economic concessions more readily than changes that in the long run tend to undermine their position.

During the May revolt in France in 1968, various forms of workers' self-management were established in a large number of companies, such as production committees and workers' councils, etc. This fortuitous assumption of power took place quite spontaneously and did not receive any support from the leadership of the trade union movement. During the negotiations between the trade union leaders and the employers, no demands for workers' self-management or control were achieved. The only demands that succeeded were economic demands, which were soon neutralized by the employers by means of price-increases.

Other disequilibria involving potential for change are the increasing demands of the workers with regard to the content of their jobs and the appearance of the work environment. This is mainly, perhaps, due to a higher level of education and great differences in working conditions compared to more favoured groups of clerical workers, and with the actual deterioration of the physical work environment, which has taken place as a consequence of production with extensive use of heavy technical equipment. On the other hand, it is perhaps more doubtful whether higher income as such leads to demands for more industrial democracy. By not being able to offer attractive jobs and an attractive work environment, many companies have great difficulties in recruiting. A rapid turnover of employees, consisting mainly of unskilled foreigners, will then be the solution. This is unprofitable, however, and in the long run many companies run the risk of being without labour. Auto-

mation, transfering production to other countries, and liquidation, are alternatives that are probably considered before they feel compelled to make changes in the direction of democracy. The automation of production will in many cases be regarded as the best solution. The possibilities of moving abroad and of liquidation, will probably be worse as time passes. The Government and the trade unions will not allow a mass exodus of businesses. Instead, the state is to take action against businesses which refuse to create more attractive work voluntarily.

In the very near future, however, it will no longer be possible to automate most mass-production jobs. Technical development is not, as one would be inclined to hope, principally aimed at the least skilled tasks, but rather at the middle level of jobs. Cleaners, mechanics and maintenance workers, have been left behind by the technological innovators. The danger is, then, that profit-controlled technical development leads to a polarization between two equally big levels of workers. The upper level includes technicians, specialists and managers, the lower level includes low-skilled workers and clerks. This ought to emphasize the present tendency to revolt, but it might also mean that some of the clerical workers will join the employers in trying to keep the underprivileged down.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Technological development includes many possible alternative trends of development and, lacking recent investigations in the field, it is difficult to make any prognosis as to the consequence for employees. A few distinct main trends may be traced, however.

One vital feature is the development towards bigger units and production with extensive use of heavy technical equipment. This development affects most industries, especially those having some kind of heavy bulk production, like cement, pulp, paper, iron, steel, etc. Production methods with extensive use of heavy technical eguipment, require more efficient process control by means of data systems and better socio-technical solutions. It may prove very unprofitable to maintain organizational forms with low efficiency, such as hierarchical authority patterns. It is probably no coincidence that the computer centre in Uppsala has been so successful. A greater demand of information processing and for flexible adaptation should in itself include a democratization potential. Negative features, however, do exist in the trend towards bigger units. The risk of increased bureaucratism, overplanning, the use of work-studies, etc, is great in the mechanical engineering industry and other industries with a big volume of mass production. The introduction of time studies has probably been multiplied in the sixties, and there is very little to indicate that this trend will decline in the next decade. The automation of piece production would, in that case, be the most important factor. Most likely, the volume of time-studied mass production will increase with strict control. Fewer mass production jobs are being rationalized away than those that are being created through the transformation of manual production methods.

In many cases production with a more extensive use of heavy technical equipment requires stricter control than more primitive forms of production. The tolerances for deviations from production speed and quality are small, in for instance a car factory. There is little to indicate that the gap between what is technically and economically feasible and what is humanly profitable is narrowing. In a production system, where machines become comparatively more expensive and people less important, there will probably be a general tendency to give priority to technical rather than social aspects. **This ought to lead to an intensification of the conflict between the technical system ruled by profit and the demands of the employees.**

Greater capital investment requires unhealthy shift-work, for instance, and also tends to diminish the profit on capital, a fact which usually produces a greater exploitation of manpower through increased working-speed, etc. In the last decade there has been a heavy increase of the number of old and physically handicapped workers, who have had to leave the labour market, due to increasing demands in work. This problem may be expressed as an intensification of the conflict between the capitalist organization of production and the development of production forces. This trend has been predicted for about a hundred years, and there are few reasons to believe that development will accelerate so fast, that we can just calmly wait for the collapse and then construct new production forms. It is probable that the capitalist method of production can preserve a high degree of stability, at a considerably higher level of conflict between different social classes, than is the case at present in Sweden.

In order to maintain their advantageous position, those in power are compelled to use more and more plainly coercive measures. Greater control over the mass media of communication, indoctrination in schools and at work-places, and other forms of power control are now intensified.

The informative activities of the SAF in schools have for instance been multiplied in a few years, and real freedom of speech in press and radio/TV has been measurably restricted, due to pressure from the corporatively organized establishment.

PRIVATE ENTERPRISES

Development does not, however, proceed in straight lines, but every big change takes place in a process of action and reaction. Our experiences during the last year might be nothing but a casual reactionary back-lash. It is doubtful whether it is possible today on a broad front to introduce anything that could really be called industrial democracy, without preparatory work including wide-spread and intensive training and propaganda work.

Such structural changes would probably have to be preceeded by other reforms, that strengthen the position of the employees locally in the enterprise. Fixed monthly salaries, improved labour welfare, intensive adult education, the equalization of differences in social benefits, a new Collective Agreement Act which is not biassed against the workers and the abolition of the »Paragraph 32« principle (i.e. the right of employers to hire and dismiss workers, to supervise and distribute work), are examples of necessary chan-

ges. What may be done concerning industrial democracy, is possibly marginal changes in a few selected enterprises. The decision taken by the LO at their congress in the autumn of 1971, may be of a decisive nature. In spite of a few deficiencies, the programme constitutes a turning point in the trade union strategy.

The principal points in this programme are:

- extension of the right to negotiate, so as to include also work organization and management, personnel policy, job security, work environment, health services and measures of rationalization,
- joint management of personnel policy by means of a parity committee,
- greater job security, with causes for dismissal approved by the trade unions,
- intensification of information responsibility and accountability of the enterprise,
- participation of the employees in budgeting and planning,
- employee audit
- representation of the employees on the board (minority representation).

The TCO has adopted a similar programme, which is on the whole well in line with the LO's.

In private enterprises any real changes can hardly be expected until the LO's proposals have been implemented with the assistance of a Social Democratic government and the Parliament. At most it will be a matter of self-managing groups under the auspices of the Development Council. Most likely the autonomy of the groups will be both limited and unprotected against interference from the company management. They will become manipulatory» joint bodies«, a more flexible exercise of authority within a narrow range of freedom. Agreements covering autonomy will never be accepted by the employers, as a result of the SAF's control.

STATE ENTERPRISES

It is probably only in the public sector, that there are any prospects of real changes. The difficulties are great even there. In themselves the state enterprises (amounting to about 5% of industry) contain no built-in tendency to be more democratic than private enterprises. The reforms must be carried out through pressure from politicians and the trade unions. The activities of the Committee for Industral Democracy show that the politicians — at least when influenced by public opion — are prepared to use their power.

The Committee's projects (in which the author has been engaged as investigator and research scientist) have been conducted with a strategy differing in several respects from the co-operative strategy described above. The de-

velopment groups set up in the experimental enterprises always have a majority of trade-union representatives. The practical work of collecting information for the purpose of changes in organizational patterns, the survey of the basic situation and the collection of opinions among various employee groups as to how they would like to formulate a more democratic organization, was done without interference from company managers. Reports were prepared with the development groups and then presented to the managers. The proposals for change that have been prepared are generally based on the results of interviews, polls, and sometimes even on discussions and voting among the employees. The proposals therefore have a strong democratic basis, which naturally leads to problems in the relations with authoritarian managers. The official nature of the reports (the committee is a public committee with instructions to continually publish its findings) has created strong pressure on the company managers, and the risk of unfavourable publicity and possible interference from politicians, etc, has in some cases brought changes towards increased industrial democracy. Unfortunately, many managers in stateowned enterprises have an ideology identical with that of private industry. The contacts with leading persons in private companies and with industrial organization are often well developed.

The development potential within state-owned companies lies mainly in the great interest on the part of the employees and the trade union leaders in promoting the question. In practice then the projects must be based on the support of the trade unions and also obtain support from the LO, the TCO and the government.

CHANGES OF ATTITUDE BY MEANS OF GROUP DISCUSSIONS?

The main reason for doubt or opposition to experiments in industrial democracy in management circles ,is perhaps the fact that there are many other things to deal with, which are regarded as more important, and that the Committee's advances are looked upon as proposals from idealists and political fanatics. They simply find it hard to see the point in democracy. The idea of democracy is outside their frame of reference. »Aren't I a democratic person?« they say.

We are back at the idea that existing organizational forms are dependent on and in themselves generate a world of ideas, unfamiliar with and antagonistic to industrial democracy. Persons who have climbed up the ladder in this system, may be supposed to have gradually accepted values consistent with it (in so far as they have not brought them with them from the upper--class milieu, in which in 9 out of 10 cases these persons have grown up). The main constituents of the upper-class values are precisely a belief in the superiority of the elite, the necessity of competition for the elite positions, the stupidity of the working class and their inability to control themselves, the necessity of richly rewarding those who have reached the top and the basic reasonableness of the existing order, if only a lot of socialist agitators did not excite the workers with unpleasant talk of equality and industrial democracy.

The co-operation strategy includes the idea that these negative attitudes should be altered by means of group discussions. This is based upon a fundamentally unrealistic overestimation of the consultant's chances of producing a change of attitude. Group discussions (say, once a week for six months) are hardly capable of upsetting fundamental valuations, formed during a whole lifetime, valuations consistent, moreover, with the fundamental social and economic interests of the individuals concerned.

Group discussions between workers, supervisors, company managers and democracy consultants might just as easily jeopardize the projects by revealing existing antagonism without any means to neutralize it. To the workers the situation must seem artificial, by the simple fact that they are invited to talk freely in the presence of persons otherwise treated with negotiating attitudes. Demands for changes submitted by workers, moderation on the part of the top managers and the adoption of a careful middle position on the part of the salaried employees and the supervisors, is probably a common picture in joint groups. The role of the consultants can hardly be neutral in such a situation. In most cases their interests in the project are likely to coincide with those of the employees, rather than with those of the managers, if they regard their task as contributing to real democratization. In situations of conflict when the management, contrary to the wishes of the trade-union representatives, tries to delay or prevent a democratization project, the consultants cannot remain neutral if they wish to keep the confidence of the employees but must support the efforts to achieve democratization. In the end this leads to a deterioration in the relations with the management. Without external support, they will therefore sooner or later be kicked out.

The difficulties in working with development groups of the kind outlined above, do not necessarily lead to the drastic step of not appointing any groups at all, or abolishing those in existence. If a group is successful, it can often provide valuable assistance (however it would be harder for a manager to make decisions in the group, unfavourable to the employees, than it is in his room). If it turns out that no progress is made in the discussion, an attempt should be made to get away from the group and start working at the »floor level«. By establishing direct contact with the employees, and by running the work in local work groups, there is a far better chance of achieving practical results. Interviews, group discussions, persual of study material, surveys, etc, could lead to the formulation of democratization proposals at the »floor level«, and from there the proposals can be taken up to the development group for decision, with support from the local trade unions. The work must be intended to achieve an irrevocable social development, consisting mainly of greater confidence on the part of the workers as to the prospects of taking up greater responsibility and practical knowledge of how this is to be done. This would then be synonymous with a strengthening of the worker collectives. If possible ,support should naturally be sought from progressive groups of salaried employees, preferably technicians connected in some way with the department.

In order to facilitate the development, the trade-union demands should, if possible, aim at the abolition of deficiencies in the wages' system, controlling systems, methods of supervision, methods of time studies, etc, obstructing the development of the total strength of the employees. One problem is, of course, the number of minor advances necessary on the way from the

present situation up to the final goal. By splitting up the problems into too many sub-problems to be treated separately, there is a danger of getting stuck in a lot of bargaining situations. The difference between this situation and working in a slow joint group becomes insignificant. One might visualize the process as a step-by-step development:

— agitation and training
— formulation of concrete demands
— bargaining (possible conflict)
— development of positions
— evaluation and results
— agitation and training.

The managers are enabled to make a series of retreats and do not necessarily completely lose face.

Where, then, should the employees first take up their positions? Evidently, this must depend on the specific situation in the enterprise. Trade-union consciousness and activity, the economic situation of the enterprise, the level of conflict with the organization, the attitudes of the management, the personnel structure, the layout of the production system, etc. are important features that necessarily affect the choice of strategy.

In companies with a big volume of alienative work, low trade union consciousness and unity, one might have to start by changing jobs and the wages' system, while in others one would be able to jump straight to a solution with representative systems.

TRADE-UNION COMPLICATIONS

It is rather obvious that just as different groups of employees in a company do not share the same interests with regard to industrial democracy the corresponding trade unions do not pursue the same policy. The groups of salaried employees are for instance widely split on the question. SIF (The Swedish Industrial Salaried Employees' Association) includes both managers fairly high up in the hierarchy, and low-paid clerks. At the local level the unions are often dominated by managers. In their work the supervisors apply the managing rights of the employers, and their special position and organization is based on this particular relationship with the employers. In a democratic company organization, where the unilateral right of the employers to supervise and distribute work has disappeared, difficulties may arise for the staff of supervisors. The attainment of a job security agreement must therefore be a primary interest. What may occur when the LO and the TCO launch their new claims on the employers is that other trade-union organizations may adopt a neutral position or, worse, join the side of the employers in their efforts to maintain existing relationships.

The picture of attitudes in the company often shows that the top management is more interested in democratization at »floorlevel« than are the supervisors and managers at the first stage of promotion. In principle, the

managers have nothing against a democratization which does not affect them. The supervisors and the middle management do not mind a democratization directed against the top management. To sum up, the workers are, as a rule, in favour of all kinds of democratization, while other groups only favour changes which affect others, in the sense that supreme decisive power becomes restricted. The lowest denominator in such a situation is a pseudo-democracy in the form of discussion groups.

DO THE EMPLOYEES COPE WITH MORE POWER?

In the discussion of industrial democracy and representative systems, the latter solution is often ruled out, on the ground that the workers are not prepared for it. This attitude is based on a low estimation of the workers' general level of knowledge, and on the view that they only have enough knowledge to enable them just barely to manage their own simple work. This is a fundamental misjudgment, partly due to a liberal individual-psychological view of the volume of knowledge existing in the ranks of the workers. The individual has a need of self-development, training and variation, etc.

Nowadays, our work-places are not to any great extent populated with persons, whose individual knowledge may be added to the total capacity of the workers. On the contrary, the presence of collective experience, common system of values and behaviour, are the most characteristic features. The collective capacity is not the average capacity multiplied by the number of workers, but far more the sum of the greatest individual capacities within different sub-areas. Since it may be assumed that knowledge and intellectual capacity is spread in such a way that Smith is the better master of a and b, Jones the better master of c and d, etc, the total capacity of the collective group becomes greater than the total potential considered from the individual psychological viewpoint. Why, for instance, is collective intelligence never tested? Maybe just because individual intelligence tests have emerged in order to meet the demands of managers for weighing and measuring up people, whom they are going to fit into a hierarchical organizational pattern.

The above reasoning leads to the conclusion, that the workers as a whole today already have a considerably greater capacity for coping with more influence and responsibility, than that required for the part that they play in existing organizational forms. What is necessary, is rather a reform of the law governing the positions of the parties and a different allocation of the means of sanction between the two sides.

This is then based upon the fact that knowledge and intellectual capacity are fairly unevenly distributed in a normal work group. Informal leaders are trained in different sub-areas. Smith knows accounting, Jones knows the machines, etc. Persons given to differentiating, may call this a new type of hierarchy, in fact not so much better than the previous form. In some degree this is quite true, of course. Some will be more active, full of initiative, and energetic. This is unavoidable. Wide divergencies from a traditional hierarchy may hower be discerned:

1. The existence of an equality, preventing more active individuals from obtaining extra benefits.
2. The informal leaders have the full confidence of the rest of the group. Those who do not meet the demands of their fellow--workmen are replaced.
3. Joint behaviour towards the external world, once a decision has been taken.

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC EQUALIZATION

It is hardly likely that groups of workers or salaried employees, when advancing their positions in relation to the company managers, should refrain from a joint effort to improve their relative position socially and economically. Equalization in this respect, would hardly be possible without the abolition of other deficiencies in the social and economic structure. The development of industrial democracy cannot be separated from the total efforts of the working class to improve their situation economically, socially and culturally.

As seen above, industrial democracy is, in the first place, a trade-union and political matter, and in the second only, a technical and organizational problem. The ambition of the PA-Council (Swedish Council for Personnel Administration) to make these problems non-political, to suppress controversial ideas and express themselves in a scientific and technical jargon, displays great similarities with the development in regional and town planning, the discussion among economists in the forties and fifties (with the apparent death of the ideologies as a consequence), and the treatment of a great number of fundamentally political questions ,like road traffic safety, future planning and labour market problems. Class antagonisms and goal conflicts are concealed in a technocratic jargon.

The consultant's language (the socio-technical and systemtheoretical, psychological etc, frames of reference) will soon match other secret languages in its enigmatic and non-political form.

No doubt the purpose is both benevolent and ambitious. There is no reason to doubt that the researchers within the private sector actually believe that the viewpoints presented to company managers and employees, will contribute to creating new alternatives for work organization and technology. Work can be made more human and instructive, and less stressing.

But is it so certain — which is often assumed — that there is a direct connection between »greater personal autonomy and economic democracy«? Is it likely, that the personnel influence can be made to include also matters of investment, financing and distribution of profits, without having an ideology which is hostile to the present rulers, implying that their power is not legitimate? Is it possible, by integration and a diminished vertical level of conflict, to take over all the power, or even half of it?

The salaried employees have a considerable personal freedom in their work, in comparison with the workers, and have had so for a long time. They have good opportunities of picking up news, of self-realization etc. Nevertheless, the hierarchy of salaried employees is in many respect just as authoritative as the workshop organization. It is obvious that the salaried employees stand closer to the employers than the workers do. By differentiation of wages, praise and admonition, ideological indocrination (free enterprise is best!) and training in business economics, etc, the owners and the managers are able to make parts of this group of employees their efficient tool in their conflict with the workers.

Recent results from three polls at state-owned companies support the thesis, that there is no positive correlation between the experience of personal freedom in work and demands for influence over the management of the company on a large scale.

In the polls we used a great number of so-called contentment indices, i.e groups of questions regarding the general contentment of the employees, their opinion of their own work, the management, the personnel treatment of the company, strains in work etc. Apart from this, we put a number of questions about industrial democracy, experience of influence, and the demands for influence. After a so-called factor analysis we tested the correlations between different groups of questions and found, in brief, as follows:

— contentment indices are correlated with each other as in former polls;

— contentment indices (above all the opinion of their own work and the personnel treatment of the company) are correlated with the **personal experience** of influence on their own work (working speed, choice of tasks, planning of work, way of performing work) in such a way that those experiencing greater influence feel more contented than those who experience less influence;

— the demands for influence on personal matters as well as colective matters such as personnel policy, work environment, economics, technical matters etc, are not correlated at all with the experience of influence, nor with contentment indices;

— a radical attitude towards industrial democracy is positively correlated with the demands for influence, but not with experienced influence or with contentment;

— workers make greater demands than supervisors for increased influence, and non-promoted salaried employees make heavier demands than their promoted colleagues;

— 60—80% of the employees were discontented with their influence depending on which question were asked;

— employees were more interested in increasing their influence in »top-management matters« than in »personal« matters, i.e. the demand for collective influence was higher than for individual influence.

Our conclusions from these results are that, to a high degree, demands for influence and a radical attitude towards industrial democracy are a matter of forming opinions through trade-union policy, where information and training is of vital importance. This should be of great importance to the strategy of change in enterprises.

IS SOCIO-TECHNOLOGY JUSTIFIED?

To those engaged in democratic projects in private enterprises, institutional opposition means that using the co-operative strategy acceptance will never be achieved for solutions that upset the bargaining positions of the parties. Only integrative changes moderating conflict and changes that are neutral or harmful to the long-term interests of the working class, can be brought about.

Again it must be recognised, that socio-technical system solutions leading to increased personal freedom, autonomy of groups etc, are positive factors from the point of view of particular local groups of workers. No doubt it is an organizational model that will become very popular within industry. The question is, however, whether more far-ranging solutions of more vital importance when seen from a superior political perspective, are not being obstructed by developing integrative solutions. Experimental activities with so-called self-managing groups are, in my opinion, valuable only for the development of such organizational forms that may be adopted on a large scale after a shift of the balance of power in enterprises and between the parties on the labour market. In the struggle for the liberation of the working class socially, culturally and economically, which must precede such a shift of power, all work-system researchers and consultants are forced to adopt a position. They have to choose between taking sides with the working class or with the employers. Today researchers in private enterprise, owing to organizational connection and a formally neutral attitude, are actually on the side of the employers in their efforts to survive a future struggle over industrial democracy.

This perspective of conflicts may seem unrealistic, as we have for so long enjoyed stability and industrial peace. There is, however, hardly any proof of our having made any considerable progress towards increased social and economic equality without trade-union and political conflicts. How then can it be possible to achieve industrial democracy, which must be thorough in its social and economic consequences, by co-operative arrangements?

Such a belief must be considered as naive idealism.

THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

The international and national level of conflict will probably deepen into a process of radical advances and a reactionary back-lash, then new advan-

ces and a further back-lash, etc. The increased tendency on the part of the workers to strike, the growing understanding of young people of the wider implications and the militance of the extreme Left Wing, will bring forward more radical ideas within the working class. The older generation of trade-union leaders of a more co-operative disposition will soon retire and be succeeded by people who are seriously prepared to back socialistic reforms (as opposed to welfare reforms). There is no reason to believe that they should not get a political majority for such a policy. As far as I know, the Social Democratic Party has never lost an election because of being too radical, only because of being feeble and uninspiring.

There are many leaders in the trade unions who are very doubtful about the co-operative line taken by the Development Council. They now demand that the joint-action strategy should be abandoned and a more militant line of legislation adopted and as far as I see, the Development Council will not be able to present any results whatever, that by any reasonable measures might be called »industrial democracy«.

In their established conservatism, the great majority of employers and company managers will never have time to adapt themselves to a rapidly radicalized state of opinions.

The conclusions of this political perspective will be, that the efforts of trade unions and the Social Democratic Party to achieve industrial democracy, cannot be separated from other trade-union and political equalization goals. Economic democracy (with opportunities for political control of new businesses, closing down and large investments), cultural democracy (with much greater adult education), economic equality (with a far ranging equalization of fortunes and income), are some of the items in this total policy, into which the question of industrial democracy must be inserted.

Instead, perhaps continued research in the field will be conducted by trade-union or national institutions which manage to penetrate into the private companies by means of legislation, and there carry out a democratization of a more socialistic nature. By this I mean changes that lead to an advance in the relative power positions of the workers and the salaried employees as to information, knowledge, linguistic apparatus of concepts, problem-solving capacity and means of sanction. Only by political organs supporting the activity from outside, will it be possible to avoid solutions implying integration and subordination in the existing system. The boundaries between research, trade-union and political agitation and direct activity for change will then disappear. A new coalition of socialistic »intellectuals«, trade-union leaders and workers, may be anticipated.

Through external support and the provision of information it will be possible to bring about a rapid development by means of existing vertical tensions in the organizational structures, which are connected with the workers' unsatisfied demands for influence. Besides, it may be noted that in contacts with workers and trade-union representatives in the state-owned companies, we who work for the Committee for Industrial Democracy have encountered strong demands for thorough changes. The very fact that the working-class government has appointed a body dedicated to the creation of »industrial democracy« raises very great expectations. The employees refer to the ideological-political community, and demand that the government should ensure that there will be no need to submit to the bourgeois company managers.

The radicalization at the basic level has come about very fast, as far as I can see. At the same time, the reactionary tides at the central level have become stronger. This should, on the whole, be seen as a favourable development. Only by bringing the opposition into the open will it be possible to develop the conflicts that can lead to real changes.

Ideological solidarity is probably of vital importance for the trustful attitude of the employees towards the consultants. The trustful relationship has been achieved mainly by constantly providing information and endeavouring to appreciate the viewpoints of all persons concerned, without paying any regard to formal positions. This, of course, has led to strained relations vis-à-vis the company management which is accustomed to receiving special respect and consideration from consultants and experts. It is extremely important to have a clear ideology as a foundation for the experiments in democracy. It must have the explicit aim of improving the relative positions in enterprises of the workers and the lower-grade salaried employees. This inevitably means that we have to be prepared to pay attention to demands for better wages, social benefits and physical work environment. These conditions, so vital to the employees, cannot be isolated from or replaced by »joint action«, as some cunning American managers have succeded in doing. In the United States for instance, many companies have tried to prevent trade unions from developing by using consultative departmental committees and other forms of pseudo-democracy. Powerful local trade unions are, therefore, the first step towards industrial democracy. They must not, however, confine themselves to wage contracts and other benefits but must widen their activity to include all problems concerning the employees at work-places, and the administration of the company as a whole.

The demands for an ideological point of view must also concern the question of the future organization of Swedish industry. Do we want to strengthen the capitalist system, facilitate the concentration of private fortunes and base our policy on welfare reforms within the framework of the existing company legislation? Then, of course, we should support integrative solutions, implying the continued subordination of the working class to the employers. Trade-union leaders inclined to choose this way, should then consider, that in doing so they run the risk of undermining the combined strength of the working class. Less power for the working class means more power for their opponents, and as a result, the development of society will proceed in an American direction.

If, on the other hand, one prefers the gradual progress of the influence of the labour movement on industry, through political and trade-union organs, it will be necessary to draw up a Socialist long-range goal. Its basic aim must be that the majority of workers and lower salaried employees — at present ill favoured in every respect — should replace the privileged minority of private owners and their servants as the ruling class.

In the Socialist vision of the future, which is still vaguely formulated, there are demands for thorough new social relationships and values: economic equality, equality in power, influence, education and working conditions. The profit ideology still permeates the economic institutions of society. It must be replaced by a construction of theories including a completely new economic doctrine, organizational theory and work technology. Its fundamental thesis must be that the goal of the enterprise is that of society and of the employees.

It must give guidance as to how the interests of consumers and society can be balanced against the employees' need for a good income, security, social comunity and self-realization. The psychological and social values in working life which are difficult to measure must be weighed against economic demands. This also requires a radically new technology mainly based on the needs of the employees.

The socio-technical frame of reference is, in its present form, thoroughly inadequate for this purpose, as it has the profit motive of the private owners as one of its optimizing goals. It technologizes and makes non-political the problems of man's position in production. It assumes that a profit-controlled technological development could be the leading sector in the development towards a more democratic society, which is an absurdity.

Changes in the social relations within enterprises therefore precede the technological changes in the structure. The capitalist profit motive must be replaced by other goals.

The co-operative projects conducted in Sweden with the support of the socio-technical frame of reference can, for the reasons explained above, only lead to small enclaves of freedom within the scope of a production technique controlled from the top and geared to make a profit. This has nothing to do with democracy but is rather a new philosophy of human relations, the fundamental idea of which is that the subordinated function better in accordance with the »company goals« when given just a little bit of freedom.

Without any knowledge of the joint action strategy around 1970, Marx and Engels as early as 1847 wrote as follows:

> *They therefore endeavoured consistently to deaden the class struggle and to reconcile the class antagonisms. They still dreamt of the experimental realisation of their social Utopias, of founding isolated »phalansteres«, of establishing »socialist colonies«, of setting up a »Little Icaria« — and to realise all these castles in the air, they are compelled to appeal to the feelings and purses of the bourgeoisie. By degrees they sink into the category of the reactionary conservative Socialists depicted above, differing from these only by more systematic pedantry, and by their fanatical and superstitious belief in the miraculous effects of their social science.*

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THE BELGIAN CHRISTIAN AND SOCIALIST TRADE UNIONS
Their participation in a neo-capitalist consultation economy and their strategy toward self-management

I. THE BELGIAN SITUATION

The sociological investigation and evaluation of the trade union position and union strategy towards self-management are probably hard to understand without an outline of the situation of the Belgian enterprises and entrepreneurs, of the attendance, the structures and the participation of trade unions in the economic consultation system.

It is even necessary to make a brief analysis of the trade union standpoint with respect to social economic democracy as it comes to expression in official documents.

These certainly supply background information for an evaluation of the real state of power of the labour collective and for any enquiry which might be made by sociologists from the viewpoint of a dynamic labour movement into the possibility of self-management by the broad category of workers[1].

a) Enterprises and Entrepreneurs

Belgian industrialisation began shortly after that in England and before that of any other European country. It started in the French speaking part of the country with coal and iron ore extraction and textile production. Gradually, the centre of gravity largely moved from the French speaking southern part of the country of the Brussels central area to the northern Dutch speaking area with its coast and ports. Expanding sectors are: energy, chemistry, metal, electro-techniques, building and building-materials. Lagging sectors are: mining, leather and textiles. The food industry is stagnating. Everything classified under the services heading, including transport, is also expanding.

Besides approximately 350.000 independent workers running one-man businesses (artisan, professional and trading) about 2.800.000 employees work in about 150.000 private enterprises[2]. Hardly 1.100.000 are active in the treatment and processing industry. The others are engaged in service enterprises and only an extremely small number in agriculture and allied enterprises

[1] A large number of analyses, based on dossiers composed by a working group of »De Nieuwe Maand«, are concerned with social economic democracy. They were published in issues nos. 4 and 7 of 1971 and issues nos. 2 and 4 of 1972. The author is a member of this working group. (De Nieuwe Maand, Tijdschrift voor Politieke Vernieuwing, Standaard Uitgeverij, Antwerpen — Utrecht).

[2] Belgium has 9.7 million inhabitants, 3.8 million of which constitute the active population.

(about 15.000). Besides this about 600.000 persons are in the civil service. In Belgium, there are already more salaried employees and officials (in the civil service) than industrial workers.

The concentration phenomenon is also important: one third enterprises employ less than 5 workers and about 80% employees are active in 25% of the enterprises. About 60% enterprises are owned by one person and have no legal status (and in general a small staff) whereas 40% enterprises have some legal status (société anonyme, naamloze vennootschap, which is a kind of limited liability company, limited liability partnership, co-operative society etc.).

This does not mean that these enterprises cannot be family-businesses, though their number is certainly smaller than in the case of minor enterprises.

The 60.000 enterprises with a public legal status are either independent individual Belgian enterprises or units of largescale financial groups which predominate on the national level or are foreign affiliates in Belgium (the multinationals).

Little is known about financial groups in Belgium. They are made up of a mass of interwoven family estates. It is not precisely known how many enterprises they have control of nor how many persons they employ but the number must be very high[3].

It has even become difficult to discover how many groups there are as they have become increasingly interlinked and intermixed so that more and more reference is made to the Belgian Industrial Financial Complex[4].

The so-called holding companies — each group involves one or more of these holding companies — have developed very intensively and are extremely expansive. They either own enterprises or participate in the most up-to-date branches of industry, and have in general their own banks, credit and insurance companies. Their most recent activities are centered on the leisure and tourist industry, planning and design enterprises. They also have strong links with specific newspapers and advertising groups and a few of them contribute to the financing of the national press agency Belga. They also have a considerable share in real estate speculation (and in general hinder a proper area planning policy). In addition, a considerable portion of their money is invested abroad and not in the less developed areas or districts menaced with structural unemployment. This was certainly the case in the colonial period and it is still frequent today.

They have research bureaus and management trusts which are technically, socially and economically better informed and provided with brains than any civil service.

These groups are in fact the materialisation of the Belgo-Latin patrimonial tendency towards financial property. They preserve the concept of possession and property in every way. Financial mindedness thereby predominates

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[3] The groups are: Société Générale de Belgique, de Launoit, Solvay, Janssen, Boël, Empain, Evence Coppée, Lambert and Compagnie d'Anvers and Petrofina (Almanij is sometimes mentioned but this is only an investment trust).

[4] J. P. C. Ten Hove Driebergen-Rysenburg, Bedrijfsleven in België — Financieel-Industrieel Complex, in Intermediair — Nederland, Augustus 1971.

over industrial mindedness. Belgian financial groups primarily try to achieve influence and power through money, the means of production and financial participation and to a very minor extent through industrial and technical performance. The latter is an introduction to the former. Hence, research and development in the industrial and technical field are not yet very developed: the main skill is in the valorisation of existing techniques and the copy and purchase of existing patent letters, also in trade, imports, exports and transit transactions.

It is agreed that the financial groups have control of capital goods to the amount of fr. 900 billion ($ 20 billion) more than twice the annual national budget.

Foreign investments (minimum 10% participation) have considerably increased in Belgium in the course of the past ten years. They were attracted by all kinds of government measures within the framework of full employment.[5] It now appears that in 30% of the cases the foreign enterprises (half of which are American) are at least up to 50% foreign property and up to two-thirds **wholly** owned by foreign residents. Hardly in 2% of cases is participation limited to 10% to 20%.[6] In 30% of the cases they are Belgian take-over property and for the rest they are predominantly new settlements. The large international concerns come to Belgium on account of the favourable labour market, the infrastructure, the tax system, the government and credit facilities.

From an enquiry it appears that three quarters are entirely dependent on the foreign concern headquarters as regards decisions in respect of investments and it also appears that their investments are over 50% of Belgian net investments. The higher the ranks among the senior staff or at management level the more foreigners are found. Hardly 23% of the top level administrators are Belgian. Research and development are practised in hardly one-forth of these enterprises so that in general from the technical and scientific viewpoint there is a dependence upon the foreign headquarters.

The important part they play in the Belgian economy is further seen from the fact that they are mainly found in the large enterprise categories. Although they represent hardly 2% of the overall number of enterprises they represent over one-third of enterprises with more than 500 employees. They form 40% of the 120 largest enterprises and are present in the most expansive sectors. One out of 5 workers in the treatment and the processing industry works in a foreign enterprise. The proportion of workers who are trade union members is as high as elsewhere and employees are in general better paid there[7].

Significant and vital components of the Belgian economic system are the financial sector and the energy sector.

We have already dealt with the supervising financial and holding companies. A significant role is played by their deposit banks which

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[5] D. Van Den Bulcke, Les investissements industriels étrangers dans l'economie belge — Résultats d'une enquête, in Synopsis, Bruxelles, O. B. A. P. nov. — déc. 1971 page 15 et seq. The author quotes The Economist of October 26, 1968: »Belgium clearly enjoys being raped, but she is just beginning to wonder if she should«.

[6] For the rest the participation is often taken by the large-scale financial groups.

[7] From all this it appears that in Belgium more is known about the foreign enterprises than about the enterprises belonging to the large-scale financial groups.

achieve substantial profits to the detriment of the community. The official returns are: in 1953: fr. 910 million ($ 20 million) in 1969: 3317 million ($ 711 million). But in fact this profit should be considerably higher. They set up more and more affiliates (from 1287 to 2943 over the same period) which are probably not always useful or indispensable. They follow a credit policy for their own benefit and not necessarily for the benefit of the community. The financial groups have also many savings banks under their control with the status of »naamloze vennootschap« (kind of limited liability company) and not of non-profit institutions as is compulsory in many other countries.

Accordingly, they achieve substantial profits: they have many useless intermediaries and effect investments which suit their own purposes. The insurance sector too is for the main part under the control of the groups. They achieve substantial profit: fr. 709 million in 1953 ($ 15.5 million) and fr. 1857 million in 1965 ($ 40 million). The same applies to companies dealing with mortgages, capitalization, loan granting, sales and hire purchase business and only then is it still possible to discuss whether their existence is justified or not as their activities could be exerted by the institutions already mentioned.

The energy sector in Belgium comprises: coal, electricity (including nuclear power), oil and the natural gas industry.

The significance of the coal industry decreases yearly. The mines which are still in operation work at considerable loss and the gaps are covered by the authorities. This deficient sector is fully under government control but private shareholders may withdraw their accumulated earnings intended for so-called non-industrial purposes (portfolio, land and houses).

The electricity industry is fully controlled by a few large financial groups. Exploitation is not very efficient (for example, too many enterprises). The result is that low tension rates are the highest of all countries of the European market, the high tension rates are second highest.

Natural gas is imported from the Netherlands: the distribution is to a major extent controlled by a few financial groups and a few large oil concerns. Initially, a price of fr 1/m³ for general use was promised. In fact it was more than doubled.

The oil industry is fully controlled by multinational concerns united in one cartel. There is only competition in the field of service. The large advertising costs and the very large number of filling stations undoubtedly increase the cost price of petrol. The high market price is not only due to high taxes.

In Belgium too, the entrepreneurs have joined organisations. They constitute the League or Association of Belgian Industry (Verbond van de Belgische Nijverheid-Fédération des Industries Belges) on the one hand, and the League or Association of non-industrial enterprises of Belgium (Verbond van de Niet-Industriële Ondernemingen van België — Fédération des entreprises non-industrielles de Belgique) on the other. For each of the industrial and the service sectors sectorial leagues exist, in their turn sometimes split up into distinct sections according to the nature of the

products or services, raw materials etc. These associations, per sector are nevertheless rather independent.

These entrepreneurs' associations are indeed »the first line of the front« of individual enterprises. They arose from the collective reaction to the workers unions on the one hand and increasing government intervention in the social, economic and industrial field on the other. They supply the so-called interlocutors for the trade union representatives and the entrepreneurs' representatives in al kinds of public consulting and management organisms.

In respect of the associated enterprises they mainly fulfil a service function concerning social, commercial, economic, tax and other legislation, canvassing etc.

For the rest, the leaders thus elected, together with a permanently appointed staff of experts consult the members about matters which are put to them in all sorts of consulting organisms. To find the representatives to sit in these numerous bodies is no problem: apart from the senior staff of the entrepreneurs' associations there are also senior staff and management members of the associated enterprises who may be commissioned.

The entrepreneurs' associations in general adopt a defensive and wait-and-see attitude, and defend none the less a flexible economic liberalism. In the name of the free economy they intend to preserve the independence of the associated enterprises to the maximum. They do not have the authority to deal with problems of planning, investment quantitative and qualitative orientation of production. Only if certain enterprises want to take joint initiative in this respect they make their services available.

They have become best known through their action in more social consultation bodies in which wages and labour conditions are fixed.

It may nevertheless be stated that everything within the entrepreneurs' leagues does not develop without difficulty. There are permanent tensions between small and large enterprises. The large financial groups in general occupy indirectly (through intermediaries) important power positions and endeavour to conduct the policy of the associations in their interest, and mainly to keep it limited in volume. When it suits their purposes they will even safeguard the small enterprises but the latter naturally feel themselves manipulated. Tensions are observed among enterprises of the distinct sub-sectors within the same sector association. Recently, most conflicts were observed between the executives and the permanent staff members on the one side and the rank-and-file enterprises on the other.

Increasingly vital financial and economic matters are subjected to public discussion and consultation under the pressure of the trade unions. The senior staff members of the associations tend to go further with ordering, planning and publication of social and economic information than is desired by the entrepreneurs and this gives rise to significant internal tensions[8].

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[8] L. Van Outrive and A. Moons, Les organisations professionnelles patronales, in Synopsis, O.B.A.P. Bruxelles, 1969, no. 2.

E. Leemans, A. Martens e. a. De patronale beroepsorganisaties en het overleg (The Entrepreneurs associations and the concertation system); B.D.O.P. Brussel Sociologisch Onderzoeksinstituut, Kath. Universiteit Leuven, s. d.

b) The Belgian Trade Unions

Belgium together with Sweden shows the highest proportion of trade union affiliation in Europe a 67% to 70% membership. For industrial workers this figure is approximately 85%, for civil service officers 75% and for salaried employees of the private sector 38%. The affiliation to trade unions among industrial workers is still increasing while the category shrinks as to volume. That of the civil officers goes quicker than the increase of the category. That of the private employees goes quicker than the increase of the category, though remains relatively the lowest. The medium and higher senior staff members and executives are affiliated to a minor extent.

How can this trade union membership rate be justified? The conservative minded family entrepreneurship adapted to ownership and profit making from whom everything must be exacted and the economic crisis of the thirties certainly encouraged a firm start for Belgian Trade Unionism. After World War II the developing concentration and the mass grouping of manpower constituted a favourable factor.

In addition, the large entrepreneurs from this period onward practised integration strategies and if necessary applied the escalation-integration--theory of W. F. Whyte.[9]

The entrepreneurs' associations also aided the consultation system to be set up and from that time onward employees representatives had to be elected on entreprise level. All this encouraged affiliation. A number of local crises coupled with fresh unemployment, promoted affiliation. Finally, the two large trade unions commissioned a service system which involved all sorts of facilities for the affiliated members[10]. Accordingly, most Belgians are split up which means that they live within the sphere of interlinked organisations and institutions with the same ideological Christian, socialist, liberal basis and membership of one organisation (for example sickness fund) sometimes involves membership of another (for example trade union). This phenomenon will be referred to later. When however in the sixties trade union membership threatened to stagnate and even to decline, the Belgian trade union leaders launched »the special benefits to trade union members«. They caused the entrepreneurs to pay into the fund a % per worker from which first the member contribution to the trade unions is paid and in addition all sorts of trade unions training schemes are financed, and guarantee funds set up as a security for social peace etc. The formulae differ according to the sector of industry but the affiliates annually receive a benefit which is many times higher than the trade union contribution. Accordingly many refer to »compulsory trade unionism«.

This regulation has enabled the large trade unions to receive stable incomes and to rely on a so-called »majority trade unionism«. The employers have joined this game being convinced that a majority trade unionism will at the same time become an integrated trade unionism. Moreover, the larger the trade union the greater the internal differentiations are.

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[9] W. F. Whyte, Patterns for industrial peace, 1951.

[10] Up to an including service in respect of appointments and promotions for civil officers.

There are in Belgium two large trade unions and one smaller. The latter is the liberal trade union and has hardly 100,000 members. It follows a highly opportunistic policy. It is constantly overshadowed by the two large trade unions.

The big two are thus the Christian A. C. V. — C. S. C. (Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond — Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens) and A. B. V. V. — F. G. T. B. (Algemeen Belgisch Vakverbond — Confédération Générale des Travailleurs Belges), a socialist trade union. The Christian trade union has gradually become the biggest and membership now runs into 1.000.000. The socialist trade union has 900.000 registered members. From an enquiry into trade union participation however it appeares that in most important industrial sectors and in large enterprises, i. e. at strategic points, the socialist trade union is in a majority position. In the transport and distribution sectors the socialist trade union is quite strong whereas the Christian trade union predominates in the bank and financial sectors. They are equally strong in the public sector. It also appeares that apathy and lack of opinion is higher among the Christian than the socialist employees, and that the attendance of the latter employees at their trade union is in general greater than that of the Christian employees.

The enquiry showed that the trade unions in Belgium can hardly consider 5% of their members as genuine combative militants. Many consider the trade unions merely as a service institution, mainly on the Christian side[11].

The structure of the two trade unions is somewhat divergent: this has a historical background. The socialist trade union calling itself »general« developed after World War II from a merger of a number of left wing trade unions, socialist as well as communist, which had developed in various regions and/or industrial sectors before the war. Much is still left of this: the areas and the distinct »centrales« (trade union of an industrial sector) still claim a large autonomy and have their own resistance funds (for the payment of strike funds) and their own administration and »way of action«. This self-control is more urged in the Walloon or French than in the Flemish or Dutch part of the country! The headquarters at Brussels thus have only »the rest of power« at their disposal and must be satisfied with financial means which the districts and the »centrales« agree to transfer. The Christian trade union, on the other hand, was after World War II set up on rather centralised lines and the powers of the headquarters are much greater than in the case of the other trade union. Mainly through the resistance fund, the centralised administration and personel management it is possible for these headquarters to have more control over the »centrales«, the industrial branch sections and over the regional sections.

Both trade unions have a twofold organisation basis: the area and the industrial branch.

Accordingly, they dispose of local sections and sections per industrial branch or groups of industrial branches (not of professions). In the Christian trade union the area organisation is more important than in the other trade union. This has again a historical background; the Christian workers mo-

[11] L. Van Outrive en P. Gevers, De deelneming aan de vakbond. Sociologische analyse van het syndicaal handelen van uitvoerende werknemers A. C. V. Brussel 1967 (6 parts) (The participation in the unions, a sociological analysis of union behavior of employees) This is an enquiry among 1.300 workers and clerks.

vement may avail itself of the Catholic territorial parish structure. A large number of services are thus organised on local lines, thus the collection of membership's contributions. The offices of the local sections of several industrial sector »centrales« are also accommodated at local headquarters and they refer any employee in need of social and legal service to the centralised local service-departments. In the socialist trade union this local system has not been developed so strongly and this is probably one of reasons of the relative decline. From time immemorial the socialist trade unions have laid more emphasis on action in the industrial sectors and the enterprises and their militant action is by tradition more intensive than in the Christian trade union.

It may however be stated that in both trade unions local service activity and sectorial actions and those of the enterprises develop on equal lines. It can only be noticed that this co-existence of two regional service systems certainly means a waste of money and energy.

The Belgian trade unions then have thus no structure based on professional groups such as for example in England, though they are structured according to industrial sectors. There is one exception: there are distinct »centrales« for workers and in both trade unions there is a centrale for salaried clerks. The blackcoated workers of the private sector have thus a separate organisation although this is not a separate trade union like in the German Federal Republic. In both trade unions voices are heard demanding that employees in the (industrial sector) »centrales« be listed together with the industrial workers and to set up for the tertiary sector a number of »centrales« where the manual workers of the tertiary sector may be listed.

This is a permanent topic of discussion within the trade unions. The two trade unions do not show the same subdivision into »centrales«. The »centrales« in the socialist trade unions are often more substantial than in the Christian trade unions and several industrial sectors are sometimes grouped in one »centrale«. The fact that in this respect the trade unions have not the same structure sometimes hinders joint action. It may at any rate be stated that the entire trade union structure, for the »centrales« as well as for the districts or regionals, is not an image of the structuration of industry with its financial groups and international concerns which cross and break through all the sections at region or at sector level.

Finally, something must be said about the links between these two large trade unions and other organisations and political parties. Besides trade unions which are separated as to the ideologic point of view there are also sick funds, cultural and educational organisations, education networks which are also separated in the ideologic field (the substantial state subsidised private education is Catholic, but offical education is to a major extent under socialist control). In addition, there are Christian and socialist co-operatives though their place in the distribution sector is negligible. The socialist trade union is linked up with the other socialist organisations in the »joint socialist action« in which the political socialist party has an active share. Only at great events are all socialist powers mobilized by order of the party — and this is exceptional. For the rest the links between the trade union and the socialist political party are rather intensive — although in the course of the past few years political leaders were found who have no longer so many links with the trade unions which indeed leads to tensions within the

party! Besides this however there are also powerful trade union leaders (for example of the large socialist »general centrale« which groups several industrial sectors) which are concerned with the political party rather than with the workers movement within the trade union.

All this creates a complex situation within the socialist sphere.

The Christian trade union is linked up with the Christian sick funds, Christian educational and cultural organisations and co-operatives in the Christian labour movement. The links between this movement more particularly the trade union and the Christian Democratic Party (Parti Social Chrétien) are not so close and even for a certain time it intentionally kept aloof from this party which groups Christians of any class. All combinations of trade union functions and political mandates were made impossible. This raises a significant problem as it appears that the Christian movement is no longer politically sufficiently represented.

Finally, something must be said concerning the distinct horizontal levels in the trade unions: the categories of participants who internally and at the same time also externally have a share in the functioning of the trade union system and in the action of the trade unions within the economic system.

We have already incidentally referred to this enormous basis, the large number of members who in general show a small formal degree of participation ... but it should also be noticed that the actual trade union action within the enterprise, sometimes outside the formal channels, is seldom subject to enquiry. In Belgium like in numerous neighbour countries wild-cat strikes are now breaking out and constantly show that the basis is apparently not yet exhausted[12].

Trade unions now take these events rather seriously and always hurry to recognize the strikes officially and pay strike funds.

About 5% of the employees are active militants, many of them take up all kids of functions in the consultive bodies within the enterprise. They constitute strike pickets and delegations etc. It appears however that these groups of militants are in general too static and will fairly quickly no longer be representative of the broader basis of employees.

Both trade unions command a senior staff of elected or salaried managers or permanent officers (the Christian trade unions have about 1.000 of these members, the socialist trade union about 700). They are the links between the rank and file and the top. They are certainly too few and are in general little trained in industrial, economic and social matters and also in the field of communication and group-processes.

They are in general not well paid and have overburdened agendas and long working days. They have to spend much time as representatives of the trade unions in all sorts of consultation-bodies and must even spend much time on individual services. Too little time is left for contacts with the rank and file and in contacts with the works the dominating items must be the fight against the entrepreneurs' reluctance, action in emergency cases and action for limiting local damage. No time is left for enquiring into needs

[12] The phenomenon is now under study in Belgium.

with these basic groups and for developing consistent options and long-term strategy. It is therefore not astonishing that they sometimes become the scapegoats of the rank and file as well as of the top executives of the union.

What applies to the union executives can be extended to the top trade union leaders. A continuous »appeal« is made to them by the whole national consultation system.

They are indeed extolled to leaders at national level but meanwhile they go on living far from their senior staff and their union-members. Under the pressure of intensive activity in public, social and economic affairs the top leaders increasingly live in an inner circle, and questions may be raised as to the legitimate character of their action and how much »backing« their views really have. They also show elitist tendencies.

Finally, the research bureaus of the trade unions are expanding and employ university graduates. They are however of little significance compared with the intellectuals mobilised by the entrepreneurs and the financial groups. They are burdened with daily note drawing work and mobilised to attend the consultation system. This more or less eliminates them also from the trade union structure, from the union-stewards and the rank and file. Although little time is left for long-term tasks the interesting congress documents recently published by the trade unions are drawn up by them (cf. II). The question is to what extent these documents are fully backed by the trade union leaders and members and whether the latter are prepared to contribute to the application of the theories of the intellectuals.

The large trade unions increasingly tend to a common front and it is out of the question that this tendency may still be reversed. Spontaneous or wild-cat action proves the breaking-up of traditional separation between manual and non-manual workers and between the distinct trade unions. Both trade unions are called upon to assume a place among the representatives of the employees within the consultation system. They take standpoints of principle which draw nearer to each other (cf. II). At present they are preparing common standpoints in respect of overall interprofessional minimum wages agreements, working hour cuts, a fourth week's leave, the purchasing power of the workers, pensions, extra staff contact time for trade union-militants.

At the same time it may be observed that joint action has so far been conducted on a fairly pragmatic basis and is mainly directed towards immediate material achievements. Talks on matters of principle more particularly as regards democratization of the economic system are already announced for the months ahead. It may however well be expected that in the socialist and Christian political parties which, as already mentioned, are not so much concerned with the two workers movements, there will be attempts to prevent such a common front. In addition, not all the trade union leaders are immune to the temptations of the political parties. On the other hand, separate intercompetitive trade union apparatuses which were created a few decennials ago will not easily be fused.

c) The consultation system and the position of the trade unions

In official documents attention is often drawn to the fact that apart from the Netherlands, Belgium has the biggest consultative network and has thus reached a high degree of pacification in industrial relations. When enquiring into the source of these statements it is established that they emanate from established politicians, top-entrepreneurs and managers and from top trade unions leaders. An obvious question is whether the rank and file of the entrepreneurs on the one hand and the trade union executives and employees on the other are of the same opinion.

It is possible to understand the position of the established often senior leaders and of the generation which succeed them when it is known that during World War II entrepreneurs, trade union leaders and politicians in an atmosphere of solidarity against the German occupation and in anticipation of the postwar economic democracy prepared a so-called »treaty of social solidarity« as a basis for the present consultation system of organised relations between the representatives of the employers and the employees and of their participation in the development of social and economic policy.

In this way it was intended to fill the gap created by the fact that in the Belgian constitution there is provision for three powers: the legislative, the executive and the judiciary. Nothing specific was provided for social and economic representatives.

When, after World War II the development of the two started, the economic and political situation and the discrepancy between capital and labour led to the fact that much of the above mentioned plan was either not or was only partially achieved. The result is that the whole consultative system become quite an incoherent entity, lacking communication structures with overlapping and vague delimitation of competences.

1) *On the Enterprise level*

The Health and Safety Committee (Komitee voor de Veiligheid, Gezondheid en Verfraaing der werkplaatsen — Comité de Sécurité et de Santé) was in existence in many enterprises even before World War II. Subsequently, it was operative in all enterprises with at least 50 workers. It is structured on the basis of joint representatives of employers and employees and has advisory power in respect of matters regarding safety, hygiene and improvement of the environment in the enterprise. It operates with varying results but is mainly engaged in micro-matters and acts too much in a curative manner aimed at limiting damage. It is too little preventive and systematic in its proceedings. Every five years lists are submitted by the trade unions with the names of candidates from whom the employees elect a number of representatives.

The **works council** (Ondernemingsraad — Conseil d'Entreprise) is also an organ composed of employers' and employees' representatives in which employers representatives are appointed and employees representatives are elected.

The Council was set up by law after World War II and is compulsory in any plant employing a minimum of 150 workers. It covers financial, economic and social matters. By the terms of the law the council shall promote co-operation between employers and employees. Its competence is only of a decisive nature in a few matters (leave terms, modalities of employment and dismissal), and in addition it has advisory power. The council must also be informed by the entrepreneur mainly in the financial and economic field.

We shall afterwards draw attention to the fact that the distinct trade unions had divergent objects in respect of the works council.

A systematic enquiry[13] has shown that the larger the enterprise the better the staff at the disposal of the entrepreneur will be; more particularly that as regards personnel management he will be in a better position to manipulate the council and that in his capacity as chairman he can reduce all discussions to comment on details and also postpone a number of matters indefinitely so that they are never settled. It was also shown that information in respect of economic and financial policy measures are quite inaccessible to employees representatives.

Nevertheless the trade unions have not entirely written off the works councils and mainly intend to have their role increased in the field of evaluation of the financial and economic situation of the enterprise. Early 1970, the trade unions insisted on calling an »Economic and Social Conference« where they, together with the government and the entrepreneurs representatives jointly decided that in principle the operation and the task of the works councils should be reconsidered and that in particular more information should be given to them within the framework of the actual democratization of the economy.

The National Labour Council and the Central Council for the Economy was ordered to work out these decisions. In the National Labour Council a collective labour agreement was ready towards the end of 1970 in which it is rather precisely laid down that employment prospects must be reported annually, quarterly or on occasion. The works council must be consulted in respect of professional training and readjustment courses. It must also be informed in respect of personnel matters and work organisation. Important structural changes which exert any influence on employment opportunities must be communicated in advance. It is also important that the entrepreneur must subsequently state which follow-up he has reserved for joint consultation in the works council. Finally, arrangements were also made to give the employees representatives the time and the opportunity to follow union training courses and contact the employees (for example extra employee contact time). These arrangements must be worked out per sector but nothing has developed so far!

For the working out of the financial and economic information — decisions reference is made to the Central Council for the Economy. In a commission it was possible for an agreement to be reached after 15 meetings including measures about shareholders, economic and financial links, sales and cost prices, profit and loss figures, budgets and accounts, production,

[13] Le fonctionnement des conseils d'Entreprises. Sociologisch Onderzoeksinstituut K. U. L. 1967 (on demand of the Nationatl Labour Council Contentanalysis of the raports of 75 works councils for a period of 5 years).

scientific research and planning in general. A detailed report on all this should be issued by the works council annually, quarterly and on special occasions (fusion, crisis, closing down etc.). Technical modalities were worked out for adequate joint discussions to be held: more particularly experts may be appointed and all disputes (with respect to concealment of information, recommendation of experts' advice etc.) between employees and employers may be submitted to a higher authority (a kind of financial-economic arbitration authority). The staff co-operators of the employers associations who had contributed to the draft in the commission were however disapproved by the rank and file. On the side of the entrepreneurs the draft was thus amended so that practically nothing was left. All prerogatives concerning information and the property of the entrepreneurs must be maintained.

The negotiations were broken off early 1971 and the dossier transferred to the Christian-socialist government which in its inaugural address promised that information about the enterprise given through the works council would be improved. The government has not so far taken any steps.

In the Central Economic Council talks are just finished concerning a bookkeeping plan and annual accounts (het boekhoudkundig plan en de jaarrekeningen — le plan comptable et les comptes annuels) on the one hand and about the revisers (a financial and economic body of experts whose main responsibility is to assist employees by giving information and exerting control in respect of the accuracy of the information provided by the employers).

The talks were extremely obscured by a split during the basic deliberations about financial and economic information.

At enterprise level there is also a third organ: the **trade union delegation** (de vakbondsafvaardiging — la délégation syndicale — shop stewards). This is not a consultive organ proper but a representative body of trade union members who act in their name. It was set up by joint agreement in 1947 and not on the strength of a law. The position of the delegation was then defined within the distinct branches of industry through special joint conventions. Nowhere are such vague statement on joint agreements or conventions found as those relating to the trade union delegation. The employers and the employees obviously like to keep the delimitation of powers fairly vague for various reasons. There is no systematic enquiry as to the efficiency of this body though in trade union circles the opinion prevails that this is the most efficient trade union weapon at enterprise level: the delegates have the right to be heard, to assist the employees and to be informed in advance about wages and work conditions.

The employers are in general apprehensive of these delegates.

At the urgent request of the trade unions the same Economic and Social Conference early in 1970 ordered the National Labour Council to reconsider the status of the trade union delegation. Accordingly, on May 24, 1971 a national joint agreement was signed by the terms of which the basic agreement of 1947 was amplified and worked out; the delegates must be given more information, more opportunities for communication and training; they should be better safeguarded against dismissal and it was also established that in the absence of a works council they will take over from that council the most important powers and the right of information.

2) *On the sectors level*

Whereas at enterprise level social, economic and financial matters are still dealt with within the same bodies a splitting up of social, economic and financial matters which is already typical of Belgium is observed here.

In the social field there are **Joint (Employers' and Employees' Representatives) Committees.** (De Paritaire Komitees — Les Comités Paritaires) This typical Belgian institution was set up by the terms of the law in 1945. There is also a **national** joint employers' and employees' representatives committee and about 120 committees for the sectors and the subsectors. They must in each case have 4 representatives of the employers and 4 representatives of the employees[14]. They are consulted — and must in specific cases be consulted — in matters of wages, social benefits (income security, social laws, employees' status, transport charges, extra employee contact time, pensions etc.) and work conditions (work classification, time and motion and work organisation). They have even decision making power with respect to wages and also with respect to certain work conditions.

They also spend much time on solving disputes which arise within the individual enterprise about wages and work conditions: an arbitration-function.

These organs are called the backbone of the Belgian industrial relations-system. However minimum results are often reached because of the fact that a full agreement for example in respect of wages must be reached before any regulation can become effective. Overlapping also occurrs between The National Joint Employers and Employees Committee and the National Labour Council (cf. infra). Also as a result of the fact that the social sector is separated from the economic sector it is not always possible to hold a thorough discussion within the Joint Committee and thus to comment the wages and work conditions within a broader and clearer scope.

In the economic field a number of **Economic Branch Councils** (Bedrijfsraden — Conseils Professionnels) were set up. However from 1948 (Law on the economic councils) up to the present hardly seven were really created (for metal, textiles, building, fisheries, leather, chemistry, food). There is however a joint employers' and employees' representatives structure composed of appointed representatives but their competence is merely advisory. Their advice is however little asked for by Government of Parliament and these councils do not often meet. Their main advantage is that they have adequate research bureaus which collect and process data, undertake research work and draw up advice notes. Moreover, their operating possibilities are often weakened on account of the fact that a special national organ is set up or that an existing national organ takes up the matter whenever some problem or other becomes urgent in any industrial sector (cf. infra).

3) *On the national level*

It is useless to sum up and comment on all the consultative organs which exist at national level. In general there are 14 financial, 12 economic, and 11 social organs. To this were added special and more general bodies.

[14] Appointed by the sector — or national boards of the trade unions, thus not directly elected.

It is indeed impossible to represent them all in an orderly scheme and to indicate their links with organs at lower levels. Once more: the consultation system has grown up in a fragmentary way.

When it is stated that the public financial institutions and organs may take basic decisions and may in the first instance greatly influence private financial decisions, that economic matters are now of secondary importance and finally that social matters are in fact rather minor importance, that in other words there is a **factual** financial — economic — social control hierarchy, the following may be established[15].

As matters actually stand, the competence of the consultation organs refers to a smaller part of the total economic system even if the power of decision in this limited field may be large. Thus many financial problems escape public financial control organs but when the latter have something to say in any matter their power of decision is considerable. Economic consultation already covers a broader number of economic problems though their competence is in general only advisory. Social problems are to a very large extent the object of consultation and this competence is greatly directed towards real decision-making. It must nevertheless be remembered that the social field is considered of minor importance in a neo-liberal economic system even when the contrary is asserted in public.

Moreover the observance of social implications and needs is smaller when a level of problems is reached which in fact appears to be of major importance. Thus the observance of social aspects within financial consultation is practically non existent. Within economic bodies social problems are given more consideration on occasion although still appreciably less than desired.

As problems are in fact more important and dominate more over others, the workers' delegation within the consultation system is smaller and accordingly more in a minority position. Representatives are practically absent within the financial organs. They have seats in the economic councils but often represent a minority. Finally, in the social consultation employers and employees are equally represented.

The public **financial bodies** are not or only to a minor extent composed on the joint basis of employers' and employees' representatives[16]. Besides direct representatives of the Minister of Finances and/or the Minister of Economic Affairs, there are representatives of other public financial organs, representatives of private financial enterprises (mainly banks) and for the rest representatives of entrepreneurs associations. In addition, there are personalities and experts who tend either towards the employers or who are technocratically minded.

Their advice is in general observed by the political authorities. It is not easy to find out to which field their competence relates, vis-à-vis the overall volume of the financial problems of the country. They are involved however in tax and monetary policy and deal with credit markets, discount rates etc. and these are important regulating measures.

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[15] Labour movements — and we too — have a tendency towards stating that the control hierarchy should be quite the other way about.

[16] The most important are: The National Bank of Belgium (more particularly the regency council), the National Investment Society, the National Society for Credit to the Industry, the High Council for Finances, the Banking Commission.

These public organs are in fact dominated by those who in several fields may be considered their competitors: the representatives of private financial enterprises and agencies. Their function is mainly to see that the public institutions only play a complementary role and not that the institutions expand and exert a regulating and social function. They may thereby count on the support of the successive Ministers of Finance who each in their turn represent one of the big financial groups with which they are linked.

In the **economic consultative organs** a major tendency is observed towards the presence of an equal number of representatives of capital and labour but in many bodies the trade unions are still in a minority position[17]. These councils have in general hardly any advisory power and they must only on rare, occasions be consulted. They are not much asked for advice and certainly not always followed by the government and parliament. In addition, the overlapping and undercutting phenomena are frequently seen: several organisms are engaged in the same business or take over each others' tasks. Problems of acute political significance are then settled in one council: the National Committee for Economic Expansion. (het Nat. Komitee voor Ekon. Expansie — le Comité National pour l'Expansion Econ.). In this committee besides social partners, there are also members of the government and its activities automatically become more public and political. Reference should be made to a similar council: the Social and Economic Conference (de Sociale en Ekonomische Conferentie, la Conférence Sociale et Economique) which however meets less than the expansion committee, but which has more political power (cf. infra). The Committee for Economic Expansion is however also consulted with respect to the economic programme (cf. infra). It sometimes happens that even outside these organs problems are settled at meetings of political leaders, ministerial councils and committees.

How consistent the competence of the distinct councils may be is far from clear. The competence is however more exactly described for bodies which deal with crisis-situations, with problems that require special measures and still do, where reconversion must urgently be carried out and the like.

We are faced with the traditional case of the railways which must be the object of care on the part of the Government and the community should they start operating at a loss. Problematic sectors in the meantime are steel and coal and to a certain extent electric power mainly with respect to supply--rates. We may however also refer to cases of traditional industries and enterprises in danger.

Except for the cases referred to above, it may be stated that fundamental economic problems such as investments, quantity and quality of production in function of the actual needs of the population etc. are hardly mentioned or dealt with.[18] The competence indeed also increasingly applies to consumer problems rather than production problems. Social implications are in general left out of consideration.

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[17] The main economic organisms are: the Central Economic Council, the National Committee for Economic Expansion, the Commission for the Regulation of Prices and Wages, the Indexcommission, the Social and Economic Conference, The Council for Consumption, the Control Committee for Electricity and Gas, The Joint Committee for the Steelindustry, the Belgian Service for Foreign Trade, The Advisory Council for the Coal-Mines and for the Power-Supply.

[18] If it is mentioned it is probably not carried out and the problem is not raised (National Committee for Economic Expansion).

The **social consultative organs** are in general composed on a strictly joint basis of employers' and employees' representatives: there are as many employers' representatives as there are employees' representatives[19]. The competence is of an advisory nature but it frequently happens that the political authorities are obliged to take advice.

A direct regulating competence even exists ... which however is often without any effect through lack of sanctions and control possibilities (for example as regards application of work regulations in enterprises or of some insurance system or other even in respect of wage agreements within the enterprise). Important regulating competence is taken by the National Joint Committee, which decides about some wage, work and social benefits for a fixed period of one, two or more years, with application for the whole industry. It is called »social programmation agreement«.

A number of organs not only have advisory and regulating power but they also manage large estates: the distinct directory boards of the social security system. This is however carried out under the supervision of the Minister of Social Security.

As from the point of view of their content the fields of competence are in general better described than in the economic field: the matters to be dealt with are fairly distinctly described. It is however obvious that a number of fundamental social labour problems are not covered by the field of competence: the social and collective needs, the status and the organisation of labour and enterprise.

Special consideration should be given to the already mentioned Social and Economic Conference. This consultation body is the successor of the national Labour Conference, the first national industrial relations institute set up in 1936 after serious social troubles. This conference is now called together when important social and/or economic problems are raised and summons the responsible ministers as well as the so-called social partners to gather at the table[20]. The competence is not clearly described though it overlaps those of the other national organs and in general partly undercuts their competence. The official declarations of this Council have naturally much influence but they remain fairly general and »in principle«. This medium is utilized by trade unions as well as by governments for representing something to public opinion or the employees. It has become a kind of political gallery and much publicity is given to its activities.

In its most recent public meetings of early 1970 this Conference not only made statements in principle with respect to economic democracy at enterprise level but moved on the macro-economic plane with »the competence to secure a real democratization of the economy and to create instruments indispensable for making this democratization a reality. It is however merely the confirmation of a postwar tendency; the consultation system, in which the main lines of the social economic policy are laid down in concert with the trade union and employers associations after discussions with the social partners together with the government. The self-management concept does not yet resound on that level and at these public moments ..... nor on the side of the trade unions!

[19] The main organs are: the National Joint Employers' and Employees Representatives Committee, the National Labour Council and a range of Directory Boards for the distinct sectors of the social security system (sickness and disablement, family allowance, labour supply and unemployment, social security, pensions, accidents and professional diseases), the Social and Economic Conference.

[20] The National Committee for Economic Expansion has the same structure.

4) On the regional level — the »Plan«.

After much political trouble an outline law was voted by the legislative Chambers on July 15, 1970 **providing for planning organizations and economic decentralization«.** This law had a twofold object: the federalization of Belgium not only on the cultural but also on the social economic plane. The trade unions saw in it means to achieve more social economic democracy and to allow the preparation and execution of the Plan to develop on more democratic lines and at the same time to have the share of the employees and of the trade unions in the decision-making increased.

Since 1959 there has indeed been a »Bureau for Economic Programation« and a consultation procedure was arranged which provided for the participation of organs with major economic competence and also of the national expansion committee. The procedure however appeared to be too intricate as well as too little concerned with »follow-up«. In addition, the regions were not implicated by this procedure[21].

The programme bureau has now become the Planning Bureau. It has drawn up the Five Year Plan which is being reconsidered annually but is now also concerned in follow-up and the execution at any level. The Bureau has three sections; one for general, one for sectoral and one for regional planning. The latter is subdivided into three subsections (Flanders, Wallonia and Brabant (Brussels).

The general and sectoral sections draw up an inventory of the possible alternatives and priorities. They are then confronted through the regional section with the advice of the three regional economic councils (West Flanders, Wallonia, Brabant (Brussels). Each of these councils has 1/4 union--representatives, 1/4 entrepreneurs-representatives and 2/4 politicians: Parliament and provincial council members of the region, according to the principle of apportionment strength of the political parties. The trade unions are thus in a minority position unless they can count on the support of some political mandataries.

The Planning Bureau gives the plan a new shape, and transfers it for approval to the Government which submits it to Parliament together with the advice of the highest economic and social consultation organs. The regional economic councils and the national expansion committee are consulted for the last time before submitting it to Parliament which gives it force of law.

The Plan is compulsory for the public sector and the authorities and also for the enterprises which benefit from Government support. It is indicative for all other enterprises.

Within the districts there are »Regional Development Companies« which supply the councils with logistic investigation support as well as with industrial projects ordered by these councils when private initiative fails. They will be supported by a »National Office for Promotion of Industry«.The whole initiative is in full operational development. A main topic of discussion for the time being is: how far does the competence of the regional organs extend vis-à-vis the national organs and more particularly Parliament? An

[21] There is a plan 71—75 which at the end of 1972 was not yet approved by Parliament, the last instance. The plan has no influence on Belgian economic life! It should be noted that the plan concept in Belgium had a difficult start. There was alreaday a Plan Bureau in the Netherlands and France in 1945—1946. In Belgium a serious decline in economic growth in the fifties and a serious crisis in the coal industry was first needed before the concept was finally admitted . . . . . with much reluctance!

important question is also the demarcation of the economic area of Brussels within the Brabant-region.

Another important problem is whether this is real decentralization? Finally, the trade unions wonder what will be their right of say and their power position and whether they will also be politically sufficiently present to give any priority to the employees standpoint in these regions? It has already become clear that the employers representatives and their associations do not feel a kindly interest towards decentralization nor in new plan concepts.

II. HOW DO THE BELGIAN TRADE UNIONS EVALUATE THE NEO-CAPITALISTIC ECONOMIC CONSULTATION SYSTEM?

We will at once clearly state that we can only take as a basis the analysis of a number of Christian and socialist trade union documents issued after World War II and in most of the cases drawn up on the occasion of general trade union congresses. It is clear that a true estimate can only materialize through an analysis of actual daily trade union action in consultation organs as well as in action on the occasion of specific events (strikes, claims of a certain range, etc.) but apart from a very few exceptions such enquiry is still lacking in Belgium.

a) Evaluation of the Economic System.

1. Since 1945 the socialist trade union has always given negative comments on the existing economic system. It will not lock itself up in a ghetto but at the same time states that it will never agree to the internal logics of the system and of that which proceeds from capitalists' and employers' decisions. Roughly speaking, things have been at a standstill from 1945 up to the present. It can only be established that radicalism is applied in vocabulary: criticism on the system grows ever sharper.

On the other hand, the evaluation from the side of the Christian trade unions has developed. In 1951, the A.C.V. — C.S.C. indeed criticised the system though hesitated to question it. Later on, in 1968, the Christian trade union started keeping aloof from capitalism and now tends towards a number of socialist concepts and this tendency has since 1971 become far more distinct.

It is undeniable that comments on the system by the two large trade unions are more and more consonant.

2. What suggestions do the two large trade unions make?

It is here that we begin to find vagueness and generalization also incompleteness in any presentation of a general alternative[22].

The socialist trade union tends towards a socialist, democratic and planned society.

— Socialist: a society of equality and freedom where all privilege is banned. This society must put an end to the domination of capital, the

[22] The trade unions' own terminology is to a major extent utilised in this context.

privileges and the power of the leading class and to economic liberalism, which, based on profit making gives rise to all sorts of artificial needs on account of the fact that consumption is determined and imposed by the producer. In adition, an unfair distribution of income persists and intolerable waste goes on. All in all, the social factor must be given preference over the economic factor.

Democratic: apart from political democracy, there must also be economic, social and cultural democracy. In addition, increasing importance is attached to free expression of opinion and the thorough democratization of the information media. Democratization of the economy thereby also means that labour must be considered to be the main factor.

— Planning: which must fix the alternatives and the priorities and guarantee the equilibrium of development of regions and industrial sectors. At the same time not only individual needs but also the collective ones (education, transport, family, social assistance etc.) must be ranked by order of preference.

It has, however, been noted that the advocated collective economy may not be confused with full planning such as in a people's democracy. There can be no question of generalized public appropriation. Private enterprises will act within the framework of a democratic plan .... although the place and the function of the private enterprises have not been given closer definition.

Constant and increasing emphasis is laid on the statement that the government sector in a planned economy must be intended for the orientation of the whole private sector.

The same alternative option may be found more and more in the publications of the Christian trade unions although worded rather differently:

— a welfare and service economy based on the principles of equality. This is the socialist economy of A.B.V.V. — F.G.T.B. However, more emphasis is laid on satisfying the essential needs of everybody and mainly of the people with the smallest income who must also be given a chance to contribute to the general satisfaction of needs through labour: the concept of the minimum level of subsistence. For the rest, a permanent progress of production and of incomes, full employment and an adequate appropriation of results among all men as well as a **real** satisfaction of needs is also dealt with.

— Democratic: It is also argued that there should be maximum right of codecision and chances of participation for all at any level in planning and in execution.

— Planning: the Christian concepts are obviously parallel in respect of the distribution of responsibility between the public sector and the market economy. Althought not expressly stated it has appeared recently that A.C.V. — C.S.C. is a promotor of a planned economy in which an important role is given to the market and no longer of the free market economy in which the government sector acts as a regulating and controlling factor. The subsidiary principle in which has been supported for quite a long time has probably been abandoned.

It has again been stated that at least in the declaration of principles the consistent options of the two unions have become markedly the same.

3. How to achieve this alternative?

Although joint — or self-decision-making »about what« has still been and will remain an important question it is important to enquire »how« the trade unions will achieve their alternative economy. Here a problem arises in connection with the structural considerations as well as with the modalities of participation and decisions which are advisable.

Although A.B.V.V. — F.G.T.B. mainly devoted attention to criticism of the existing system and less to an alternative it did devote a few words to the matter — although not much.

The trade union has for several years been intending to achieve something within the sectors of energy and financial institutions. If in 1954—1956 reference was still made to »nationalization« although not in the sense of »establishment of state control« the term »socialization« has now been adopted, however without any close description. For the rest, the opinion prevails that the financial means must be socialized and it is suggested to set up a »public holding company« and »public banks«. The state-authorities should be in a position to start new enterprises more particularly in growth sectors, while organizations and institutions with real decision power in the economic, the social and the cultural fields should be created at regional level.

As regards modalities of participation and decision-making, A.B.V.V. — F.G.T.B. has in the whole after war period been pleading for workers' control »at any level«. In addition, it is constantly argued that a socialist and democratic society must be achieved through gradual reform »per stage and in conformity with democratic rules«. This is an attitude of »contesting participation« which means the exertion of continual pressure on managerial decisions without sharing the responsibility as such.

What is desired is not so much the creation of new consultive organs, unless at regional level, but mainly and more urgently the consolidation of the attendance of the trade unions in and the strengthening of their control over financial organizations.

Incidentally it came to the fore that the final target is self-management of all the workers, when in 1971 the prospect of self-management was put forward expressly and explicitily.

A.C.V. — C.S.C., the Christian trade unions, also pays relatively little attention to this matter.

As regards the modalities of participation and decision-making it is and the central planning bureau. The equilibrium of the regions must be achieved and the economy adjusted to the actual needs of the community as a whole.

As regards the modalities of participation and decision-making it is generally known that the Christian trade union was until recently a convinced supporter of joint management. It even adopted a skeptic attitude vis-à-vis workers' control as in this case no responsibility in respect of decisions must be assumed. In January 1971, the A.C.V. — C.S.C. headquarters took up quite a surprising position in favour of self-management as final target and workers' representatives control appears to be admitted as an interim stage.

For the rest, this trade union is also of the opinion that the reform of the economic system must go on gradually without violence though uninterruptedly.

It appears once more that as regards declaration of principles there is close similarity between the two trade unions.

b) The Evaluation of the Enterprise System.

It is worth mentioning that relatively little interest is shown by the socialist A.B.V.V. — F.G.T.B. in enterprise problems as such.

This is in complete contradiction with the approach made by A.C.V. — C.S.C. which over the same period devoted at least three reports to enterprise problem as such. This is no coincidence but only a reflection of the rather different approach to one and the same reality.

1. What must be achieved?

The central point of concern of the socialist trade unions is the reform of the whole structure of economic power. The capital-labour contrast is still taken as a basis. Control over the economy must gradually be taken out of the hands of capitalists and entrusted to the workers: this power cannot be shared. Any form of co-management and institutional co-operation at enterprise level must be rejected. The macro-economic superstructure must in the first place be reorganised. The reform of the enterprise is secondary to this (for example socialization in function of the Plan). However in the documents published on the occasion of the Congress of 1971 more attention was devoted to action at enterprise level (cf. infra).

After World War II, A.C.V. — C.S.C. was the first trade union to again take up the problem of structural reforms within the enterprise. The approach was initially more of a moral and philosophical nature. Gradually however, increased attention was devoted to analysis of the fact and study of the enterprise as it really operates. This led to a dissociation from the current formally legal approach. Whereas initially there was an attempt to locate proposals of reform within the existing laws on joint stock companies it was stated afterwards that a broadly conceived partnership law must be arrived at, based on the double concept of partnership-institution.

Initially, the concept of the enterprise as an integrative community of complementary groups was put forward. Analysis of the fact however brought about that the enterprise was identified as the meeting place of distinct power groups with various and divergent interests. However the differentiation between capital and labour is considered as too simple. Employees (still split up into clerks and executives) as well as investors of capital are distinguished, and also the body of managers as distinct a group.

What will probably draw the Christian trade union standpoint nearer to the socialist one is the increasing negative estimate of capital and the present body of entrepreneurs. While they were initially interpreted as a necessary

economic factor in recent memorandums they are considered as power groups which often act negatively.

All this has perhaps been overtaken since the declaration of early 1971 when there was a moral switch from joint management to self-management as a target. The concept was then accepted though not elaborated that only those who work have the right to live, to participate and to make decisions.

In this field too the socialist point of view has obviously been reached.

2. How to reach the final object and what first?

»How« do the trade unions intend to achieve the new enterprise and what stages do they consider necessary?

The socialist trade unions first considers workers' control as a significant interim target. For trade unionism, workers' control is a possibility to assume responsibility with skill which it accepts willingly (contesting participation). Meanwhile, any other forms of participation such as joint management, on the workshop-level is rejected. Also the authonomy of the entrepreneurs function, the joint authorization-power of capital, labour and general interest (cf. the project of A.C.V.—C.S.C.) is rejected as a form of joint management. For the rest, it is not so clear what must be understood by workers' control. Is it trade union' control or real workers' control? From a report of 1971 »trade union guardianship« appears to be an interim stage to real workers' control.

Further, A.B.V.V.—F.G.T.B. plans action which should be undertaken outright.

— More economic and financial information.

— The intention to valorize the works-council. This is new as the socialist trade union has by tradition not been a supporter of this consultation body because of the fact that the Christian trade union saw it as an initial step towards joint-management. The works council is now viewed as a medium of information and accelerated training and a means for contesting the employers' power as well as an experiment towards widening discussion on a number of problems which the trade unions wish to put on the table. (1971)

Further it is intended to develop and strengthen the trade union delegation (la délégation syndicale): this is »the« workers' control organ. Workers' representation within the same enterprise will probably even have to be merged into one large scale trade union delegation.

These stages are still less outlined by A.C.V.—C.S.C..

In 1967, a plan was launched »to change the structure of the joint stock companies«[24]. More particularly in the large-scale enterprises (employing over 1.000 workers) the unilateral power-relations of capital should be changed and as many as possible chances of participation for as many employes as possible should be provided.

[24] This proposal was rejected by A.B.V.V.—F.G.T.B.

The five basic ideas of this plan are:

1) The status of the large-scale enterprise must be based on a twofold concept: the partnership-institution;

2) The entrepreneurs' function (management) must be recognized as an institution;

3) At the top there should be a supervisory- and authorization-body with general supervision and authorization-power for important decisions. It would be composed of : 4 representative of the active capital partners;

4 representatives of the employees;
1 representative of the institutional savings investors;
1 representative of the confederation or federations of unions;
1 president, representative of the community-interests;

4) Joint-decisions must be organised on the level of the sections and workshops in committees composed of executives and elected employees. These are advisory committees and also electoral colleges for the higher levels;

5) The representation, authorization and designations must be structured from the bottom and the existing bodies, works-councils as well as the trade union delegation must be built in.

It may be observed that banks and holding companies on the one hand and small-scale enterprises on the other are not covered by the suggestion: for these two groups of enterprise only flexible control is suggested.

According to more recent declarations, general workers' control should by all means be introduced previously into all the large-scale enterprises. »This is an important means in the change of the overall state of mind and in action with a view to the change of the unilateral power-relations and- structures in the enterprise .... Control may lead either to contest or association, either to objection or agreement« (1971). In this respect more concordance with what is advocated by the socialist trade unions has finally been achieved.

Within sections and workshops, joint-decision according to the Norwegian pattern should be arranged as soon as possible. The main intention is to make the basis more sensitive ... or to have it stated that this state of affairs can no longer hold on such a restricted scale.

What sould be achieved in the immediote future is:

— The improvement of the social and economic-financial information;
— The revaluation of the existing bodies on the enterprise-level more particularly the works-council.

In this connection trade unions opinion converges again: the works-council is considered by both the trade unions as a medium for workers' control and as the organization to which more extensive financial and economic information may be submitted. Both trade unions also agree as regards the independent action of the trade union delegation vis-à-vis the enterprise.

Opinions differ on a few points:

— A.C.V.-C.S.C. would like the executives to be represented as a distinct group whereas A.B.V.V.-F.G.T.B. prefers this group to be incorporated in the employees delegation as a whole;

— the Christian trade union would like to have predominant attendance by employees in the works-council and to have equal representation of employees and employers abolished, whereas the socialist trade union considers this point as unimportant and pleads for a merger of works-council-representatives and trade union delegates.

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WORKERS' PARTICIPATION: THE CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

Demands and struggles for workers' control are now a significant part of radical politics in many industrialized countries of Europe. This brief essay intends to discuss certain aspects of the current level of activities in Canada and to bring out some of the ideological and institutional obstacles to strategies based on workers control and self-management.

Given the nature of Canada's corporate capitalist system, demands for workers' control of the process of production are by definition seen as threats to the power of corporate capitalism. Every demand to restrict or remove the unfettered rights of management to manage and control the process of production or service encounters the fierce resitance of management supported by the entire legal and political superstructure of our capitalist system. It is essential to capitalism that the owners and their appointed management exercise absolute control over industry. Struggles for workers' control are thus inherently anti-capitalist and form part of an emerging socialist strategy for the transformation of society.

A useful point to begin the discussion is to look at the union movement in Canada. To what degree are unions in Canada protecting and advancing working conditions, dealing effectively with unemployment, plant closures and relocations and to what degree have they been ready to challenge the prerogative of management to manage and control the workplace?

We are all familiar with early history of union struggles as we are with the fact that unions in North America today have made their »peace« with corporate capital which in turn has become reconciled with the existence of the trade union movement. As Andre Gorz has pointed out, unions are recognized by corporate capital on two conditions:

1. They must only voice demands that do not call capitalism into question (i. e. that are negotiable),
2. Once an agreement has been reached, unions must stick to it and prevent workers from breaking it.[1]

In political terms, unions in Canada, with few exceptions, have become a reform oriented social force operating within the limits set by the capitalist system.

[1] Andre Gorz, »Workers' Control is more than just that«, Gerry Hunnius (Ed.). **Participatory Democracy for Canada**. Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1971, p. 17.

And yet, this is not the whole story. The latest demands for industrial democracy have come from sections of the union movement. The emergence of these demands and the reaction of management and the union leadership illustrates concretely the possibilities and the obstacles to the development of an effective organized force for workers' control and eventual self-management.

Prior to the 1970 Convention of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), a small group of union activists, organized as the Reform Caucus, hammered out a programme for reform which included a section on industrial democracy. The programme stated in part:

> *»To this end, the Canadian Labour Congress must fight for the extension of collective bargaining to encompass all matters which affect the workers' industrial life. We must move to erode, to restrict, and ultimately, to remove the unfettered right of management to control the working forces, to impose discipline, to determine work schedules, to select and promote supervisory plans. These are the functions that determine the conditions of the work place hour by hour and day by day.*
> *Through collective bargaining, we must move to control the right of management to decide on prices, technological changes, production plans, future industrial development policies, the curtailment of operations, the relocation of plants, the methods and processes of operations, pollution control. In the right to control these functions lies the right to control the economic destiny of this country. It is a right which is vested now in an irresponsible managemnt elite at the expense of all the other elements of our society. We must extend the influence of the trade union movement into these decision-making areas and eradicate forever the concept of management's residual rights«.*[2]

The leadership of the CLC, taken by surprise by the well organized campaign of the Reform Caucus, attempted to regain the initiative by submitting its own watered-down resolution on industrial democracy which was duly passed by the assembled delegates. It reads as follows:

> *»Whereas it is inappropriate in a free society for working people to be subject to authoritarian control in the work place that would be considered intolerable in the community at large; and*
> *Whereas one of the major historical forces for freedom has been the labour movement;*
> *Be it resolved that the Canadian Labour Congress press for the application of democratic principles in the work place by fighting for the extension of collective bargaining to remove the unfettered right of management to exercise undue control over the work force;*
> *Be it further resolved that the Canadian Labour Congress, while recognizing that there is a division of functions between labour and management, endorse the extension of collective bargaining*

[2] The Reform Caucus, **A Programe for Reform.** Toronto: no date.

to encompass all matters which affect the workers' industrial life, including such things as the impact on workers of technological and other change, with particular emphasis on the legislative enactment of the recommendations of the Freedman Report, production plans, future industrial development policies, the curtailment of operations, the methods and processes of operations and pollution control«.[3]

In January 1972, the CLC held a conference on industrial democracy which in essence supported the resolution adopted at the CLC convention in 1970. Donald MacDonald, CLC president, set the tone for the conference in his opening remarks when he warned of those »who define industrial democracy in terms of workers' control«. The red-baiting and distortions of the following quote by the CLC president needs no further comments:

> *»Industrial democracy is seen by them as an essential precondition to the establishment of a genuine political democracy, and industrial democracy can only be established when workers are in control of factories, shops and offices. In another time and in another place this solution to social and economic problems went by the name of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is, of course, an option which is available to Canadians, but not one which has been taken seriously at any time by the vast majority of Canadian workers. Despite their disapproval of the inequities of the social, economic and political system under which we live, workers by and large reject extremist solutions which fail to conform with democratic principles and procedures. And if experiments with so-called workers' control in other countries can teach us anything, it is that workers' control usually turns out to be control of the workers by their political masters who think they know what's in the workers' best interest«.*[4]

While the debate on industrial democracy between reform-oriented trade unionists and the established union hierarchies continues, the most radical demands for workers' control have emerged from the rank and file of the union movement in the course of day-to-day struggles against unemployment and plant closures. In April, 1971, the London and District Labour Council in Southern Ontario organized a conference on Plant Shut-Downs. The emergency resolution passed at this conference is a clear indication that the principle of workers' control was seen to be relevant to the immediate struggles of workers in Canada. The resolution states in part that: »We will no longer accept the 15th century notion that management will decide, while workers and the community suffer in silence. The power to decide must pass to those who work in the plants and the communities in which they live«.[5] The resolution calls for a broad struggle which will combine political with economic action. »It must reach into each plant, office, mine, mill, forest, service

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[3] The Canadian Labour Congress, »Substitute Resolution on Industrial Democracy«, submitted to the Canadian Labour Congress Edmonton Convention by the Economic Policy Committee.

[4] Donald MacDonald, »Industrial Democracy in the 1970s«. **Canadian Labour**, Vol. 17, No. 2 (February 1972), p. 4.

[5] London and District Labour Council, »Emergency Resolution on Plant Shut-Downs and Unemployment«, London, April 3, 1971, p. 1.

industry and school«.[6] The resolution, which includes a number of specific demands directed at the Ontario and Federal governments, calls on workers faced with shut-downs to refuse to leave the plant and recommends either a sit-in or a work-in as a means of mobilizing support in the wider community.[7]

Several radical rank and file caucuses have sprung up across the country in response to growing unemployment and the increase in plant closures and relocations. The number of workers affected, in Ontario alone, by closures, layoffs, and extensive employment terminations has reached alarming proportions. During a one year period (June 1970 to June 1971) over 16,000 workers either lost their jobs or were laid off.[8]

The Waffle Labour Committee in its programme calls openly for workers' control in such areas as firing, layoffs, plant relocations and shut--downs.[9] Such demands have simultaneously raised the issue of rank and file control of the trade union movement which pits the radicals against the established union bureaucracies.

It is relevant to note that some of the struggles in other industrialized countries are having certain repercusions in Canada. There are signs that young workers in Canada are beginning to question the institutions of our capitalist society which serve them so poorly. Some of that rebellion is directed against the existing trade union leadership, which is still largely dominated by an older generation of workers. Some recent statistics will ilustrate the growing importance of younger workers. In 1966, 13.7 percent of the workforce was between 20-24 years old. By 1970, this percentage had grown to 15.4. While in 1966 this age group accounted for 16.1 percent of the unemployed in the labour force, by 1970, this figure had increased to 21.6 percent.[10] These young workers, according to one labour spokesman, »are using contract rejection as means of repudiating what they consider are the injustices of the workplace and of their unions«.[11]

A number of studies, of what one may call the new generation of workers, have indicated an increase in frustration, alienation and frequently rebellion on the part of these workers. Two Canadian scholars have suggested that:

> *»... the effect of affluence and increased education on the status system of modern industry is to erode the legitimacy of this system. This, in turn, means that the involvement of the modern, affluent, highly educated worker is weakened and is unsatisfactory to him.*
> *We predict that this dissatisfaction will be expressed in a claim for increased control over the redistribution of profits and over the production process itself. Unions which contain both tradi-*

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[6] Ibid, p. 1.
[7] Ibid, p. 3.
[8] John W. Eleen and Ashley G. Bernadine, **»Shutdown: The Impact of Plant Shutdown, Extensive Employment Terminations and Layoffs on the Workers and the Community**, Toronto: Ontario Federation of Labour, August 1971, pp. 1-4.
Note: Only plants with 25 or more terminations or layoffs during that period are included in the above figure .
[9] NDP — Waffle Labour Committee, **»For an Independent Socialist Canada: A Socialist Program for Canadian Trade Unionists**, Toronto: 1971
Note: The Waffle Movement functioned, until recently, as a left caucus within the New Democratic Party (NDP). Continued confrontations between the NDP leadership and the Waffle eventually resulted in the majority of Waffle members creating their own organization outside of the NDP.
[10] »Problems of the Younger Workers«, **Task** (News from the Ontario Department of Labour), Vol. 6, No. 2 (1971), pp. 3-4.
[11] Gil Levine, »The Coming Revolt in Labour«. **The Labour Gazette**, Nov. 1971, p. 722.

tional and modern workers will experience intense internal struggles for power. Where the traditional group is in power in the union, the other group will lead wildcat strikes and rejections of settlements«.[12]

The revolt is particularly evident in the public service sector which is presently experiencing a series of strikes which cannot be explained away as having resulted solely from a breakdown in labour-management relations. Several labour spokesmen have suggested that the discontent of many workers in the public sector derives at least in part, from a distaste for the kind of duties they have to perform. They have become »dirty workers«, engaged in clearing up or controlling society's problems. An official of the Canadian Union of Public Employees stated recently that:

> *»The public employee who is a dirty worker has become a zoo keeper and is engaged in a social control function. Social workers, prison guards, garbagemen, teachers and employees in Homes for the Aged are employed to keep our social misfits, inconveniences and undesirables off the streets and out of sight. We have created an entirely new type of worker — one whose job it is to hide and control our society's failures«.*[13]

Deaton points out that the public service employees find themselves in a squeeze between the middle class which expects them to do their dirty work and keep quiet about it, and the recipients of public service »who refuse any longer to tolerate mistreatment«.[14]

The new militancy of public service workers, however, does not necessarily lead to politicization and the struggle for radical goals. Outside of Quebec, demands for radical change are at present only voiced by a small minority in organized labour. It is far from clear at the moment what the final result of the various trends and changes in Canada and within the union movement will be. The rising tide of Canadian nationalism, largely the result of a growing awareness of U. S. control and ownership of Canadian resources, is beginning to have a direct impact on Canadian sections of international unions.[15]

Quebec offers an entirely different picture. It represents one of these rare instance where nationalism and socialism have merged within important sections of the labour movement to produce an emerging mass movement based to a significant extent on libertarian socialist values and strategies. It is not possible to review the development and radicalization of the Quebec trade union movement in a few paragraphs. We can only state here that a number of concrete political and economic struggles have led to the politicization of the three major trade union federations in Quebec: The Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU); The Quebec Federation (QFL); and The Quebec Teachers Corporation (QTC).

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[12] Wiliam A. Westley and Margaret W. Westley, **The Emerging Worker: Equality and Conflict in the Mass Consumption Society.** Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1971, p. 122.

[13] Rick Deaton, »The Fiscal Crisis of the State and the Revolt of the Public Employee«. **Our Generation**, Vol. 8, No. 4, p. 40

[14] Ibid, p. 41.

[15] International unions are in essence American unions with headquarters in the United States. The autonomy of Canadian sections of such unions varies greatly.

The manifestoes of the three federations, originally published as study papers in 1971, constitute a milestone in the development of Marxist working class thinking in Quebec. One observer from Ontario has pointed out that the three manifestoes point clearly to the common roots of the class struggle and the national struggle for independence of Quebec. The answer is clear: »The working class must take power itself«.[16] It is clear that the move to the left among unions in Quebec has been led by the independent CNTU which as long ago as 1962 was involved in political struggles. In 1966, the CNTU published a document entitled, »A Society Built for Man«, which called for industrial democracy at the workplace. This was followed in 1968 with a new policy statement on »The Second Front« which situated the worker both as a producer and a consumer and linked the membership of the CNTU with the growing number of citizen groups. Part three of the CNTU manifesto, »Ne Comptons Que Sur Nos Propers Moyens« (we can rely only on our own means) defines socialism clearly in terms of workers' control.

> »An economy dominated by workers could only be socialist. By **'socialist'** we mean:
>
> 1. that society (through the state) owns the means of production (factories, land, raw materials);
> 2. that workers participate directly and collectively in the management of industry and the economy and in setting economic priorities;
> 3. that economic activity seeks to satisfy the population's needs as much as possible;
> 4. that economic activity is planed directly by the state«.[17]

During the 45th Convention of the CNTU (June 1972), the delegates reaffirmed their determination to create a new socialist society by declaring »that the CNTU pronounce itself against capitalism and in favour of a form of socialism as a system creating economic democracy in the interest of the workers, while ordering the continuation of a study by the movement aimed at defining the contents of a Quebec 'system' and the steps towards its accomplishment«.[18]

Within a small but growing section of the left in Canada there seems to emerge something resembling a consensus which incorporates an analysis of capitalist society with a few still largely unconnected, strategic considerations. This thinking has emerged largely from the experience of the day-to-day struggles of workers and citizen groups (particularly in Quebec). Some of the emerging trends could be sumarized as follows.

— Representative democracy is seen to be neither representative of the people nor democratic. It is seen to operate more and more openly in

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[16] Daniel Drache (ed.), **Quebec — Only the Beginning: The Manifestoes of the Common Front**, Toronto: New Press, 1972, (Introduction) p. XXIII.

[17] Black Rose Editorial Collective, **Quebec Labour: The Confederation of National Trade Unions Yesterday and Today**, Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1972, p. 167.

[18] »We know Where we're Going«, **We'll Equip Ourselves to Get Respect from the Powers**, Supplement to **Labour**, Vol. 48, No. 15, p. 25.

the interest of a small section of the population — the ruling class. Not only are parliamentary channels and institutions unresponsive to popular demands but the awareness is gaining ground that the real centres of power and decision-making are located outside of parliament and are not subject to the voter's influence.

— The narrow definition of politics as relating only to the activities of government, political parties and periodic elections is giving way to a much broader conception which encompasses the entire scope of social relations in society. In relation to the workplace, G. D. H. Cole once said that »a servile system in industry inevitably reflects itself in political servility«. Increasingly, workers and employees are becoming convinced that without a fundamental change in the social relations of production the achievement of socialist democracy will be impossible.

— What is begining to emerge from the struggles of the immediate past and present is an awareness that the traditional demands of workers within the workplace must be broadened to challenge the hitherto 'sacred' rights of management and that such action should be fought in alliance with organized consumer groups. Such alliances are particularly relevant in the public sector. Rick Deaton points out that: »Putting forward qualitative collective bargaining demands which affect both groups — workers and clients — is a necessary prerequisite to building these alliances. These alliances are necessary to strengthen trade union actions in the immediate future in the public sector, as well as serving as a springboard for later politicization«.[19]

The increased militancy and the slowly developing politicization of workers must be seen against the background of an awakened Canadian nationalism. It is only in Quebec, however, that organized labour has openly confronted the issue of U. S. imperialism in the context of an anti-capitalist struggle. A statement by the Confederate Council of the CNTU in the autumn of 1971 states that: »American imperialist capitalism has a direct influence on the life of all Quebecers. To escape, we must understand how the capitalist system leads to imperialism. Having understood this, we cannot replace American capitalism with Quebec capitalism; we must look for something else that responds to the true needs of the population«.[20]

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[19] Rick Deaton, **op. cit.**, p. 477.

[20] »Statement by the Confederate Council of the CNTU«, October 6-9, 1971, **Quebec Labour, p. 104.**

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LA PRISE DES DECISIONS DANS LES ENTREPRISES AUTOGEREES

Essai de théorie économique a partir de l'expérience algérienne

L'autogestion algérienne, exemple encore mal connu, organise la prise des décisions par les travailleurs, dans les entreprises. Mais il y a loin des textes à leur application telle que dix années de fonctionnement du système nous permettent de la connaître.

Les déviations sont nombreuses, en grande partie liées au centralisme et à la prise en considération, par le bais de l'exercice de la tutelle, de points de vue externes collectifs.

Pour affermir l'autogestion, il faut rendre rationnel dans les choix opérés ce qui ne l'était pas jusqu'à présent. C'est à ce niveau que la théorie économique peut peut-être venir aut secours de l'autogestion par une tentative d'appréciation d'externalités internalisables par l'entreprise et non internalisables, telles que ce »mode de vie plus harmonieux«, que doit rechercher le système, puisqu'à la différence du capitalisme, il ne vise pas à la seule rentabilité plus grande des unités de production.

I. LE ROLE DES TRAVAILLEURS DANS LA PRISE DES DECISIONS DES ENTREPRISES AUTOGEREES ALGERIENNES

Quelles que soient les formes de »participation« mises en oeuvre dans les entreprises des pays du système capitaliste, il reste toujours un domaine réservé de la prise des décisions auquel les travailleurs n'ont pas accès, domaine réservé aux détenteurs du capital et à leurs mandataires, les dirigeants de l'entreprise.

Au contraire l'autogestion apparaît comme une forme de démocratie qui permet à tous les niveaux et dans tous les groupements sociaux la prise des décisions par ceux auxquels elles s'appliquent directement et indirectement, grâce au principe de délégation révocable des élus et au système de la rotation des représentants.

Dans l'entreprise, il n'y a plus alors de domaine réservé. Dans le cadre de la coordination générale des activités par un Plan démocratiquement

élaboré — qui doit, sans plus, équilibrer par sa force centripète l'individualisme des différentes communautés autonomes de la base — les travailleurs associés prennent toutes les décisions relatives à la marche de l'unité.

Il y a malheureusement de nombreuses atteintes portées à ces principes théoriques de fonctionnement de l'autogestion. L'exemple algérien en témoigne. Les nombreuses déviations du système ont presque rendu caduque l'organisation de la prise des décisions dans les unités de production par les travailleurs.

Nous devons examiner successivement cette organisation théorique, telle qu'elle semble résulter de l'application des textes et les déviations, et leurs conséquences que dix années de pratique de l'autogestion en Algérie ont permis de mettre en évidence.

1. L'organisation de la prise des décisions par les travailleurs.

L'organisation de l'autogestion en Algérie résulte de deux séries de textes, les décrets »historiques« de mars 1963 et pour le seul secteur agricole, l'ordonnance du 30 décembre 1968 et décrets d'application de février 1969.

Marquée par une conception »préfectorale«,[1] l'autogestion algérienne comporte à l'intérieur de chaque unité les organes de gestion socialiste suivants: »L'Assemblée Générale des Travailleurs«, le »Conseil des Travailleurs« et le »Comité de Gestion« qui désigne en son sein un »président«. L'Etat est représenté dans l'entreprise par un »directeur«.

Les attributions de ces différentes organes sont synthétisées dans le tableau 1 (voir p. 140—141.).

A la lecture des textes officiels les pouvoirs de décision des organes que contrôlent les travailleurs apparaissent déterminants.

C'est le Comité de Gestion qui élabore le plan de développement et les programmes annuels d'équipement de production et de commercialisation qui seront adoptés par l'Assemblée Générale des Travailleurs.

C'est encore ce Comité qui établit les comptes de fin d'exercice (examinés par le C. des T. et approuvés par l'A. G. des T.), qui établit le règlement du travail, décide des modes d'achat et de commercialisation des produits, des emprunts a court terme. Il règle enfin, tous les problèmes posés par la production. Le Conseil des Travailleurs, pour sa part décide de l'admission et de l'exclusion des travailleurs (dans la limite des chiffres fixés par les services fonctionnels). Il prend aussi les décisions relatives à l'achat et à la vente du matériel d'équipement et aux emprunts à long et à moyen terme. Quant

[1] Nous voulons distinguer une conception de l'autogestion »municipale«, qui fonde l'autorité dans l'entreprise sur l'élection du président et des organes de gestion socialiste, tout comme le maire français et son conseil sont élus et exercent un pouvoir sans partage à l'exception de la tutelle) et une conception »préfectorale«, qui estime au contraire, nécessaire la présence à la tête de l'unité autogérée d'un représentant du pouvoir central nommé par l'autorité de tutelle.
Cette dernière conception admet un bicéphalisme tel que l'essentiel du pouvoir appartienne au directeur nommé, comme il appartient au préfet dans le départment, le président du comité de gestion n'ayant alors pas plus d'autorité que n'en a le président du conseil général, dans la réalité de l'administration départementale française.
(Sur ces notions et sur l'histoire de l'affirmation en Algérie d'une conception »préfectorale« de l'autogestion, on peut lire: S. K., »Dynamiques de l'autogestion, genèse et ambivalence de l'experience algérienne« in »Communautés — Archives Internationales de Sociologie de la Coopération et du Développement« — nº 31. Janvier, Juin 1972).

à l'élu suprême des travailleurs, le président du Comité de Gestion, il contresigne toute pièce d'engagement financier et de paiement et il représente l'entreprise auprès des tiers et en justice.

Dans cette belle construction, le directeur désigné par l'Etat semble n'avoir qu'un rôle mineur. S'il assure bien »la marche quotidienne de l'entreprise«, il le fait sous l'autorité du président et en appliquant les décisions des organes élus.

Cepedant un certain nombre d'ambiguités apparaissent déjà à la simple lecture des textes qui régissent l'autogestion et la réalité du fonctionnement du systeme algérien met en évidence la persistance de graves déviations.

2. Les déviations observees dans le fonctionnement du système.

Elles sont de deux ordres.

Les unes résultent du chevauchement des compétences à l'intérieur de l'entreprise et du rôle ambigu du directeur. Les autres sont la conséquence d'un centralisme excessif et de ses effets, la bureaucratisation du système et sa technocratisation, tant à l'intérieur de l'unité que dans le contexte général dans lequel elle est prise.

A — Les sources de conflits internes.

Il existe dans l'entreprise autogérée algérienne plusieurs hiérarchies naturellement aptes à la prise des décisions, ce qui entraîne des chevauchements de compétences inévitables. La **»hiérarchie de gestion socialiste«** (A. G. des T. → Conseil des T. → Comité Gestion → Président) semble, de par les textes, être seule à pouvoir prendre les décisions importantes, mais il paraît évident que la **»hiérarchie fonctionnelle«** celle qui lie, du directeur au manoeuvre, les individus ayant leurs rapports de travail de chef à subordonné, doit aussi avoir son mot à dire dans la production.

Il faut ajouter à cela les structures internes à l'entreprise du **Parti** unique et du **Syndicat** qui jouent officiellement un rôle de »régulateurs« de l'autogestion. Il faut enfin considérer l'exercice de la **tutelle,** dont le directeur est le représentant à l'intérieur de l'unité.

Avant d'en venir à l'ambiguïté de la position de ce dernier, nous avons tenté de synthétiser dans le tableau 2, la complexité des interrelations entre les organes qui concourent à la prise des décisions de l'enterprise industrielle en autogestion. Le directeur de l'unité autogérée a une position extrêment ambigüe.

Il est le représentant de l'Etat au sein de l'entreprise, nommé par l'autorité de tutelle et chargé de s'opposer à toutes les décisions non conformes aux plans et directives nationales, mais par ailleurs, il est l'agent d'execution des décisions du Comité de Gestion et du Conseil des Travailleurs, sous l'autorité du président.

TABLEAU 1.

ORGANE	Se Compose	Se réunit	Etablit ou élabore
L'Assemblée Générale des Travailleurs	Tous les travailleurs permanents. »Permanent« pour l'agriculture + de 200 jours de travail dans l'année en vertu du décret 6915 du 15 Février 1969.	Au moins tous les trimestres. (2 fois par an dans l'agriculture, décret 69-16 du 15 Fev. 1969)	
Le Conseil des Travailleurs	N'existe que s'il y a plus de 30 travailleurs (50 dans l'agriculture, décret 69-16) Composition: de 10 à 100 membres (élus par l'As. des T.) de 18 à 45 dans l'agriculture (décret 69-16).	Au moins une fois par mois. (tous les 2 mois dans l'agriculture - décret 69—16).	**Note:** S'il n'y a pas de Conseil des Travailleurs, les prérogatives en sont exercées par l'A. G. des Travailleurs.
Le Comité de Gestion	3 à 11 membres élus par l' A. des T. Dans l'agriculture 6 à 12 membres élus par le Conseil des Travailleurs parmi ses membres (décret 69—16)	Au moins une fois par mois. Au moins 2 fois par mois dans l'agriculture (décret 69-16).	— Le plan de développement dans le cadre du plan national. — Les programmes annuels d'équipement, production et commercialisation. — Le règlement en matière d'organisation du travail, de définition, répartition des tâches et des responsabilités. — Les comptes de fin d'exercice.

Le président: Statut: Président du CG dans le cadre des décrets de Mars. Président du Collectif des Travailleurs élu par l'A. G. des T., parmi ses membres dans le cadre du décret 69—16 applicable à l'argiculture.

Fonctions: Représente le collectif des travailleurs à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de l'entreprise (auprès des tiers — Este en justice). Il contresigne les pièces d'engagement financier et de paiement. Il convoque le CG, le CT, et l'AG des T et assure le contrôle de l'exécution de décisions prises par ces organes. (Il est dégagé de ses obligations profesionnelles pour la durée de son mandat, 3 ans, dans le cadre du décret 69—16, applicable à l'agriculture.)

Etudie ou adopte	décide
— le plan de développement (élaboré par le CG) — les programmes annuels de production et de consommation (élaborés par le CG) — le programe de travail (préparé par le CT et le CG) — le règlement d'organisation du travail et le règlement intérieur (CG et ministère) — les comptes de fin d'exercice (élaborés par le CG).	— Détermine les modalités d'utilisation des fonds entre lesquels est réparti le revenu de l'entreprise. — Contrôle l'activité des autres organes de l'autogestion. — Se prononce sur la »faute grave« et les sanctions correspondantes. — Demande la révocation du directeur ou des cadres techniques.
— le programe d'approvisionnement — Examine les comptes de fin d'exercice et émet un avis avant présentation à l'AG. des T.	— Toutes mesures relatives à l'application du règlement intérieur. — Toutes mesures concernant l'équipement et le développement de l'entreprise. — L'admission de nouveaux membres du collectif des travailleurs — La suspension et l'exclusion des membres du collectif pour »faute grave«. Recours à A. T.
	— Emprunts à court terme. — mode d'achat des approvisionnements — mode de commercialisation — embauche des saisonniers.

Le Directeur: Statut: Nommé par le ministre de tutelle. Membre du Comité de gestion pour les décrets de Mars, simple voix consultative au CG pour le décret 69—16 (agriculture).

Fonctions: Tient l'inventaire des biens mobiliers et immobiliers. Veille à la conservation des moyens de production, s'oppose aux décisions qui conduiraient à la diminution de leur valeur initiale. S'oppose aux plans non conformes au Plan national ou à ses objectifs qu'il fait connaître. S'assure de la régularité des opérations économiques et financières. Signe les pièces d'engagement financier et de paiement. Détient les fonds en espèces. Applique et fait appliquer par les cadres placés sous ses ordres les décisions du C.G. Etablit en fonction du plan de développement les programmes annuels, les calendriers de travaux, les comptes d'exploitation, le bilan provisionnel, le tableau des rémunérations par postes et primes afférantes, le nombre et la qualification des travailleurs à recruter (par le CT).

C'est sous l'autorité du président qu'il assure la marche quotidienne de l'entreprise, et, ce dernier, contresigne toutes les pièces d'engagement financier et de paiement. Cette double signature devait normalement être précédée, dans l'esprit des Décrets de mars, d'un contrôle exercé par le président sur les pièces présentées. Or, le président est un simple travailleur de l'entreprise; à ce titre il lui est souvent difficile de trouver le temps nécessaire pour contrôler régulièrement le bien fondé de toutes les pièces financieres proposées à sa signature jour après jour, lorsqu'il en a les capacités techniques.

Représentant de l'Etat au sein de l'entreprise, le directeur ne fait pas que s'opposer à l'exécution de celles des décisions des organes de la gestion socialiste qui ne seraient pas conformes au Plan national. Il doit encore appliquer et faire appliquer les directives nombreuses qui lui sont données par l'autorité de tutelle et par les différentes autorités administratives habilitées à formuler directives et recommandations (ministère du Travail, ministère de la Santé, etc).

A ce titre, certaines décisions prises par le directeur, en fonction d'ordres supérieurs, s'imposent aux organes de gestion de l'entreprise.

Il y a là une source certaine de conflits. Il peut se faire que les décisions imposées, en vertu de directives, par le directeur ne soient pas comprises ou même ne soient pas admises par le collectif des travailleurs.

Il peut se faire encore que le directeur utilise le procédé pour outrepasser systématiquement ses prérogatives en arguant de directives ou de recommandations, souvent orales, interprétées très largement, parfois même simplement imaginées pour les besoins de la cause.

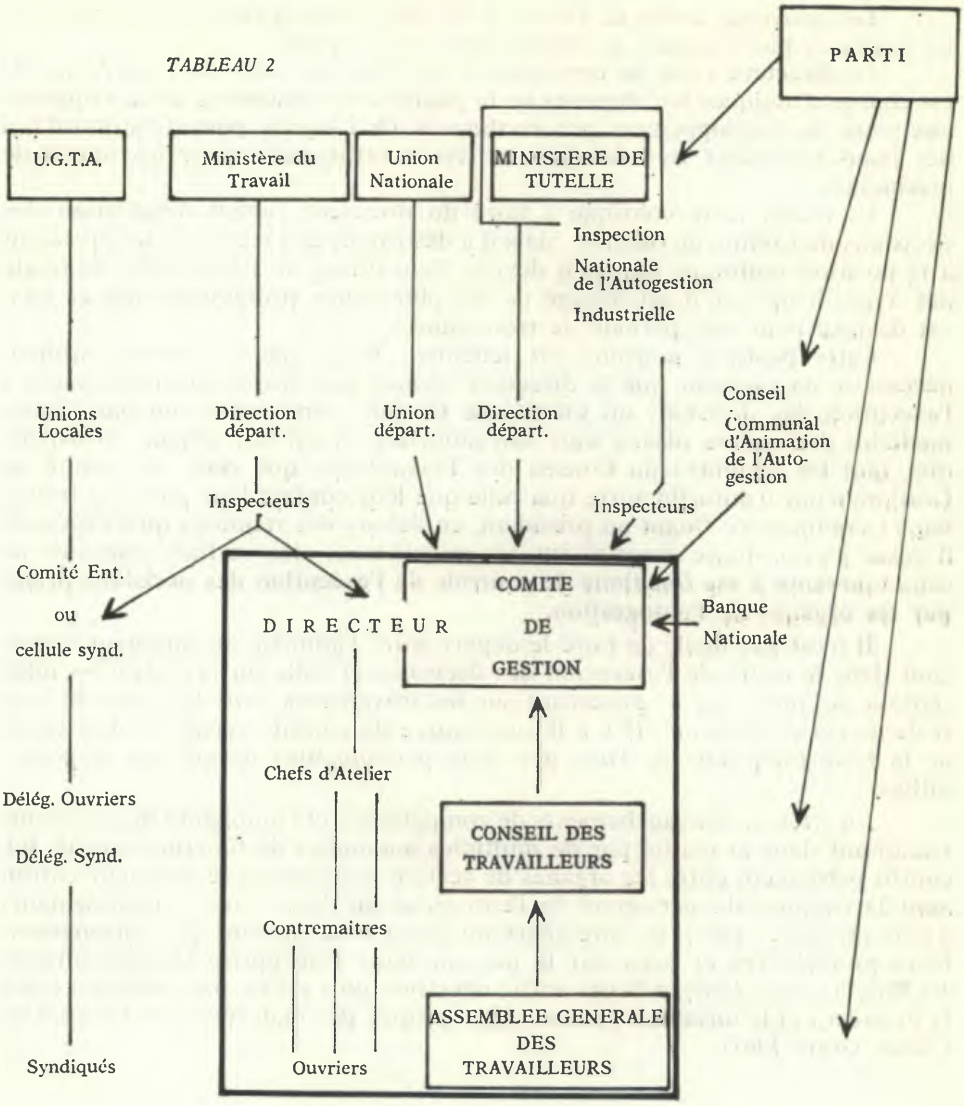
Les Décrets de mars prévoient encore que le Comité de Gestion ne se réunit qu'une fois par mois et que le Conseil des Travailleurs se réunit également une fois par mois. Dans ces conditions, il apparaît difficile pour ces organes de prendre des décisions aussi quotidiennes, que l'embauche du personnel non permanent, que les modes de production, d'approvisionnement et de commercialisation des produits.

Dans l'intervalle des réunions, les décisions dans ces domaines appartiennent au directeur et au président. Mais ce dernier n'a que difficilement la possibilité de suivre tous les problèmes. C'est donc en fait le directeur, qui assume souvent seul, la responsabilité des décisions relatives à la marche quotidienne de l'entreprise ou du domaine ,et il le fera d'autant plus volontiers qu'un certain nombre de ces décisions lui appartiennent normalement en tant que chef de la hiérarchie fonctionnelle d'exécution.

On conçoit aisément qu'il y ait là encore possibilité de conflits nombreux, dans la mesure où il est extrêmement difficile d'établir une frontière entre celles des décisions qui concernent la marche quotidienne de l'entreprise ou du domaine et celles qui ressortissent normalement aux plans et programmes, dont l'élaboration appartient aux organes de gestion socialiste.

Engager des travailleurs journaliers pour des travaux exceptionnels ou urgents, c'est certainement une décision de routine quotidienne, mais dans la mesure où ces travailleurs occasionnels tireront ensuite argument de leur engagement temporaire pour demander leur intégration au collectif des travailleurs permanents, il apparaît que cette décision »de routine« engage particulièrement l'avenir de l'entreprise.

TABLEAU 2


PARTI
U.G.T.A.
Ministère du Travail
Union Nationale
MINISTERE DE TUTELLE
Inspection Nationale de l'Autogestion Industrielle
Unions Locales
Direction départ.
Union départ.
Direction départ.
Conseil Communal d'Animation de l'Auto-gestion
Inspecteurs
Inspecteurs
Comité Ent. ou cellule synd.
DIRECTEUR
COMITE DE GESTION
Banque Nationale
Chefs d'Atelier
Délég. Ouvriers
Délég. Synd.
CONSEIL DES TRAVAILLEURS
Contremaitres
ASSEMBLEE GENERALE DES TRAVAILLEURS
Syndiqués
Ouvriers

Les nouveaux textes de 1968 et 1969, applicables à l'autogestion agricole, ne semblent pas résoudre la dualité mise en évidence.

Le directeur reste le représentant de l'Etat au sein de l'entreprise. Il est chargé d'indiquer les objectifs de la planification nationale et de s'opposer aux plans de développement non conformes. Or l'Algérie possède aujourd'hui des plans nationaux très détaillés et très contraignants pour les unités de production.

Le même texte continue à faire du directeur l'agent d'exécution des décisions du Comité de Gestion. Mais il a désormais en face de lui un président à la position renforcée puisqu'il devient l'élu direct de l'Assemblée Générale des Travailleurs, qu'il est dégage de ses obligations professionnelles et qu'il est désigné pour une période de trois années.

Cette position nouvelle est tellement forte que les textes estiment nécessaire de rappeler que le directeur »donne seul les orders nécessaires à l'exécution des décisions du Comité de Gestion, directement ou par l'intermédiaire des cadres placés sous son autorité«. Il est par ailleurs réaffirmé que, tant les membres du Conseil des Travailleurs, que ceux du Comité de Gestion, n'ont d'autorité autre que celle que leur confère leur poste de travail dans l'exploitation. Quant au président, en dehors des réunions qu'ils préside, il cesse d'avoir toute autorité sur les travailleurs, réserve faite toutefois de celle **inhérente à ses fonctions de contrôle de l'exécution des décisions prises par les organes de l'autogestion.**

Il n'est pas facile de faire le départ entre l'autorité du directeur s'exerçant dans le cadre de l'exécution des décisions et celle du président — inhérente à ses fonctions — s'exerçant sur les travailleurs dans le cadre du contrôle de cette exécution. Il y a là une source de conflits certaine ou la cause de la fuite éventuelle de l'une des deux personnalités devant ses responsabilités.

En effet les chevauchements de compétences et l'ambigüité des positions traduisent dans la réalité par de multiples anomalies de fonctionnement. Ici, conflit permanent entre les organes de gestion socialiste et le directeur entraînant la coupure du personnel de l'entreprise en deux clans (Etablissements TUBNIS, Alger, 1965), là, directeurs ou chargés de gestion qui outrepassent leurs prérogatives et prennent le pouvoir dans l'entreprise (Etablissements Ex-Ronda, Alger 1965), ailleurs enfin, déviation plus grave, par collusion entre le président et le directeur pouvant aller jusqu'à des malversations (entreprise CERA, Oran, 1967).[2]

B — Bureaucratie et technocratie

On constate un double mouvement parallèle à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de l'unité autogérée.. A l'intérieur de l'entreprise une première tendance des membres élus des Conseils est de considérer qu'ils doivent se détacher de la production pour accomplir des tâches de gestion qui requièrent leur présence dans les bureaux plutôt qu'a l'atelier. Aux Etablissements Ex-Ronda d'Alger le journal du Syndicat, »Révolution et Travail« signalait le 5 mars 1964, que les ouvriers se plaignent de ce que le président ne travaille pas avec eux, »sa

[2] Ces exemples sont developpés et analysés, d'autres donnés, dans un article de la »Revue Algérienne du Droit et des Sciences Economiques«, intitulé: »Comment sont prises les decisions dans l'autogestion algérienne« (nº 4 — 1969).

tâche consiste uniquement à rester assis avec le directeur tout au long de la journée«, à cela le président devait répondre: »j'ai toujours une mission à remplir, celle de rechercher les manières de recevoir les responsables des banques et de l'administration pour qu'ils facilitent notre tâche. Les travailleurs ne veulent pas m'obéir et lorsque je leur dis quelque chose ils me répondent: »travailles avec nous, mets sur toi un bleu comme nous et alors nous t'écouterons«.

Dans l'agriculture cette tendance est ratifiée par les textes de 1968 et 1969 et l'on peut déjà penser que le président, déchargé d'obligations professionnelle pour un mandat relativement long, deviendra très rapidement un permanent, un administratif, un directeur parallèle. Le texte est trop récent pour que l'on puisse dire qui gagnera dans la course au pourvoir du directeur-représentant de l'Etat, ou du président-directeur représentant le Collectif des Travailleurs, s'il y aura conflit ou collusion. Ce que l'on constate déjà c'est que la distance s'accroît entre les travailleurs de la terre et l'oligarchie a cols blancs qui les dirige. Cette tendance à la bureaucratisation et à la pérennisation dans leurs fonctions des membres élus de la hiérarchie de gestion socialiste, au moins au sommet, se double, toujours à l'intérieur de l'unité autogérée, d'une seconde tendance à la technocratisation.

D'un côté, prise en main des décisions par ceux qui détiennent le savoir et qui préparent les dossiers, de l'autre désintérêt des travailleurs lié à leur peu de pouvoir réel en raison de la pression des pouvoirs de tutelle, à l'absence de toute information, à leur manque de formation générale et politique. Parfois le président, plus compétent techniquement qu'un jeune directeur »parachuté« dans un secteur économique qu'il ne connaît pas, va s'emparer avec une petite equipe du pouvoir. Ce sera le cas en 1964 à la SATT (Société Algérienne des Transports Tropicaux), mais il faul dire que le président était en même temps le directeur général de l'exploitation de cette entreprise très spécialisée.

Plus généralement c'est le directeur avec son brain-trust, qui, profitant du pouvoir que lui donne la tutelle, va s'emparer de la décision économique. Il le fera d'autant plus facilement qu'il est formé et compétent et qu'il trouve en face de lui un président au niveau le plus bas de la pyramide fonctionnelle, parfois illettré (agriculture 1962 — 1963).

A l'extérieur de l'unité autogérée, on constate la même double tendance bureaucratique et technocratique.

Par l'intermédiare des Offices qu'il a crées et dans lesquels il est intéressant de noter la place qu'il tient — c'est le chef du gouvernement qui est président du conseil d'administration de l'Office National de la Réforme Agraire (ONRA) et c'est le ministre de l'agriculture qui en est le directeur — l'Etat exerce un véritable pouvoir hiérarchique sur les unités autogérées. Pouvoir de décision qui dépasse singulièrement la tutelle telle qu'elle est organisée en France dans les sociétés nationales où l'Etat exerce bien un contrôle serré des activités et peut même s'opposer à certaines décisions par l'intermédiaire de son commissaire, mais où il en peut agir à la place du Conseil d'administration en imposant des directions, en donnant des ordres relatifs à la production.

Au delà même de toute tutelle et de tout pouvoir hiérarchique, les statuts de l'Office National des Transports (ONT) donnent un exemple de véritable détournement du pouvoir des Comités de Gestion au profit de l'Office. Le texte manie avec désinvolture la dérogation aux Décrets de mars et ne

TABLEAU 3

FONCTIONS	*Situation antérieure à l'application des réformes de la tutelle de 1966 - 1967 - 1968*
Fonction administrative (politique générale, organisation, coordination, contrôle)	— dans l'agriculture, tutelle étroite de l'ONRA s'apparentant à une direction directe des domaines par l'intermédiaire des multiples échelons locaux et par l'entremise des chargés de gestion entièrement dans la main de l'office. — dans l'industrie, tutelle confuse et plus souple, parfois inexistante; action autonome des chargés de gestion très souvent. Dans les deux secteurs, les charges de gestion s'arrogent en général pouvoir de direction en invoquant des directives du Plan et des directives administratives. Les organes de gestion socialiste se bornent à avaliser une politique dont ils ne décident pas.
Fonction commerciale: (achats, ventes, échanges)	La commercialisation relativement libre dans l'industrie est pour l'agriculture assurée par les CORA, les CORE, l'ONACO, l'OAIC, tous organismes, qui, même à forme »coopérative«, traitent directment avec l'ONRA. Le domaine ignore tout de la vente de ses produits (ou de la mévente) et des prix pratiqués (sauf en cas de redu). L'approvisionnement est aussi une prérogative de l'office.
Fonction technique (production, fabrication, trasformations)	En principe la production est décidée par les organes de gestion socialiste en fonction des directives de planification nationale. Dans l'agriculture, l'ONRA impose les cultures et les surfaces. Rôle important des chargés de gestion en tant que chefs de la hiérarchie fonctionnelle de production.
Fonction financière (recherche et gestion des capitaux)	La Banque Centrale d'Algérie est pour le secteur industriel beaucoup plus un organe de contrôle financier qu'un organe de crédit. Dans l'agriculture, l'atribution des crédits de campange par l'office about à une gestion directe des domaines en raison du système d'échelonnement adopté. Aucun crédit à long ou à moyen terme.
Fonction et sécurité. (protection personnes et biens, gestion du personnel)	Dans le domaine des admissions de nouveaux membres organes de gestion socialiste ont encore leur mot à dire sur les personnes, mais en sont les offices qui acceptent ou refusent les plans d'embauche ou du licenciement annuels. La discipline est exercée par le chargé de gestion le plus souvent. Les taux d'avances sont fixés par l'Etat, les répartitions de bénéfices sont également décidées par lui.

Situation actuelle

La tutelle dans l'industrie est réorganisée; elle s'exerce désormais par l'intermédiaire des directions départementales de l'industrie.
Dans l'agriculture, l'Office National de la Réforme Agraire est supprimé et c'est le ministère qui exerce directement une tutelle qui reste assez lourde.
Ces diverses mesures vont cependant dans le sens de l'allègement d'une bureaucratie aux rouages compliqués; elles doivent renforcer le pouvoir ouvrier dans l'entreprise.

Sans changement dans l'industrie, où la commercialisation des produits du secteur autogéré ne posait pas de problemès spécifiques.
Dans l'agriculture, nouvelle organisation des circuits, dans laquelle les CORA et les CORE prennent un caractère véritablement »coopératif«. Organisation coopérative également des approvisionnements.

Sans grand changement, sinon par le fait de la disparition de l'ONRA dans l'agriculture. Pouvoir toujours étendu des chargés de gestion en cette matière. L'amorce de planification devrait aboutir à ce que des directives plus precises de production soient imposées aux unités (après consultation de celles-ci pour faire le plan).

Nouveau système de financement de l'agriculture pour les crédits de campagne versés en une seule tranche annuelle ce qui évite désormais la »gestion directe« évoquée pour la période précédente. La BNA apparaît comme la banque des secteurs public et autogéré.

Sans grand changement, sinon par le fait de la réorganisation (dans l'agriculture) des organes de gestion socialiste et par les nouvelles règles d'admission au sein du collectif des anciens saisonniers (plus de 200 jours de travail par an). Nouveau mode de calcul de l'intéressement.

Fonction comptable (inventaire, bilan, prix de revient, statistiques)	Dans l'industrie la comptabilité est tenue par les unités elles-mêmes. Dans les transports, c'est l'office (ONT) qui s'en charge. Dans l'agriculture, les SAP, sous la dépendance de l'ONRA, assurent la comptabilité des exploitations d'une manière extrêmement imparfait et globale (les renseignements ne sont pas repercutés à l'echelon des domaines: — les autogestionnaires ignorent tout des problèmes d'amortissement de leur importance (pas de plan d'amortissement, pas de plan d'investissement) — les produits ne sont pas entrés en comptabilité, même fictivement dans les domaines — acun calcul de rentabilité, de prix de revient n'est fait — l'investissement échappe aux travailleurs (en principe directives liées à la planification) La fonction comptable, sans laquelle aucune gestion réelle ne peut être faite, échappe, dans l'agriculture et dans les transports presque totalement aux organes de gestion socialiste des unités de production.

vise pas à autre chose qu'a vider l'autogestion de sa substance au profit d'un pouvoir centralisé au niveau du ministère.

Par l'intermédiaire des organes de la »tutelle« administrative, s'exerce également une véritable direction économique du secteur socialiste autogéré. Le tableau 3 en délimite le contour (voir p. 146—147—148—149).

Cette direction économique est aujourd'hui renforcée par l'existence d'un réseau de coopératives agricoles de comptabilité, tenant pour chaque domaine une comptabilité en partie-double complète et devant tenir ultérieurement des comptabilités analytiques afin d'amener les unités autogérées à établir des plans rationnels d'exploitation (plan de culture, plan d'emploi de la main d'oeuvre, programmes d'approvisionnement, de commercialisation, d'équipement, etc.).

Aujourd'hui l'ONRA tentaculaire n'existe plus. Une grande partie de ses prérogatives ont cependant été confiées au ministre de l'agriculture et sont exercées par les directeurs départementaux de l'agriculture (DDA). Mais surtout, une nouvelle forme de tutelle, moins »bureaucratique«, mais plus rationnele, plus »scientifique« apparaît.

Les moyens nouveaux que constituent les coopératives de comptabilité permettent désormais d'infléchir les décisions prises ou à prendre par les organes de gestion socialiste, au nom des calculs de rentabilité effectués par les ingénieurs. En cas de rébellion, il reste toujours la possibilité de couper tout crédit.[3]

[3] Ces différents points sont développés dans »L'autogestion, l'homme et l'Etat, l'expérience algérienne«, SK, thése de doctorat d'Etat, Faculté de Droit et de Sciences Economiques de Bordeaux 1970 (1200 pages). En cours de publication aux Editions Mouton, dans la collection »Recherches Coopératives«.

C'est sur ce point primordial pour toute gestion que les réformes les plus importantes ont été introduites dans l'agriculture (l'industrie n'ayant pas posé de problème jusque là sur le plan comptable).
Les coopératives de crédit nouvelles sont désormais outillées de manière à faire une comptabilite analytique et prévisionnelle pour tous les domaines.
Les prix de revient sont très exactement déterminés par culture, l'amortissement est pratiqué, les fonds sont pourvus et les domaines sont renseignés sur les résultats comptables de leur gestion assez régulièrement. Ils savent désormais comment leur production est entrée en recette. En outre, des conseils de gestion leur sont prodigués, dont il est simplement à craindre qu'ils influent parfois trop profondément sur les décisions prises par les collectifs.

Une certaine passivité des travailleurs, volontairement entretenue par la rétention d'information a entraîné en Algérie, tout au long de ces dix dernières années, une dégénérescence progressive de la démocratie interne de l'autogestion et l'émergence d'une couche nouvelle de »dirigeants«. Ceux-ci appartiennent tantôt à hiérarchie de fonctionnement (directeurs, chargés de gestion, cadres), tantôt à la hiérarchie de gestion (présidents et membres des comités), mais ils s'appuient toujours sur l'autorité des organes de tutelle, du Parti, du Syndicat ou de la délégation spéciale, organes qui bien souvent ne sont pas étrangers à leur première désignation.

En l'absence de rotation dans les fonctions, telle qu'elle semble appliquée en Yougoslavie, le principe de délégation devient purement formel et la démocratie s'estompe, quand les formes extérieures (périodicité des réunions des organes de gestion et remise en cause des mandats par de nouvelles élections) en sont encore respectées.

Il y a bien loin des textes qui donnent le pouvoir dans l'entreprise aux travailleurs, à leur application.

D'ailleurs que resterait-il à »autogérer« à ces travailleurs — principalement ceux de l'agriculture — alors que les décisions de production sont prises à l'échelon central, dont les délégations assurent les approvisionnements, vendent les produits, tiennent la comptabilité des unités et distribuent discrétionnairement le crédit?

Au niveau du domaine, une gestion est-elle seulement possible alors que l'on ignore les quantités des différents produits vendues, le prix de vente et à plus forte raison la marge réalisée?

Peut-on même parler de marge lorsque l'on méconnaît toute notion d'amortissement et que l'on se contente au jour le jour de produire ce qu'il

est prescrit de produire, sans autre responsabilité puisque la comptabilité est tenue »ailleurs«.

Une »auto-gestion«, sans véritable démocratie interne et à la limite même sans »gestion«, apparaît vidée de tout contenu. Cela est grave et les nouveaux »managers« de l'Algérie ne manquent pas de faire remarquer l'inaptitude des travailleurs à prendre les décisions de niveaux techniques et économiques de plus en plus élevés que requiert le développement du pays et l'inaptitude du système à la compétitivité. Les atermoiements provoqués par une capacité de prendre les décisions non concentrée sur quelques têtes compétentes paraissent incompatibles avec l'obligation de décider et d'agir vite, de plus en plus vite, dans le domaine de la production et de la distribution.

Est-ce une condamnation définitive de l'autogestion?

C'est à ce niveau que la théorie économique peut peut-être venir à son secours.

L'autogestion est un système qui ne vise pas simplement à la plus grande rentabilité des etreprises, mais qui cherche à dévélopper un mode de vie plus harmonieux. La théorie économique se soucie déjà depuis quelque temps de ces coûts qui n'étaient jusq'à présent pas ou peu pris en considération: la fatigue des travailleurs, le vieillissement prématuré de certaines catégories d'ouvriers, etc.

On peut penser que la participation des travailleurs aux décisions de l'entreprise autogérée permet de tenir compte d'une manière en quelque sorte naturelle, non rationnelle, de ces éléments.

La théorie économique appliquée à l'autogestion a simplement pour but de rendre les décisions internes plus rationnelles. En cette matière il ne s'agit pas de faire oeuvre d'innovateur hardi, mais d'ouvrir des voies qui demanderont ultérieurement des études précises et approfondies.

II. RATIONALIZATION ECONOMIQUE DE LA PRISE DES DECISIONS EN AUTOGESTION

Les économistes, se penchant sur les conséquences fâcheuses de la croissance non contrôlée ont débouché sur le concept »d'environnement«. Les nuisances, l'épuisement des ressources naturelles, le niveau des relations interpersonnelles et intergroupes, mais aussi l'esthétique industrielle nouvelle, sont autant de **coûts** ou **d'avantages** non chiffrés.

Ces coûts et avantages non chiffrés sont appelés **effets externes** ou **externalités**, parfois **coûts et avantages sociaux**, l'expression »non chiffré recouvrant les catégories »unpriced« and »inadequately priced« (non chiffré et mal chiffré).

Les effets externes peuvent être négatifs (destruction de sites) ou positifs (industrie en expansion créant des avantages dans une zone déshéritée).

Ces notions, jusqu'à présent surtout appliquées à l'extérieur de l'entreprise, dans ses relations avec le milieu ambiant, font référence à l'idée de **bien-être** (welfare-economy).

Or cette notion de bien-être n'est pas étrangère au milieu qui constitue l'entreprise elle-même.

Les externalités négatives ou positives n'y sont pas moins importantes qu'à l'extérieur. Il existe pour les travailleurs des »nuisances« et parfois aussi des avantages non chiffrés qui résultent du milieu dans lequel ils oeuvrent. L'entreprise autogérée ne connaît ni plus ni moins d'externalités positives ou négatives que l'entreprise capitaliste, mais il est probable que les effets externes y sont mieux connus, que la prise de conscience des problèmes y est plus grande et plus vif le désir d'étudier les questions pratiques d'évaluation des coûts et les remèdes à apporter aux effets externes négatifs.

Ceci résulte de plusieurs particularités de l'autogestion. Tout d'abord, on établit généralement qu'existe un rapport étroit entre le degré de responsabilité que possède un »décideur« et la quantité d'incertitude à laquelle il a à faire face pour prendre ses décisions. Or, dans les entreprises autogérées, ce sont les travailleurs qui prennent les décisions les plus importantes, qui élaborent plans et programmes. On peut donc penser que la notion de **choix dans l'incertain** leur est familière, ainsi que tous les effets externes qui y sont attachés.

Cette prise de décisions communautaire a une autre conséquence, celle de multiplier cet »oeil neuf« qu'apportent à l'examen des problèmes qui leur sont soumis ceux qui ne sont pas directement impliqués et qui peuvent prendre le recul nécessaire à un bon examen.

Dans l'entreprise classique l'ingénieur décide de production, mais n'intervient pas dans la gestion du personnel, le comptable décide de finances et n'intervient pas dans la réglementation d'atelier, le contremaître organise le travail de son équipe et n'intervient pas au niveau de la politique générale. Dans l'autogestion il en va tout autrement et l'on peut penser que le système permet de faire surgir des ambiguités, des prolongements qui n'auraient pas été vus par ceux qui travaillent tous les jours sur certains problèmes.

Par ailleurs, la participation aux décisions des travailleurs de la base, permet d'inclure dans les éléments des choix à effectuer, des données humaines et sociales, rarement considérées dans l'entreprise classique, sauf en période conflictuelle, sur intervention des syndicats. En effet les travailleurs ont une propension naturelle à prendre en considération, au niveau de l'entreprise, avant l'intérêt général qui leur paraît lointain, les problèmes qui les touchent de près tous les jours, problèmes de bruit, de fatigue, d'horaires, d'agrément plus ou moins grand du travail, etc. Tous facteurs difficilement quantifiables.

Au niveau de la prise de conscience des effets externes dans l'entreprise autogérée, il faut encore souligner deux particularités.

D'une part, le fait que l'unité de production se situe dans un contexte dont elle ne peut se désintéresser au même titre que l'entreprise classique. L'entreprise autogérée est aussi polluante que l'entreprise capitaliste, mais du fait même de l'aspiration du système à l'autogestion généralisée, elle ne peut faire le même type de calcul que l'entreprise privée qui nuit et pollue si le coût de cet effet externe négatif est pour elle nul ou plus faible que le coût du remède à apporter au mal.

D'autre part, on peut penser qu'en autogestion la formation et l'information des travailleurs, leur »conscientisation«, les amènent à prendre en considération dans les décisions au niveau de l'entreprise des éléments non

quantifiables auxquels ne peuvent pas songer les ouvriers des firmes privées, éléments tels que l'aspiration au bonheur par le mieux-être, la culture, le comportement conscient de consommateur ou de citoyen etc.

Parmi les externalités que l'autogestion met ainsi en lumière, il en est qui peuvent donner lieu à une certaine quantification par »appropriation« ou bien »dédommagement«. Les processus d'appropriation des effets externes positifs et de dédommagement des effets externes négatifs constituent ce que l'on appelle **l'internalisation des externalités.** L'entreprise classique utilise déjà des pratiques d'évaluation qui permettent cette internalisation.

Mais il est d'autres externalités, non internalisables, pour lesquelles le problème se pose de savoir jusqu'à quel point l'entreprise autogérée doit et peut en tenir compte.

1. Externalités internalisables.

Une des premières à avoir été prise en considération est le prix de la vie humaine.

En effet on s'est rendu compte que l'on devait prendre en considération dans les décisions en matière d'investissements — et pour cela quantifier — le coût de la vie humaine épargnée ou prolongée par des dépenses de sécurité ou de santé.

Par valeur d'une vie humaine on entend le »montant de monnaie qu'aux yeux d'une collectivité il vaut la peine de dépenser pour sauver une vie« (J. Bernard). Cette valeur comporte deux éléments, l'un économique est calculé par application du système du **coût d'opportunité,** en appréciant la valeur de la perte de production évitée en conservant la vie, l'autre, non-économique, a été approché par C. Abraham et J. Thédié à partir du »praetium doloris« fixé par les tribunaux.

D'autre **»incorporels«**, c'est à dire biens divisibles ou non qui ne sont pas directement quantifiables physiquement ou en valeur, sont aujourd'hui évalués monétairement par les coûts d'opportunité, ainsi les temps de transport et les temps de loisir, évalués en temps de travail qui pourrait se substituer au transport ou au loisir (au taux du salaire horaire net d'impôt).

A un échelon plus vaste, Jacques Delors, avec ses **indicateurs sociaux,** a tenté de représenter par des donées quantifiées l'activité sociale de la nation. Il existe 304 indicateurs, groupés en 24 thèmes, très divers, allant de l'espérance de vie à l'utilisation du temps en passant par la place faite aux personnes âgées, la mobilité sociale, l'évolution de l'urbanisation etc ...
A un niveau plus proche de celui de l'entreprise, des tentatives de quantification de nouvelles externalités incorporelles négatives auront probablement lieu en France à la suite des dernières assises du Conseil National du Patronat Français. En effet ont été condamnés en vrac par le mouvement: l'inégalité dans les salaires, dans les conditions de travail, dans le logement, dans les transports, l'inégalite dans l'accès à la culture et aut loisirs, l'encerclement de l'individu par la publicité et le sentiment de frustration qui en resulte pour le travailleur, le travail à la chaîne etc.

On peut penser que dans la mesure où la décision de »s'attaquer aux racines de l'aliénation de l'homme par son travail« s'explique par le fait que »laisser faire plus longtemps, continuer de faire confiance à la loi du hasard nous conduirait immanquablement à la révolution« (A. Riboud), les éléments d'aliénation énumérés donneront lieu rapidement à analyse et tentative d'internalisation, alors que pour l'instant il s'agit encore d'effets externes non internalisables.

2. Externalités non internalisables.

Ces effets externes ne sont guère différents des précédents, sinon par le fait qu'ils ne sont pas encore pris en considération par l'entreprise privée dans ses calculs. On les rangera sous la rubrique générale de »qualité de la vie«.

On y trouve au premier plan, externalités négatives, les problèmes de santé, de fatigue industrielle, de vieillissement précoce, liés à la vie de travail. On y trouve le problème des ouvriers spécialisés et de la chaîne. Dans un reportage sur les ouvriers spécialisés de l'usine de la Régie Renault à Sandouville, »le Figaro« apporte les témoignages suivants (7 décembre 1972): »Le Dr Couture maire de Saint-Valéry: médecin et maire: Je suis bien placé pour savoir ce qui se passe chez les gens. Je peux vous dire que la chaîne n'arrange pas les hommes. Hier, j'ai reçu dans mon cabinet un gaillard de 1 m 85, ouvrier spécialisé à la Régie. Il m'a dit: Docteur, ça ne va pas. Je dors mal. Je n'ai plus d'appetit. Et puis, il y a quelque chose de plus embêtant. Ma femme se plaint que je la néglige. Je n'y arrive plus ...«.

»Le Dr Couture n'est pas le seul de son avis. Des études sérieuses ont été faites par les médecins sur l'état de santé des travailleurs. Voici quelques brèves conclusions. Le Dr Viennay: Un bucheron est vieux à 65 ans, un ouvrier sur chaîne à 40 ans. Le Dr Muldworf constate les effets néfastes de la chaîne sur le système nerveux et relève le nombre alarmant de cas de dépression nerveuse, ce qui n'est pas seulement un luxe de P. D. G. surmenés ...«.

Autres externalitée négatives, celles liées au milieu de vie, à l'habitat, aux conditions de transport, au déracinement des ruraux. Dans le même article on lit: «Pour les jeunes ruraux, le problème se complique comme toujours, quand il est question de mariage. Pour une raison simple: les filles ne veulent à aucun prix entendre parler d'habiter à la campagne, parce que c'est sale et trop loin des joies de vraie vie. ... Les statistiques confirment: sur 100 filles d'exploitants agricoles, 21 seulement épousent un agriculteur ou un salarié agricole. Elles ne refusent pas d'épouser un ouvrier, 44% le font. Mais le futur mari doit remplir une condition nécessaire: habiter la ville«.

La culture et les loisirs, constituent, après le travail et l'habitat, la troisième source d'effets externes négatifs, de frustrations:
... la lecture? »Nous avons rencontré un jeune homme, élève d'une grande école d'ingénieurs, qui effectuait un stage d'un mois comme ouvrier spécialisé. Il dit: »Chez moi, je dévore les livres. Depuis que je suis ici, je n'en ai pas

ouvert un seul. J'ai tout juste le courage de prendre des notes pendant une demi-heure pour mon rapport«.

... la télévision? »Un exemple: nous passons la soirée chez un ouvrier spécialisé. C'est un samedi. La télévision propose deux excellents émissions: la »Légende du siècle«, à propos d'André Malraux, sur la deuxième chaîne et »Le Procès d'un valet de chambre«, consacrée à Maupassant, sur la première. Excellents spectacles, mais totalement hermétiques pour notre hôte. Il soupire: »Moi je n'y comprends rien à ces trucs-là. Pourquoi n'y a-t-il jamais rien de bien à la télé, les seuls jours où je peux la regarder?«.

L'entreprise peut-elle et doit-elle prendre en considération ces différents effets externes négatifs? Les uns résultent directement d'activités liées au travail dans l'entreprise; ils peuvent donner lieu à dédommagement et internalisation. Les autres ne sont que des effets plus ou moins dérivés de l'activité ou de la présence dans l'unité de production. Il apparaît souhaitable que l'entreprise autogérée, plus soucieuse que l'entreprise privée de qualité de la vie, cherche à en tenir compte. Il ne nous appartient pas de prendre position à ce niveau, mais simplement de faire remarquer que la théorie économique, là encore, peut offrir quelques services.

Que peut-on attendre d'une théorie de la décision? Selon Marcel Duquesnay, qui emprunte aux travaux de Morlat et de Saïas, essentiellement:

— de formaliser simplement et clairement les problèmes de choix dans un cadre commun
— de tester que les préférences affirmées sont cohérentes et s'il y a lieu de corriger les incohérences
— de completer les préférences pour certaines possibilités complexes dont l'ordre n'est pas directement ressenti, mais peut résulter d'autres choix, directement et clairement exprimés
— de comprendre et de justifier le choix dans la mesure où le modèle impliqué par la théorie semble décrire correctement les éléments essentiels de la décision
— de disposer, par conséquent d'un critère de décision à utiliser si l'on accepte les hypothèses de base.

Les méthodes seront optimales si elles réalisent un système organisé permettant la meilleure réduction possible de l'incertitude.

Choisir dans l'incertitude n'est pas toujours possible, en raison du caractère contradictoire des multiples critères économiques et sociaux sur lesquels se fondent les préférences. Le décideur qui doit faire un choix entre des possibilités dont les issues sont incertaines va tenter de réduire cette incertitude. Cela peut se faire par acquisition d'information ou par accomplissement d'une action délibérée, qui tenant lieu d'expérience, apporte également de l'information.

Laissons de côté la théorie des jeux, assez difficilement applicable à l'autogestion, il existe alors des méthodes dites **»multicritères«** qui permettent de déterminer dans un ensemble d'objets les éléments les meilleurs en fonction d'un certain nombre de critères non agrégageables en principe.

Pour mémoire, la méthode CPE, utilisée par la Défense Nationale, le classement est obtenu au regard de deux points de vue: jugement en fonction de la réalisation du besoin et jugement en fonction du coût à efficacité donnée:

— l'indice 0, désignera les systèmes les plus satisfaisants ou les moins cher,

— l'indice 1, les systemes les moins satisfaisants ou les plus cher,

— l'indice x, les systèmes correspondant mal au besoin à satisfaire ou à prix jugé prohibitif.

Un classement partiel au niveau des systèmes est obtenu par le tableau suivant (sommation des indices partiels):

réalisation du besoin

Coût	0	1	x
0	0	1	x
1	1	2	x
x	x	x	x

Le symbolle x indique le système appartient à une classe de projets que l'on peut immédiatement abandonner.

Les apports à l'autogestion de la théorie économique, tels qu'ils viennent d'être envisagés, sont modestes.

Il s'agit simplement de »pistes«, de voies nouvelles à défricher.

Il a peut-être encore quelque imprudence à vouloir extrapoler:

— à l'intérieur de l'entreprise, ce qui a été établi pour ses rapports avec l'extérieur,

— à l'entreprise socialiste autogérée, ce qui a été établi pour l'entreprise capitaliste classique.

Néanmoins des recherches nouvelles sur cette voie devraient permettre, en rationalisant les choix opérés de renforcer l'autogestion là où elle existe aujourd'hui et d'en faire un modèle pour là où elle n'existe pas encore.

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WORKER PARTICIPATION IN NATIONALIZED MINES OF BOLIVIA 1952 — 1972

Worker participation in industry has been, historically, a management innovation to gain worker cooperation in times of labor-management tension. One of the first experiments was promoted in Canada when, after the strike of 1913 in the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, John D. Rockfeller and V. L. Mackenzie, the Minister of Work, signed the contract for a short-lived plan for worker participation in the management. During World War I, a few Italian industries introduced worker councils as a means of increasing productivity. After the war, Antonio Gramsci promoted the councils in Turin after the failure of a general strike in May, 1920. Gramsci (1957 : 23) viewed worker councils as a kind of territorial base for promoting workers' self--government. He envisioned the role of the factory council as follows (1957 : 25):

> *In the Factory Councils, the worker, because of his very nature, plays the role of producer as a result of his position and function in society in the same way as the citizen plays a role in the democratic parliamentary state. In the party and trade unions, the worker plays his role »voluntarily« participating in a contract which he can tear up at any moment. The Party and the trade unions, because of this »voluntary« character, because of their »contractual« nature, are not to be confused with the councils which are representative institutions and do not develop mathematically but morphologically, and in their higher forms tend to give a proletarian meaning to the extracting of profit, production and exchange.*

This was the first concerted attempt by the left to transform factory councils, which were set up by managers to accelerate production, into a defence of workers' interest for the purpose of preparing »the working classes organizationally, politically and culturally for the task of managing industrial enterprises.« (Gramsci 1957 : 13).

The reality of worker participation in industry has been more closely approximated in Yugoslavia than in any other industrial nation. Vanek, based on his knowledge of the movement in Yugoslavia, and contrasting that with experiences in the Soviet Union and the United States, defines the ideal nature of a participatory democracy (1971):

1. Firms controlled and managed by workers with management by all on the basis of equality, to be carried out by a workers' council, an executive board and a director of firms.

2. Income sharing based on an income-distribution schedule that is equitable.
3. Worker usufruct of capital assets.
4. Market economy with fully decentralized management, no direct interference from outside except in fixing of maximum and minimum prices.
5. Freedom of employment with firms free to hire and fire, and individuals free to come and go.

The judgment of the effectiveness of the new organizations, designed to increase worker participation, has to shift from a straight evaluation based on gross national product to an assessment of self-fulfillment of people. The motivation to work and the greater social aims of production are an immediate concern of firms organized under such a plan. The Marxist adage about capitalism — that it is designed to create more useful products for more useless people — might be reordered to consider a social design that will create more useful people concerned with producing for more socially gainful ends.

Vanek's model has been widely disseminated in Latin America and the Peruvian edition of his book (1971) has influenced the formation of the industrial communities.

I shall assess Bolivia's experience in worker participation in the tin mining industry from the point of view of the two conditions Vanek uses in his model of equilibrium analysis: degree of efficiency and degree of self--determination. I should point out several problems in data analysis that make such an analysis nearly impossible. First of all, efficiency in tin mining cannot be measured by simple productivity ratios either per capita, per man hours, or per enterprise because of the constantly dwindling resource base. The figures of fine tons produced are misleading because of the lowering levels of metal content — it takes continuously more work to get out the same amounts of mineral. Metric tons of ore is a better index of shere human productivity, but the comparative indices are hard to get because they do not enter into international trade.

The second condition of equilibrium proposed by Vanek, »self-determination« is hard to measure because it is contingent on the level of worker consciousness, not only of their exploitation as a class, but as potential prime movers in history. This consciousness is dependent on ideological inputs as well as concrete experiences that reinforce the willingness of workers to sacrifice themselves for an end. Bolivia's trade union movement has relied in the post 1952 period more on the former and less on the latter. The rhetoric of revolution was honed to a fine point in the annual succession of coups from September 26, 1969 when Ovando seized power from Barrientos' vice president Siles to October 8, 1970 when Torre caught the presidential ball as it was flipped from one to another military pretender in the »Week of the Generals« to the August 19 takeover by Colonel Hugo Banzer who moved up through the American stronghold in Santa Cruz where Gulf Oil had its holdings to seize the presidency after only three days of sporadic fighting. Action on the part of the workers was limited in these sorties into and out of power of various military representatives to imploring the real power holders for guns. Technology had outmoded political persuasion. Without an active role in

decision-making in industry, the workers' ability to enter into decision-making in politics was limited.

The first stage of worker participation in industry began with the nationalization of the tin mines on October 31, 1952. Anayo (1952) traces nationalization back to 1949 when the Left Revolutionary Party (PIR) called upon the legislature to nationalize mines without indemnization and with a strong worker control. Bedregal (1963) on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the nationalization decree claims that this act, along with the Agrarian Reform formed the nucleus of the National Revolutionary Movement (MNR). Lora (1972) traces it to the Thesis of Pulacayo which he, as leader of the Revolutionary Party of Workers (POR) helped to draft in 1946. These claims to paternity prove one thing: the bastard form of nationalized mines was a popular creation and all political parties that had a stake in labor claimed to have fathered it.

Those who moved toward nationalization of the mines pointed out that the mines under the tin barons were more exploitive of the labor force than during the colonial period (Anayo 1952). Certainly the production was more intense: during three centuries of colonial rule, 105,454 metric tons of minerals were extracted from the **Cerro Rico** of Potosi, while during the Republic, the same amount was exported in three years. In the period from 1935 to 1949 alone, over one million tons were extracted (Anayo 1952 : 42).

Assessing the damage of unrestricted mineral exploatation during the first half of the twentieth century, Canelas (1966 : 20) asserts that the tin barons succeeded in (1) maintaining a permanent national budget deficit such that the government lacked even the minimum impulse to economic growth, (2) extracting an extraordinary amount of natural recources with low taxes, (3) constantly increasing the external debts to cover deficits in costs for imports to care for public services that directly or indirectly serviced the mines and (5) contributing to growing inefficiency in the recuperation of minerals by failing to invest in modern machinery for concentration work within the country. The profligate waste of human recources are summarized in Anayo's statement (1952 : 105) that »Capitalism . . . signifies the destruction of one man for each four that enters to work.«

Despite severe exploitation and the high risk of their work, miners have always been poorly paid in Bolivia. The level of living in mining communities as described by Bloomfield, sanitary engineer of the Institute of Interamerican Affairs (cited in Anayo 1952 : 101 et seq) was lower than that described by Marx for the Lancashire workers in the 18th Century. Several families lived in a single habitation, with up to 15 persons living in eight square meters. People took turns to cook, even to sleep in the few beds. He noted that »Problems related to morals result in the dissolution of many marriage ties. . . . The absolute impossibility of rest for workers because those occupying the same quarters work in different shifts, and on returning from a hard days' work, finds others engaged in activities.« The hope of nationalization was summarized by Anayo (1952 : 143) in the following litany:

> *To liquidate the fifty years of backwardness, or exploitation, of extermination imposed by the great mining companies, we must nationalize the mines.*

To destroy the reactionary forces that block progress we must nationalize the mines.
To make possible the economic, social and cultural transformation of the welfare and of the liberty of the Bolivian people we must nationalize the mines.

Nationalization became a reality at a sunrise ceremony at Siglo XX-Catavi six months after the revolution — time enough for the former owners to return shiploads of capital goods destined for the mines to the country of origin and to cut off further explorations and exploit to the maximum existing shafts. A worker relates the meaning of nationalization for underground workers:

On the 31st of October they signed the act of nationalization in Siglo XX in the Field of Maria Barzola. They declared a day of festivities. All the works were paralized, neither factories, nor masonries, nor those who worked in the constructions in the city of Oruro worked that day. We workers of all the mines gathered together for this act in Siglo XX where they had a huge concentration. They set off some dinamite as if they were in a ferocious combat, a war.
When we worked in the companies of the ex-barons of tin, there were no drilling machines nor automatic shovels for the majority of us in Santa Fe. They had compressed air only where were drills, and this was in only a very few areas. After nationalization they put in pipes in all parts, even into the most oppressive areas where the heat was so intense you could hardly stand it. Before a worker had to swing a wet burlap in all directions to drive out the heat into the tunnels or the shafts when they were driving a shaft down to another level. After the revolution they had pipes set up for ventilation.
Before the nationalization of the mines, many workers could not secure a contract. They had to work two years as a peon of the house at the behest of any cuadrilla (work group), earning no more than the base wage without a contract. For example, in my case, when the month of May came I should have been let on the job after I was fired serving as a peon for two years. Instead when I came back to work the engineer told me, »Listen, Rocha, you cannot continue as a pirkin; *you have to work as a driller.« I was afraid when he said this because never in my life had I worked with a machine, nor did I know anything about the sickness of the miners and how one contracted it. It just scared me to hear, »You are going to work with the drilling machine.«*

Nationalization of the mines was a grandstand play for the peasants and workers who had brought Paz Estenssoro to power. Leaders of the labor movement tried to promote a greater participation by workers through the **Control Obrero**, or Worker Control. The revitalized Federation of Mine Workers Unions of Bolivia (FSTMB) along with the newly organized Bolivian Workers Central (COB) drafted the decree for worker participation that was passed for the mines on December 15, 1853. This same worker summarizes the effect of the decree on workers from his perspective:

After the Control Obrero Boliviana (COB) was organized, the secretary general of the Federation declared that the administrators of the nationalized mines were taking advantage of their position in the cashiers office, the head office of personnel, the supply office, the heads of the encampment and of welfare. In the personnel office there was a list of workers called maquipuras *(irregular, non-supervised workers) who were not people who worked, but only appeared as names on the pay ledger and the chief received their pay. As a result of these abnormalities, the secretary generals in the nationalized mines asked that COMIBOL organize a directive wich would serve as a base to control each company. They wanted to form a Worker Control with the right of veto. The government of Victor Paz Estenssoro prevented the organization of this group. With great effort, the miners organized it but without the right to a veto. Without this, nothing had any worth. The workers of Siglo XX took a stronger position than the other mines. They wanted to enter into a strike, the first threat during the time of Victor Paz Estenssoro. Paz Estenssoro did not want any problem in this period of office and he gave in to their demand. After that they did not have these kinds of arbitrary acts that were happening in the nationalized mines. They had more earnings than ever because every receipt had the signature of the men in charge of Control Obrero. No one had the right to dispatch any drug, any work material in any part, no matter how urgent it was, without passing through the Control Obrero.*

In Santa Fe we did not know what the Control Obrero was and for what it served since our company wasn't nationalized in the year 1953. We only knew that the Control Obrero had to interfere in all kinds of arbitrary acts that existed in the company. In the year 1954. our company was nationalized as well as Japo. Immediately we organized the Control Obrero with the right to veto. The first secretary general was Victor Carrasco who was secretary of the union organization in the Federation of Miners. He apprehanded various employees who had taken advantage of the earnings of the company. For example, Senor Manuel Cano had made a good house in Oruro with materials from the company. He came in person to Oruro to collect materials for the shops in Santa Fe saying that he needed pipes, wood, all kinds of fixings for the construction of housing. They discovered it when the Control Obrero looked over a mountain of receipts from the year 1952. He was changed to another post. Also they discovered a Senor Minaya, chief of the offices. He was a Paraguayan who had taken advantage of $b30,000. Another chief of the offices, a Chilean, had taken $b25,000 to his country, but they couldnt get it back. The Control Obrero is the one which put a quota on everything and made things more rational.

The decree called for Worker Control to intervene in production planning, organization of work, decison making in investments, vigilance over expenditures and disciplining of personnel (Ruiz G. 1965 : 279). However, the main concentration of Worker Control in fact was an attack on the administra-

tion which took for granted that the managers were the owners of the house and the workers were the outsiders. The very function of being a watch-dog was at odds with the other administrative functions contained in the decree. The aggressive stance taken by miners in the Worker Control minimized one of the common weaknesses of the system: the assimilation of workers' outlook to that of administrators, but it severely limited their managerial functions.[1]

The limitation of functions exercised by Worker Control had a structural base in the failure to take a position independent of the union. Even after such councils are formed and operating smoothly, it is important to retain a strong union organization that operates in the capacity of watchdog over both managerial and worker representatives and that oversees the problems of salary and welfare that worker control councils often get bogged down in. In the case of Bolivian mine workers, there never developed a clearcut separation of functions. The FSTMB controlled the selection of Worker Control representative and dominated in the selection of issues. Frequently the secretary general of the union was the director of worker control. The ever-present fear of the rank and file that their representatives were becoming an elite corps as they entered into managerial functions was exaccerbated.

Another structural weakness was the fact that there was only one worker representative in the Worker Control. As Ruiz Gonzales (1965 : 272 et seq) said, »Only one such representative who carries out functions of control and effective intervention in complex administrative tasks as required by the decree is in the same situation as the shipwrecked sailor hanging from a log on the high seas.«

As a result of these functional ambiguities and structural inadequacies in defining lines of jurisdiction between Worker Control and the union, workers failed to gain a sense of participation and this increased their sense of frustration.

The experience with Worker Control was one part of a larger contradiction that existed in popular participation in the MNR government from 1952 to 1964. The working class held positions in the senate, in up to four ministeries, and their maximal leader, Juan Lechin Oquenda occupied at one time the post of minister of Mines and Petroleum and the vice presidency in Paz's final term, at the same time that he continued as president of the COB and of the FSTMB. The contradiction between these roles became particularly sharp as labor's discontent with the government, particularly over the issue of the economic stabilization that put a freeze on wages and prices in 1957, sharpened. The same replication of functions was found at lower levels of the union and political hierarchy.

As a result of the elite positions union leaders occupied in a non-labor government, the rank and file workers felt more and more disinherited of the revolution they had made a reality in 1952. In a post-mortem on the MNR Period made by a rank and file worker at the San José mine in April, 1970 this lack of confidence is underscored:

[1] Selsef (1970) has spelled out the major problems encountered in the Argentine experience as follows: (1) difficulties in the exchange of information with the base (2) workers dedicate more energy to salary and welfare than to management of enterprise and (3) workers assimilate to the point of view of managers. These problems point to the need for continued surveilance of trade unions independent of the Worker Control group and operating outside of the particular enterprise.

During co-government we had many workers as senators and congressmen, and what did they do for the workers' movement? Nothing. But we can indicate clearly that they had a great opportunity to traffic with sindicalism because they are the new rich. Many of the worker ministers live very comfortably; they have automobiles, houses not only in Coban, but in Cochabamba, and they don't even belong to the working class because they do not know the mineshaft while we, of the working class, continuc living in the mine shafts.

He concluded his attack on the old leaders with a call for the independence of the working class. Of the many such attacks that I heard in the months following the regeneration of the labor movement in the April 1970 Congress of the FSTMB, the phrase that seemed to sum it up best was that of a rank and file member of the San José mines who said at a union meeting, »This kind of petty-bourgeoisie politics broke the skull **(descalabró)** of the working class.« Lechin himself admitted in an address to union delegates to the COB meetings in May, 1970:

We have to recognize that the experience of co-governmet caused the compromise to the working class and the entrance into power by governments of this period. This experience and the attitude assumed by different political parties undermines our union independence of political parties.

But he concluded with the ambiguous statement, »However, we must recognize that we cannot remain simply a spectator because that is a peril to the working class.«

The reversal of nationalization began with vigor in the 60's and was accelerated by the Triangular Plan signed in August, 1961. The plan called for the recapitalization of the mines with a loan of $ U.S. 37,750,000 from the Bank for Inter-American Development (BID), West Germany and the United States, to be used for exploration of new mineral deposits, metallurgical work to increase recovery rates, replacement of needed material, equipment to rehabilitate mines and commissary supplies (Zondag 1966 : 232). The loan was contingent on the »rationalization« of the labor force. It was this provision that split the ranks of labor, and Worker Control was the scene on which the battle was fought. Federico Escobar, leader of the Siglo XX-Catavi mine union and head of Worker Control there attacked the plan as an imperialist design to gain control over the mines. Lechin defended it in the publication called **Control Obrero** (August 1961, No. 8 : 4) stating:

Since when can something die before being born? The Triangular Plan has not yet been born in this country; perhaps it will be born today in accord with the information of the press. The comrades have begun blaming the Triangular Plan for all the evils of the working class and their social problems. But the means adopted are prior to and not a consequence of the plan but of other things. (Quoted in Canelas 1966: 106—7.)

Because of the resistence of the workers, the Plan did not bring about a reorganization of the work force until 1965. There was in fact an increase in the number of above-ground workers from 1962, when there were 16,813 to 18,819 in 1965. The increase in above-ground workers was due in part to an overinflated bureaucracy expanding in accordance with Parkinson's law, but also to a policy of absorbing men too sick to work underground in supernumerary posts above ground. The »rationalization« of the work force did not begin until 1965 when General René Barrientos, who had seized power atfer the November 4. 1964 rebellion when Paz was unseated by the combined action of workers and students, sent troops into the mines in May.

The decade of the sixties was a time for the attack on the nationalized mines from managerial and government leaders as well as from workers. From the time of nationalization to 1965, the mines had lost $ 106,000,000, a figure partly inflated by fiscal manipulation but accurate enough to demoralize the operation of the mines (Arce 1965 : 17). Labor costs had gone up from $ U.S. 0.70 a pound in 1952 to $ U.S. 1.29 in 1960. United States critics such as Stokes (1963) and Zondag (1966) blame worker inefficiency for the increases in costs. In defence of workers, Canelas (1966 : 43) pointed to the Ford, Bacon and Davis report made in 1957 which showed that, despite reduction in overall figures for refined tin exported, there was an increase of 30 per cent of gross mineral extracted in the first five years of nationalization. He pointed out that men in Catavi who had turned out 1.22 tons per **mita** or work shift, in 1950 were turning out 1.31 tons per mita of work in 1955, and there was an overall production increase of 1,052.405 tons of crude ore in 1950 to 1,459,389 tons in 1955. The declining production noted by Stokes, who used figures on refined mineral to prove his case, was due to the fact that it required ten meters of advance to extract a ton in 1960 in comparison with one meter in 1950. The failure to explore new tunnels and declining administrative efficiency were blamed for this.

Federico Escobar, the secretary general of Siglo XX-Catavi's union and head of Worker Control attacked the administration for having benefitted Patiáp, one of the former owners, more than the workers in the course of nationalization. Bedregal, then president of COMIBOL, countered the attack by claiming that COMIBOL was crippled by world market prices which had dropped severely in the post Korean war period. The United States had taken advantage of the nationalization of mines to break its contracts with the former companies which were pegged at the high war-time price of $ U.S. 1.83 per pound of refined tin and reset their price at $ U.S. 0.90. He tried to enlist the support of labor with his statement that »Nationalization of the mines does not have as an object only the betterment of the conditions of work and of the life of the miner, but also the entire transformation of the economic and social conditions of the Bolivian nation.« (1959:14). His appeal to nationalism in an attempt to overcome the developing class antagonism in the mine is summed up in the position that:

> *In the natural order of political priorities, first is the country and then unionism; first is the national liberation and then the liberation of the working classes. If one insists on altering this nationalist order of priorities, believing that the union can earn when the nation is losing, we have confronted the interest of the workers to*

the interests of the nation as a community weak and irresponsible; that is, we have added the new forces of the proletariat to the old forces of the counter-revolution.

Labor did not buy this position and advised the management of their discontent by calling a strike. Later Bedregal tried a frontal attack on labor with the report of a National Investitigation Comission's summary of the damage caused by the union. The report (**Comisiôn Investigadora Nacional** 1965) arrived at a sum of $ U.S. 45,076,718.29 with the following items included:

Cost of Control Obrero and directors	*5,604,725.29*
Loss of production by directors of unions failing to attend jobs	*8,333,063.40*
Loss for excess workers on surface	*15,813,723.19*
Cost of strikes	*13,187,942.32*
Cost for activities involved in disputes	*47,944.19*
Debts of FSTMB	*350,552.58*
Debts of union leaders	*295,113.38*
Debts of workers	*1,315,618.00*
Debts of clubs	*128,036.03*

Assessing this balance sheet, one can see that labor was charged for all the damages caused by the failure of the industry to settle labor disputes. In addition, one can clearly see the dependency that trade unions had fallen into, relying on income from the administration to maintain them in power.

While both sides in the attack on COMIBOL used the Ford, Bacon and Davis report to bolster their claims, the conclusions censure both low worker productivity and tehnicians' failure, but with the target being managerial inefficiency in overcoming these pitfalls. Arce, an engineer in Patiro mines, pointed to the nub of the technological problem in nationalized mines stating that (1965:15) »a fiscal administration cannot carry out risks of long range exploration« since they are constantly subjected to criticism and review, oftentimes by men who had little or no knowledge of mining. The resulting policy in the mines was one of intensive exploitation of existing reserves, a point most of the workers made to me on the basis of their immediate experience. Arce's recommendation was that there should be holding companies of **Sociedades Anonimas** which were decentralized with directories including workers to »create a spirit of belonging between workers and employers that would reinforce efficiency and produce both healthy and constructive competition«.

Despite the attack from both management and labor of the policies of COMIBOL, both sides were dedicated to vindicate the process of nationalization and prevent the mines from falling back into private holdings. In part this was due to self interest. The union leadership had benefitted in the 1952 populist period when unions had a greater recognition and opportunity to benefit financially under nationalized restraints which were more subject to populist pressures and more willing to invest in cooptation funds. Management benefitted in the very position they occupied in replacing previous

foreign incumbents at technical and managerial levels. These vested interests made nationalization an irreversible process. Neither the government nor the military attacked COMIBOL because they were, as one miner said in the Congress at Siglo XX-Catavi in 1970, using it as their own private purse.

The problem was to overcome the lack of confidence of the workers with nationalization. The thesis worked out by the political commission at Siglo XX-Catavi pointed to the fact that COMIBOL, »as inheritor of the **rosca** (oligarchy of tin barons) has constituted a true superstate over the blood of the workers, limiting the role of the workers to produce and obey.« But it attributed this failure to a false nationalization in which the middle class maintained control of the decision-making apparatus and continued as subservients of the international private capitalists. The union »line« became one of splitting the economic and political consequences of nationalization. This was expressed by an aspiring candidate for union office at the San José union meeting:

> *I believe that nationalization of mines and of Gulf is a positive step for the Bolivian people and for the liberation of Latin American countries, but it is a negative step economically because the world market is controlled now by imperialism... Who fixes the prices? It is no more than the imperialists who are the great monopolists... Nationalizations are positive from a political point of view, but from an economic point of view we do not control the world market.*

One of the theoreticians from the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés who was called upon to give a course in the union of San José gave a Marxist class analysis of nationalization and its failure.

> *COMIBOL does not benefit the worker because it is not in the hands of the workers. The passage of property from private hands to the state only means that the same internal relations continue. State capitalism produces a bureaucracy in conformity with administrators, superintendants who belong to the bourgeois class. This bourgeoisie has a selfinterest in the company. The bourgeoisie is anti-national.*

He went on to point out that the bourgeoisie is not a great homogeneous block but has internal contradictions that the working class must learn to take advantage of. While nationalization benefits one sector of the bourgeoisie by giving them more possibilities of work and earning money, it disfavors another group, the commercial sector, because many **gringos** leave and they lose many dollars in the sale of whisky, good clothing and other luxuries.

In analyzing the failure of nationalization in the brief period of revitalization of the union movement after the XIVth Congress of miners in April 1970 until the Banzer coup of August, 1971, union leaders pointed to the error of letting COMIBOL fall into the hands of »the politicians of turn, the bourgeois bureaucrats, and the military« and the necessity of regaining Worker Control to ensure the gains made by the revolution. During this period, the union started an all-out drive to re-establish wages at the pre-Barrientos level and cut down bureaucratic expenditures in order to finance labor's demands.

They pointed out that COMIBOL presonnel in the La Paz central office increased from 265 in 1954 to 475 in 1970, with administrative employees earning up to one hundred times more than interior workers. Expenditures for the central office were $ U.S. 2,750.000 per year, without counting funds for purchases that never arrived in the mines. Lechin summarized the case in a report to the delegates on September 29. 1972: »There is no possibility for a worker to enter in the mine to produce and leave his lungs there, but there is to increase the bureaucracy. For this there is no limit. There we have to get rid of the parasites.« (Taperecording) He called for the management by the workers of the funds they contributed to the Social Security and the reinstatement of Worker Control with the right of veto.

A week later, and only twelve days after the first anniversary of his September 26, 1969 coup, Ovando had to yield the presidency to Torres after Miranda made a bid for power that failed. One of his first moves to coalesce the waning labor support of his predecessor was to increase wages. Contract workers were still dissatisfied, but Torres promised to give more support to the unions, and so the miners rallied around him when Banzer made the first of his abortive moves to unseat him in January, 1971.

In a move to gain greater worker contribution to production Torres proposed a plan for co-participation in nationalized industries. In theory, co-participation was to mean a »substitution of exclusive authority of the employer by the collective authority of all those who take part in production. However, the degree of entry by workers was not explicitly stated. (Andrade 1971). The Bolivian Petroleum Company (YPFB) and the National Housing Cooperative (CONAVI) accepted the proposal as presented immediately. The FSTMB made it a central point for discussion in the popular Assembly that opened on May 1, 1971. The proposal was designed to gain greater cooperation from the workers in raising production, but since they lacked a veto power, the miners considered it a company ploy.

In the discussions that ensued in the Assembly, which included representatives of most of the organized segment of labor except for the peasants, whose representatives were considered too government controlled or too far left[2], as well as Party representatives from the Workers Party of Bolivia (POR), the Communist Party of Bolivia (PCB Moscow line), the Left National Revolutionary Party (PRIM), and the National Revolutionary Movement (NNR). as well as some student representatives of the Left Revolutionary Movement (NIR) and the Cristian Revolutionary Democrats (DCR), the union representatives of the FSTMB dominated proceedings. They differentiated co-participation from Worker Control in that proposed to work »from below to above rather than the reverse« as had occurred in the early years of nationalization when only top leaders entered the councils. They demanded that a majority of the representation in the council of workers and managers should be labor, and they demanded that the president of COMIBOL should be chosen by the directors of COMIBOL from a list drawn up by the directory. COMIBOL rejected these two proposals, and called for the president to be named by the executive power in a council of ministers from a list presented by COMIBOL. The ultimate aim of co-participation as envisioned in the Assembly was »the social property of the means of production.« (Andrade 1971).

[2] The union of Poor Campesinos (UCAPO) was refused a seat in the Popular Assembly along with some unions of campesinos considered to be dominated by the government.

The duties drawn up by the FSTMB and presented to the Popular Assembly were more specific than those included in the 1953 decree for Worker Control:

1. Attend with voice and vote in the directors' meetings.
2. Inform themselves of all aspects relating to activities of the company, such as plans, projects for exploitation of minerals, reforms of administrative structures, cost accounting, commercialization, financing, evaluation and control of growth of these plans and works without any limitation.
3. To take into account contracts of purchases, local contracts, transportations and to prove to themselves that the prices, qualities and conditions are most favorable that can be obtained.
4. Control the distribution of articles in the puperia and shop with the interest of avoiding favoritism.
5. Interview for the hiring and firing of workers.
6. Control and intervene in the increases and modifications of day work of personnel and transfer of workers and employees.

The FSTNB combined its presentation of demands with an attack on the administration of COMIBOL by generals. They pointed out that before the Barrientos regime began, when the president of the company was civilian, the bureaucracy cost $ U. S. 40,000 and after the costs rose to $ U. S. 400,000 as the presidency became occupied by the military. They asked that the administration seek a new market for minerals in the socialist countries. Lora (1972:44) summed up the contrast between Worker Control and co-participation stating that while the first was individual and bureaucratic, co-participation was collective and exercised by the working class itself. The contradiction in function between that of vigilance over the operation of management and participation in the administration as coequals that I pointed to above remained implicit in the new plan.

The left was divided on the importance of the Assembly and its major proposal for co-participation. While some called it »a symphony of the left« (Presencia, August 18, 1971) others accused it of being reformist in orientation and seeking personal ends (Lora 1972 : 16).

The Banzer coup makes any speculation as to how co-participation would have worked out an accademic issue. However, the reaction of the rank and file in the period when the plan was still being discussed in July of 1971 revealed a lack of confidence in the labor leadership, and a fear of the resurgence of the elitism that characterized the labor movement in the co-government period. Rank and file leaders in San José mine broke up a meeting scheduled for a discussion of the plan when I visited that center in July 1971. They resented the fact that Juan Lechin, who was scheduled to appear and explain the new measure, had not come and many expressed suspicion of both local and national leaders and their motivation for implementing the plan before many of the concrete problems of contract prices and incentives had been ironed out. The heritage of corruption from the period of co-optation had born its harvest of mistrust.

Bolivia's experience with worker participation reveals the contradictions implicit in any compromise form of entry into management short of a socialist reorganization of the aims and structures of industrial enterprises. However, this should not imply that such movements should not be undertaken. Many of the Worker Control representatives rose to the occasion and gained enough entry into the administrative process to thoroughly shake up the bureaucratic process and threaten its usurption of control over the lives of thousands of workers. Worker Control succeeded in establishing some of the minimal conditions for living and working in mining encampments that had, under the old management, reduced workers to bestial levels. For the first time they questioned the premise of production geared to meeting external demands and lacking even minimal interest in the lives and welfare of the men and women who produced the wealth. In the early years of nationalization, miners did produce more ores, although they contained less refined metal than before. Poor administration and ineffective technical control were probably as much or more responsible than lack of discipline in labor for declining productivity in later years.

As for the criterion of self-determinancy for judging Bolivia's experience with participation in the tin mining industry, I felt that, in the accounts miners gave and in the reports I have read on the experience in the fifties and sixties, there was a growing awareness of the needs for further exploration and capitalization, but these demands never were channeled through the Workers Control representatives. Many workers have told me of the failure of the administration to open new shafts. They respected the ability of some of the old foreign technicians and felt that the demagoguery af nationalist leaders inhibited the efficient exploitation of the mines. Their growing alienation from the administration of COMIBOL caused them to resist yielding information about veins they knew existed. However, these demands for opening up new shafts and providing the equipment to work effectively were not publicly aired. Their watchdog function was simply a reversal of the Robin Hood role; the administration was still the owner, they were still the underdog although they patrolled the streets of the managerial elite instead of stealing from them.

One could probably make a good case for decline in efficiency in the nationalized mines. In the old **pirkin** system of exploitation favored in the time of the rosca, the worker was paid for the mineral content of what he produced. He was highly motivated to use all his ingenuity and senses to work the veins. Miners develop an eye and a taste for where the veins are. Some even explore the face of a newly blasted area with their tongue to sense the location of the vein. Under the private companies, some could get fairly high returns, and they exploited their bodies and souls, which they sold to the Devil,[3] in the desire to find the metal. After nationalization they were paid in relation to brute loads, a fairer system from an overall perspective but one which failed to mobilize the total involvement of the miners as they had under the old system. In the pirkin system, self exploitation was greater, but workers report a greater sense of adventure. They followed the veins of metal without too much concern for organizing tunnels and channels of entry and exit, and they profitted in terms of the value of the ore.

[3] I have summarized rituals and beliefs concerning the Devil, or Supay, a pre-conquest hill spirit in »Devils, Witches and Sudden Death,« **Natural History Magazine**, March 1972.

Worker participation cannot be conceived of as a solution for the class struggle nor as the conquest of socialist aims. It is only a prelude to such victories that at best can provide an arena where workers can gain the experience necessary to gain full control over their destiny in the future. Trade union movements too often bog down in bread and butter questions. Even worse, they generate alienation not only against the owners of industry but against the work itself. This serves to minimize the sense of social participation in productivity that would provide the basis for a socialist economy. With a division of labor between trade unions and worker councils the former could retain the function of preventing the exploitation of workers, attending to their economic concerns, while the latter could enter into the transformation of administration into a concern with the wider interests of the community. The failure to maintain this division of functions minimized the effectiveness of both worker activities during the populist period of nationalization.

Vanek envisions a democratic form of socialist enterprise achieved through a modified market controlled system to avoid the bureaucratic state apparatus of the soviet state. He does not, however, go into the contradictions that still exist in a production system part free-market and part planned. These contradictions are just now rising to the surface as inflation, unemployment and inadequate incomes for most workers in Yugoslavia is stirring up worker resentment, and this is exaccerbated by the high life style of some management representatives who have profitted from the enterprises (New York Times, Nov. 18, 1972). Latin American countries must work out their own model for worker participation in administration whether prior to or after a revolutionary transformation of structures.

Worker participation shifts the workers' perspectives from a concern with the class struggle to an interest in the division of labor. It makes post-revolutionary decisions a priority before the revolution. For the Bolivian rank and file during the revival of interest in the issue when the Popular Assembly was convening in June and July, 1972, it seemed to indicate a greater concern with the division of spoils rather than a reconstruction of their role in industrial production. Without careful planning and preparation of this phase, the experience can end in the frustration that would defeat ultimate aims.

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ASPECTS OF CLASS STRUGGLE IN WESTGERMANY: ONLY SOME SIGNS OF WORKERS' DEMAND FOR SELF-MANAGEMENT

I

After a period of relative stability during the first two decades of post-war development the class struggles in most of the West European countries have increased in number, militancy and political mindedness. This thoroughly contradicts that thesis which says that the social antagonism between hired labour and capital has lost its relevance in forming the structure of society, that the changing of structures has led to a reduction, if not even extinction of power and exploitation by the ownership of capital and, that disintegration of class structures coordinates with disintegration of the traditional working class and class consciousness in favour of an adaptation to middle class values, i. e. a bourgeois tendency of social thinking and behaviour of the working class.

Nevertheless, it must be seen that the reactivation of the working class is a general development in West European countries, but that the degree of militancy and political consciousness has reached very different levels in the various countries, as can be seen especially in the manner of struggling and demands.

This is especially obvious in the question here most relevant: whether the selforganisation of labour has already been demanded and been integrated into the aims of the struggle.

During the strikes after 1968 in Italy especially the defensive position which only refers to the status quo of labour and which understands fight only as a means of preventing or parrying negative changes, has been more and more abandoned and been led over into an offensive practice, asking for abolishing capitalistic exploitation altogether. The demands for abolishment of wages dependent on performance and the discharge of restrictive work are examples of this new practice, they also show those aims asking for selforganisation of work and the productive process.

In contrast to the class consciousness developed and shown in these demands, we have to see that the struggles within the BRD, also those spontaneous strikes in September 1969, which were very different from those traditional standard wage conflicts organized by the trade unions, have not reached the Italian level of political consciousness.

The difference in number of striking workers alone is relevant: The 150.000 German workers who participated in the September strikes look rather meager in international comparison. Thus, differences in quality seem to be more important: the strikes of September 1969 certainly were no organized political struggles against the existing structures, they remained fixed at wages. Militancy in form of active occupation of factories was only seldom noticed, control or organization of production was neither practiced nor demanded.

II

The different causes of the September strikes shall not be investigated here. In our context it is necessary to characterize the political and social consciousness in the BRD more closely, in order to explain the willingness for striking on one side, and why the aims of the struggle remained so narrow and the demand for selforganization of production was not raised.

In order to explain the actions of the workers in the September strike we have to look at their social prospective as well as at their attitude towards the trade unions.

The ambivalent attitude between expectance of partly material improvements on one side and the knowledge that in spite of amendments in some respects the basical social disadvantage of workers is perpetuated on the other side, characterizes the basic disposition of the working class, the ground on which their willingness to strike developed. Both these components of their attitude have their specific explanation value for the readiness to strike.

As the workers see their own social position as being underpriveleged, they feel separated from society. This hinders them to identify themselves with society.

Their knowleedge of their social disadvantage is a barrier to all efforts towards integration. Up to now no one has succeeded in giving the workers a feeling of equality and equal advantage as members of this society. However the insight into their underprivileged position does not turn into an attitude of resistance and doesn't activate them in order to change society: the mechanisms of social adaptation have not passed them over. The workers have settled down in the position of inequality, they have arranged themselves.

Their lack of social phantasy, the unability to imagine a social order without inequality and their low self-assessment of the possibilities and power of their own class result in the fact that workers can only define their own interests and demands within those restrictions imposed by the factual development of capitalistic societies. To orient themselves into that direction seems even more reasonable, because their conditions now seem to be much better than in earlier times.

Nevertheless, the acceptance of rules already given, the integration into the existing pattern of distribution and the adaption to social reality in general should not be taken for an attitude, which accepts the social structure and identifies itself with it.

There is a gap between worker and society — possibly to be activated — which explains their sensitive reaction to a situation, in which also the workers felt that the rates of distribution immanent to the system had not been kept to.

Here now the second component of the social consciousness of the working class is important: the expectation of improvement, if only reduced, and participation in technical-economic progress. This level of claims was developed by their own experiences in life and affirmed by the state policy of supporting the demands of the workers for 'just' participation in the growth of the social product, nevertheless also only conforming to the system. So the demands of the workers apparently were officially agreed to.

If the distribution of the socio-economic progress does not conform to this kind of 'justice', if the expectations of their 'just' claims are not fulfilled, a situation arises, which mobilizes the workers because of their orientation on standards set up by society. As their own claims conform to the status quo and as they know that even if they are given what they have asked for, their basic disadvantage will still exist, workers will feel resistance justified, especially if their restriced expectations are not fulfilled.

The fact that there were spontaneous strikes in September 1969 in the BRD certainly was not only a result of the disproportion of real development and expectations but also o result of the actions of their institutionalized representatives in this situation. The settlement of the 'unstable' situation certainly might also have been reached in the traditional manner of tariff contracts. As the trade unions were not able to 'pacify' the expectations, because their interaction was restriced by the conditional clauses of the tariff treaty valid at that time, the workers started activities independent of their trade union.

The fact, that in September 1969 workers fought for their demands independently of the trade unions, shows that the relation to their own representatives had changed. Their distant attitude towards the trade union widenes their room for actions independent of the trade unions, if it seems necessary in order to fight for their claims effectively. This does not principally question loyalty towards the unions. Because the trade unions are still accepted as their representatives, there is still the willingness to abide by their orders for action, i. e. to follow a declaration of strike. On the other hand it seems easier for workers to go ahead by themselves if they think so: the brink of loyalty is less difficult to pass. The September strikes have shown this situation very clearly. The workers' own interests have been carried through not against the trade unions, but independently of them. So the strikes are not signs of estrangement from their own organization but expression of a higher autonomy of its members.

To keep in mind: Aims and events of the September strike clearly demonstrate that it is very dubious to interprete these strikes as signs of a class-conscious behaviour of the workers. The demands of the workers in the strikes conformed to the system. Their criticism also was confined to the existing structures: No basic social changes were asked for, but only measures to adapt social reality to the promises given by society itself. Not a change in the patterns of distribution of wealth and power, but only participation within the existing structures. According to this attitude their consciousness of conflicts was confined to those conflicts, which apparently could be solved within the existing society, i. e. especially guaranteed suitable participation in the growing social wealth. This explains that in September 1969 the workers confined themselves to economic questions and did not raise further demands

as to the organization of work and political changes, claims for the selforganization of work and for the control of the production were not articulated This also agrees with the fact that the willingness of workers to carry through their interests autonomously was limited. Spontaneous actions in most cases were limited to showing their misfeelings about the disproportion of wages and profit as well as about other abuses within their factories. The initiation, organization and also the ending of the strikes were turned over to the institutions of their own representatives within the factory, i. e. the shop stewards.

Also it is astonishing that the workers declared their willingness to strike even without the support of the trade-unions. This shows no signs of a basic alienation from the traditional working class organizations. In fact, the strikes in most cases could not have been carried through without the help of the shop stewards, i. e. the basis of labour organization. This is a clear proof of the strong ties that still exist between the workers and their traditional representatives.

III

These attitudes, especially the characteristic lack of claims, which would collide with the mechanism of private profit economy, are the result of a specific understanding of social experiences by the West German working class.

Contradictive experiences in work:

The lack of labour reserve (especially after 1960) imposes a limit to the possibility of raising work productivity by work intensification. In order to have profitable production in the BRD it is necessary to improve the technical equipments of the work process. This accounts for the rapid technological progress, which very quickly changes the work process, but leads to definitely more work pressure in only some parts. Depending on the existing level of technology there are either improvements or deteriorations of working conditions. Therefore the changes experienced by workers in Western Germany in their factory admit more than one interpretation, at least more than in Italy.

Resigned understanding of bad working experiences:

Within this process those groups of workers who do unqualified and exhausting work form the greatest part of the working class. But even in these groups there is not much open criticism and opposition to the bad working conditions. One reason for this may be the fact that many of these workers have been confined to estranged work for a long time and thereby have been forced to reduce their expectations as to their work. The collision of non-capitalistic standards and capitalistic claims which comes about in Italy because the economic development is not synchronous, and which forces the unqualified workers into radicalism, does not necessarily apply to the BRD. The working class, already disciplined by capitalism, reacts to its estranged situation with adaptation rather than with resistance.

Behaviour of the worker's movement:

Considering these facts one of the most important functions of a progressive policy would be the teaching of new reference patterns. The West German capitalism does not develop without contradiction. Its contradictions, ho-

wever, are not so evident for workers and only come up to the surface, if they are forced to be a certain policy. The traditional organizations of workers' movements (the classical negotiators of a socialist interpretation of society) have put aside this task constantly since 25 years. By not trying to offer a socialist alternative to capitalistic reality the West German workers' movement has succeeded in giving special impact to those parts of the political consciousness of workers which press towards integration. That too, is different from Italy.

Nevertheless: in spite of this development there are tendencies in the BRD, which might bring about a new form of class consciousness. These tendencies are due to specific contradictions of a developed capitalistic systems.

— The contradiction between the great economic and technical resources of society and the narrow conditions of life for workers, which fall back more and more behind the chances objectively given.

— The contradiction between the objectives of learning, which have to go into the direction of teaching autonomous behaviour because of economic-technical reasons, and the social constitution of production, which tries to confine these abilities to technical processes.

— The contradiction between the standards of consumption, which have to suggest all kinds of opportunities to the workers, because of the economic impact of their effective demand, and the standard of production, which still is characterized by many restrictions.

Whether these contradictions will have a greater impact on the consciousness of the worker and will have political effects, depends on the policy taken. The hidden conflicts must be forced up to the surface by mobilizing the basis. That means alternatives will have to be shown for those groups of workers who are confronted mostly by these conflicts. These alternatives have to show solutions to the workers problems but can not be integrated into the existing social structure. This confrontation of social reality and a solution not to be reconciled with reality offers the chance for a general mobilization: growing numbers of workers will see their own situation and the reasons for it more clearly, they will oppose the capitalistic development by demands of their own, they will fight for it and increase and develop their political consciousness.

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