

Univ  
Shelf.

C.4<sup>v</sup>

California. University. Institute  
of industrial relations (Berkeley)

**EMPLOYEE**

**RIGHTS**

**AND THE**

**EMPLOYMENT**

**RELATIONSHIP**

**HOWARD M. VOLLMER**

INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL  
RELATIONS LIBRARY

JUN 17 1960

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
BERKELEY

CALIFORNIA

**EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND THE  
EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP**

*A Publication of the  
Institute of Industrial Relations  
University of California*

EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND THE  
EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

HOWARD M. VOLLMER

*University of California Press  
Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960*



*University of California Press  
Berkeley and Los Angeles, California  
Cambridge University Press, London, England*

*© 1960 by The Regents of the University of California  
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 60-10362*

*Printed in the United States of America  
By The Riverside Press Cambridge  
Designed by Ward Ritchie*

## **FOREWORD**

This study is part of a broader inquiry into due process and job rights in modern industry, which is being conducted under the direction of Professor Philip Selznick of the Institute staff. The broader study is concerned with the changes in the law of employment that have been taking place and may be expected in the future.

Selznick's project calls for an intensive analysis of several factors that are contributing to a change in the nature of the employment relationship in private industry: (1) the need for managerial self-restraint, in the light of the requirements of large-scale enterprise and the development of professional management, (2) the significance of collective bargaining as a vehicle for legal evolution, especially through the process of grievance arbitration, and (3) employees' expectations and attitudes toward job rights and due process. Once the implications of these devel-

## *Foreword*

opments have been fully analyzed, it will be possible to consider the question of their impact on "official" legal doctrine. In other words, the study will also be concerned with the extent to which the traditional legal principles relating to the master-servant relationship and the employment contract have been modified under the influence of quasi-legal developments in private industry.

The present monograph, which is concerned particularly with employees' attitudes toward their job rights, is based in large part on data collected in interviews with workers and personnel directors in large firms in the San Francisco Bay area. Howard Vollmer, the author, was a member of the Institute of Industrial Relations research staff in 1957-1958 while he was conducting the study; he is now affiliated with Stanford Research Institute. He is also the author of a number of articles dealing with employee attitudes and personnel problems.

Arthur M. Ross, *Director*

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

As Professor Ross indicated in his foreword, this study is part of a larger investigation of problems of justice and power in modern industry, under the direction of Professor Philip Selznick. I am indebted to him for guidance in all phases of the research. I also greatly appreciate the helpful criticism and advice of Professors William Kornhauser and Van Dusen Kennedy.

The principal research, involving interviews with personnel executives in leading San Francisco Bay area establishments and samples of employees at four Bay area firms, was sponsored by the Institute of Industrial Relations of the University of California, Berkeley. I greatly appreciate the assistance of the Institute and particularly the help of Professor Arthur M. Ross, Director. In addition, I am especially indebted to Dr. Margaret S. Gordon for encouragement and detailed advice at all stages of the research.

Finally, I wish to express my special appreciation to my associate, Patrick J. McGillivray, who has been a colleague in several phases of the research activity.

In spite of my indebtedness to others, it is quite proper that I claim responsibility for any errors of method or interpretation.

H. M. V.

## CONTENTS

I	INTRODUCTION	1
	<i>Research objectives, 3; Methodological perspective, 9; Sources of data, 11</i>	
II	BUREAUCRATIZATION AND THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP	14
	<i>Increasing extent of bureaucratization, 18; Content of formal personnel policies, 22; Bureaucratization and the principle of uniform treatment, 38</i>	
III	HUMAN RELATIONS AND THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP	41
	<i>Increasing extent of human relations practices in industry, 43; Manipulation and adaptation in human relations practices, 51; Human relations and the principle of individual treatment, 58</i>	
IV	THE EXERCISE OF MANAGERIAL AUTHORITY	62
	<i>Participation in supervisory decisions, 63; Primary relations in supervision, 74; Uniform versus individual treatment, 82; Managerial authority and employee rights, 85</i>	
V	CLAIMS TO SPECIAL PRIVILEGE	88
	<i>Organizational career orientation and special privilege, 90; Occupational career orientation and special privilege, 96; The consequences of claims to special privilege, 112</i>	
VI	THE MANAGEMENT OF DEVIANCE	115
	<i>Scope of managerial control, 117; Consistent enforcement of discipline, 127; Procedural aspects of discipline, 131</i>	
VII	THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE: AUTOMATION AND EMPLOYEE RIGHTS	141
	<i>Summary: Employee rights at present, 142; Automation and changes in job characteristics, 147; Employee rights in an age of automation, 151</i>	

*Contents*

APPENDIX A COMPOSITION OF THE SAMPLES	157
APPENDIX B METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS IN EMPLOYEE SURVEYS	160
INDEX	175

## TABLES

1. <i>Bureaucratic Practices by Year of Survey</i>	19
2. <i>Conduct Subject to Disciplinary Action in Rules of Selected Companies</i>	30
3. <i>Human Relations Practices by Year of Survey</i>	47
4. <i>Preferred Type of Administration of Discipline by Size of Firm</i>	50
5. <i>Experience of Participation in Supervisory Decisions by Ordnance Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	65
6. <i>Preference for Participation in Supervisory Decisions by Ordnance Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	66
7. <i>Comparison Between Preference for an Experience of High Participation in Supervisory Decisions by Ordnance Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	67
8. <i>Career Orientation of Ordnance Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	69
9. <i>Career Orientation of Industrial Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	70
10. <i>Preference for Worker Participation in Supervisory Decisions by Ordnance Employees According to Level of Supervision</i>	73
11. <i>Occurrence of Primary Relations with Work Associates Among Industrial Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	75
12. <i>Place of Origin of Closest Friendships of Ordnance Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	77
13. <i>Preferred Orientation of Supervisors' Friendships by Ordnance Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	79
14. <i>Preferred Orientation of First-level Supervisors' Friendships by Ordnance Managerial Personnel According to Occupational Classification</i>	80
15. <i>Preferred Orientation of First-level Supervisors' Friendships by Ordnance Employees According to Level of Supervision</i>	80
16. <i>Preference for Uniform Supervision versus Individualistic Supervision Among Ordnance Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	82
17. <i>Preference for Uniform Supervision versus Individualistic Supervision in Ordnance Management According to Occupational Classification</i>	84

18. <i>Claims to Protection against Arbitrary Supervision among Ordnance Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	86
19. <i>Orientation toward Advancement into Management Positions by Industrial Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	90
20. <i>Claims to Protection against Arbitrary Discharge among Ordnance Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	98
21. <i>Claims to Occupational Identity as a Mitigating Factor in Discharge among Industrial Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	99
22. <i>Claims to Seniority as a Mitigating Factor in Discharge among Industrial Workers According to Occupational Classification</i>	106
23. <i>Attitudes toward Scope of Managerial Concern with Employee Extra-work Behavior Among Industrial Employees According to Occupational Classification</i>	119
24. <i>Attitudes toward Consistency in the Enforcement of Discipline among Industrial Employees According to Occupational Classification</i>	129
25. <i>Attitudes toward Advance Warning in Disciplinary Practice among Industrial Employees According to Occupational Classification</i>	135
26. <i>Attitudes toward Proof of Intent in Disciplinary Practice among Industrial Employees According to Occupational Classification</i>	138



## CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

"Between the workman and the master," wrote Alexis de Tocqueville in the 1830's, "there are frequent relations but no real associations."<sup>1</sup> Tocqueville made this statement as a reflection of his comparative observations of American and European society in the early nineteenth century. He observed that political democratization is associated with the growth of industry. At the same time, he noted the disappearance of the personal relations of masters and servants which were so characteristic of the older aristocratic societies. The danger, according to Tocqueville, was that the development of large-scale industry would result in a "new aristocracy." This aristocracy would seek to exercise power both in industry and politics without the restraints imposed by personal obligations to subordinate classes

<sup>1</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. and trans. by Phillips Bradley (New York: Vintage Books, 1954), II, p. 171.

which were typical of the old order in Europe. Such power would not necessarily be unlimited. He saw restrictions, for example, developing in the relations of employers to employees: "the rule is different, but there is a rule."<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, he felt that the public should be concerned with *the way in which* managerial power was developing in large-scale industry: "The friends of democracy should keep their eyes anxiously fixed in this direction; for if ever a permanent inequality of conditions and aristocracy again penetrates into the world, it may be predicted that this is the gate by which it will enter."<sup>3</sup>

More than a century later, Tocqueville's concern with the power and prerogatives of a managerial elite is still with us. Some recent writers have been particularly interested in the exercise of managerial influence in modern American politics.<sup>4</sup> In industry, on the other hand, managerial power has come to be more and more circumscribed, not only by labor legislation and the spread of collective bargaining but also by the development of system and order in relations between employers and employees.<sup>5</sup> In our time these have become more stabilized—more of a "real association" has developed—than ever before. Tocqueville's concern with the way in which stability has developed in the employment relationship is still pertinent for "friends of democracy." In what specific ways has the arbitrary exercise of managerial power over employees come to be limited? Conversely, what kinds of employee rights have gained common recognition? Finally, what are the sources of stability for these rights and limitations upon managerial prerogatives? Our inquiry is directed to these questions.

In answer, we assert the following general propositions: (1) the conditions of employment for workers in modern American industry favor the development of managerial *self-restraint* and mutual expectations regarding employee rights; (2) the conditions and meaning of employment for different types of industrial employees vary, and hence their expectations vary; (3) the requirements of industry and the needs of different types of em-

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>4</sup> See for example, C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

<sup>5</sup> In this monograph, the terms "industry" and "industrial" will be used loosely to refer to any types of manufacturing or commercial enterprises, privately or publicly owned, which are principally oriented toward economic functions, that is, the provision of marketable goods and/or services.

ployees vary, and consequently employees and management do not always agree on employee rights; and (4) greater stability in managerial self-restraint and recognition of employee rights may be anticipated when management and employees want the same things. In other words, employee rights have their origin and sources of stability in the social conditions of employment.

This does not minimize the importance of trade unions, collective bargaining, and arbitration for the protection of employee rights. It has been pointed out earlier that this study is part of a larger inquiry into problems of justice and power in modern industry under the direction of Professor Philip Selznick, which devotes considerable attention to the contribution of labor arbitration decisions to employee rights.<sup>6</sup> Other studies have also been concerned with the effects of collective bargaining and arbitration procedures upon employee rights.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, there is considerable justification for the assertion that collective bargaining and its concomitants have had significant effect upon the character of employment.

Therefore the argument presented here should not be interpreted as supporting the claims of any who maintain that management by itself is in a position to solve all problems of industrial discipline and employee rights. We merely assert that recognition of employee rights is not solely dependent upon the spread of collective bargaining and labor arbitration. We are directing attention to other basic supports for employee rights which develop out of the requirements of industry and the nature of employment therein.

The following sections of this chapter discuss the theoretical framework and certain methodological aspects of this study. Those readers who are not especially interested in these matters may wish to skip directly to the next chapter.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The basic objective of this study is to analyze the relation of

<sup>6</sup> See the forthcoming publication by Philip Selznick tentatively entitled, *Justice and Power in Modern Industry*.

<sup>7</sup> As an example of an earlier study, see Sumner H. Slichter, *Union Policies and Industrial Management* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1941). For a more recent study, see Orme W. Phelps, *Discipline and Discharge in the Unionized Firm*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959.)

employee claims to, and the managerial recognition of, certain types of employee rights. The study does not consider all conceivable types of employee rights but only those that seem most significant in employment relationship. In pursuing this objective we shall give particular attention to the requirements of industry, on the one hand, and to the needs of employees, on the other.

Chester Barnard was particularly sensitive to the requirements of industry when he distinguished between “effectiveness” and “efficiency” as two types of imperatives which govern decision-making. According to Barnard, an action is “effective” if it represents the achievement of organization goals. In contrast, an action is “efficient” if it achieves a desired end and simultaneously satisfies the interests of the individual participants in the collective endeavor.<sup>8</sup> For effectiveness, large-scale organizations, such as government and military agencies, have developed bureaucratic practices: for example, the development of authority within the enterprise in terms of a pyramid-like hierarchy of offices or positions, the differentiation of responsibilities in terms of specialized functions, and the establishment of formal rules and regulations governing the relation of individuals to the organization. Requirements of bureaucratic organization have thus given rise to order and self-restraint in business enterprises.

Order and system emphasize standards of work performance oriented toward coordination and specialization. But as students of social organization from Tocqueville, Durkheim, and Marx to Barnard, Drucker, and Simon have pointed out, considerations of effectiveness are not enough to motivate the maximum participation by individuals in large-scale enterprises. Failure to recognize individual needs can only result in the alienation of employees. Therefore decision-making must be modified by considerations of efficiency; the needs of individual workers must be taken into account together with organization requirements.

This conclusion assumes that the needs of individual employees and organization requirements at times diverge significantly. Otherwise, effectiveness and efficiency in the mobilization of personnel would coincide. However, as the well-known Hawthorne studies showed implicitly, and as others have pointed

<sup>8</sup> See Chester Barnard, *Functions of the Executive* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), pp. 55–59, 91–94, 139–160.

out explicitly, this is not always true.<sup>9</sup> For this reason, a number of “human relations” practices have developed in American industry which reflect managerial attempts to recognize and integrate the needs of individual employees into the impersonal context of bureaucratic organizations.

Thus, although it may be said that bureaucratic organizations have an existence apart from the lives of individuals who occupy positions in these organizations, their actual operation depends upon the performance of individual participants. The structure of organization and its various offices and positions may endure beyond the careers of the individuals who occupy these positions. But at the same time, this structure cannot survive if it does not provide satisfactorily for the needs of individual participants.

Certain decisions, for example, may be based upon the need to maximize production and minimize costs. One of the most important cost factors in modern industrial enterprises is labor. Management may seek to minimize that cost by introducing technological changes which result in the leveling of skills in certain jobs. This process of “de-skilling” may radically affect career advancement for employees.<sup>10</sup> Although such a change may seem desirable from the standpoint of industry as a whole, it may seriously run counter to the needs and interests of the individual employees. E. Wight Bakke quotes workers in the depression of the 1930’s and gives a typical comment of an unemployed worker:

It’s the job I don’t have I’m thinking about, Buddy. I went to a lecture up at Yale the other night, and the bird what did the talking said as how we didn’t have to worry about what machines did to our jobs. They just made more jobs, he says. So what? I work for the water company and they’ve got machines that do a job in six months that it would have taken us a year to do right after the war. So what am I going to do the other six months? Go and make some of those blasted machines? No, I go and listen to a Yale economist telling me I

<sup>9</sup> See F. J. Roethlisberger and W. J. Dickson, *Management and the Worker* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949); for examples of explicit expositions of the ways in which the needs and interests of workers and employing organizations diverge, see Arthur Kornhauser, Robert Dubin, and Arthur M. Ross, *Industrial Conflict* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954), and Chris Argyris, *Personality and Organization* (New York: Harper, 1957).

<sup>10</sup> For an analysis of the effects of leveling of skills in the shoe-making industry in New England, see W. Lloyd Warner, *The Social System of the Modern Factory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), pp. 66–89.

ain't unemployed. Now let's be reasonable about this business, he says. All right, let's be reasonable. Can he get *me* a job making those machines that other six months? That's what I'm interested in. Hell, those machines are made in Ohio. Who's going to pay my fare out there and move my family back and forth every six months? Now let's be reasonable about this thing, I says, just like he said.<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, where managerial power is exercised arbitrarily and without regard for employee needs, employees are likely to feel powerless, dependent, and without rights, as indicated in the following comment:

And you think a man's independent, do you? Let me tell you something. Who says what you do and what you get and whether you do it or get it? And suppose you want to get more or change something about the way you do it. What can you do if you don't like it—quit work? That's no decent choice. You have a right not to work, but no right to work.<sup>12</sup>

However, it is not the objective of this study to show that employees resent the arbitrary exercise of managerial power without regard for their interests, but rather to examine evidence that indicates that organizations are impelled by their own needs, as well as the pressure of employee expectations, to recognize certain employee rights which are especially relevant to the career aspirations of different types of workers.<sup>13</sup> Some types of employees, more frequently women, do not have career ambitions related to their employment status. They are more likely to view their career as that of a wife and homemaker, with employment as a temporary expedient. Therefore, their claims to employee rights are possibly of less significance. Unskilled male manual workers, on the other hand, are typically not career oriented in the sense that they expect to advance through a determinant sequence of jobs; yet they value their status as employees highly, and they claim those rights which are particularly concerned with the freedom of employees from arbitrary managerial control. In contrast, more strongly career-oriented, skilled workers and staff specialists tend to claim cer-

<sup>11</sup> E. Wight Bakke, *The Unemployed Worker: a Study of the Task of Making a Living Without a Job* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), p. 69.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>13</sup> There are other factors which might also be investigated in relation to employee attitudes regarding rights in their jobs, such as age, education, race, and so on.

tain rights and special privileges which lend particular support to their status and career ambitions. When management does not recognize these claims, it fails to provide certain important components in the motivation of employee performance. The requirements of various jobs in the enterprise may be well planned and clearly presented to employees, but their execution is dependent upon the degree to which employees are motivated to carry out these requirements. This degree of motivation, in turn, is dependent upon the extent to which the needs of employees are successfully provided for.

Certain *power* aspects of the employer-employee relation, as it has developed in American industry, are our special concern. We shall use as a point of departure the definition of Goldhammer and Shils: "A person may be said to have *power* to the extent that he influences the behavior of others in accordance with his own intentions."<sup>14</sup> As Max Weber pointed out, the exercise of power may be considered "legitimate" where it is based upon the consent of those who are influenced.<sup>15</sup> A "social relationship" denoted to Max Weber the behavior of actors so far as they subjectively orient their actions according to expectations about the behavior of others.<sup>16</sup> In these terms, our concern is with the social relationship between employees and employers (management) as defined by the expectations of each regarding legitimate aspects and limitations of influence.

In different kinds of social relationships, influence may be expressed in many ways. For the purposes of this discussion, we shall consider three basic types of legitimate power: that is, three ways in which a person (or collectivity) may influence the behavior of other persons (or collectivities): through *authority*, or the influence of officeholders in a formal structure upon subordinates by virtue of the latter's acceptance of official directives; through *status*, or the influence of individuals upon others on the basis of the commonly recognized prestige of those who initiate the influence; and through *control*, or the influence of individuals upon others on the basis of the legitimate ability of those who initiate the influence to manipulate contingent

<sup>14</sup> Herbert Goldhammer and Edward A. Shils, "Types of Power and Status," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLV (1939), p. 171.

<sup>15</sup> See especially Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, ed. and trans. by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1947), pp. 124-132.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 118-120.

rewards and punishments (sanctions). Thus in an industrial context, a supervisor exercises authority where his subordinates accept his work directives because they expect "the boss" to issue work orders and feel that it is proper for them as "employees" to obey them. On the other hand, an older employee of higher seniority, or an employee of recognized competence and ability in his line of work, may also exercise considerable influence upon fellow workers and even upon supervisors by virtue of his personal prestige or *status*.<sup>17</sup> Finally, management exercises *control* of its employees so far as it is able to offer the positive incentives of pay increases, promotional opportunities, and the like, and the negative sanctions of discipline and discharge. Managerial concern with such devices of control becomes particularly important whenever managerial authority decreases in potency.

In all three areas, the exercise of managerial power has come to be significantly limited in modern industrial firms. Indeed, managerial authority is never completely unlimited, but is always circumscribed by a "zone of acceptance" or a "zone of indifference" describing the areas within which the directive communications of superiors are likely to be accepted by subordinates as governing their actions.<sup>18</sup>

We are also concerned here with an analysis of how employee expectations are influenced by the needs of different types of employees. *Employment does not mean the same thing to all men*. To some, it is one step in their career. To others, it is security in a particular occupation. To still others, it does not mean a career at all—employment is simply a temporary expedient. It is a principal theme of this study that these differences in career orientation among different types of employees affect significantly the kinds of rights to which they lay claim.

Attention will be given to some speculation about the anticipated effects of automation upon employee rights. In most of our discussion it is assumed that the factor of technology has

<sup>17</sup> Where supervisors who hold formal positions of authority are also employees of high seniority or recognized job competence, their influence over subordinates may be strengthened accordingly. See Howard M. Vollmer and Jack A. Kinney, "Informal Requirements for Supervisory Positions," *Personnel*, XXXIII (1957), pp. 431-441.

<sup>18</sup> For a discussion of "zone of acceptance," see Herbert Simon, *Administrative Behavior* (New York: Macmillan, 1954), especially pp. 12, 18, 116, 131-133, 204; for a discussion of "zone of indifference," see Chester Barnard, *op. cit.*, pp. 167-169.



been held constant. However, technological change is important in industrial society. Since the organization of industry is closely related to the technological aspects of the productive process, and since employee claims to and management recognition of employee rights are in turn related to organizational structure, we may expect what has been called "the second industrial revolution" (automation) to have certain significant effects upon the principal concern of this study—employee rights—especially in mass production enterprises.

#### METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The approach to this analysis is sociological. Other students have approached the study of employee rights from different perspectives. For example, Sumner Slichter, a labor economist, described the development of restrictions on the conditions of employment by an analysis of "the system of industrial jurisprudence" arising out of trade union regulations and the provisions of collective contracts.<sup>19</sup> Undoubtedly, collective bargaining is an important source for the stability of employee rights. As indicated earlier, without strong trade unions the ability of workers to assert and gain recognition of what they claim to be their legitimate rights vis-à-vis employers is seriously weakened. Nevertheless, we maintain that claims to employee rights do not *originate* simply in power struggles between unions and management. The collective agreements which emerge from such struggles protect workers' claims, which have their origin, in part at least, in the nature of the employment relationships. Furthermore, the recognition of certain types of employee rights is not always a reluctant concession by management in response to employee pressure. Some types of employee rights are more strongly asserted by management itself than by workers, since these forms of self-restraint are apt to be more closely related to the requirements of industry than to the needs of employees. However, the *effect* of these claims is similar, whether they are more closely related to individual needs or to organizational needs; in both cases they result in pressure for limitations upon the arbitrary exercise of managerial power over employees.

Perhaps the perspective of the sociologist may be most sharply distinguished from that of other social scientists by his concern

<sup>19</sup> Slichter, *op. cit.*

with the nature of social relationships. For the sociologist, social relationships often constitute the basic unit of analysis. For example, he views an "employee," not primarily as a unique personality with a peculiar personal background and history nor as a commodity in a labor market nor as a citizen in a political order (although every employee is each one of these things in a very real sense), but rather as a participant in a social relationship with his employer.

Of course, this relationship of employment in modern industry differs significantly from the master-servant relation in the nonindustrial aristocratic societies which Tocqueville described. There it was typically a relation between two individuals, a property owner and a hired servant. In modern industrial societies, however, this relation is characteristically one between an employee and representatives of management (supervisors), who are themselves employees.<sup>20</sup> The supervisor is not only an employee, but also a representative of the organization. He plays two roles: the role of employee vis-à-vis his superiors and the role of supervisor or manager vis-à-vis his subordinates. He is expected to behave in certain ways in his relation to subordinates and in other ways in his relation to superiors.<sup>21</sup> However, it is the basic relation between supervisors and employees with which we are concerned here.

Thus, the parties to the employment relationship may be viewed as persons acting in the roles of "employees," on the one hand, and persons acting in the roles of "management representatives," on the other. These management representatives are typically foremen and supervisors. Or, they may be specialists from the personnel department in the firm. For example, in chapter iv, it will be seen that the exercise of "authority" in the employment relationship typically involves the interaction of employees and supervisors; but in chapter vi, it will be pointed out that the exercise of "control" frequently involves the interaction of employees and higher level management officials or representatives of the personnel department. Our concern, then,

<sup>20</sup> Peter F. Drucker has elaborated upon this idea in "The Employee Society," *American Journal of Sociology*, LVIII (1953), pp. 358-363.

<sup>21</sup> This situation may cause considerable strain upon supervisors and foremen in large industrial establishments; see for example Fritz J. Roethlisberger, "The Foreman: Master and Victim of Double Talk," *Harvard Business Review*, XXIII (1945), pp. 285-294; also Donald E. Wray, "Marginal Men of Industry: The Foremen," *American Journal of Sociology*, LIV (1949), pp. 298-301.

is not with all aspects of the relationship of specific types of individuals, but rather with the relation of individuals in the roles of employee and management representative. Our more specific interest is with the way in which both individual and organizational needs result in employee claims to, and managerial recognition of, different types of employee rights.

Thus in focusing upon an analysis of the expectations of employees and management regarding employee rights and limitations upon the arbitrary exercise of managerial power, this study supplements other inquiries into developments in union regulations and collective agreements. Our approach is to probe into the social dynamics behind such expectations in order to identify additional sources of weakness and strength in employee rights.

#### SOURCES OF DATA

The bulk of the original data in this study is taken from four surveys. The first of these we shall describe as the Ordnance Survey. In this survey data were collected by means of a written questionnaire administered to a representative sample of approximately 2,100 nonsupervisory civilian employees at five United States Army Ordnance installations in various parts of the United States. Similar questionnaires were given to approximately 1,100 supervisory employees. The survey was sponsored by the Office of the Chief of Ordnance in 1953-1954 in connection with the Ordnance supervisor selection project.<sup>22</sup>

A second source of data may be designated as the Western Arsenal Survey. These data were also collected by means of a written questionnaire submitted to a representative sample of approximately 460 nonsupervisory civilian employees at a West Coast Ordnance installation in 1957. The survey was sponsored by the management of the installation in order to gather information about employee attitudes toward a variety of matters. Some of the data especially relative to attitudes toward employee rights were reviewed for this study.

A third source of data may be designated as the Bay Area Employee Survey. This survey was sponsored by the Institute of Industrial Relations in 1957-1958. Interviews were conducted

<sup>22</sup> For a further description of the specific objectives and methods of this study, see Howard M. Vollmer and Jack A. Kinney, *Identifying Potential Supervisors*, Research Series No. 12 (Iowa City: University of Iowa, Bureau of Labor and Management, 1956), section II.

with approximately 100 nonsupervisory employees at a cement manufacturing plant, an automobile assembly plant, a hardware manufacturing plant, and an aircraft maintenance base, all in the San Francisco Bay area. Employees in skilled trades, semi-skilled occupations, clerical work, and staff specialist positions were included. The objective was to elicit information on attitudes toward specific types of employee rights from employees in various kinds of private industrial establishments and in various occupational classifications.

Finally, the fourth survey may be designated as the Bay Area Personnel Management Survey. It, too, was sponsored by the Institute of Industrial Relations in 1958 and consisted of interviews with 44 staff personnel directors in San Francisco Bay area industrial and commercial firms. The objective was to gather information about management practices and personnel directors' attitudes in matters bearing on employee rights.

It should be pointed out that these surveys are focused upon large-scale public and private enterprises engaged in the manufacture and distribution of goods for military use or public consumption. Therefore the principal conclusions of this study are limited to those industries. In some cases, the findings have been supplemented by information about conditions in non-manufacturing establishments. However, the differing conditions of employment in nonmanufacturing enterprises undoubtedly merit further analysis before we draw meaningful conclusions about them.

A more detailed description of the methodological approach and techniques of the studies upon which this monograph is based is included in Appendix B. At this point, however, we should emphasize the limitations of the data derived from these studies. Except for the Ordnance Survey, the data are based only upon local samples. Furthermore, the conclusions of this study apply only to large-scale industrial establishments; data from smaller firms are not included. However, those companies included in the Bay Area Employee Survey and the Bay Area Personnel Management Survey are believed to be representative of leading manufacturing enterprises, where important examples and patterns are set for smaller firms.

In summary, the objective of this study of the employment relationship in modern industry is to identify tentatively some of the significant factors which seem to influence the development

of claims to employee rights and limitations upon managerial power. It is therefore an exploratory study. Only by duplication of such a study in different situations and perhaps under different circumstances may we hope to prove (or disprove) our conclusions.

## **CHAPTER II. BUREAUCRATIZATION AND THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP**

The process of bureaucratization has had certain important implications for the character of the employment relationship in modern American industry. Before we consider some of these implications, however, it is essential to clarify just what the process of bureaucratization involves and what its particular value is for our analysis.

Considerable confusion has been associated with the use of this concept in the literature on social organization and problems of administration. A great deal of this confusion has arisen from the improper equation of bureaucratization with certain other elements in social organization. One of the major errors has been to equate loosely the concept of "bureaucracy" with concepts of "rational organization" or "rational administration."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps such a conclusion in the literature derives most naturally from an uncritical acceptance of Max Weber's thesis about the progressive rationalization

Bureaucracy is undoubtedly one form of rational organization oriented toward effectiveness in the accomplishment of organizational goals.<sup>2</sup> However, it is not the only form of rational organization found in modern American industry. In several types of industries, subcontracting, in contrast to bureaucratic organization, is the usual arrangement for the production of certain goods or services. This is particularly the method in the building construction industry, and also to a considerable extent in many other types of manufacturing industries which may be bureaucratically organized themselves, and yet which subcontract the production of parts and component items. It is as rational to subcontract as to produce goods or services within a bureaucratic structure; indeed, it may result in considerable cost advantage. The production of items within the framework of a bureaucratic organization is more rational than subcontracting only where these items are continuously required and are of such a specialized nature that to produce them within the structure would not overtax and overextend it.

Another mistake is to equate the process of bureaucratization with the development of formal rules and regulative structures. One of the essential components of the process is certainly the development of rules and rule-making mechanisms, but bureaucratization involves more than this. For example, we may see an increase in rules and regulations in collective bargaining and contract administration. Yet it would be a distortion of the concept to say that the relations of managements to trade unions have become more bureaucratized. Collective contracts and institutionalized agencies such as arbitration boards reflect the development of rules and regulation in the relation of two types of more or less bureaucratic organizations to each other. They do not represent the development of any kind of over-all bureaucratic organization which superimposes itself upon the individual identity of business enterprises or trade unions, even as governmental regulations and regulative agencies do not

---

of administrative processes in western societies and its embodiment in bureaucratic forms of organization; see Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, ed. and trans. by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1947), especially pp. 329-340; see also Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. and trans. by H. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), especially pp. 196-244.

<sup>2</sup> For an analysis of the concept of "effectiveness," see Chester Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), especially pp. 55-59, 91-94, 139-160.

represent a superorganization which diminishes the significance of the separate identity of corporations subject to their jurisdiction. Rules and regulative agencies of the type mentioned here perform highly specialized functions concerned with the interrelationship of bureaucratic organizations; they are not part of an unbroken line of hierarchical authority which is characteristic of bureaucratic organizations.

A third error has been to identify the process of bureaucratization with middle management, the levels of organizational hierarchy between the highest level of leadership and the lowest level of nonsupervisory employees. Historically, the process of bureaucratization may have had its greatest impact in this area of organizational structure. However, it is a principal theme here that lower levels of nonsupervisory employees in modern American industry have also been significantly affected by the process of bureaucratization.

We have indicated briefly what bureaucratization is not. Now we shall devote some attention to a more precise statement of what it is and what it involves. Bureaucratization is an organizational process which develops typically under conditions of increasing size in organizations established in given locations and oriented toward the continuous production of a range of goods and services. Basically, bureaucratization arises out of three types of needs within the organizational structure: (1) the need for *coördination* in decision-making; (2) the need for *specialization* of functions; and (3) the need for *regulation* of the recruitment, training, promotion, discipline, and separation of personnel in fulfilling these specialized functions.<sup>3</sup> These needs are represented in three of Max Weber's well-known principles of bureaucracy: (1) "authority relations between positions are ordered systematically"; (2) "defined rights and duties are pre-

<sup>3</sup> Therefore large size in itself does not necessarily lead to a high degree of bureaucratization in organizations, except where increase in size of an organization is coupled with strong needs for coördination, specialization, and personnel regulation. This is the case typically in large business enterprises. In large universities, for example, the case may be different. These institutions may permit a relatively high degree of decentralization in decision-making by various academic departments and even by individual faculty members. Furthermore, professional standards in various academic disciplines, rather than the bureaucratic standards of the institution, may be relied upon rather heavily in the recruitment and advancement of academic personnel. In business enterprises, on the other hand, it is more likely that increased size in itself will result in the greater cogency of organizational needs for special mechanisms of coördination, specialization, and personnel regulation.



scribed for particular positions"; and (3) "the recruitment, promotion, and separation of personnel is formally regulated."<sup>4</sup> These are the essential elements of bureaucratic organization and are coördinate. They tend to occur concurrently and form a syndrome which we may conveniently label as "bureaucratic organization."

Thus, for example, it is impossible to have a high degree of specialization in an organization without authority for the co-ordination of specialized functions. Furthermore, it is impossible to perpetuate an organization with relatively stable systems of differentiation and coördination without regulating the selection and training of personnel to fill the positions in the formal structure. The primary dictum of placement policies in bureaucratic structure, therefore, is that "the man must be selected and trained to fit the requirements of a particular job."<sup>5</sup>

In modern American industry, development of the bureaucratic principle of authority may be indicated by the increased use of formal "organization charts." Also, development of the bureaucratic principle of specialization may be shown by increased use of "job analysis," "job evaluation," and resulting "job descriptions." Finally, development of the bureaucratic principle of personnel control may be indicated by the increase in written personnel regulations, particularly with reference to the establishment of formal policies regarding "objective" personnel selection devices, seniority in promotions and layoffs, and formal rules governing the discipline and discharge of personnel.

Not only has there been a marked increase in each type of bureaucratic practice in American industry in recent years, but also these trends are particularly significant in the development of certain aspects of employee rights. More specifically, the rules which have developed with regard to selection, lay-off and retention, promotion, and discipline and discharge have resulted in significant limitations upon the arbitrary exercise

<sup>4</sup> These principles are paraphrased from Max Weber's description of the characteristics of bureaucracy; see *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociological Theory*, pp. 196-204.

<sup>5</sup> In describing the elements of bureaucratic organization, we are using the concept as an ideal type, which is never perfectly represented in any specific organization. Specific organizations, therefore, are only more or less bureaucratized. Even in relatively more bureaucratized organizations, for example, lines of authority are often not as clear-cut as one might be led to believe from examination of a formal organization chart, functional specialties sometimes overlap, and the personality characteristics of individual employees may have an effect in altering the job requirements of specific positions.

of managerial prerogatives and power. These limitations are not simply the result of trade union pressures through collective bargaining; they are more in the nature of *self-restraint* which managements have imposed upon themselves as a result of organization needs for coördination, specialization, and personnel regulation. Thus managements, motivated by considerations of technical effectiveness in achieving organizational goals, have been impelled to systematize authority relationships, to differentiate functional specialties, and to establish personnel regulations—yet the very system and rules they have established have become commitments which have tended to bind the hands of the rulemakers themselves. What is more, most large businesses have established personnel offices or agencies to maintain and implement these mechanisms of self-restraint. Finally, the nature of the self-restraint imposed as a result of the process of bureaucratization may be expressed most generally in the principle of “equal treatment for all employees.”

Here, therefore, is one aspect of an institutional environment favorable to the development of claims to and recognition of employee rights. The special value of the concept “bureaucratization” is that it enables us to analyze this environment through an examination of the self-restraint imposed by certain types of *internal* requirements of large-scale industries, instead of concentrating on the impingement of *external* forces on the firm.

#### INCREASING EXTENT OF BUREAUCRATIZATION

A series of nation-wide studies by William R. Spriegel and his associates of industrial firms of varied sizes and varied types has revealed that bureaucratization in those industries generally has increased in recent years, especially in the period following World War II. For example, in 1947, 57 per cent of the firms surveyed reported that they had formal organization charts for managerial personnel (table 1). In 1953 this had increased to 77 per cent of the sample. Also, in 1947, 35 per cent of the firms surveyed reported that they were using departmental charts. In 1953 this per cent had increased to 54.<sup>6</sup>

This same study indicated that the use of organization charts

<sup>6</sup> William R. Spriegel and Alfred C. Dale, *Personnel Practices in Industry*, Personnel Study No. 8 (Austin: University of Texas, Bureau of Business Research, 1954), p. 39.

TABLE 1

BUREAUCRATIC PRACTICES BY YEAR OF SURVEY <sup>a</sup>

Bureaucratic practices <sup>a</sup>	Year of survey		Difference in per cent
	1947 (in per cent)	1953 (in per cent)	1947 to 1953
Use of managerial organization charts	57 <sup>b</sup>	77	20
Use of intradepartmental organization charts	35	54	19
Job analysis	66	80	14
Job evaluation	55	68	13
Personnel policies written	46	67	21

<sup>a</sup> These data are abstracted from two surveys conducted by William R. Spriegel and Alfred G. Dale, as reported in *Personnel Practices in Industry*, Personnel Study No. 8 (Austin: University of Texas, Bureau of Business Research, 1954), pp. 39, 45.

<sup>b</sup> All per cents indicated in this table are expressed as percentages of the 628 firms included in the 1953 survey and the 325 firms included in the 1947 survey. The data were collected from questionnaire studies of a nation-wide sample of firms of all sizes in a wide variety of manufacturing and nonmanufacturing enterprises. The firms responding to the mailed questionnaire were said to represent a high proportion of those sampled (80.5 per cent in 1953). The sample was not randomized, but instead was intended to be selective of leading firms in various industries. The authors reported in this regard: "It should be emphasized that the survey is not a sampling of American business as a whole, nor is it the intention of its authors that it should be so construed. The listing of respondents represents a selection of firms known or believed to have well-developed personnel policies. Within the limits dictated by this selectivity, an attempt was made to preserve a reasonable balance in the pattern of company locations, sizes, and types. The value of the survey lies in the fact that it is based upon a selection of leading companies and that it reflects contemporary personnel thought at an advanced level. Accordingly, the interpretations made in this study are restricted to observations and inferences concerning trends in this section of business. Such a study is perhaps more valuable in examining the dynamics behind developing and sometimes controversial theories of personnel relations than any nonselective survey could hope to be"; *ibid.*, pp. 8-10.

was positively associated with the size of the firm. Spriegel's finding was that charts were used by 70.6 per cent of companies of less than 1,000 employees, by 75.7 per cent of companies of from 1,000 to 5,000 employees, and by 86.4 per cent of companies of more than 5,000 employees.<sup>7</sup>

Increased use of job analysis, job evaluation, and resulting formal job descriptions has also been indicative of increasing bureaucratization in industry. Spriegel's study showed that in 1947, 66 per cent of the firms surveyed reported that they used

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

some kind of job analysis, and 55 per cent indicated they had a specific program of comparative job evaluation based upon a point, ranking, classification, or factor comparison plan. By 1953 the percentage of firms using job analysis had increased to 80, and the percentage using job evaluation had increased to 68, as shown in table 1. Another survey in 1951 of personnel practices in 600 Southern industrial plants from Maryland to Louisiana reported the per cent of plants using job evaluation to be somewhat comparable to the national sample of the Spriegel study. This survey of Southern plants by H. E. Steele and others is particularly interesting, however, in that the factor of plant size was included in reporting the findings. Plants of fewer than 500 employees were classified as "small" and larger plants were classified as "large." In nonunionized firms 56 per cent of the small plants and 77 per cent of large plants reported the use of job evaluation. In unionized firms 54 per cent of small plants and 69 per cent of large plants used job evaluation.<sup>8</sup> Thus increased size of an enterprise, in both the presence and absence of unionization, is associated with increased use of job evaluation.<sup>9</sup>

Moreover, the use of formal personnel policies has increased in recent years. The Spriegel study of firms on a nation-wide basis reported in 1947 that 46 per cent of firms surveyed had comprehensive written statements of basic personnel policies, whereas the 1953 survey indicated that this percentage had increased to 67 (table 1). The Bureau of National Affairs reported in 1957 that about 3 out of every 4 companies have written plant rules outlining personnel policies and practices.<sup>10</sup> My study of large Bay area firms in 1958 indicated that about 86 per cent have personnel regulations of this type. One personnel director of a prominent paper products company commented on this trend as follows:

<sup>8</sup> H. Ellsworth Steele, William R. Myles, and Sherwood C. McIntyre, "Personnel Practices in the South," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, IX (1956), p. 248.

<sup>9</sup> Similarly, in my study of forty-four large Bay area firms ranging in size from 1,500 to 59,500 employees, only five companies reported they did not use formal job descriptions. In one of these five firms the Personnel Director stated, "Our lack of written job descriptions is, in my opinion, our greatest weakness in our personnel program."

<sup>10</sup> The Bureau of National Affairs, *Disciplinary Practices and Policies*, Personnel Policies Survey No. 42 (Washington, D. C.: Bureau of National Affairs, 1957), pp. 1-2. This study reports that copies of personnel regulations are either posted or given to employees in most companies.

We believe we have developed increased understanding with our employees over the years. In connection with increased understanding, we believe in this company that rules are necessary to any game, whether you are talking about football, baseball, or employee relations. The larger a firm becomes and the more employees you have, the more rules of procedure you need in order to try to keep personnel policies uniform. (Paper products company—Interview 217.)

This development of more and more complex rules and regulations is closely associated with the needs of large-scale industries for coördination and stabilization of production. As Clark Kerr and Abraham Siegel have pointed out:

The industrialization process, whatever the form, must always evoke the structuring or restructuring of a web of rules which relates workers to one another and to the productive process. . . . The disruption of older (i.e., preindustrial) relationships intimately tied to older production patterns, to less elaborate machinery, to less specialization and division of labor, and by the evolution of a new code of "law" which governs the behavior of the labor force in the new setting.<sup>11</sup>

In the United States railroads were the first industry in which personnel regulations in the form of "working rules" were widespread. The original working rules were simply oral instructions issued by supervisory employees. Later these oral instructions were posted as written statements on bulletin boards. Then management printed and issued rule books to employees in order to standardize regulations throughout the railroad systems. By 1907 employee organizations began to demand a voice in the formulation of such rules and regulations, and this paved the way for their embodiment, in part at least, in collective agreements.<sup>12</sup> Orme Phelps has estimated that there are now between 20,000,000 and 21,000,000 persons in the United States employed by business firms large enough to require formal personnel policies and procedures.<sup>13</sup>

What are the consequences of increased bureaucratization to the employment relationship? As indicated previously, it is a

<sup>11</sup> Clark Kerr and Abraham Siegel, "The Structuring of the Labor Force in Industrial Society: New Dimensions and New Questions," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, VIII (1955), p. 162.

<sup>12</sup> Jacob J. Kaufman, "Working Rules in the Railroad Industry," *Labor Law Journal*, V (1954), p. 819.

<sup>13</sup> Orme W. Phelps, "A Structural Model of the U. S. Labor Market," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, X (1957), p. 412.

principal contention of this chapter that bureaucratization leads to increased restriction in decision-making by management regarding the treatment of employees. In order to show how this is the case it is necessary to make a somewhat detailed analysis of the content of the formal personnel policies which develop as an integral part of increased bureaucratization.

#### CONTENT OF FORMAL PERSONNEL POLICIES

The formalization of personnel policies is particularly evident in the following areas of personnel management: selection, layoff and retention, promotion, and discipline and discharge. In each one of these areas the development of formal policy has significantly limited the exercise of managerial power over employees.

A National Industrial Conference Board study reported that there is still considerable divergence in the detail in which companies formally state their selection policies. Some companies, like Armstrong Cork (as of 1947) simply state: "The Armstrong Cork Company is determined to have associated with it—in each position—the most capable individual available".<sup>14</sup>

Other companies have more detailed policies regarding employment, as illustrated in the following examples:

Selection of new employees is made on the basis of such factors as ability, skill, experience, training, character, physical fitness and residence in the area in which the plant is located. . . .

As stated in the President's Executive Order No. 8802 and in the National Labor Relations Act, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of membership or nonmembership in any law-abiding organization nor on the basis of religion or race. . . .<sup>15</sup>

Some of the conditions most frequently embodied in written statements of employment policy, according to the National Industrial Conference Board study, are: (1) the use of tests and physical examinations to determine qualifications for employment; (2) minimum and/or maximum age requirements; (3) minimum educational requirements; (4) character and work references; (5) the granting of preferential consideration to former

<sup>14</sup> National Industrial Conference Board, *Written Statements of Personnel Policy*, Studies in Personnel Policy No. 79 (New York: National Industrial Conference Board, 1947), p. 19.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

employees, residents of the community, and citizens of the United States; (6) restrictions against discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, or national origin; (7) special requirements relative to the employment of women; and (8) special restrictions on the employment of relatives of present employees.<sup>16</sup> A study by F. T. Malm of hiring practices in the San Francisco Bay area revealed that the following percentages of firms take certain of these factors into account in employment procedures: (1) 88 per cent consider the physical condition of job applicants; (2) 63 per cent the age requirements; (3) 67 per cent the educational requirements; and (4) 88 per cent have special restrictions regarding the placement of female employees.<sup>17</sup>

Although a formal policy specifying the health, age, education, sex, and other characteristics of employees to be hired in itself imposes certain limitations upon managerial discretion, it is the use of "objective" selection devices to measure and rank applicants according to certain aptitudes, abilities, and areas of special knowledge that especially limits "free choice" by management. This is true even where management is not required to hire the individual who places highest on the selection test. The apparent objectivity of selection tests where they have become a standard procedure in a firm places a considerable "burden of proof" upon an official who overrules the test findings on the basis of his personal judgment. The widespread use of tests in modern business and governmental organizations, as William H. Whyte has pointed out, has lent strong support to the uncritical acceptance of test findings.<sup>18</sup>

Several surveys have indicated that the use of tests for selection purposes has been increasing in recent years. The Spriegel study reported that 75 per cent of the companies in a nationwide sample used various types of tests for selection in 1953.<sup>19</sup>

Use of tests and staff consultation is also related to the size of industries. The Spriegel study reported that tests for selection purposes were used by 55.9 per cent of firms with fewer than 1,000 employees, by 74.5 per cent of firms with from 1,000 to

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> F. Theodore Malm, "Hiring Procedures and Selection Standards in the San Francisco Bay Area," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, VIII (1955), pp. 242-248.

<sup>18</sup> William H. Whyte, Jr., *The Organization Man* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1956), pp. 190-194.

<sup>19</sup> Spriegel and Dale, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

5,000 employees, and by 90.6 per cent of firms with more than 5,000 employees.<sup>20</sup>

Firms are more likely to use tests of mental intelligence and special abilities than tests of personality or psychological factors. The Spriegel study found that in 1953, 73 per cent of the companies used stenographic or clerical tests, 40 per cent mechanical aptitude tests, 56 per cent intelligence tests, and 40 per cent used personality or interest tests.<sup>21</sup>

Managerial prerogatives have also become limited in matters of layoff and retention, particularly through the introduction of seniority policies. John A. Lapp has pointed to the origin of seniority considerations in the nature of the employer-employee relation itself:

The idea of seniority is as old as the employer-employee relationship. Employers generally retained their employees as long as they could do the required work. They did not contract to retain them and could let them go at their option, but the practice of retaining older men generally prevailed. The experienced senior men, as a rule, were likely to become the most competent and dependable employees and would be retained for that reason if for no other.<sup>22</sup>

Seniority has come to be a generally recognized principle governing layoff procedures in both union and nonunion firms. Seniority has been recognized longest in the railroad industry.<sup>23</sup> Mass production industries commonly followed practices of indiscriminate layoff and rehiring until the 1930's, when it became apparent that the common character of semiskilled mass production work in large shops made application of the seniority principle feasible. One representative of the United Steelworkers of America in 1950 wrote of this development as follows:

Seniority rules have been worked out in the course of negotiations in the past thirteen years on the basis of agreements at the local union level. As a result there were no great problems of application when

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>22</sup> John A. Lapp, *How to Handle Problems of Seniority* (New York: National Foreman's Institute, 1946), p. 2.

<sup>23</sup> Dan H. Mater, "The Development and Operation of the Railroad Seniority System," *The Journal of Business of the University of Chicago*, XIV (1941), pp. 1-65. Transportation and communication industries under federal regulation have been especially subject to governmental control of seniority matters in organizational mergers. See Mark L. Kahn, "Seniority Problems in Business Mergers," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, VIII (1955) pp. 365-377.



the steel industry began to slump in the Spring of last year. Some eight or nine months after the union signed its first contract in 1937, a depression hit the steel industry. Men were laid off by the thousands, and there were perhaps more grievances dealing with seniority than with any other subject. But this time layoffs on a much lesser scale resulted in no grievances at all. The rights of employees were fairly well defined, and both sides adhered generally to their obligations under the contract.<sup>24</sup>

The seniority principle is also found in a large proportion of nonunion firms, according to a National Industrial Conference Board study. They reported that seniority applied to layoff actions in 95 per cent of the nonunionized companies studied and that 83 per cent of the companies recognized seniority in rehiring after layoffs.<sup>25</sup> The Steele study of Southern firms also found that seniority in "promotion, layoff, and rehire" was used in from 84 to 88 per cent of the nonunionized companies and in about 99 per cent of the unionized companies.<sup>26</sup> Therefore we cannot dismiss seniority policies as a consequence of collective agreements alone.

A survey of personnel practices in Cleveland, Ohio, firms reported that the policy that seniority alone prevails in layoffs increases in frequency in direct proportion to company size.<sup>27</sup> This would also support the thesis that seniority policies are integrally related to certain special needs of larger enterprises.

However, in many companies the principle of seniority is not applied automatically but is qualified by management's evaluation of the relative ability of employees subject to layoffs.<sup>28</sup> A typical contract provision on this matter reads as follows: In increasing or reducing the working force seniority shall govern except that the ability and willingness of the individual employee to

<sup>24</sup> Cited in Robert L. Aronson, *Layoff Policies and Practices: Recent Experience Under Collective Bargaining* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University, 1950), p. 25.

<sup>25</sup> John J. Speed and James J. Bambrick, *Seniority Systems in Non-Unionized Companies*, Studies in Personnel Policy No. 110 (New York: National Industrial Conference Board, 1950), p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> Steele, Myles, and McIntire, *op. cit.*, p. 248. Spriegel and Dale reported that a seniority system for layoff and rehiring was in effect in 86 per cent of firms surveyed in 1953, although this finding was not analyzed for union versus non-union firms; Spriegel and Dale, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>27</sup> Hubbard C. Capes, "Personnel Practices as Related to Company Size" *Personnel*, XXVII (1950), p. 121.

<sup>28</sup> Aronson, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-36. See also Frederick H. Harbison, *The Seniority Principle in Union-Management Relations* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University, 1939), pp. 21-23.

do the job shall determine preference both in being kept at work and in being returned to work.<sup>29</sup>

What this means in practice is that transfers in lieu of layoffs are commonly limited to those jobs previously held by the employee within a seniority unit.<sup>30</sup>

The National Industrial Conference Board study also pointed out that 82 per cent of nonunion firms qualified seniority by "merit or ability."<sup>31</sup> A typical management policy follows:

In the event of a reduction in force in any department the persons having the lowest seniority with the company, assuming their ability and willingness to work is relatively equal, will be the first to be laid off.<sup>32</sup>

Management rationale on this type of policy has been expressed by a National Association of Manufacturers spokesman in the following terms:

In the worker's mind, seniority is an impersonal standard which minimizes possible employer discrimination and favoritism in matters affecting the worker's job. For this reason, employers' policies regarding the seniority principle represent one of the cornerstones of sound labor-management relations.<sup>33</sup>

Seniority is generally less important in promotions than in layoffs. The National Industrial Conference Board study reported that seniority was found to apply in layoffs in 95 per cent of the firms sampled, and it applied in promotions (and demotions) only in 75 per cent of the companies.<sup>34</sup> Frederick Harbison has claimed that seniority in promotions is less important than in layoffs both because industrial employees commonly are motivated more strongly by considerations of job security rather than by job advancement, and also because managements are more likely to be concerned with competence and merit in promotions than in layoffs.<sup>35</sup> In my interview with a personnel director in a prominent Bay area company, this situation was expressed:

<sup>29</sup> Aronson, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Speed and Bambrick, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> National Association of Manufacturers, "Current Industrial Seniority Practices: A Survey," *Management Review*, XXXVI (1947), p. 84.

<sup>34</sup> Speed and Bambrick, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>35</sup> Harbison, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

We follow seniority strictly in layoffs. In promotions we follow seniority plus ability—but the problem is how to define and evaluate ability. [*Italics mine.*] (Can manufacturing company—Interview 202.)

Thus in most firms ability is given more consideration than seniority in promotion. A petroleum products manufacturer expressed the policy of his company in the following terms:

In making promotions, transfers, and demotions, consideration is given first to ability, then to experience, and then to length of continuous service with the company. If there are qualified employees within the company or its subsidiaries, the general practice is to promote them to higher job classifications.<sup>36</sup>

However, although seniority is given only second consideration in promotion policies, the recognition of seniority does constitute at least a minimal restriction on the completely “free” exercise of managerial prerogatives. On the other hand, so far as an “objective” procedure for evaluating the relative ability of employees is introduced into a promotion policy, this constitutes a further restriction on the free choice of management. In this regard, William H. Whyte reported that about 25 per cent of leading corporations currently use tests for promotion and that this proportion is increasing.<sup>37</sup> The National Association of Manufacturers supports this trend toward the development of objective techniques for measurement of employee abilities, as expressed in the following terms:

It is vital to the development and maintenance of good human relationships that the factors used to qualify length of service be measured in as objective and equitable manner as possible. To do so, management should develop adequate techniques, including the best use of employee records, job descriptions, merit rating plans, and supervisory appraisal ability.<sup>38</sup>

As for future trends, Philomena Mullady has claimed that changes in the character of the labor force and increasing automation will necessitate increasing emphasis on skill and decreasing emphasis on seniority.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> National Industrial Conference Board, *Written Statements of Personnel Policy*, p. 17.

<sup>37</sup> Whyte, *op. cit.*, pp. 192–193.

<sup>38</sup> *Seniority* (New York: National Association of Manufacturers, 1955), p. 7.

<sup>39</sup> Philomena Mullady, “Seniority—A Changing Concept,” *Personnel*, XXXIII (1956), pp. 78–81.

It is in the area of discipline and discharge that the most elaborate personnel regulations have developed which have special significance in limiting managerial prerogatives. The range of management action in this regard has been affected especially by three developments: (1) the formal specification of causes for discipline and discharge; (2) the establishment of procedural limitations and systems of graduated penalties for various offenses; and (3) the establishment of formal grievance procedures relative to complaints arising out of disciplinary actions.

The specification of causes for discipline and discharge may be a matter of joint agreement between management and trade unions, whereby they become embodied in the provisions of collective contracts. The 1957 *Uniform Labor Agreement* in the Pacific coast paper industry lists thirteen specific causes for discharge.<sup>40</sup> Where such provisions appear in a collective contract, management, by implication, has abandoned a claim to establish causes for discharge *unilaterally* without making them the subject of union negotiation. The Director of Industrial Relations at a Bay area plant referred to this matter when he said to the author:

We made a mistake in allowing specific causes for discharge to be listed in our previous contract. We have eliminated such a listing in our present contract. (Automobile assembly plant—Interview 203.)

In another study an industrial relations executive commented:

Our plant rules are not formalized by being reduced to writing. We have avoided this, for to do so would possibly make them subject to negotiation with the union. Not having written rules has strengthened rather than weakened the unilateral authority of management in this regard. This is a fact, not wishful thinking.<sup>41</sup>

On the other hand, a recent survey showed that 76 per cent of collective contracts in manufacturing industries and 50 per cent in nonmanufacturing industries have a general "management rights" provision to the effect that management has the authority to discharge employees for "proper cause," "just

<sup>40</sup> United Papermakers and Paperworkers; International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite, and Paper Mill Workers; Pacific Coast Association of Pulp and Paper Manufacturers, *Uniform Labor Agreement* (as amended in 1957), section 17.

<sup>41</sup> Bureau of National Affairs, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

cause,” or simply for “cause.”<sup>42</sup> Where such a clause is present in the contract, or where the contract is silent on the matter of discharge, or where there is no union contract, it becomes incumbent upon management itself to establish standards for discharge and other forms of discipline. Such standards are frequently embodied in the “shop rules” and personnel regulations of these firms.<sup>43</sup> Where this is the case, although these standards are self-imposed by management, they again act to limit the arbitrary exercise of managerial prerogatives.

This is particularly evident when we analyze the nature of the specific causes for disciplinary action commonly found in the personnel policies of business enterprises. Table 2 groups these specific causes into five categories: (1) offenses of absence or tardiness; (2) offenses concerned primarily with the performance of work tasks; (3) offenses concerned with the relation between the employee and the employing firm; (4) offenses concerned with the relation between the employee and his superiors within the firm; and (5) offenses concerned with the relation between the employee and his fellow employees. Although the specific matters considered in table 2 under each category may be somewhat overlapping and subject to variations in classification, this analysis suggests that there are certain *essential* requirements of the employment relationship—essential in the sense that it is necessary for employees to perform these requirements satisfactorily in order for an industry to achieve its production and sales goals in a competitive economy. Where employees fail to meet these requirements, management may claim disciplinary prerogatives.

This is especially evident in the general requirement that employees be at their place of work at specified times. Table 2 indicates that all company policies studied included a rule about disciplinary action for chronic absenteeism, and most policies included specific reference to tardiness and to leaving a work-site without permission. Similarly, most companies had rules relating to unsatisfactory work performance, with intoxication as

<sup>42</sup> Bureau of National Affairs, “Discharge, Discipline, and Resignation,” *Collective Bargaining Negotiations and Contracts*, II (1956), p. 40:1.

<sup>43</sup> My survey of leading Bay area companies indicated that 24 out of 29 companies operated under collective contracts which did not list specific causes for discharge. Of the 24 companies whose labor contracts did not list specific causes for discharge, 11 reportedly had formal personnel policies or shop rules which list specific causes for discharge and other discipline.

TABLE 2

## CONDUCT SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION IN RULES OF SELECTED COMPANIES

	Company designation <sup>a</sup>												
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
PHYSICAL PRESENCE AT PLACE OF WORK													
Absenteeism .....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tardiness .....			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Unauthorized departure .....		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
SATISFACTORY WORK PERFORMANCE													
Unsatisfactory work ..		X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Negligence .....		X	X	X		X	X		X		X	X	X
Restricting output ....				X	X	X		X					
Intoxication .....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Sleeping on job ....			X			X	X					X	
RESPECT FOR COMPANY													
Damage company property .....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Theft company property .....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Revealing confidential information .....			X					X					
Maligning company ..					X		X						
Unauthorized distribution of information ..				X	X		X	X					
RESPECT FOR SUPERVISION													
Insubordination .....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dishonesty .....	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Bribery .....		X	X				X				X	X	
RESPECT FOR FELLOW WORKERS													
Safety violation .....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Malicious mischief ...			X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	
Fighting .....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Unauthorized weapons .....	X	X	X		X		X	X				X	
Profanity .....	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X		
Acts outraging decency .....	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X		
Concealing disease or injury .....	X	X	X				X			X	X	X	
Unauthorized financial activity .....				X	X	X	X	X		X		X	
Criminal conviction ..		X	X									X	X

<sup>a</sup> This information was abstracted from the written rules of thirteen San Francisco Bay area companies. Each X mark represents the existence of a formal rule relative

the most frequently mentioned condition subject to discipline, by virtue of its interference with the individual's ability to perform his work properly. Respect for the company is most often required of employees in matters relating to the protection of the physical property of the firm, although table 2 also indicates that some companies require the employee to protect the reputation of the firm in the larger community; other companies are particularly concerned with the introduction of outside influences into the company in the form of unauthorized literature. Respect for supervision is, of course, the keystone of authority in any organization. For this reason, it is usual for companies to be particularly explicit in cases of employee insubordination and dishonesty in dealing with supervisors. Some companies are especially concerned with preventing the bribery of supervisory personnel for special favors. Other disciplinary offenses fall under the general category of offenses against fellow employees, general morale, or the common physical or psychological welfare of those engaged in the coöperative endeavor.

Thus, according to the information summarized in table 2, actions subject to discipline chiefly fall into these categories. Other types of "offenses" which cannot be clearly related to the criteria of specific task performance, respect for the firm, respect for supervision, or respect for fellow employees are not ordinarily included in personnel rules and regulations. If a company attempts to make rules which are contrary to the commonly accepted requirements of the employment relationship, then that company could, at least, expect considerable difficulty in enforcing them.

Therefore, management action in the area of personnel rules and regulations tends to be limited to two ways. First, the subjects upon which rules are made must be "reasonable" in the sense that they relate to the legitimate objectives and requirements of the employment relationship. Then, in addition, once formal rules and regulations are established governing the types of offenses for which disciplinary action may be taken, management itself is constrained to obey these same rules. In other words, management is placed under a severe "burden of proof"

---

to the matter indicated. Types of firms represented are as follows: A, steel products; B and C, can fabrication; D and E, automobile assembly; F and G, shipbuilding and repair; H, hardware manufacturing; J and I, electronic equipment manufacturing; K, food processing and packing; L and M, retail department stores.

in cases where managers administer discipline for causes other than those specifically enumerated in the regulations. The point of burden of proof for management then becomes the problem of showing that an unlisted type of offense does, in fact, undermine one of the aforementioned requirements of the employment relationship.

The Bureau of National Affairs has reported that about three-fourths of all business firms have written personnel regulations in the form of "plant rules." Many companies in the remaining fourth operate under rules that are well known to employees, although they are not in written form.<sup>44</sup> The outlook for the future in this regard was summarized by a personnel executive:

In the future I see a continuing trend toward specifying and tightening disciplinary policies. Employees like to have a tight-run ship. They like to know that their supervisor will take the same action each day. They like to have rules and to have a part in creating them. They expect their discipline to be fair. (Paper products company—Interview 215.)

Management has become limited not only with respect to commonly recognized causes for discipline but also with reference to the severity of disciplinary action which may be taken in specified circumstances. Many plant rules have specific penalties attached to the violation of certain regulations. A high proportion of these simply state, "The following offenses may result in immediate dismissal." In other cases, however, plant rules may list certain types of actions for which an employee ordinarily is not subject to discharge for a first offense. For example, the rules of a Bay area electronics firm state:

For offenses against safety, plant working, and employee conduct rules, other than those specifically mentioned under Section B below, an employee shall not be discharged without first having been notified that repetition of the offense will be cause for dismissal. The record of this notification shall be incorporated in the personnel record at the time it is given. . . .

In a shipyard the disciplinary regulations make the following distinction:

Any employee committing any of the following violations shall be subject to discharge: (Thirteen types of offenses are listed.)

<sup>44</sup> Bureau of National Affairs, *Disciplinary Practices and Policies*, p. 2.



For any of the following offenses an employee will be given a pink (reprimand) slip: (Six types of offenses are listed.)

Any employee issued a second pink slip will be given five days off.

Any employee issued a third pink slip for any of the above violations shall be discharged.

In the procedure for disciplinary action of a hardware manufacturing company, offenses are classified in three types with corresponding increasing severity of discipline: "minor offenses," "major offenses," and "intolerable offenses." In the same company the following written instructions are given to supervisors regarding discharge policy:

Not every rule violation justifies dismissal. But there is a point at which discharge becomes proper by reason of either a single serious infraction or an accumulation of minor infractions. The following "yardstick" is suggested to determine whether this point has been reached:

1. Has the employee seriously or irreparably damaged the employer's trust and confidence in him? The importance of this test depends on the type of work done by the employee.

2. Does it seem likely that the employee will correct his deficiencies within a reasonable period of time if he is not fired?

3. What effect would retaining the employee have on the discipline and morale of other employees?

4. What about the individual himself? Does he have a long period of good service and, therefore, deserve special consideration? How would a discharge affect his job prospects elsewhere?

5. Finally, does a discharge seem fair, all things considered? In other words, does the punishment fit the crime, taking into account any mitigating circumstances that might be present?

The existence of gradated penalties for different types of offenses and a discharge policy such as that just cited both tend to restrain management from arbitrary discipline. The Bureau of National Affairs study reported that among larger firms which have written plant rules, about 50 per cent spell out the penalties for breaking each rule. For example, penalties for chronic absenteeism most frequently take the form of one or two warnings, then suspension, and then discharge—although in many firms suspension is not used and employees are discharged after one or two warnings. Insubordination is subject to immediate discharge in about one-third of larger companies, although about the same proportion report that they do not discharge an em-

ployee until after one warning. The penalty for fighting is immediate discharge in about half of the companies studied, but other companies treat a first offense with a warning or suspension.<sup>45</sup>

Once discipline is administered, management action may then be subject to review in a formal grievance procedure. The Bureau of National Affairs reported that in 74 per cent of labor contracts in manufacturing industries and in 49 per cent of the contracts in nonmanufacturing industries there is a specific provision for the appeal of discharge actions through the grievance procedure. Moreover, the same study pointed out that even where a contract does not explicitly mention this, it may be assumed that discharges may be submitted to regular grievance procedures.<sup>46</sup> Nonunion employees, however, have much less chance of recourse to a formal grievance procedure. A National Industrial Conference Board study pointed out that only 21.5 per cent of companies studied had formal grievance procedures for nonunion hourly personnel and only 8.6 per cent had formal grievance procedures for nonunion salaried personnel.<sup>47</sup> Among nonunion employees it has been common custom to settle any grievances informally with higher management through an "open door" policy. Such a policy was particularly appropriate for smaller firms. As one Midwestern manufacturer said:

We do not feel it necessary to have any formal grievance machinery. There are only seventy-five employees in our office and three hundred in our plant. In a small, compact organization like ours, the employees know that if they have anything on their mind and get nowhere with the department heads, they can easily talk to anyone in higher management. With company officers daily walking through the plant, eating in the cafeteria, and meeting employees coming in and going out of the plant, it is an easy thing for employees to meet and talk with us.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Bureau of National Affairs, *Disciplinary Practices and Policies*, pp. 2-4. Conditions of suspension are less often regulated in collective contracts than conditions of discharge. Another Bureau of National Affairs study, cited previously, reported that 96 per cent of contracts refer to discharge, whereas only 40 per cent refer to suspension. See Bureau of National Affairs, "Discharge, Discipline, and Resignation," *op. cit.*, pp. 40:1-6.

<sup>46</sup> Bureau of National Affairs, "Discharge, Discipline, and Resignation," *op. cit.*, p. 40:4.

<sup>47</sup> National Industrial Conference Board, *Personnel Practices in Factory and Office*, pp. 56, 109.

<sup>48</sup> Quoted in James J. Bambrick, Jr., and James J. Speed, *Grievance Procedures*

However, as business establishments have grown larger, this informal type of grievance adjustment has become less practical, and pressure has been brought upon management to establish formal procedures, although this development has taken place thus far only in a small proportion of companies.

Therefore, we may briefly reemphasize the fact that the total effect of formal procedures of employee selection, layoff, promotion, and discipline has been to limit significantly the arbitrary powers of management.

This self-imposed limitation upon managerial power in the relation with employees has been supported and implemented by the establishment of personnel agencies in bureaucratic enterprises. Such a development is especially in accord with the need for functional specialization and personnel regulation in large business firms. Personnel agencies are likely to play an important role in support of a wide variety of formal personnel practices. For example, data presented by Steele and his associates in their study of Southern firms indicated that in both union and nonunion companies with personnel agencies, the companies were more likely to use tests in hiring, to have a program of job evaluation, to use seniority in promotions and layoffs, and to have a grievance procedure.<sup>49</sup>

Moreover, many personnel policies require line management officials to consult with staff personnel specialists in disciplinary and discharge actions to make sure that rights of the individual employee have not been violated. Following is an example of such a policy in the instructions of a nonunionized department store regarding "relief from duty in departments":

It is our desire that all separations be conducted in a manner which will satisfy the employee that we have attempted to extend him every consideration and that we are willing to reopen his case on the basis of any facts presented by him which may not have been given adequate consideration. . . .

Immediate supervisors of employees may request the Relief from Duty within their department of any employee considered unsatisfactory with the concurrence of the Department Heads, but under no circumstances may terminate any employee from the Store's employ.

Department Heads shall consult the Employment Department on

---

in *Nonunionized Companies*, Studies in Personnel Policy, No. 109 (New York: National Industrial Conference Board, 1950), p. 7.

<sup>49</sup> Steele, Myles, and McIntire, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

all questions pertaining to the Relief from Duty of any employee considered unsatisfactory, prior to the discussion of the matter with such employee.

Department Heads shall, when requesting the Relief from Duty of any employees, justify such requests by submitting to the Employment Department written reports covering the record of warnings.

The Employment Department shall, whenever possible, recommend the transfer of employees Relieved from Duty, provided the Merit Rating of the employee is satisfactory.

In the consideration of all cases of Reliefs from Duty, the Employment Department shall consult with the Merit Rating Department, Training Department, and others interested in order to determine that all pertinent facts have been considered. . . .<sup>50</sup>

The Bureau of National Affairs reported that most companies provide some type of procedure for the review of disciplinary and discharge actions before such actions become effective. In approximately one-third of all companies this review is made by the personnel or industrial relations department. In another third, the review is conducted by the personnel department and one or more higher executives. In the remaining firms the review procedure is commonly handled entirely by line supervision—for example, by the department head or the plant manager.<sup>51</sup>

Thus, in most firms, personnel agencies represent interest groups which serve to restrain the actions of line management.<sup>52</sup> Many personnel and industrial relations directors interviewed in the Bay area commented that they had frequent discussions and arguments with line management officials on their handling of disciplinary problems. Following are some representative comments in this regard:

There are times when we believe line management at the plant level is wrong. Then they say, "God damn you, you're selling us down the river." Then we must sell them on the right way to handle discipline. We may even have to go to the company president if we have a firm

<sup>50</sup> Quoted by Helen Baker and Robert R. France in *Personnel Administration and Labor Relations in Department Stores* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University, 1950), pp. 54–55.

<sup>51</sup> *Disciplinary Practices and Policies* (Washington, D. C.: Bureau of National Affairs, 1957), p. 9.

<sup>52</sup> For a general discussion of the significance of interest groups in administrative organization with regards to the protection of policy commitments, see Philip Selznick, *Leadership in Administration* (Evanston, Ill.: Row Peterson, 1957), pp. 93–95.

disagreement with plant managers. (Steel Manufacturing—Interview 200.)

I have as many arguments with the back office (line management) as I do with union leaders. Yesterday I had a fight with one of our managers to get him to give an employee adequate notice before discharging him. (Shipyard—Interview 213.)

I'm employed by the company, but my responsibility is to the employee as well as to the company. Sometimes I have to fight for an employee with management. I have to ward off the impulsive actions of division heads. Believe me, one has to have the courage of his convictions to do this. (Petroleum products—Interview 221.)

In some firms labor relations departments have very little authority—the authority in personnel matters is vested in line management. But here we do have considerable authority over line operations on labor relations and personnel matters. (Cement manufacturing—Interview 219.)

We have an enlightened management as far as labor relations is concerned. Our president has pointed out repeatedly that anything that affects labor relations must be approved by the personnel department. He has also said that in doubtful matters, the personnel department will determine whether the particular matter affects labor relations or not. (Railroad transportation—Interview 226.)

These comments should not be construed to mean that personnel specialists always act on the side of employees against line management; this is obviously not true. Personnel administrators universally recognize themselves as "a part of management," or they probably would not remain long in their jobs. Yet within the context of the firm, they frequently operate to protect the "rights" of employees vis-à-vis line management.<sup>53</sup> As this may become more and more a professional responsibility, codes of ethics common to personnel managers may strengthen the hands of personnel specialists in this regard.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Difficulties in this role of personnel specialists in relation to line managers have been discussed by Nathaniel Cantor, "A Sociologist Looks at Personnel Administration," *Personnel*, XVIII (1951), pp. 170–173. For a discussion of the sociological bases of staff-line conflict in general, see Melville Dalton, "Conflicts between Staff and Line Managerial Officers," *American Sociological Review*, XV (1950), pp. 342–351.

<sup>54</sup> See, for example, American Management Association, "Ethics in Personnel Administration," *Personnel*, XXX (1953), pp. 180–186; and *Professional Standards for Personnel Work* (Washington D.C.: Society for Personnel Administration, 1956).

BUREAUCRATIZATION AND THE PRINCIPLE  
OF UNIFORM TREATMENT

The principal effect of bureaucratization upon employment is the obliteration of close, personal relations between employers and employees. As business enterprises increase in size and complexity, the corporate structure is more likely to involve absentee ownership, dispersed in the hands of a multitude of stockholders.<sup>55</sup> Even in those few remaining large-scale businesses where ownership is not widely dispersed, there is likely to be considerable distance between owners and top managers, on the one hand, and production workers, on the other. Top executives typically have little contact with ordinary employees and know few of them by name. The "open door" policy is no longer practical, not only because of the large numbers of employees at lower levels but also because of the intervening offices and levels of authority in a typical large industrial enterprise. The most direct contact of an employee with management is no longer with a boss who is also owner of the establishment, but instead with a "supervisor," who is really just another "employee."

Consequently the employment relationship becomes impersonal. An employee is evaluated by management on the criterion of his job performance—what he does, rather than who he is or what his personal problems may be. This tendency is supported by statements of personnel and industrial relations executives. It is especially indicated in comments to the effect that "general rules and personnel regulations should be established" and that "every employee should be treated alike" in accord with these formal standards of conduct. In my interviews with Bay area personnel executives, this point of view was typically expressed as follows:

The larger a firm becomes and the more employees you have, the more rules of procedure you need in order to try to keep personnel policies uniform. What is done for one should be done for all. Employees expect this. (Paper products manufacturing—Interview 217.)

Further comments of this nature were elicited in personnel directors' responses to a projective-type situation, where the in-

<sup>55</sup> Perhaps one of the best-known discussions of the organization and ownership of corporation structures is Adolf A. Berle and Gardiner C. Means, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property* (New York: Macmillan, 1933).

interviewees were requested to comment upon the following description of a hypothetical situation in which an employee violated a company rule ostensibly through no fault of his own:

The rules of the Ajax Company state that an employee who is over one hour late to work without phoning in to notify his supervisor is subject to disciplinary action. All the employees clearly understood this rule. However, Jim, who worked at the Ajax Company, was two hours late one morning. Jim claimed that his car broke down and that he had to get out and fix it in a spot where there was no telephone nearby, so he was unable to call in. When he finally got to work, his foreman recommended that Jim receive a written warning to be placed in his personnel file and told Jim that he should keep his car in better working order so that this didn't happen again, because it caused a considerable delay in getting out production that morning. "If this happens again," the foreman said, "I will have to recommend that you be given a one-day suspension without pay. It is essential that our employees be impressed with the importance of getting to work on time." Jim, on the other hand, felt that it was unfair for him to receive the written reprimand this time. Jim said, "I know I violated the company rule, but it wasn't my fault my car broke down where I couldn't get to a phone so I don't think the written reprimand is fair."

Some typical comments on this situation were as follows:

The company was well within its rights in taking the action indicated here. The company had a clear rule. If the man's car was not working right, he should keep it in better working order. (Electronic equipment manufacturing—Interview 209.)

Certainly the company has a right to expect the employee to be at work on time. If the rule mentioned above had been enforced by written warnings in cases of other employees before, and if the union had accepted such action in past cases, then the employee would have no grounds for a grievance here. (Automobile assembly—Interview 203.)

While he might have some grounds for complaint in that he might have been telling the truth, I still feel that if you have a policy you must live up to it. Rules must be applied and enforced, even if the action was not the employee's fault. (Department store—Interview 304.)

We have had almost exactly this same case here. I think management was within its rights in taking this action. The written warning is a good idea. The man should be informed that he must conform to the rules on punctuality at work. This is the kind of case where arbitrators sometimes go off the beam. They want to be men of "justice," etc., but they ignore the important fact that the man did violate the rule. (Railroad transportation—Interview 226.)

This principle of uniform treatment of all employees, in accord with specified principles and regulations, is compatible with the over-all character of bureaucratic administration. An integral part of bureaucratic organization is the substitution of impersonal for personal criteria in social relations. As Max Weber pointed out:

The reduction of modern office management to rules is deeply embedded in its very nature. The theory of modern public administration, for instance, assumes that the authority to order certain matters by decree—which has been legally granted to public authorities—does not entitle the bureau to regulate the matter by commands given for each case, but only to regulate the matter abstractly.<sup>56</sup>

Where the principle of uniform treatment under impersonal rules and regulation is carried to an extreme, however, it may defeat its own purpose. In such a case, rules may come to be viewed by bureaucrats as ends in themselves, rather than as means to the effective accomplishment of organization goals.<sup>57</sup> From a legal as well as a practical standpoint, there is no logical incompatibility between a concern for rules of order and a concern for the flexible application of these rules to individual cases. Many personnel management officials in larger firms recognize this fact and maintain that in disciplinary actions every case should be handled on its individual merits, with particular consideration for possible mitigating factors in individual cases. This suggests that some other factor besides technical effectiveness is associated with increasing size in modern industry, since the process of bureaucratization *by itself* would be expected to give more support to the impersonal principle of uniform treatment, rather than case-by-case treatment.

<sup>56</sup> From Max Weber: *Essays in Sociology*, p. 198.

<sup>57</sup> See, for example, Robert K. Merton's discussion of this tendency in "Bureaucratic Structure and Personality," in *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1949), especially pp. 153–155.



### CHAPTER III. HUMAN RELATIONS AND THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

The preceding chapter indicated that the principal result of the process of bureaucratization is *impersonality* in the employment relationship. Where the individual employee comes to recognize this condition and begins to see himself as Charlie Chaplin's character in the motion picture *Modern Times*—simply a cog in a huge production machine—he may become alienated from his work and therefore poorly motivated to devote his best efforts toward the accomplishment of organizational goals. The well-known Hawthorne studies were particularly important in directing attention to the informal relations which develop among employees as a method of moderating conditions of impersonality in industrial enterprises.<sup>1</sup> Management response to the problem of impersonality and alienation among employees has been largely

<sup>1</sup> See F. J. Roethlisberger and W. J. Dickson, *Management and the Worker* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949) for a description of these studies.

in the development of so-called "human relations" practices and techniques.

As was indicated in chapter i, the difference between bureaucratic practices and human relations practices is made clear in Chester Barnard's distinction between the criterion of effectiveness and the criterion of efficiency. Barnard pointed out that an organizational decision or action is "effective" if it merely accomplishes a specific aim. Thus bureaucratic practices may be seen as attempts to organize actions toward specific ends by means of such rational mechanisms as a systematic ordering of authority relations, a differentiation of offices or positions in terms of specialized functions, and a formal system of regulation over individuals. In contrast, Barnard maintained that a practice is efficient if it achieves a desired end and simultaneously satisfies the motives or interests of the participants in the cooperative endeavor.<sup>2</sup> Thus human relations practices may be seen as attempts to organize actions in a bureaucratic context in terms of positive incentives and negative sanctions which satisfy the presumed needs of individual employees.

As pointed out in chapter i, human relations practices would be unnecessary if the requirements of larger organizations and the needs and interests of individual participants in such organizations were always perfectly articulated, for then what would be "effective" would also be "efficient." However, the needs of individuals and organizations often diverge in important ways. This divergence is especially apparent where the delegation of authority in complex factory-type industries requires the willing compliance and good judgment of employees. As Reinhard Bendix has pointed out in this regard:

Under the conditions of factory production . . . workers must be willing to do the work assigned with a degree of steady intensity. They must have a positive interest in accuracy and exercise reasonable care in the treatment of tools and machinery. And they must be willing to comply with general rules as well as with specific orders in a manner which strikes some reasonable balance between the extremes of blind obedience and capricious unpredictability. And it is this last qualification which brings the general attributes of an ethic of work performance within the framework of an industrial organization; for under conditions of factory production the intensity

<sup>2</sup> See Chester Barnard, *Functions of the Executive* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), pp. 55-59, 91-94, 139-160.

of work, its accuracy, and the careful treatment of tools and machinery cannot remain the attributes of an individual's performance. Rather these qualities of work must be coördinated with the production schedule, and that coördination depends to some extent on the good judgment of each worker in his every act of complying with rules and orders.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, human relations practices may be seen as managerial actions which are appropriate in a democratic society.<sup>4</sup> The cultural climate of Western democracy sets up constraints around practices which attempt to increase efficiency through the direct use of external coercion. Thus human relations techniques tend to be more manipulative than coercive. Nevertheless, certain practices used by managements for the explicit purpose of manipulating workers and "engineering consent" have, in effect, resulted in self-imposed limitations upon managerial actions within the employment relationship, and these limitations operate in an opposite direction from the limitations resulting from bureaucratic practices.

#### INCREASING EXTENT OF HUMAN RELATIONS PRACTICES IN INDUSTRY

Human relations practices have been especially concerned with employee acceptance of (1) the authority of superiors, (2) the task requirements of given positions, and (3) the regulative mechanisms of the organization.

In regard to motivating employee acceptance of authority, there has been increasing interest in and application of programs for training foremen and first-level supervisors in techniques of "democratic" leadership. The principle of democratic leadership gained special attention in managerial circles following the studies of Kurt Lewin and his followers on the productivity of small groups under experimental conditions.<sup>5</sup> His findings have

<sup>3</sup> Reinhard Bendix, *Work and Authority in Industry* (New York: Wiley, 1956), p. 204. This analysis of a factory situation is also apropos to many office situations so far as they resemble the mass production characteristics of factories. See, for example, C. Wright Mills' description of modern office conditions in *White Collar* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), chapter 9.

<sup>4</sup> Amitai Etzioni has pointed out that human relations practices may not be as efficient in a nondemocratic cultural milieu. See Amitai Etzioni, "Human Relations and the Foreman," *Pacific Sociological Review*, I (1958), 34-36.

<sup>5</sup> See Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lippitt, and R. K. White, "Patterns of Aggressive Behavior in Experimentally Created 'Social Climates'," *Journal of Social Psychology*, X (1939), 271-299; Ronald Lippitt, "Field Theory and Experiment in Social

been interpreted as showing that groups who work under democratic conditions, where members have a sense of participation in the decisions of supervisors regarding group activities, tend to have higher productivity and to generate a higher degree of member coöperation than groups who work under authoritarian conditions.<sup>6</sup> These findings lent support to the development of industrial training programs for supervisors in techniques of group discussion, solicitation of individual opinions, and the like. The programs were designed to promote the acceptance of managerial authority by developing a sense of "democratic participation in a common endeavor."

"Foremanship" training programs, emphasizing this perspective, have increased markedly in recent years. The Spiegel study of a nation-wide sample of companies showed that such training was given in 34 per cent of the firms in 1930 and in 72 per cent in 1953, as indicated in table 3. Similarly, Harold P. Zelko sent out a questionnaire to 322 companies in 1950, to which 70 per cent replied. Of those replying, 71 per cent reported some kind of a training program in "human relations" for foremen, and 49 per cent reported training in "participation and conference leadership." However, of those firms replying in the survey, more than 90 per cent indicated that some kind of training in "human relations" was needed, and 82 per cent said that training in "participation and conference leadership" was needed for foremen and first-level supervisors.<sup>7</sup> Of the San Francisco Bay area firms that I surveyed in 1958, only about 18 per cent reported that they had no formal supervisory training program.

This growing concern with the techniques of "democratic" leadership is indicated not only by the increasing per cent of

---

Psychology: Authoritarian and Democratic Group Atmospheres," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLV (1939), 26-49; and Ronald Lippitt and R. K. White, "The 'Social Climate' of Children's Groups," in *Child Development and Behavior*, Roger Barker, Jacob Kounin, and Herbert Wright, eds. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1943).

<sup>6</sup> Such a general interpretation of the findings of the social climate studies neglected the possibility that democratic leadership might not be efficient in all types of situations and among different types of adult work groups, as Amitai Etzioni (*op. cit.*) pointed out, and as research studies of Army Ordnance employees have indicated; see Howard M. Vollmer and Jack A. Kinney, "Informal Requirements for Supervisory Positions," *Personnel*, XXXIII (1957), 431-441; and Howard M. Vollmer and Jack A. Kinney, "Supervising Women is Different," *Personnel Journal*, XXXIV (1955), 260-263.

<sup>7</sup> Harold P. Zelko, "Speech and Conference Leadership Training in American Industry," *Personnel*, XXVII (1950), 124-125.

companies with actual training programs but also by the growing amount of personnel literature devoted to the subject of "foremanship" and supervisory training.<sup>8</sup> For example, Tead and Metcalf devoted only five pages to the subject of supervisory training in their 1920 edition of *Personnel Administration*, and about ten pages in the 1933 edition. Yoder devoted about three pages of *Personnel and Labor Relations* to the topic in 1938 and about eight pages in 1956. Scott and Clothier hardly mentioned the matter in *Personnel Management* in 1923 and then gave two, four, and twelve pages to it in 1931, 1941, and 1954, respectively. When Scott and Clothier began to give serious attention to the training of foremen in 1931, they wrote:

There is one group, however, which many concerns believe that it is more important to train than all others, namely the foremen and supervisors. It is only within recent years that executives have come to appreciate the fact that it is not as important to train foremen in the technical aspects of their work as it is to train them in their primary duty, i.e., the management of men. . . . Industry needs men in supervisory positions who can command loyalty. It needs men who can handle subordinates intelligently, consider the strengths and weaknesses of each, make allowances for them, and bring to bear upon each the kind of personal influence, the kind of stimulus to which he, individually, will respond best.<sup>9</sup>

The authors then pointed out that the ability of supervisors to "command loyalty" was particularly important because of the fact that in many firms the *authority* of foremen was beginning to be separated from the system of *control*—in other words,

<sup>8</sup> Conclusions on the amount of attention devoted to each human relations technique are presented from a content analysis of the following textbooks: (1) Ordway Tead and Henry C. Metcalf, *Personnel Administration: Its Principles and Practice* (1st ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1920); (2) Walter D. Scott and Robert C. Clothier, *Personnel Management: Principles, Practices, and Point of View* (1st ed.; Chicago and New York: Shaw, 1923); (3) Walter D. Scott, Robert C. Clothier, and Stanley B. Mathewson, *Personnel Management: Principles, Practices, and Point of View* (2d ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1931); (4) Tead and Metcalf, *op. cit.* (3d ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1933); (5) Dale Yoder, *Personnel and Labor Relations* (1st ed.; New York: Prentice-Hall, 1938); (6) Walter D. Scott, Robert C. Clothier, Stanley B. Mathewson, and William R. Spriegel, *Personnel Management: Principles, Practices, and Point of View* (3d ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1941); (7) Walter D. Scott, Robert C. Clothier, and William R. Spriegel, *Personnel Management: Principles, Practices, and Point of View* (5th ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954); (8) Dale Yoder, *Personnel Management and Industrial Relations* (4th ed.; Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1956).

<sup>9</sup> Scott, Clothier, and Mathewson, *op. cit.*, pp. 344-345.

foremen were expected to give orders to subordinates, and yet their power to discipline or dismiss employees who failed to comply with orders was being taken away and put into the hands of higher line management and personnel specialists. As a general manager of a Midwestern firm put it:

If you want Bill in the toolroom to rush some work to you, you don't threaten to fire Bill, as you have no authority [sic] to do so. What do you do? You work for and secure Bill's coöperation and through co-operation you get results. . . . You must have a higher type of ability to get results under such conditions.<sup>10</sup>

Other human relations practices have developed from managerial concern about motivating employee acceptance of the requirements of particular jobs. W. Lloyd Warner, whose work was influenced by Elton Mayo, particularly emphasized the loss of job interest inherent in the nature of work in modern mass production. He pointed out that modern methods had caused a disruption in the typical pattern of career progression and upward mobility through a "breakdown in the skill hierarchy" in the shoe factories of "Yankee City."<sup>11</sup> Charles Walker and Robert Guest studied similar dissatisfactions of workers with highly specialized and routine jobs on an automobile assembly line.<sup>12</sup> C. Wright Mills and Nancy Morse have written about the increasing routinization of jobs in office and other white-collar contexts and the effect on employee job satisfactions.<sup>13</sup> Still others have studied the degree of intrinsic job satisfaction in a wide variety of occupations.<sup>14</sup>

Several human relations practices have developed to ameliorate the dissatisfaction of workers with highly routinized and special-

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 345-346.

<sup>11</sup> W. Lloyd Warner, *The Social System of the Modern Factory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), pp. 66-89.

<sup>12</sup> See Charles R. Walker and Robert H. Guest, *The Man on the Assembly Line* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952); Robert H. Guest, "Work Careers and Aspirations of Assembly Line Workers," *American Sociological Review*, XIX (1954), 155-163; and Robert H. Guest, "Men and Machines: an Assembly Line Worker Looks at His Job," *Personnel*, XXXI (1955), 496-503.

<sup>13</sup> See C. Wright Mills, *White Collar* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953); and Nancy C. Morse, *Satisfactions in the White Collar Job* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Survey Research Center, 1953).

<sup>14</sup> See for example, Eugene A. Friedmann and Robert J. Havighurst, *The Meaning of Work and Retirement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954); Elizabeth J. Lyman, "Occupational Differences and the Values Attached to Work," *American Journal of Sociology*, LXI (1955), 138-144; and Nancy C. Morse and Robert S. Weiss, "The Function and Meaning of Work and the Job," *American Sociological Review*, XX (1955), 191-198.

ized jobs. One of these is the use of personality and interest tests in the selection and placement of employees. The object of these devices is to reduce the number of employees who feel alienated from their work and to increase the number who are predisposed to be satisfied with the position in which they are placed.

The Spriegel study found that personality and interest tests for placement in American firms were used less frequently than placement tests of other types. Table 3, however, indicates that

**TABLE 3**

**HUMAN RELATIONS PRACTICES BY YEAR OF SURVEY**  
(Percentages)

<i>Human relations practices <sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Year of survey <sup>a</sup></i>				<i>Difference in per cent</i>
	1930	1940	1947	1953	1947 to 1953
Personality and interest tests for placement	... <sup>b</sup>	... <sup>b</sup>	29	40	11
New employees introduced to department	63	82	88	92	4
Follow-up interviews of new employees	67	75	75	81	6
Promotion charts maintained	17	19	13	25	12
Morale surveys	... <sup>b</sup>	... <sup>b</sup>	15	28	13
Exit interviews	... <sup>b</sup>	... <sup>b</sup>	64	80	16
"Foremanship" training classes	34	50	51	72	21

<sup>a</sup> These data are abstracted from four surveys conducted by the Bureau of Business Research at the University of Texas, as reported in William R. Spriegel and Alfred G. Dale, *Personnel Practices in Industry*, Personnel Study No. 8 (Austin: University of Texas, Bureau of Business Research, 1954), pp. 19, 25, 39, 45. See table 1, footnote b, for a more complete description of the survey.

<sup>b</sup> No data were presented for these years, since the item was not included in the survey.

this proportion is increasing; in 1947, 29 per cent of the firms studied reported the use of personality and interest tests for placement, and by 1953 this per cent had increased to 40. Similarly, a National Industrial Conference Board study reported in 1954 that 31.8 per cent of companies in a national sample used psychological tests for selection of hourly workers, and 43.1 per cent used such tests for salaried personnel.<sup>15</sup>

The increased concern with personality and interest tests is

<sup>15</sup> *Personnel Practices in Factory and Office*, Studies in Personnel Policy No. 145 (New York: National Industrial Conference Board, 1954), pp. 12, 69.

reflected in the coverage given the subject in personnel management textbooks. For example, Scott and Clothier gave practically no attention to the subject in 1923, and then devoted four pages to it in 1931 and nine pages in 1941 and 1954. Yoder did not cover the topic in 1938, but gave six pages to a discussion of it in 1956.

Other human relations practices especially oriented toward the assessment and counseling of employees with regard to job satisfaction and career progression are evident in the increasing concern with skillful interviewing of employees, both after their initial placement and before a prospective voluntary separation of an employee. The Spriegel study showed that 67 per cent of the firms studied in 1930 conducted "follow-up" interviews with new employees. In 1953, this per cent had increased to 81, as shown in table 3. The same table indicates that 64 per cent of the companies conducted "exit" interviews with employees in 1947 and 80 per cent in 1953. A study of Southern companies reported that an even higher proportion (more than 90 per cent) used exit interviews.<sup>16</sup>

Concern with interview techniques has also increased in the successive editions of all personnel management textbooks studied. Yoder described the rationale behind the growing use of "follow-up" interviews as follows:

Current practice recognizes the fact that adjustment to the job takes time. New employees may encounter many problems. Planned explanations and orientation may not work exactly as intended. Errors may have been made in appraisals of the new employee in the process of selection and in job assignments. . . . In follow-up interviews, his questions can be answered and he can be given whatever help he needs. If an error in placement has been made, the new employee may be transferred.<sup>17</sup>

Scott and Clothier indicate that the "exit" interview also may serve an important function in enabling employees to be placed in positions more suitable to their personal dispositions and interests:

The exit, or separation, interview is widely used in industry. Such a program will often reveal the causes of labor turnover and provide records that may be valuable later. Often an employee who is leaving

<sup>16</sup> H. Ellsworth Steel, William R. Myles, and Sherwood C. McIntire, "Personnel Practices in the South," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, IX (1956), 248.

<sup>17</sup> Yoder, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-273.



of his own accord may be saved for the company. Frequently a transfer can be arranged if the employee does not like the work he is leaving.<sup>18</sup>

Probably those human relations practices which followed most directly from the results of the Hawthorne studies were those concerned with the control of behavior of employees by management manipulation of informal work group approval and disapproval (in contrast to financial incentives and formal disciplinary procedures). Roethlisberger and Dickson found out first in their study of the Relay Assembly Test Room (and later confirmed their findings in their observations of the Bank Wiring Room) that workers tend to be more strongly influenced by the incentives and sanctions imposed upon them by their fellow workers than by actions of management. They found that the production of individual workers was not as predictable in terms of management incentives and sanctions as it was in terms of informal group norms: "if you produce too much, you are a rate-buster; if you produce too little, you are a chiseler."<sup>19</sup>

The Hawthorne studies bore an important message for management—informal group norms may operate to *support* the goals of the enterprise, as in the case of the Relay Assembly Test Room, or to *undermine* goals, as in the case of the Bank Wiring Room. The management problem, therefore, became the problem of the "efficient" utilization of informal group arrangements to support management objectives.

Elton Mayo and George Lombard studied this problem further in the context of war production in the aircraft industries of southern California. They found that labor turnover and absenteeism could be controlled through management attention to certain aspects of small group integration and mobilization toward company objectives. Specifically, they found that where foremen took special pains to introduce new employees to their work groups and paid particular attention to the personal problems of individual workers, turnover and absenteeism were significantly decreased.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Scott, Clothier, and Spriegel, *op. cit.*, pp. 84–86.

<sup>19</sup> See F. J. Roethlisberger and W. J. Dickson, *op. cit.* The results of this famous study have been subject to much analysis and reinterpretation. For example, see Elton Mayo, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1949), pp. 60–76; also see George C. Homans, *The Human Group* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1950), pp. 48–130.

<sup>20</sup> See Elton Mayo and George F. Lombard, *Teamwork and Labor Turnover in*

Management practices in this regard have been increasing as in the human relations practices discussed earlier. For example, table 3 indicates that the proportion of American firms where there is a general policy of giving new employees a personal introduction to their particular work groups has increased from 63 per cent in 1930 to 92 per cent in 1953. Formal morale surveys are so far conducted only in a small proportion of firms, but table 4 shows that this proportion has increased from 15 per cent

TABLE 4

PREFERRED TYPE OF ADMINISTRATION OF DISCIPLINE BY SIZE OF FIRM  
(Percentages)

Type of discipline <sup>a</sup>	Larger companies <sup>b</sup>	Smaller companies <sup>b</sup>
Uniform application of regulations	35	50
Case-by-case application of regulations	53	40
Combination of uniform and case-by-case application	12	10
	100	100

<sup>a</sup> These data are reported in *Disciplinary Practices and Policies*, Personnel Policies Survey No. 42 (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of National Affairs, 1957), p. 10. The survey was based upon information submitted by 160 "top personnel officials in all types of companies, large and small, in all branches of industry, and in all sections of the country" participating in the *Personnel Policies Forum* (see *ibid.*, pp. 1-2). No further information about the character of the sample or method of eliciting information is given in this publication.

<sup>b</sup> Larger companies referred to those with 1,000 or more employees, and smaller companies referred to those with less than 1,000 employees.

in 1947 to 28 percent in 1953. A National Industrial Conference Board study reported slightly smaller proportions of firms engaged in morale surveys in 1954. They indicated that morale surveys were conducted for hourly employees in 14.5 per cent of the companies surveyed and for salaried employees in 20.5 per cent.<sup>21</sup>

Growing concern is also shown in personnel management textbooks of recent years about the techniques of conducting morale surveys, particularly in the texts by Scott and Clothier and by Yoder. Although Scott and Clothier comment that high morale does not necessarily contribute to the goals of an enterprise, they

*the Aircraft Industry of Southern California*, Business Research Study No. 32 (Cambridge: Harvard School of Business, 1944); see also Mayo, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-100.

<sup>21</sup> *Personnel Practices in Factory and Office*, *op. cit.*, pp. 55, 109.

recognize what they consider to be the *potential* contribution of management programs to increase employee group satisfactions, so far as these group satisfactions can be efficiently harnessed to management ends:

. . . . a group possessing a high type of morale will utilize the skill, initiative, and training of its members to further the success of the enterprise. Required supervision will be minimized, and collective ingenuity, thought, and effort will replace the necessity for force.<sup>22</sup>

This last quotation reemphasizes the objectives of the human relations practices discussed herein—to increase the *efficiency* of an enterprise, in Barnard's meaning of the concept. The fact that human relations practices are frequently related in personnel management literature to some of the research studies demonstrates that human relations practices, like the bureaucratic practices discussed earlier, should be seen as essentially rational attempts by management to solve, or at least to alleviate, some of the problems of organizational efficiency. To make this assertion, of course, is not to pass judgment upon the moral appropriateness of such techniques in terms of their effects upon the individual employees—a topic which has caused considerable concern.<sup>23</sup> Instead, this discussion has merely attempted to show that the research in the area has been paralleled by utilization of human relations techniques in management practice.

#### MANIPULATION AND ADAPTATION IN HUMAN RELATIONS PRACTICES

Robert K. Merton has pointed out the importance of distinguishing between the manifest functions and the latent consequences of mechanisms in social systems.<sup>24</sup> The manifest function of human relations practices, as perceived by many management spokesmen, has been *to manipulate* employees toward the acceptance of various management objectives.<sup>25</sup> One of the latent conse-

<sup>22</sup> Scott, Clothier, and Spriegel, *op. cit.*, p. 455.

<sup>23</sup> See for example, Reinhard Bendix and Lloyd H. Fisher, "The Perspectives of Elton Mayo," *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, XXXI (1949), 312–321; John T. Dunlop, "A Framework for the Analysis of Industrial Relations," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, Vol. III (1950); and Clark Kerr and Lloyd H. Fisher, "Plant Sociology: the Elite and Aborigines," in *Common Frontiers of the Social Sciences*, Mirra Komarovsky, ed. (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957).

<sup>24</sup> Robert K. Merton, "Manifest and Latent Functions," in *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1949), pp. 21–82.

<sup>25</sup> To assert that manipulation is the manifest function of human relations practices, of course, must not be interpreted to mean that their object is manifest to the

quences, however, has been the development of managerial self-restraint through commitment to a policy of flexibility in dealing with the "human" concerns of employees.

It may be pointed out, however, that both emphases result in managerial self-restraint, although of different types. Conscious "manipulation" implies that management officials restrain themselves with regard to means-actions in handling employees—for example, they control impulses to be direct or "authoritarian" in giving orders and attempt to use more indirect methods of persuasion and influence. "Adaptation," on the other hand, implies that management officials restrain themselves with regard to certain more important organizational objectives—for example, they may make temporary sacrifices in production schedules in order to maintain safety standards within a plant.

Many examples of manipulative rationale may be found in such publications as *Personnel*, the official organ of the American Management Association. For example, L. A. Appley at the time of his presidency of the A.M.A. wrote:

. . . . competitive survival depends upon the capacity of management to increase the individual productivity of workers. . . . *The emergence of a new management era is the transferring of emphasis from technology to humanics.* It is the application of the same time, skill, effort, logic, understanding, knowledge, and competency to human resources which management applied so successfully in the past to physical resources.<sup>26</sup>

Other statements have also encouraged the application of human relations practices to problems of increasing productivity:

It is our responsibility to prove that the basis for good production from satisfied workers is a triangle of good relations which consists of recognition and acceptance by management of the interests and needs of the workers as individuals as well as in a group.<sup>27</sup>

. . . . in those organizations where unionization or civil service may have tended to immunize the worker from the fear motivation, the

employees who are being manipulated. Where employees become aware of the fact that they are being manipulated, the process can be expected to fail in its objectives. Therefore, this objective of human relations practices may be considered to be manifest only to those who are doing the manipulating.

<sup>26</sup> L. A. Appley, "Emergence of a New Management Era," *Personnel*, XXV (1949), 429, 431.

<sup>27</sup> E. H. Van Delden, "Toward a New Personnel Philosophy," *Personnel*, XXVI (1949), 177.

major opportunity to stimulate productive effort would seem to be in the generation of group morale and team spirit through democratic participation.<sup>28</sup>

Moreover, human relations techniques have been proposed to facilitate employee coöperation toward secondary management goals, such as gaining acceptance of a job evaluation program,<sup>29</sup> making "friends" of union stewards,<sup>30</sup> improving company status in the larger community,<sup>31</sup> and reducing labor turnover.<sup>32</sup>

However, it is not so much in the *objectives* of human relations practices that their manipulative character becomes apparent, but rather in the character of their *means*. Thus one author pointed out the usefulness of the technique of "role playing" in changing employee attitudes, as follows:

Another by-product, and a valuable one, in role-playing is the process that tends to guide the group into doing their own attitude improving. For example, in handling "The Case of the Base Rate Pay," the members of our group came to the conclusion, without the conference leader's guidance, that policies instituted by management should be discussed as "our policies," not "management policies." They saw distinctly that to secure employee acceptance of policies, such policies would have to be presented as something that the supervisors installed and enforced because they (the employees) believed in them.<sup>33</sup>

Another writer extolled the usefulness of "supervision by suggestion" in the following terms:

The effective supervisor today is a specialist in dealing with human relations. Understanding the forces that motivate people to coöperate is a powerful tool. It allows for the manipulation of human behavior to the mutual satisfaction of both the supervisor and those supervised. The successful supervisor is frequently distinguished by his ability to make it appear that his wishes originated with the other person. The employee who usually displays a negative attitude is studied very

<sup>28</sup> J. M. Pfiffner, "Participation as a Tool of Management," *Personnel*, XXV (1948), 143.

<sup>29</sup> H. W. Daniels, "Winning Acceptance for the Job Evaluation Plan," *Personnel*, XXX (1953), 30.

<sup>30</sup> E. H. Van Delden, "The Ten Basic Principles of Sound Human Relations," *Personnel*, XXVI (1949), 313.

<sup>31</sup> R. S. Calvert, "Employee Attitudes: the Key to Better Community Relations," *Personnel*, XXXIII (1956), 242.

<sup>32</sup> F. H. Joiner, "Making Employees' Work More Interesting," *Personnel*, XXIX (1953), 309.

<sup>33</sup> A. H. Tyler, "A Case Study of Role Playing," *Personnel*, XXV (1948), 142.

carefully to find some way in which an idea he expresses, or something he says, can be interpreted to mean what the supervisor would like to have it mean. The supervisor then tries to get the employee to express the desired thought himself. When the worker can be made to feel that he himself originated the idea, he is committed to it in advance and rejection of the supervisor's instruction is circumvented. At the same time the worker is made to feel personally adequate and even influential.<sup>34</sup>

Merton has pointed out that in informal, rationally organized social structures (i.e., bureaucracies), "Adherence to rules, originally conceived as a means, becomes transformed into an end-in-itself; there occurs the familiar process of *displacement of goals* whereby 'an instrumental value becomes a terminal value.'"<sup>35</sup> The same tendency is present in human relations practices. Originally, such practices were conceived as means to achieve organizational goals efficiently, which is certainly the objective in the minds of many management officials at present. However, there is a tendency for those who devote a great deal of time and effort to the problem of discovering the needs and interest of individuals to view these presumed needs and interests as *valuable in themselves*, and therefore as worthy of protection as the collective needs of the larger enterprise. James T. Worthy, Personnel Director of Sears Roebuck Company, has been one of the few management officials who has expressed this point of view. In an article in *Personnel* he first cited the following words of Elton Mayo:

*Technical skill* manifests itself as a *capacity to manipulate things* in the service of human purposes. *Social skill* shows itself as a *capacity to receive communications* from others and *to respond* to the attitudes and ideas of others in such a fashion to promote congenial participation in a common task.<sup>36</sup> [My emphasis.]

He then went on to decry the manipulative tendencies of human relations practices in the following terms:

<sup>34</sup> E. E. Jennings, "Supervision by Suggestion," *Personnel Journal*, XXXII (1954), 288-292. It may be noted that supervision by manipulative techniques is the only recourse left to supervisors who are charged with the responsibility of mobilizing the effective consent of employees, and yet who are severely restricted in their power to apply direct sanctions on employees who fail to conform with supervisory directives. This problem is discussed further in chapter iv.

<sup>35</sup> Robert K. Merton, "Bureaucratic Structure and Personality," in *Social Theory and Social Structure*, pp. 151-153.

<sup>36</sup> Mayo, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

The attempt to apply to human problems methods and concepts originally developed for the manipulation of things almost inevitably inhibits effective communication and undermines that "congenial participation in a common task" referred to by Mr. Mayo.<sup>37</sup>

He concluded his discussion with an enumeration of certain "rights" of employees which he felt management should respect as valuable in themselves:

These ideals are usually expressed in terms of "rights"—the very word "rights" implying their essentially moral and ethical nature. . . . we may summarize some of the more significant of these rights as follows:

1. The right of every man to be treated as an individual and respected as a person;
2. The right of every man to a voice in his own affairs, which includes his right to contribute to the best of his ability to the solution of common problems;
3. The right of every man to develop and make use of his highest capacities;
4. The right of every man to fairness and justice in all his relationships with his superiors.<sup>38</sup>

Occasionally personnel directors in Bay area firms also indicated recognition of certain "inherent rights" of employees by virtue of their status as "human beings," rather than because of specific contractual agreements. In the Bay area interviews I made the following statement: "some workers, when they talk about their jobs, say they have 'rights in their jobs.' What do you think they mean when they talk about such 'job rights'?" Following are some comments on this point:

Because of the type of country we live in, where the individual is more important than any company, a man carries this idea about his rights into his work—this idea of his "dignity." Employees are particularly concerned with their rights to job security, fair treatment, and being respected by management and their fellow workers. (Chemical and paper products—Interview 217.)

There are actual rights and there are implied rights. Actual rights are overtly expressed in company policies and practices. Implied rights

<sup>37</sup> J. C. Worthy, "Changing Concepts of the Personnel Function," *Personnel*, XXV (1948), 171.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

are implicit in the expectations of the mutual parties to a relationship—like the employment relationship. Usually, when employees talk about their rights, they are not referring to contract provisions. Employees use the term in a broader sense. For example, if an employee feels his supervisor has treated him ill, he speaks of his rights as an individual with human dignity. For an instance of this, an employee who is publicly reprimanded in front of other employees is likely to feel that his rights as a human being with dignity have been violated by the supervisor. (Food processing and packing—Interview 223.)

We feel that all employees have a right to fair treatment. Furthermore, an employer has certain obligations to his employees. For example, if longer service employees are handicapped some way through an accident, we have a moral obligation to retain them. (Paper products—Interview 216.)

As I see it, there are two kinds of rights: human rights and rights of contract. In respect to human rights, we might think of the preamble to the Declaration of Independence, mentioning rights to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” In the employment relationship, employees also have such rights as human beings, like rights to fair treatment and the right to be recognized as an integral part of a productive enterprise. (Automobile assembly—Interview 203.)

These statements, then, indicate that the management officials making them view employees as more than tools in the productive process. They demonstrate an attitude of managerial *self-restraint* with regard to what are conceived to be the “human rights” of employees; they focus upon flexible *adaptation* to the presumed needs of employees as human beings, rather than upon the *manipulation* of needs.

However, such statements mean little if they do not indicate self-restraint in managerial practice as well as in managerial speech. Restraint in practice may only be maintained continuously where there are structural supports for it. In this regard, personnel agencies in modern industries not only function to restrain line management in the observation of personnel policies and regulations, as pointed out in chapter ii, but they also operate to restrain line management behavior with regard to “human relations.” For example, according to a publication of the Society for Personnel Administration, “Personnel work may be defined as the management function concerned with the acquisition, maintenance, motivation, development, and utiliza-



tion of the human resources of an organization.”<sup>39</sup> This same publication went on to point out that the proper performance of the personnel function requires *specialized* training and background:

This is too critical a function to be trusted to any but broadly trained and broad-gauged persons—those who are able to cope with *principle*, not only with factual *data*; to handle delicate *human relationships*, not only interpretation of *rules*.<sup>40</sup>

Thus, personnel specialists in modern businesses not only have assumed bureaucratic functions of rule interpretation but also have tended to take upon themselves the role of protector of “human relations.” This role has been indicated in comments of Bay area personnel executives in the Bay area interviews (cited in the previous chapter), where it was continuously stated that “there are times when we believe line management is wrong; then we must sell them on the right way to handle discipline,” “I have as many arguments with line management as with union leaders,” and “my responsibility is to the employee as well as to the company—sometimes I have to fight for an employee . . . and ward off the impulsive actions of division heads.”

The assumption of this protective role by personnel specialists is more promising when the belief exists that management of “the human factor” requires specialized training and specialized techniques, even as the operation of complex mechanical apparatus requires specialized skills. Line managers are not likely to have had much formal training in human psychology and leadership skills, although the in-plant supervisory training programs discussed earlier represent an attempt to make up for this deficiency. Staff personnel officers, however, are becoming more and more likely to have a background of specialized training at the college level in principles of leadership and human psychology. One study has reported that out of 140 professional schools of business and public administration, 87 offered courses leading to undergraduate degrees and 46 provided graduate training in personnel, industrial relations, or both, in 1945.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>39</sup> *Professional Standards for Personnel Work* (Washington, D. C.: Society for Personnel Administration, 1956), p. 10.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Carter V. Good, *A Guide to Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools in the United States* (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1945), pp. 296–319.

Another study indicated a definite trend toward college training as a requirement for entrance into the personnel field. Moreover, this same study reported that psychology was considered the most valuable subject in college training by personnel executives by a wide margin of preference over the second subject, economics.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, staff personnel executives, particularly "employee relations" specialists, are likely to be very concerned with what they consider to be problems of human relations within the firm. Furthermore, they are likely to consider themselves as specially trained and charged with responsibility to see to it that such problems are handled by line management in a manner simultaneously appropriate to the "human" needs of individual employees and to the organizational goals of the enterprise. In this regard, the functions of "employee relations" specialists in personnel agencies are likely to reënforce the self-restraining effects of a human relations ideology upon managerial action.

#### HUMAN RELATIONS AND THE PRINCIPLE OF INDIVIDUAL TREATMENT

The logical consequence of human relations practices is that each individual case where difficulties arise in the employment relationship is handled flexibly according to the "human" considerations. The Bureau of National Affairs has reported several statements of personnel executives in support of this approach:

The application of corrective discipline on a case-by-case basis, rather than on a stringent uniform set-penalty basis, permits management to take into consideration such things as length of service, seriousness of offense, length of time since last offense occurred, and other extenuating circumstances. (American Bosch Arma Corporation.)

Rules can be written, but never can all situations be covered. Each case is usually different and should be handled on an individual basis. (Coöperative Farm Chemicals Association.)

<sup>42</sup> Donald S. Parks, "Survey of the Training and Qualifications of Personnel Executives," *Personnel Journal*, XXVII (1948), 256-266. Similar findings are reported in Philip H. Kreidt and C. Harold Stone, "College Courses for Personnel Work—Union and Management Preferences," *Personnel Journal*, XXVII (1948), 247.

Case-by-case application permits a more flexible approach which takes into consideration the many factors which may be involved. (Hayward-Schuster Woolen Mills.)<sup>43</sup>

Several similar opinions were expressed by personnel directors in my study of Bay area firms. Responses to the hypothetical situation of the tardy employee, as presented in chapter ii, were typically as follows:

I can't go along with these inflexible rules. Many things make an inflexible rule like this very difficult to administer. If an employee is consistently late to work, he should be warned first, and then if his record does not improve, he should be dismissed. In a case like this, the foreman should get the facts and take them into account. (Public utility—Interview 225.)

I don't think the company was right here. This is one of those uncontrollable things. Management should be reasonable in the administration of rules. They should attempt to judge individual cases on their merits. (Petroleum products—Interview 221.)

The company is in the dilemma here of hewing to a set policy as much as possible, versus handling individual cases as they come up. You lose something either way. I think, however, that it is better personnel practice to handle individual cases on their own merits—you lose less by this policy. (Can manufacturing—Interview 202.)

This company was all wrong in approaching the enforcement of a rule this way. There should be common sense in enforcing a rule. If a man gets into an accident or has unavoidable car trouble, this is something that can't be helped. (Paper products—Interview 217.)

We are learning to be smarter in handling disciplinary cases. We are now coming to understand that rules should be general in nature so that each specific case may be handled on its own merits. (Steel manufacturing—Interview 200.)

In larger firms, there is some evidence that management is more concerned with the need for stronger emphasis on individual

<sup>43</sup> One of the most forceful pleas for the "clinical" or case-by-case approach in personnel and labor relations has been made by B. M. Selekman in *Labor Relations and Human Relations* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1947), chapter v. An opposite point of view, emphasizing the "reign of rules," has been held by Robert Dubin in "Decision-making by Management in Industrial Relations," *American Journal of Sociology*, LIV (1949), 292-296.

treatment of employees. This is understandable in the light of the fact that the relationship of employment in larger companies tends to be more impersonal. In smaller firms, on the other hand, it is likely that management will be more concerned with uniform treatment of employees, since there may be greater need here for elimination of overpersonalized considerations in the employment relationship. These conclusions are substantiated by data in table 4, where it is shown that the majority of personnel directors (53 per cent) in large firms favored a case-by-case application of disciplinary regulations, whereas the larger proportion (50 per cent) of directors in small companies favored a uniform application of disciplinary regulations.

A superficial interpretation of such data and comments might maintain that there is an incompatible contradiction between the orientation of those who hold to a case-by-case approach to the treatment of employees and those who emphasize the uniform application of rules. However, as mentioned in chapter ii, there is no necessary incompatibility between these two emphases, either from a legal or from a practical standpoint. The employment relationship in large-scale bureaucratized firms represents a delicate balance between the principles of uniform treatment and mitigation according to individual circumstances. A completely individualistic orientation in handling employees is unworkable because it would leave management open to charges of "inconsistency" and "favoritism," which the formalization of personnel policies is designed to avoid. On the other hand, a completely uniform orientation in handling employees would be just as impracticable because it would leave management open to charges of "blind legalism," and of lack of consideration for "human error" which human relations practices are designed to avoid.

Therefore, in summary we may conclude that the need for industry to organize its operations and control its personnel in a manner most *effective* for the achievement of organizational goals (i.e., the production of goods and services in a market economy) has resulted in bureaucratization within these enterprises. Part of this process has involved the development of formalized rules and regulative agencies (especially personnel agencies). This development, in turn, has resulted in the self-imposition of restraints upon management in relationship to employees; that is, management has become committed to ob-

servance of the rules and respect for the regulative agencies it has established. Finally, this establishment and maintenance of personnel regulations over time has resulted in common expectations by both employees and management officials that such rules and personnel regulations will be consistently observed and maintained.

On the other hand, the need for industrial enterprises to utilize their employees in a manner most *efficient* for the achievement of organizational goals and for the satisfaction of individual needs has resulted in the development of human relations practices. An important aspect of these practices has been the attention given to either changing or manipulating individual employees' needs and interests in directions more amenable to organizational goals, or adapting organizational goals to certain individual needs. In both cases, human relations practices have resulted in the self-imposition of restraints upon management—that is, management has become committed to some degree of flexibility in the application of rules and regulations to individual cases. This flexibility over time has, in turn, resulted in common *expectations* among employees and management officials that individual needs and interests will be respected and retained in the relationship of employment.

#### CHAPTER IV. THE EXERCISE OF MANAGERIAL AUTHORITY

The two preceding chapters have indicated how managerial power in its relation to employees has come to be limited in significant ways as a result of certain organizational requirements of industrial enterprises. These limitations on managerial power have become manifested and further reinforced in the reciprocal expectations of management and employees. Thus management expects certain behavior of individuals acting in the "role" of employee; conversely, employees expect certain treatment from those acting in the "role" of manager or supervisor. It is impossible for human beings to relate themselves to each other throughout any considerable period of time except where such reciprocal expectations have developed and become stabilized. Coöperative endeavor among human beings depends upon (1) the articulation of reciprocal behavior patterns so that each party to a relation performs a task or series of tasks which contributes effectively to the

achievement of a common objective, (2) the mutuality of reciprocal expectations so that each party has a clear idea of what the other party is supposed to do and how he is supposed to do it, and (3) the observance of these role expectations so that each party actually behaves in a manner which confirms the expectations of the other party. Conversely, where role requirements are ineffectively interrelated, where they are not mutually held or clearly understood by either party, or where they are not observed in actual behavior, conflict is likely to occur.

An analysis of certain conditions which either facilitate or restrict employee acceptance of managerial authority will lead to an investigation of the meaning of employment among different types of industrial employees. A tentative conclusion will be that mutual expectations regarding limitations in managerial authority are most likely to develop in those occupational contexts (involving skilled manual workers and staff specialists) in which work-career orientations are maximized and deep interpersonal commitments are minimized, that is, where individuals tend to view their relation to their work as an important aspect of a long-run career rather than a means for the expression of short-run needs.

#### PARTICIPATION IN SUPERVISORY DECISIONS

As Georg Simmel pointed out, every superordinate-subordinate relation involves some degree of reciprocity; to a certain degree leaders are always led by their subordinates.<sup>1</sup> In the supervisor-worker relation, reciprocity may take the form of employee participation in the supervisory decision-making process. Tannenbaum and Massarik have pointed out in this regard:

Decisions are made by managers in order to organize, direct, or control responsible subordinates to the end that all service contributions be coordinated in the attainment of an enterprise purpose. Since managers are those who accomplish results through subordinates, the latter are always directly and intimately affected by managerial decisions and therefore may have a considerable interest in them. Because of this possible interest, subordinates may have a strong desire, particularly in a nation with deeply ingrained democratic traditions, to participate in the determination of matters affecting them.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Georg Simmel, *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, ed. and trans. by Kurt H. Wolff (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1950), pp. 181-189.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Tannenbaum and Fred Massarik, "Participation by Subordinates in

Tannenbaum and Massarik went on to indicate that the "participation" of subordinates in managerial decision-making does not necessarily mean that subordinates make the actual decision; the supervisor may merely "take into account" the opinions of subordinates before he makes a decision—or in extremely manipulative forms of human relations techniques, the supervisor may simply have made a decision earlier to which he wishes to get the consent of subordinates through the use of clever discussion devices, and so on.

Irrespective of the conscious intent of management in permitting worker participation in managerial decision-making, however, the latent consequence of this practice *can* operate to reinforce the legitimacy of supervisory authority, depending upon the type of employees and the nature of the work involved. Participation in managerial decision-making is an efficient device for strengthening supervisory authority among certain types of employees. Not *all* employees are "always directly and intimately affected by managerial decisions," and therefore, some employees do not have as great an interest in managerial decisions as others do.

Some of the data collected in the Ordnance Survey are relevant in this regard.<sup>3</sup> For example, table 5 indicates that only a minority (from 39 to 48 per cent) of Ordnance workers in the sample at the five Ordnance installations reported *experiencing* a high degree of participation in supervisory decision-making. A typical description of this type of supervision was expressed in the words of an Ordnance worker as follows:

He didn't force workers to do things his way. He said, "Let's see if we can work this out together." He said, "If you have any ideas, let's hear them." He didn't just have his way and that was all. . . . He would give work assignments and knew what he wanted, but he was willing to listen to what you wanted to say. (Ordnance interview.)

The more common experience of Ordnance workers, however, seemed to be a lower degree of participation in supervisory decision-making.

---

the Managerial Decision-making Process," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, XVI (1950), p. 410.

<sup>3</sup> In this connection the term "first-level supervisor" will be used to refer to foremen and supervisors who are directly responsible for the work performance of nonsupervisory employees; in other words, first-level supervisors are those persons at the lowest level of the management hierarchy. The term "workers" will be used to refer to nonsupervisory personnel.



TABLE 5

EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPATION IN SUPERVISORY DECISIONS  
BY ORDNANCE WORKERS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION  
(Percentages)

Participation of workers <sup>a</sup>	Occupational classification <sup>b</sup>						
	(1) Female Cler.	(2) Female Unsk.	(3) Male Cler.	(4) Male Spec.	(5) Male Unsk.	(6) Male Semi.	(7) Male Skill.
High degree	39	40	40	47	48	48	44
Low degree	61	60	60	53	52	52	56
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	456	120	65	209	501	475	89

<sup>a</sup> The data in this table are tabulated from the written questionnaire responses of civilian nonsupervisory employees, designated as "workers," in five army Ordnance installations to the following statements: "My supervisor takes action without asking for my ideas"; "My supervisor takes time to explain why the work must be done a certain way"; "My supervisor asks for my ideas before taking action on important things"; and "My supervisor says that the work should be done his way." Responses to each statement were precoded in terms of the following categories: "(a) always; (b) usually; (c) sometimes; (d) seldom; (e) never." Then indices of participation in supervisory decisions were constructed according to the Guttman scalogram technique.

<sup>b</sup> The occupational classifications included in the various categories are as follows: (1) female clerical personnel graded GS-4 and below; (2) female personnel in unskilled warehousing and processing classifications; (3) male clerical personnel graded GS-4 and below; (4) male specialists in salaried classifications graded GS-5 and above; (5) male personnel in unskilled labor, warehousing, and processing classifications; (6) male personnel in semiskilled vehicle repair, artillery and small arms assembly and repair, metal work, and machine operation classifications; and (7) male personnel in shop crafts classifications. See Appendix A for a more detailed summary of the occupations included in these classifications.

Table 5 also demonstrates that the variation in high participation in supervisory decision-making as related to occupational and sex differentiation was not of great magnitude (9 per cent). However, these data suggest that females in both clerical and unskilled manual worker classifications were generally less likely than males to have participated widely in decision-making. Among male employees, clerical personnel were less likely to have participated widely than staff specialists or those in manual worker categories.

In this same survey, Ordnance employees were asked similar questions designed to measure the degree of their *preference* for participation in managerial decision-making, in contrast to their *experience* of it. Table 6 suggests occupational and

**TABLE 6**

PREFERENCE FOR PARTICIPATION IN SUPERVISORY DECISIONS BY  
ORDNANCE WORKERS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION  
(Percentages)

<i>Preference of workers <sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Occupational classification <sup>b</sup></i>						
	(1) <i>Female Cler.</i>	(2) <i>Female Unsk.</i>	(3) <i>Male Cler.</i>	(4) <i>Male Spec.</i>	(5) <i>Male Unsk.</i>	(6) <i>Male Semi.</i>	(7) <i>Male Skill.</i>
High degree of participation	27	31	37	46	38	44	43
Low degree of participation	73	69	63	54	62	56	57
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	457	120	65	207	494	476	88

<sup>a</sup> The data in this table were tabulated from the written questionnaire responses of civilian nonsupervisory employees in five Army Ordnance installations to the following statements: "I would expect a good supervisor to take action without asking for my ideas"; "I would expect a good supervisor to say that the work should be done his way"; "I would expect a good supervisor to ask for my ideas before taking action on important things"; and "I would expect a good supervisor to take time to explain why the work must be done a certain way." Responses to each statement were precoded in terms of the following categories: "(a) always; (b) usually; (c) sometimes; (d) seldom; (e) never." Then, as in the case of the data reported in table 6, indices of desired participation in supervisory decisions were constructed according to the method explained in Appendix B.

<sup>b</sup> See table 5, footnote b, for a description of occupational classifications.

sex variations. There was more variation among workers according to sex and occupation in their preference for participation (19 per cent) than in their experience of participation.

The comparative uniformity in managerial practice, as indicated in table 5, is understandable in view of the fact that most first-level supervisors in the Ordnance Corps had been subjected previously to a fairly intensive series of training programs, initiated by the Office, Chief of Ordnance, during the years following World War II for the purpose of improving the human relations practices of supervisors. Participation of workers in supervisory decision-making was especially emphasized in the program. The courses typically involved a conference method of training, with sessions including "round-table" discussions among supervisors from all types of operations in an installation.<sup>4</sup> The net effect of this program was to encourage uniformity

<sup>4</sup> This description is based upon my experience as an instructor in this training program for a period of eighteen months at an eastern Ordnance installation.

in supervisory practices throughout an installation and also throughout the Ordnance Corps. Thus, though supervisors were subjected to certain common influences tending to encourage uniformity in their practices, workers' *preferences* for these practices still might have reflected a diversity of backgrounds and interests in relation to their work experience.

Table 6 illustrates this diversity. Although some percentage differences are small, they suggest that in Ordnance installations, staff specialists, semiskilled manual workers, and skilled manual workers are more likely to prefer a high degree of participation in supervisory decision-making. This table also indicates more conclusively that female workers in both clerical and unskilled manual worker categories are less apt to prefer participation.

The comparison between the preference for and the experience of high participation in supervisory decision-making is summarized in table 7. There it may be seen that male clerical

TABLE 7

COMPARISON BETWEEN PREFERENCE FOR AND EXPERIENCE OF  
HIGH PARTICIPATION IN SUPERVISORY DECISIONS BY ORDNANCE  
WORKERS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION  
(Percentages)

Participation in supervisory decisions <sup>a</sup>	Occupational classification <sup>b</sup>						
	(1) Female Cler.	(2) Female Unsk.	(3) Male Cler.	(4) Male Spec.	(5) Male Unsk.	(6) Male Semi.	(7) Male Skill.
Experienced high degree of participation	39	40	40	47	48	48	44
Prefer high degree of participation	27	31	37	46	38	44	43
Difference	12	9	3	1	10	4	1

<sup>a</sup> The rows of percentages in this table are replications of the top rows of percentages in table 5 and table 6.

<sup>b</sup> See table 5, footnote b.

personnel, staff technicians, semiskilled manual workers, and skilled manual workers expect about as much participation as they actually experience, whereas female clerical personnel, female unskilled manual workers, and male unskilled manual

workers expect participation less frequently than they experience it. These data would suggest, then, that from the standpoint of worker's expectations, high participation is less essential for the "legitimacy" of the supervisor-worker relation among female clerks, female unskilled workers, and male unskilled workers than in other classifications by occupation and sex.

We may summarize by characterizing the supervisor-worker relation for female clerks, female unskilled workers, male unskilled workers, and male clerical employees (noting that for male clerks, both the frequency of expectation and the frequency of experience of participation is relatively low) as typically a more *unilateral* relation—that is, the acceptance of supervisory authority does not depend so much upon the experience of participation in supervisory decision-making. On the other hand, we may characterize the supervisor-worker relation for staff specialists, semiskilled workers,<sup>5</sup> and skilled workers as typically a more *reciprocal* relation—that is, the acceptance of supervisory authority seems to be more dependent upon the experience of participation in supervisory decision-making.

The question remains as to how these differences might be explained. It would be reasonable to assume that those employees who are more "career oriented" in their present jobs would be more likely to expect high participation in supervisory decision-making, since they would have more at stake in managerial decisions relating to their work activities. In this regard table 8 reports data relative to career orientations from the Western Arsenal Survey, which support this conclusion. In table 8 it may be seen that the three occupational groups which most frequently expressed preference for participation in supervisory decision-making, as suggested in table 6 (staff specialists, semiskilled manual workers, and skilled manual workers), are also the occupational groups in which workers seem to be more likely to think of their present jobs as a step in a career.<sup>6</sup> Female employees, on the other hand, who frequently think of their jobs simply as means to supplement a husband's income or as a temporary expedient until marriage or family responsibilities, also prefer supervisors who make their own decisions without involv-

<sup>5</sup> This finding applies in Ordnance work only; see the following discussion of semiskilled workers in Bay area industries.

<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, a cross tabulation of career orientation and desire for participation in supervisory decision-making could not be done because the data in tables 6 and 8 are based upon different samples.

TABLE 8

CAREER ORIENTATION OF ORDNANCE WORKERS  
ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION  
(Percentages)

Career orientation <sup>a</sup>	Occupational classification <sup>b</sup>				
	(1) Female Cler.	(2) Male Spec.	(3) Male Unsk.	(4) Male Semi.	(5) Male Skill.
Think of present job as part of working career	55	94	60	74	90
Do not think of present job as part of working career	45	6	40	26	10
	100	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	69	16	178	64	32

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from the written questionnaire responses of a sample of civilian nonsupervisory employees at Western Arsenal (a fictitious designation of an Army Ordnance installation) to the following question: "Do you think of your present job as part of a career you would like to follow for the rest of your working life?"

<sup>b</sup> The occupational classifications included in the various categories are as follows: (1) female clerical employees graded GS-4 and below; (2) male specialists graded GS-5 and above; (3) male unskilled manual workers graded WB-11 and below; (4) male semiskilled manual workers graded WB-12 through WB-15; and (5) male skilled manual workers graded WB-16 and above. These classifications roughly correspond to the occupational classifications in the broader Ordnance sample in five installations, as reported in tables 5 through 7.

ing their female employees in such unwanted responsibilities.<sup>7</sup> Similarly although less frequently than females, male unskilled employees and male clerical personnel more often look upon their work as "just a job" rather than a step in a career of particular importance to their self-conceptions and self-esteem.

This conclusion is supported by data from the Bay Area Employee Survey of industrial workers in four San Francisco area factories under private management, as shown in table 9. Although the sample was smaller (and thus the percentage comparisons were less reliable) than in the Western Arsenal Survey, the fact that replies were elaborated verbally by the interviewees enabled me to make a more careful classification of career orientations. For example, the question asked in the Ordnance study, "Do you think of your present job as part of a career you would like to follow for the rest of your *working* life" was

<sup>7</sup> For a further discussion of this point, see Howard M. Vollmer and Jack A. Kinney, "Supervising Women Is Different," *Personnel Journal*, XXXIV (1955), pp. 261-263.

**TABLE 9**

**CAREER ORIENTATION OF INDUSTRIAL WORKERS  
ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION  
(Percentages)**

<i>Career orientation <sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Occupational classification <sup>b</sup></i>			
	(1) <i>Female Cler.</i>	(2) <i>Male Spec.</i>	(3) <i>Male Semi.</i>	(4) <i>Male Skill.</i>
Think of present job as part of working career	17	81	33	72
Do not think of present job as part of working career	83	19	67	28
	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	17	11	30	39

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from the verbal interview responses of samples of employees at four Bay area private industrial plants to the following question: "Is your present work the kind of work you would like to follow for the rest of your life?"

<sup>b</sup> The occupational classifications included in the various categories are as follows: (1) female clerical employees in various clerical occupations; (2) male staff specialists in engineering, accounting, sales management, and similar occupations; (3) male semiskilled workers in machine operator, driver, repairman, finisher, assembler, inspector, mechanic's helper, and similar occupations; and (4) skilled workers in tool and diemaker, machinist, electrician, millwright, welder, steamfitter, carpenter, mechanic, and other skilled trades. See Appendix A for a more detailed summary of the occupations included in these classifications.

frequently answered "yes" by female employees who were not really career oriented, but nevertheless who intended to follow their present line of work until they resign to engage in family responsibilities. In the Bay Area Employee Survey it became apparent that, as we would expect, most female clerical employees did not intend to continue their jobs as a *lifetime* career. Their comments on this were typically as follows:

Well, I really don't like to work. I would rather stay home and be a wife. So if I had my choice, I wouldn't be a career girl at all. (Stenographer, cement plant—Interview 035.)

I don't think of this job as a career. I hope to have a family. I think that's more interesting! But I like this company for the nine years I've been here. (Clerk, hardware manufacturing plant—Interview 065.)

It's just a job—that's exactly right. It's just a job. There are other things I would like to do in a career, but I'm not working in a career. I'd stay

here for the extra money. I would go back into bookkeeping if I were going into a career. (Stock clerk, automobile assembly plant—Interview 043.)

It also became apparent in the Bay area interviews that many less skilled employees did not think of their work in terms of a career because of a basic dislike of the routine nature of much assembly line work:<sup>8</sup>

I don't like assembly line work. You can't use your head. You can only use your hands. I told my boss, "I'll stand there and see a line of white cars going down my line that I painted. Then I'll see a red one, and I'll say to myself 'Did I paint that red car?'" Now that's how routine it is! Like they say, "All that's worth living for is quitting time and pay day." That's all there is. It's just a job. (Automobile spray painter—Interview 059.)

Well, the work I'm doing now is interesting around the first of the year when the new model is coming out. Then the rest of the year it's just a job and the things you do are just routine. (Automobile trimmer—Interview 054.)

A lot of the jobs here are just jobs. In fact, one woman I know has been capping for eleven years and never has done anything else. All she does is screw this little cap on and test it to see if the cylinder works. For eleven years! I couldn't do that. (Female, master key assembler—Interview 064.)

I guess you'd say my job is just a job, because you do the same thing over and over again. Each day we get a job that we did two weeks ago, and it's just repeating itself. Yes, there's sure a lot of routine in it. I'd like to get into something else in the aviation line—not in maintenance, but upstairs in production control or something like that. But for that, of course, I should be studying a lot more than I do. (Aircraft mechanic, junior grade—Interview 092.)

Less skilled workers in the survey of privately owned Bay area industries tended to differ in their attitudes from workers classified as "semiskilled" in Ordnance installations, since Ordnance "semiskilled" work is probably less routine. Where work is highly routinized, it is reasonable that workers would be less

<sup>8</sup> For a further discussion of the problems of alienation from assembly line work, see Charles H. Walker and Robert H. Guest, *The Man on the Assembly Line* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952).

inclined to expect a high degree of participation in supervisory decision-making, because, as with most female workers, their stake in their jobs in terms of career orientation is not high. Indeed, in highly routinized work, the character of the work is so stabilized that supervisors probably have very few significant decisions to make in relation to the work process.

On the other hand, staff specialists and more highly skilled manual workers are more likely to look upon their work in the following terms:

Our work is extremely interesting. You know that a project can vary radically because of the nature of it. Our principal project is aluminum reduction, but we can get into a variety of things. I have noticed that when I get into a project by myself, it is much more interesting than working with several other people under a group leader. It's mine. This feeling of having something that belongs to you is all-important. Of course, you can't always have it, and you have to be realistic. But this is certainly the kind of work I would like to follow for a career, very much so. (Industrial engineer, cement plant—Interview 034.)

Well, I'll tell you, in my case I wouldn't be in any other trade. To me it's not work. If you get a job you like, it's not work. When you get a job you hate, you're working twice as hard. Most of the fellows in my shop feel the same way I do. They wouldn't trade this type of work for anything. (Machinist, hardware manufacturing plant—Interview 073.)

Oh, it's very interesting. In the shop I'm in it covers such a different thing from day to day. Tomorrow I don't know what I'll be doing. There may be a different type of airplane come in. It may change from hour to hour even. (Mechanic first class, aircraft maintenance base—Interview 099.)

Where employees are this interested in their work, it is natural for them to expect to participate in day-to-day supervisory decisions, which in turn may greatly affect the course of work activities.

We may examine the degree to which workers' expectations of participation in managerial decision-making tend to be reciprocated in terms of the expectations of management. Table 10 gives data which suggest that supervisory personnel are more likely to maintain that the supervisor-worker relation should include participation by workers in supervisory decision-making



TABLE 10

PREFERENCE FOR WORKER PARTICIPATION IN SUPERVISORY DECISIONS  
BY ORDNANCE EMPLOYEES ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF SUPERVISION  
(Percentages)

Preference of employees <sup>a</sup>	Level of supervision <sup>b</sup>		
	Non- supervisory employees	First- level supervisors	Second- level supervisors
High degree of participation	47	65	60
Low degree of participation	53	35	40
	100	100	100
Total number of cases	2,128	756	334

<sup>a</sup> The data in this table are tabulated from the written questionnaire responses of male and female civilian employees in five Army Ordnance installations to the statements indicated in footnote a of table 6.

<sup>b</sup> "Nonsupervisory employees" are those "workers" with no supervisory responsibilities in relation to the direction of other employees' work activities; "first-level supervisors" are those employees who are directly responsible for the work performance of assigned "workers"; and "second-level supervisors" are those employees who, in turn, are responsible for the work performance of one or more "first-level supervisors."

than are workers themselves. This may be indicative of the general realization in Ordnance management that participation is a useful managerial tool in buttressing the authority of supervisors. It is significant, furthermore, that first-level supervisors seemed to be more likely to express this point of view than were high-level supervisors. Possibly this may be a result both of the intensive training programs to which first-level supervisors in Ordnance have been subjected and of their everyday experience in attempting to gain worker acceptance of their decisions and directives. These training programs, however, have not taken account of the fact that participation may not be as useful a device among some types of employees as it is among others.

Therefore, taken together, the data show that the desire of some employees for greater participation in supervisory decision-making is not only a matter of individual differences in the degree of job involvement, it is also dependent upon variations in the subjective meaning of employment to employees. Higher skilled manual workers and staff specialists are more likely to view their present work as a step in a career and therefore to expect their supervisors to allow them a greater degree

of participation in supervisory decision-making. Where supervisors fail to behave in accord with such an expectation, it is probable that supervisory authority is correspondingly weakened.

#### PRIMARY RELATIONS IN SUPERVISION

Charles H. Cooley has been generally credited with contributing the "primary group" concept to sociological theory, although it was the Hawthorne studies which especially emphasized the practical importance of utilizing close interpersonal relations to strengthen supervisory authority.<sup>9</sup> These conclusions were further substantiated by Mayo and Lombard's wartime studies of labor turnover in the aircraft industries in southern California.<sup>10</sup> The studies indicated that where foremen made a conscious attempt to develop primary relations oriented to production goals within work groups and to integrate new employees into these primary relations, industrial efficiency was significantly increased.<sup>11</sup>

This does not mean, however, that control of primary relations is necessarily a useful tool for management in every type of work situation. If by "primary relations" we mean the development of diffuse, affectively toned commitments which go beyond the superficial social relations of ordinary work, we may see by examining data from the Bay Area Employee Survey that close friendships among work associates outside the work situation itself are most frequently found among less skilled male manual workers and are least frequently found among female clerical personnel and male staff specialists. Table 11 summarizes these data.

This point may be further illustrated by an examination of some typical interview comments. Contrary to what we might expect at first thought, female clerical employees, for example, are not likely to form close attachments with fellow workers which have any importance outside the work situation:

<sup>9</sup> See Charles H. Cooley, *Social Organization* (New York: Scribners, 1909), chapter 3; F. J. Roethlisberger and W. J. Dickson, *Management and the Worker* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), especially Part IV.

<sup>10</sup> See Elton Mayo and George F. Lombard, *Teamwork and Labor Turnover in the Aircraft Industry of Southern California*, Business Research Study No. 32 (Cambridge: Harvard University School of Business, 1944).

<sup>11</sup> See Leonard Broom and Philip Selznick, *Sociology* (Evanston, Ill.: Row Peterson, 1955), pp. 152-154, for a summary and interpretation of the findings of the Mayo-Lombard study.

TABLE 11

OCURRENCE OF PRIMARY RELATIONS WITH WORK ASSOCIATES AMONG  
INDUSTRIAL WORKERS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION  
(Percentages)

Occurrence of primary relations <sup>a</sup>	Occupational classification <sup>b</sup>			
	(1) Female Cler.	(2) Male Spec.	(3) Male Semi.	(4) Male Skill.
One or more co-workers as close friend outside work	29	28	47	37
No co-workers as close friends outside work	71	72	53	63
	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	17	11	30	38

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from the verbal interview responses of samples of employees at four Bay area private industrial plants to the following question: "Do you have any close friends in your work group whom you visit with or 'pal around' with after working hours?"

<sup>b</sup> See table 9, footnote b, for a description of occupational categories.

There are about three or four people here who have been to my home and I have been to theirs, but I don't do that too much. I just don't like to get too close to other employees. (Key punch operator, cement plant—Interview 038.)

Well, I believe that the less you have to do with the people you work with, the better it works out, because you have to see them all day anyway. (Stenographer, cement plant—Interview 035.)

This does not mean that female clerical workers are not typically very sociable with one another at the worksite; the point is that this sociability usually does not "go very deep" in effecting emotional commitments between these persons:

We're very friendly in the office here. Most of the girls, upstairs and downstairs, around my age have coffee breaks and lunch together. It's not exactly a clique, like in high school. If somebody joins us, we will talk to them and ask them to join us. (Receptionist, aircraft maintenance base—Interview 118.)

Our friendliness is mostly in the office here. Two of the girls are younger than I am. They're not married, so they have different interests. But we're very congenial at work, and we go out to lunch together. But as far as outside work is concerned, no. (Clerk typist, hardware manufacturing plant—Interview 070.)

Similarly, male staff technicians and, to a somewhat lesser degree, male skilled manual workers are also not likely to form close friendships with co-workers to the extent that friendships continue outside the work situation:

I don't make a policy of making close friends with the people at work. I find it leads to difficulties to get too close to men who work where you do. For instance, your friend may rise to become your supervisor, and then your friendship becomes somewhat strained. I have friends on the outside, and we feel free to argue politics, company policies, and so on. (Design engineer, cement and aluminum plant—Interview 015.)

I make it a point to be strictly business. I was told thirty years ago: "Wherever you work, don't make dates with the girls and don't fraternize with the men, just be strictly business. Don't get chummy with someone you might have to do business with later because of some outside issue that might influence your decision." So I am strictly business. (Sales correspondent, hardware manufacturing plant—Interview 078.)

No, I don't see the other employees on the outside too much. I feel that it is a little too much to see people all day and then at night too. I have done this a few times, but I feel that basically your family deserves your time after work. (Industrial engineer, cement and aluminum plant—Interview 034.)

I don't want to have any close friends here. My hours are strictly business. It's pretty hard to have close friends in your business and keep it a business. (Tool and diemaker, hardware manufacturing plant—Interview 079.)

I guess I'm a little anti-social. I have my own hobby. As far as anybody I work with, to have close contact with, there's only one or two that I've ever been inside their homes. I just don't make close friends of the other workers. (Master mechanic, aircraft maintenance base—Interview 102.)

I don't have any friends I pal around with after hours here. I have been around here forty years, and when the whistle blows, I go home. My wife is always after me to go someplace. (Maintenance electrician, cement plant—Interview 012.)

In contrast, less skilled manual workers are likely to describe the development of close friendships along the following lines:

Yes, there's quite a few that I visit with back and forth. In fact, there's three that I go hunting with all the time. (Driver, cement plant—Interview 023.)

Yes, I have many friends here, and we have interests in common. I belong to the Water Ski Club, the Air Club, and just about all the company clubs that have any entertainment to them. Then also, I have another good friend who lives down the street. (Mechanic's helper, aircraft maintenance base—Interview 098.)

These findings are also supported, in part at least, by data from the questionnaire survey of employees at Western Arsenal. In response to the question, "Think of your closest friends; are they people you met at Western Arsenal or did you meet them outside the Arsenal?" table 12 indicates that female

TABLE 12

PLACE OF ORIGIN OF CLOSEST FRIENDSHIPS OF ORDNANCE WORKERS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION  
(Percentages)

Place of origin <sup>a</sup>	Occupational classification <sup>b</sup>				
	(1) Female Cler.	(2) Male Spec.	(3) Male Unsk.	(4) Male Semi.	(5) Male Skill.
At Western Arsenal	19	31	44	41	40
Outside Western Arsenal	81	69	56	59	60
	100	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	68	16	179	65	32

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from the written questionnaire responses of a sample of civilian nonsupervisory employees at Western Arsenal (a fictitious designation of an Army Ordnance installation) to the following question: "Think of your closest friends; are they people you met at Western Arsenal or did you meet them outside the Arsenal?"

<sup>b</sup> For a description of these occupational classifications, see table 8, footnote b.

clerical personnel and male staff specialists were more apt to say that their closest friendships originated outside the Arsenal, whereas male manual workers were more likely to report that they originated at Western Arsenal.

These comments are understandable in terms of the distinction Georg Simmel made between "sociability"—what he called the "play form" of social interaction—and the deeper aspects of

true primary relations.<sup>12</sup> The typical form of interpersonal relations among female clerical personnel, male staff specialists, and male skilled manual workers seems to be characteristically a form of "sociability"; however, the development of true primary relations involving *diffuse*, affectively toned interpersonal commitments which go beyond superficial "sociability" is more likely to occur among less skilled manual workers.<sup>13</sup>

Relations between workers and supervisors are similar to inter-worker relations in this regard. Female clerical employees, for example, are likely to stress the importance of "friendliness" in relations with their supervisors. Female clerks in Ordnance installations frequently described the "best supervisors they had ever worked for" in the following terms:

She was very polite. When I came to work in the morning it was always "Good Morning" or "Hi," which made for a good feeling in our work group. (Ordnance interview.)

Other women emphasize "friendliness" in terms of a supervisor's interest in the personal and family problems of female employees:

I think friendliness and a sense of humor have everything else topped. If supervisors haven't that, they haven't anything. If you get a job you can't do, or if you are not well and come to work sick, the supervisor will help you. . . . One supervisor I had would go out of her way to ask how your family was. If you had a sick child, she would ask how he was. (Ordnance interview.)

Or female employees may interpret "friendliness" in terms of tact and consideration in the giving of work orders:

My idea of a good supervisor is one that is very pleasant. If there is something to be done, he would say "please" and "thank you." If an error were made, he would tell me about it nicely and I would not be yelled at or called down in a nasty way. (Ordnance interview.)

<sup>12</sup> See Simmel, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-57.

<sup>13</sup> Such findings may call for qualification of George C. Homans' generalization that "the more frequently persons interact with one another, the stronger their sentiments of friendship for one another are likely to be," *The Human Group* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1950), p. 133. The data above would tend to indicate that interaction among individuals may be quite frequent, as is typically true in the case of female clerical personnel; yet this interaction may only lead to increased sociability, but not to an increase in close friendships which have any important significance outside the immediate situation of interaction.

These preferences of female employees do not mean, however, that they also want their supervisors to maintain close friendships with them. This fact is brought out clearly by the data reported in table 13. The data indicate that male clerical per-

TABLE 13

PREFERRED ORIENTATION OF SUPERVISORS' FRIENDSHIPS  
BY ORDNANCE WORKERS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION  
(Percentages)

Preferred orientation <sup>a</sup>	Occupational classification <sup>b</sup>						
	(1) Female Cler.	(2) Female Unsk.	(3) Male Cler.	(4) Male Spec.	(5) Male Unsk.	(6) Male Semi.	(7) Male Skill.
Toward workers	33	49	58	32	66	60	39
Toward other supervisors	22	21	19	36	16	20	26
Makes no difference	45	30	23	32	18	20	35
	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Total number of cases	458	120	65	209	492	478	89

<sup>a</sup> The data in this table are tabulated from the written questionnaire responses of civilian nonsupervisory employees in five Army Ordnance installations to the statement: "I think the best supervisors usually keep their closest friendships with: (a) their workers; (b) other supervisors; (c) this doesn't make much difference."

<sup>b</sup> See table 5, footnote b, for a description of occupational classifications.

sonnel, male unskilled workers, and male semiskilled workers in Ordnance more frequently expect their supervisors to maintain their closest friendships with subordinate employees. More skilled manual workers and staff specialists, as well as female employees, were less likely to desire such attachments. A skilled worker typically described the "best supervisor he had ever known" in the following terms:

There is one man I know pretty well who had especially good qualities about him. By his actions and personality you would never know he was a supervisor. He worked along with the men. . . . like at lunch time some foremen would go off with another group of supervisors—it was just the opposite with this one. He was friendly, and yet not really a chum. (Ordnance interview.)

Table 14 indicates that the expectations of Ordnance workers for supervisors' friendships are generally supported by Ordnance management. Again, it is in the unskilled and semiskilled

TABLE 14

## PREFERRED ORIENTATION OF FIRST-LEVEL SUPERVISORS' FRIENDSHIPS BY ORDNANCE MANAGERIAL PERSONNEL ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION

(Percentages)

Preferred orientation <sup>a</sup>	Occupational classification <sup>b</sup>				
	(1) Cler.	(2) Spec.	(3) Unsk.	(4) Semi.	(5) Skill.
Toward workers	39	25	54	52	25
Toward other supervisors	38	39	26	30	35
Makes no difference	23	36	20	18	40
	100	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	93	197	294	153	60

<sup>a</sup> The data in this table are tabulated from the written questionnaire responses of male civilian first-level and second-level supervisory employees in five Army Ordnance installations to the statement indicated in footnote a of table 13.

<sup>b</sup> The occupational classifications for the supervisors included in the various occupational categories of this table are as follows: (1) clerical supervisory personnel graded GS-4 and below; (2) supervisory specialists in salaried classifications graded GS-5 and above; (3) supervisors in unskilled labor, warehousing, and processing classifications; (4) supervisors in semiskilled vehicle repair, artillery and small arms assembly and repair, metal work, and machine operation classifications; and (7) supervisors in shop crafts classifications. No female supervisors are included in this analysis.

classifications that the more frequent expectation of close friendships between supervisors and workers emerges. Table 15 shows

TABLE 15

## PREFERRED ORIENTATION OF FIRST-LEVEL SUPERVISORS' FRIENDSHIPS BY ORDNANCE EMPLOYEES ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF SUPERVISION

(Percentages)

Preferred orientation <sup>a</sup>	Level of supervision <sup>b</sup>		
	Non-supervisory employees	First-level supervisors	Second-level supervisors
Toward workers	58	47	34
Toward other supervisors	20	27	41
Makes no difference	22	26	25
	100	100	100
Total number of cases	2,129	757	335

<sup>a</sup> The data in this table are tabulated from the written questionnaire responses of male and female civilian employees in five Army Ordnance installations to the statement indicated in footnote a of table 13.

<sup>b</sup> See footnote b, table 10, for an explanation of levels of supervision.



that the frequency of expectation that supervisors direct their closest friendships toward subordinate workers tends to diminish as one moves up the supervisory hierarchy. This may indicate that higher-level managerial personnel see the development of close friendships between workers and supervisors as more often a threat than a support to managerial authority. Nevertheless, the Harvard studies at the Hawthorne plant and in the aircraft factories of southern California have shown that the controlled use of primary relations can be an important support to managerial authority in those types of situations where the development of close friendships is a normal feature of the work-group environment.

We might summarize this discussion by pointing out that, in Talcott Parsons' terms, the employment relationship for less skilled male workers tends to be more of a *diffuse* relationship, involving the orientation of persons to each other in terms of interests that transcend the immediate requirements of specific situations; for all other types of employees, the employment relationship tends to be more *specific* in character, even though a superficial form of "sociability" may exist.<sup>14</sup>

Why do the relationships of less skilled manual workers to each other and to their supervisors tend to be more diffuse in character? The data seem to indicate that less skilled manual workers may have a stronger need for immediate affective expression in the employment relationship than is true for other types of employees. Perhaps this phenomenon may be explained, in part at least, by the fact that less skilled workers are typically more subject to layoffs because their employers do not have a heavy investment in them. Since their jobs are more vulnerable, they are more likely to be dependent upon personal relations with supervisors and co-workers. One study has shown, for example, that local neighborhood taverns are important meeting places after working hours for industrial workers who are close friends.<sup>15</sup>

A consideration especially pertinent to the relation between workers and supervisors is the variation in expectations of uniform treatment versus individualistic treatment. It was pointed

<sup>14</sup> See Talcott Parsons and Edward A. Shils, *Toward a General Theory of Action* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 83.

<sup>15</sup> David Gottlieb, "The Neighborhood Tavern and the Cocktail Lounge: a Study of Class Differences," *American Journal of Sociology*, LXII (1957), pp. 559-562.

out in chapter iii that modern personnel practices typically involve a delicate balance between emphasis upon uniform treatment and individualistic treatment. Here, however, it will be shown that different types of employees vary in their expectations regarding these matters.

#### UNIFORM VERSUS INDIVIDUAL TREATMENT

As suggested in table 16, female workers in both clerical and unskilled classifications in Ordnance installations were more likely to make comments indicating that they expected their super-

TABLE 16

PREFERENCE FOR UNIFORM SUPERVISION VERSUS INDIVIDUALISTIC SUPERVISION AMONG ORDNANCE WORKERS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION

(Percentages)

Preferred type of supervision <sup>a</sup>	Occupational classification <sup>b</sup>						
	(1) Female Cler.	(2) Female Unsk.	(3) Male Cler.	(4) Male Spec.	(5) Male Unsk.	(6) Male Semi.	(7) Male Skill.
Uniform	61	68	40	58	46	48	55
Individual	39	32	60	42	54	52	45
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number of comments	117	44	15	36	141	101	32

<sup>a</sup> These data represent classifications of written questionnaire comments of civilian nonsupervisory employees in five Army Ordnance installations to the following "open-ended" question: "What do you think it takes to make up a good supervisor?" Those comments pertinent to the issue of uniform treatment of employees versus individualistic treatment of employees were then classified according to these categories. Since not every employee who participated in this study made written comments in response to this question, the total number of comments made by employees in various occupational categories is less than the total number of individuals in each category, as reported in previous tables.

<sup>b</sup> See table 5, footnote b, for a description of occupational classifications.

visors to "treat everybody alike" than were male workers. Many women made comments about "partiality" in supervisors similar to the following:

I think the only thing I remember about a poor supervisor I had was that he had a few little pets who could always do what they wanted to do, and someone else would have to carry their share of the work.

If the supervisor were told about it, he would give an offhand answer . . . but the people weren't too satisfied because they felt they were doing more than their share; and sometimes the favorites were higher paid than the people who had to do their work. (Ordnance interview.)

Male semiskilled and unskilled employees in Ordnance, on the other hand, were more likely to say that they expected their supervisors to treat them as individuals, with special consideration for particular work problems. This point of view was especially emphasized by an automobile assembly line worker in the Bay Area Employee Survey:

. . . I feel that if management was a little more concerned with employees there would be a lot of things that could be worked out. If they would try to know the employee as an individual and not just put him in a group, a category, it would be better. . . . My boss talks to me as though he's a man and I'm a child. I think labor relations would be much better if they would think of the worker as a man and not just as a bunch of horses out there doing the work. You find lots of differences between men, so you can't treat them just as a group. Some chew tobacco, some smoke, and some do neither one. If the foreman would consider his men and not just say, "Well, that's a bunch of tobacco-chewers down there," it would be better. (Interview 058.)

In contrast, data from the Ordnance study as shown in table 16 suggest that male staff specialists and male skilled workers are more like female employees in their desire for uniform treatment rather than individualistic treatment.<sup>16</sup>

These differing expectations of nonsupervisory employees were generally supported by Ordnance managerial officials. In this connection, table 17 suggests that female white collar supervisors were most likely to say that uniform supervision should predominate over individual supervision, whereas male blue collar foremen and supervisors were most likely to say the reverse. Again, supervisors in male white collar occupations are distributed proportionately between the two other supervisory classifications used here.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> However, since the percentage differences between male skilled and semi-skilled workers were quite small in this regard, this statement is not conclusively supported by the data in table 16.

<sup>17</sup> Since these data represent comments made on an open-ended question and since the number of comments made totaled considerably less than the number

**TABLE 17**

PREFERENCE FOR UNIFORM SUPERVISION VERSUS INDIVIDUALISTIC SUPERVISION IN ORDNANCE MANAGEMENT ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION

(Percentages)

<i>Preferred type of supervision<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Occupational classification<sup>b</sup></i>		
	<i>(1) Female white collar</i>	<i>(2) Male white collar</i>	<i>(3) Male blue collar</i>
Uniform	58	51	47
Individual	42	49	53
	100	100	100
Total number of comments	43	53	89

<sup>a</sup> These data represent classifications of written questionnaire comments of civilian first-level and second-level supervisory employees in five Army Ordnance installations to the open-ended question indicated in table 16, footnote a.

<sup>b</sup> The following occupational classifications are represented here: (1) female "white collar" supervisors in GS grade classifications; (2) male white collar supervisors in GS grade classifications; and (3) male blue collar supervisors in WBS grade classification.

In line with these comments, we may tentatively describe the supervisor-worker relation for male staff specialists, male skilled workers, female clerical personnel, and female unskilled workers as characteristically emphasizing uniform treatment (universalistic); whereas the supervisor-worker relationship for male clerical personnel and male manual workers in unskilled and semi-skilled classifications may be described as emphasizing consideration for individual circumstances.<sup>18</sup>

These findings parallel those reported earlier for primary relations in supervision. Thus, where the supervisor-worker relation is more diffuse in nature, it also tends to be more individualistic; where the supervisor-worker relation is more specific, it also tends to be more universalistic.

It is also significant to note at this point another similarity to the findings regarding primary relations in supervision. The expectations of male staff specialists and male skilled workers for

of individuals in each occupational category, the threefold differentiation of managerial personnel in this analysis was necessary, instead of the more elaborate differentiation used in earlier analyses. Again, the percentage differences in table 17 are too small to be conclusive.

<sup>18</sup> For a definition of the concepts "universalism" and "particularism," see Parsons and Shils, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

uniform treatment, as compared to the similar emphasis upon uniform treatment by female unskilled and clerical employees, is associated with different characteristics of job-relatedness. Male skilled workers and staff specialists both tend to be career-oriented in relation to their work. Female employees, on the other hand, tend to be home oriented—their work is characteristically a temporary expedient and their meaningful self-identification is with their family status. Yet both types of job-relatedness, the overinvolvement of the career oriented and the underinvolvement of the home oriented, lead to the same result—the expectation of uniform treatment in the employment relationship. Desire for uniform treatment among female employees, however, seems to derive more from a desire to be left alone, not to be bothered at work by other than strictly job matters, and to avoid personal involvement. Desire for uniform treatment among career-oriented employees, in contrast, springs from the type of overinvolvement in work which is likely to lead to strong claims for recognition of employee rights.

#### MANAGERIAL AUTHORITY AND EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

The previous discussion of the character of the supervisor-worker relation in different types of occupational categories may be summarized as follows: (1) for staff specialists and skilled manual workers (predominantly male in composition) the supervisor-worker relation tends to be typically universalistic, specific, and reciprocal in character; (2) for clerical employees (predominantly female) the supervisor-worker relation tends to be typically universalistic, specific, and unilateral in character; (3) for unskilled manual workers (predominantly male) the supervisor-worker relation tends to be typically individualistic, diffuse, and unilateral in character.

The problem remains as to how these characteristics affect employee claims to “rights” in their jobs and to protection against the arbitrary exercise of managerial authority. Table 18 presents data relevant to this matter. These data suggest that those employees in occupational categories in which the supervisor-worker relation may be characterized as a combination of the elements of universalism, specificity, and reciprocity (staff specialists more especially, and skilled manual workers perhaps to a lesser extent) are most likely to agree strongly with the statement,

TABLE 18

CLAIMS TO PROTECTION AGAINST ARBITRARY SUPERVISION AMONG  
ORDNANCE WORKERS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION <sup>a</sup>  
(Percentages)

<i>Claims to protection: "There should be definite rules to keep supervisors and other management officials from treating workers unfairly."</i>	<i>Occupational classification <sup>b</sup></i>				
	(1) <i>Female Cler.</i>	(2) <i>Male Spec.</i>	(3) <i>Male Unsk.</i>	(4) <i>Male Semi.</i>	(5) <i>Male Skill.</i>
Strongly agree	64	81	67	68	74
Agree	35	19	30	29	26
Undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree	1		3	3	
	100	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	69	16	180	65	31

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from the written questionnaire responses of a sample of civilian nonsupervisory employees at Western Arsenal to the question indicated above.

<sup>b</sup> For a description of these occupational classifications, see table 8, footnote b.

"There should be definite rules to keep supervisors and other management officials from treating workers unfairly." <sup>19</sup>

In summary, it seems that the special configuration of the elements which predominate in the supervisor-worker relation for staff technicians and skilled workers is an especially favorable environment for the development of claims to employee rights and protection against arbitrary authority. In other words, where employees expect to share in managerial decision-making and at the same time to have an impersonal and categorical relation with their supervisors and fellow workers, they are motivated to expect the development of rules to govern the employment relationship. In such cases, employees tend to have more at stake in the employment relationship in terms of a career orientation within a professional or semiprofessional (skilled) occupation; at the same time, they have less at stake in terms of deep interpersonal commitments. Thus we may conclude that career involvement tends to support the development of claims to certain types of employee "rights" and that interpersonal friendship (primary relations) tends to undermine such claims. <sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Again, it should be pointed out that the small size of percentage differences in table 18 show that the findings are not conclusive, but are tentative and subject to further investigation.

<sup>20</sup> This discussion is not concerned with whether those employees *within* various occupational categories who are more universalistic, specific, and reciprocal

Tables 10, 14, and 17 also suggest that managerial and supervisory personnel, especially those in white-collar, staff specialist, and skilled job classifications, typically place considerable emphasis upon universalism, specificity, and reciprocity in the supervisor-worker relationship. Where this emphasis occurs in management to complement the expectations of skilled workers and staff specialists, there is an important source of strength in the mutual expectations of both parties for the development and preservation of employee rights, especially as they affect the exercise of managerial authority. In other occupational groups where claims to employee rights are likely to be tempered by considerations of personal friendship or by a lack of career aspirations, or where management officials are less positive in their assertion of complementary expectations, the development and stability of employee rights tends to be more precarious.

Undoubtedly, these occupational differences in the character of the employment relationship are, at least in part, a consequence of the patterns of experience of those in the occupational categories studied here. Typically, individuals in these occupational categories vary not only in the type and complexity of the work they do but also in their educational backgrounds and consequent degree of sophistication in their outlook on life. Such factors influence the meaning of employment together with differing career orientations. We have made no systematic attempt to analyze the relative influence of these background characteristics. Instead, our concern has been to make certain analytical inferences about what we might reasonably expect to be the relation between various degrees of career involvement and the meaning of employment, especially in the supervisor-worker relation. In some cases, these inferences have been supported by survey data. In all cases, however, the arguments presented here do not rest conclusively upon the survey data reported, but instead upon a scheme of analysis, which hopefully will provide directions for further studies.

---

in their individual orientations toward employment are also more likely to claim rights or not. This analysis does suggest, on the other hand, that the normative expectations which tend to predominate among associates in given occupational categories tend to differ in comparison with the normative expectations regarding the importance of rules of order in other occupational categories. The character of the supervisor-worker relationship seems to permit clerical personnel and less skilled manual workers to be more subject to the arbitrary exercise of managerial authority than is the case with staff specialists and skilled manual workers.

## **CHAPTER V. CLAIMS TO SPECIAL PRIVILEGE**

The previous chapter indicated that staff specialists and skilled manual workers are more likely than persons in other occupational classifications to make claims to "rights" in their jobs. However, we have not yet discussed exactly what kinds of rights these employees are likely to claim.

Some kinds of employee rights may be equally emphasized by all employees in an industrial enterprise by virtue of their common status as "employees." Other types of rights or limitations upon the arbitrary exercise of managerial power may be claimed by certain kinds of employees by virtue of their special status within the firm. Human beings characteristically form self-conceptions and expectations regarding the way they feel others should treat them as a result of the different statuses which they occupy. Everett C. Hughes has pointed out that an individual's position at his place of work is an important status factor which



significantly influences his self-conception and his relations with other persons.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Hughes has emphasized the fact that many individuals orient their lives according to expectations about a sequence of status changes, that is, a career perspective.<sup>2</sup> Hughes also pointed out that, although organizations give order to the lives of individuals by providing some of them with a relatively fixed sequence of status opportunities, the careers of all individuals do not always conform to organization patterns.<sup>3</sup> Thus we shall discuss two types of career orientations: (1) the *organizational career orientation* of staff specialists who typically aspire to move upward through a sequence of statuses in a management hierarchy, and (2) the *occupational career orientation* of skilled manual workers who ordinarily aspire to gain expertise and status within their occupational specialty.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps the most important consequence of career orientation in individual motivation is the emphasis on deferred gratification. Those who are career oriented are almost by definition more inclined to sacrifice present satisfactions for the hope of future gratifications than are those who are not career oriented. Table 9 in the preceding chapter supports the conclusion that industrial employees who are career oriented are more likely to be found among staff specialists and skilled manual workers; clerical employees (especially females) and less skilled manual workers are more likely to be primarily concerned with the immediate satisfactions of monetary gain, pleasant working conditions, sociability and friendship among work associates, and so on. It is among these career-oriented staff specialists and skilled manual workers that certain claims to special privilege are likely to arise in connection with future status aspirations. Moreover, differences in the *direction* of the typical career orientations of staff specialists and skilled manual workers result in claims to different types of status privileges.

<sup>1</sup> Everett C. Hughes, "Work and the Self," in *Social Psychology at the Crossroads*, John H. Rohrer and Muzafer Sherif, eds. (New York: Harper, 1951), pp. 313-323.

<sup>2</sup> Everett C. Hughes, "Institutional Office and the Person," in *American Journal of Sociology*, XLIII (1937), 404.

<sup>3</sup> Everett C. Hughes, "Institutions and the Person," in *Principles of Sociology*, Alfred M. Lee, ed. (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1951), pp. 256-265.

<sup>4</sup> These types of career orientations correspond roughly with Chester Barnard's distinction between scalar status (organizational career orientation) and functional status (occupational career orientation); see "The Functions and Pathology of Status Systems in Formal Organizations," in *Industry and Society*, William F. Whyte, ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1946), pp. 46-70.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAREER ORIENTATION AND SPECIAL PRIVILEGE

We shall first direct attention to the types of special privilege characteristically claimed by those who orient their careers primarily toward upward mobility in the management hierarchy. These are the typical "organization men" whose values and at-

TABLE 19

ORIENTATION TOWARD ADVANCEMENT INTO MANAGEMENT POSITIONS  
BY INDUSTRIAL WORKERS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION  
(Percentages)

Expectation of Advancement <sup>a</sup>	Occupational classification <sup>b</sup>			
	(1) Cler.	(2) Spec.	(3) Semi.	(4) Skill.
Expect advancement	25	91	41	23
Do not expect advancement	75	9	59	77
	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	20	11	34	39

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from verbal interview responses of samples of employees at four San Francisco Bay area private industrial plants to the following question: "Are you interested in going into a supervisory or managerial job with the \_\_\_\_\_ Company?"

<sup>b</sup> The occupational classifications included in the various categories were as follows: (1) clerical employees (predominantly female); (2) staff specialists in engineering, accounting, sales, and similar occupations (predominantly male); (3) semiskilled workers in machine operator, driver, repairman, finisher, assembler, inspector, mechanic's helper, and similar occupations (predominantly male); and (4) skilled workers in tool and diemaker, machinist, electrician, millwright, welder, steamfitter, carpenter, mechanic, and other skilled trades (predominantly male). See Appendix A for a more detailed summary of the occupations included in these classifications.

titudes are profoundly affected by their identification with management.<sup>5</sup>

Table 19 indicates that it is among *staff specialists* that this expectation toward upward mobility into management positions is most likely to predominate. Clerical employees, who are least likely to be career oriented in their work, and skilled workers, who are most likely to be oriented toward work in a particular occupational classification, are least likely to expect advancement into supervisory or managerial positions. The majority of less skilled manual workers, on the other hand, also do not expect

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion of the relationships of organization men in the larger community, see William H. Whyte, *The Organization Man* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1956).

advancement into supervisory positions, although, at the same time, a larger minority of semiskilled workers tend to express an interest in such advancement than is the case for more skilled manual workers.

This difference between skilled and semiskilled workers may be explained in part as a result of the greater occupational self-identification of more skilled workers which, in turn, tends to prevent skilled workers from seeking advancement into general supervisory positions. This would in effect remove them from the practice of their occupational specialty. As one millwright in an automobile assembly plant put it: "I wouldn't like a supervisory job—not because of the responsibilities; I just don't like to boss people. I'd rather do the work myself." (Interview 051.)

More often, however, manual workers express worry about the added responsibilities and conflicts of interest which they see in managerial jobs:

I'm not particularly interested in a supervisory job. I was foreman in a shipyard. I had a gang of men there, but I didn't like it too well. I don't know; it just seems to me that a foreman's job gives a lot of responsibility that I don't want to have to handle. They have lots of headaches. (Pipefitter, cement plant—Interview 027.)

I have been appointed lead man to replace an assistant foreman for a month or so. The way this set-up is, I don't think I'd like a foreman's job permanently. Where the workers are, they just get pressure from one side; but in the foreman's job you get pressure from both sides. (Mechanic, aircraft maintenance base—Interview 094.)

Manual workers frequently feel that their educational and experiential backgrounds are inadequate for the responsibilities of supervision:

I know that I'm not qualified for it, because there's too many men up there who have worked in supervision all their lives and know more than I do about it. I couldn't go out into a plating shop and do that kind of work. I know how to do what I do now, but I couldn't go out among these other men and try to do something else when I knew I couldn't do it. I know it and they know it. I'm satisfied to do just what I do now. Of course, I'd like the better job and higher pay, but I'm not qualified for it. (Metal plater, hardware manufacturing plant—Interview 068.)

No, I've never been interested in a supervisory job. I know I don't have the education for one thing. Also it takes a special ability to handle men, so I just never even tried for anything like that. (Mechanic, cement plant—Interview 028.)

Finally, some manual workers are reluctant to take a supervisory job because of loss of union status and protections:

No, it's too rough. If you become a foreman, you have no union protection. If you lose your job, you either get fired out of the plant completely or you go back to the union job, providing they'll take you back. (Welder, automobile assembly plant—Interview 061.)

Comments by manual workers on why they are not desirous of promotion into supervisory jobs may also be viewed partly as "sour grapes" rationalizations, for social mobility studies have shown that the actual opportunities for the movement of persons from manual occupations into white-collar and supervisory positions is very limited.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, data from the study of Bay area personnel and industrial relations executives (similar in occupation to other types of staff specialists reported in table 19), indicate that a majority (57 per cent) of persons in these categories are looking forward to a career in management with their present employer. One personnel director expressed this aspiration in the following terms:

When I was a mechanical engineer, previously, I did not think that engineering was interesting enough for me. I liked working in the operating divisions of the firm. I would like a line management job again if I had the opportunity. You know, in this business one thinks of his company as a career rather than in terms of a particular occupational line. I feel that ——— is in a certain sense "my company," so I really wouldn't mind what line of work I was given to do. (Food processing and packing company—Interview 223.)

The explicit motivation for staff specialists to seek promotions

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, S. M. Lipset and Reinhard Bendix, "Social Mobility and Occupational Career Patterns II. Social Mobility," *American Journal of Sociology*, LVII (1952), 494-504; Natalie Rogoff, "Recent Trends in Urban Occupational Mobility," in *Reader in Urban Sociology*, Paul K. Hatt and Albert Reiss, eds. (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1951), pp. 406-420.

into general management positions is varied. Some are particularly concerned with increased financial rewards:

I think management sounds attractive. There are some drawbacks, but the financial rewards are much higher. If you stay in engineering, you cannot go as high financially. Of course, there are headaches. They don't get those big salaries for no reason at all. But assuming that I do continue to progress, I will have to go in that direction because I don't have the specialization in engineering to go much farther in that line. (Industrial engineer, cement plant—Interview 034.)

Others look forward to a broadening of interests or relief from the tensions and restrictions of a particular specialty:

I think I would like a managerial job. You would see the whole picture more. In this line you don't see what's actually happening; whereas in the supervisory line you would see what the actual procedure and works are and how the company operates. We see some of this now, but not the whole picture. (Accountant, cement plant—Interview 039.)

The job I have now is extremely fascinating, but it's also extremely nerve-wracking—you never know when tensions will arise. Because of these tensions, one's lifetime in this work is limited. I would like to go into overall management eventually. Very few men in this industry stay with labor relations until they retire—most of them advance into general management. (Labor relations specialist, trucking firm—Interview 228.)

Robert Merton has maintained that staff specialists (particularly engineers) in large-scale organizations tend to develop limited perspectives with regard to the broader managerial problems of the enterprise in which they are employed.<sup>7</sup> However, the data presented above suggest that the career orientations of staff specialists with regard to advancement into general management positions may predispose them to be dissatisfied with the limited perspectives of their own jobs. They become inclined to adopt managerial perspectives as a form of "anticipatory socialization," a concept Merton presented in another work:

<sup>7</sup> See Robert K. Merton, "The Machine, the Worker, and the Engineer," *Science*, CV (1947), 79–81.

For the individual who adopts the values of a group to which he aspires but does not belong, this orientation may serve the twin functions of aiding his rise into that group and of easing his adjustment after he has become part of it.<sup>8</sup>

This process of anticipatory socialization tends to influence staff specialists to deny themselves many of the special privileges claimed by other occupational groups whose members are not oriented toward entrance into managerial careers. Probably the major special privilege which is commonly claimed by staff specialists is special opportunity for promotion into managerial positions. Where they feel that their promotional opportunities are promising, they tend to be satisfied with their employment status:

Promotions here have been good. I have jumped up high, and I've seen other men do the same. They take people from the office and promote from within, unless they feel there's nobody inside who's qualified for it. (Accountant—Interview 039.)

Where promotion opportunities are fewer than had been expected, staff specialists tend to be dissatisfied with their employment situation:

There are a lot of things here that are not the best. I've worked in better conditions. Promotions are very slow. I've noticed that you have to be here a long time before you get anywhere. (Engineer—Interview 067.)

I guess I'm as satisfied as anybody, but when you think about it, after a while everything in accounting becomes pretty routine. I think I'm capable of a better position. I would like to better myself. I would like to get into something analytical, perhaps, something more in line with my training, something broader. But I had the division controller tell me that I was almost selected for controller myself once. I'm senior as far as length of service in accounting in this division is concerned, but there have been transfers on two occasions to the controller job here from other divisions. In other words, when there have been openings for the controller position, they have brought in men from the outside. I suppose there may be justifications from

<sup>8</sup> See Robert K. Merton and Alice S. Kitt, "Contributions to the Theory of Reference Group Behavior" in *Continuities in Social Research: Studies in the Scope and Method of "The American Soldier,"* R. K. Merton and P. F. Lazarsfeld, eds. (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1950), p. 87.

the management standpoint, but as far as I personally am concerned, I'm pretty disappointed. (Accountant—Interview 037.)

What are the mechanisms whereby the claims of staff specialists to promotion opportunities are asserted? Wherever professional associations develop a strong organization, they certainly may be expected to bring pressure upon management to protect and regulate the promotional opportunities of members. This is true for the older and more independent professions: for example, medicine, law, and teaching. We may note, for example, the academicians' professional concern with tenure and promotion systems. However, staff specialists for the most part represent newer technical specialties in which professional organization has been weakest: for example, engineering, operations analysis, personnel administration, and the like. For example, only 11 out of 44 Bay area personnel executives interviewed reported membership in one or more of eight professional personnel or management associations which are nation-wide in scope.<sup>9</sup> The large number and varied character of professional associations in the personnel management field and the relatively few personnel executives holding memberships in any such association of national scope indicate the weakness of professional organization in this area. Comparable data were not available for other staff specialists surveyed, but it is reasonable to assume that professional organization in many other staff fields is correspondingly weak.

For this reason, the control of staff specialists in newer industries over conditions of employment is considerably attenuated in comparison with union organization of manual workers. Certain claims to special privilege by skilled manual workers, which arise not as a result of the collective bargaining process but rather out of the nature of the employment relationship for skilled workers, are asserted and promoted through the mecha-

<sup>9</sup> Among these eleven personnel executives, the following memberships were reported: American Management Association, 5; National Industrial Conference Board, 2; Bureau of National Affairs Personnel Policies Forum, 2; Society for the Advancement of Management, 2; National Office Managers' Association, 2; American Society of Training Directors, 2; American Association of Personnel Executives, 1; and American Society of Personnel Administrators, 1. A few other personnel executives reported membership in local associations, such as the California Personnel Management Association (in which *firms* rather than individuals hold a membership), Southern Alameda County Personnel Association, Peninsula Personnel Directors' Association, Contra Costa Personnel Managers' Association, Bay Area Personnel Women's Association, etc.

nisms of union organization and collective bargaining. In the case of staff specialists, their particular concern with the protection of promotional opportunities is asserted not so much through the organized power of staff specialists themselves, but rather through the "grace" of higher management officials. It is to the advantage of company executives to develop well-qualified replacement personnel for high-level management positions from among those who are in staff positions. In this manner, the interests of management and staff specialists coincide.<sup>10</sup>

#### OCCUPATIONAL CAREER ORIENTATION AND SPECIAL PRIVILEGE

Table 9 presented data which indicated that skilled manual workers tend more often than less skilled workers to think of their present jobs as part of working careers. At the same time, the career orientation of skilled manual workers is not characteristically directed toward movement into a management hierarchy (see table 19). As pointed out previously, this type of employee is more likely to be career oriented in the direction of continued performance in his occupational specialty. He differs from industrial staff specialists in that, in Reissman's terms, he is more of a functionally oriented bureaucrat.<sup>11</sup> He tends to seek recognition and status from colleagues in terms of expertise in his particular trade. His self-identification with a particular occupation is furthered by the development of myths, fictions, and an occupational culture peculiar to each skilled trade.<sup>12</sup> His career orientation is strengthened by the degree to which manual labor has become "professionalized": that is, the degree to which union organization has supported his movement through an orderly sequence of statuses within a given trade by the protection of rights to job identity and seniority.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> This discussion presupposes that the promotional lines for staff specialists moving into higher level line management positions are more open than Melville Dalton indicated in "Conflicts between Staff and Line Managerial Officers," *American Sociological Review*, XV (1950), 342-351. As Dalton indicated, staff persons may occupy positions generally subordinate to line managerial personnel in terms of promotional opportunities *at the plant level*. However, the opposite may be the case at the headquarter levels of large corporations.

<sup>11</sup> See Leonard Reissman, "A Study of Role Conceptions in Bureaucracy," *Social Forces*, XXVII (1949), 305-310.

<sup>12</sup> See Richard C. Myers, "Myth and Status Systems in Industry," *Social Forces*, XXVI (1948), 331-337.

<sup>13</sup> For a discussion of the concept of "professionalization" with relation to the career patterns of skilled workers, see Nelson N. Foote, "The Professionalization of Labor in Detroit," *American Journal of Sociology*, LVIII (1953), 371-380.



The development of claims to job identity and seniority rights should not be considered simply a result of union organization and collective bargaining mechanisms. These claims arise primarily out of the difference in the meaning of employment to skilled workers—to them employment represents an opportunity to pursue a career oriented primarily toward occupational status. The protection of occupational identity and seniority rights are functional requirements for the maintenance of such a career. The role of union organization, then, is particularly important in the *collective assertion* of these claims to occupational identity and seniority rights—not in their *origin*.

Skilled workers offer a variety of reasons for wanting to continue in their line of work as a career. Some workers are thus oriented because of their interest in and satisfaction with the work itself:

I've been a welder for over twenty years. I'd rather do this than anything else, because there's a lot of variety in it. In maintenance work, you know, there is always something in the plant breaking down. (Welder, automobile assembly plant—Interview 052.)

Others may like the simplicity and ease of their work:

Yes, I would like to continue in this line of work because I don't work hard. In fact, I don't work at all sometimes—I serve just as a standby. (Maintenance electrician, automobile assembly plant—Interview 049.)

Some may feel that advanced age precludes their getting into another line of work easily:

I would like to get on easier work, but I'm getting to the age now where it wouldn't pay me to change. It would be pretty hard for me to get another job now. (Carpenter, cement plant—Interview 018.)

Others may feel that their limited educational backgrounds prevent them from moving easily into other lines of work:

Well, since I didn't have any education—I mean high school or college education—I think this is about the best I can do. (Metal polisher, hardware manufacturing company—Interview 076.)

Regardless of their reasons for an occupationally oriented career perspective, skilled workers, together with staff specialists,

are likely to be most concerned with protection against arbitrary separation from jobs. This concern is illustrated in table 20, where it is shown that among Ordnance employees staff specialists and skilled workers are most likely to agree with the statement: "A worker should be protected against removal from his job, unless he is removed for just cause." Basic job security is thus a fundamental functional requirement for both an occupational career

**TABLE 20**

**CLAIMS TO PROTECTION AGAINST ARBITRARY DISCHARGE AMONG  
ORDNANCE WORKERS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION  
(Percentages)**

<i>"A worker should be protected against removal from his job unless he is removed for just cause" <sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Occupational classification <sup>b</sup></i>				
	<i>(1) Female Cler.</i>	<i>(2) Male Spec.</i>	<i>(3) Male Unsk.</i>	<i>(4) Male Semi.</i>	<i>(5) Male Skill.</i>
Strongly agree	68	81	68	70	78
Agree	32	19	29	30	22
Undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree			3		
	100	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	69	16	180	65	32

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from the written questionnaire responses of a sample of civilian nonsupervisory employees at Western Arsenal to the question indicated above.

<sup>b</sup> The occupational categories included in the various categories are as follows: (1) female clerical employees graded GS-4 and below; (2) male specialists graded GS-5 and above; (3) male unskilled manual workers graded WB-11 and below; (4) male semiskilled manual workers graded WB-12 through WB-15; and (5) male skilled manual workers graded WB-16 and above.

orientation and an organizational career orientation. However, the conditions of "just cause" under which an employee may be legitimately removed from his job differ significantly in the expectations of skilled manual workers and staff specialists. Two types of claims to special privilege for skilled workers especially limit managerial prerogatives in the right to discharge: claims to job identity, and claims to seniority rights.

In the interview study of industrial employees in Bay area plants, comments on the principle of job identity for skilled workers were elicited in response to the following hypothetical situation:

Bob was a skilled precision die-maker. One day he was asked by the plant superintendent temporarily to take a less skilled job on a pro-

duction line at a slightly lower rate of pay, because there was at that time a lack of work in his usual occupation. However, Bob refused to take the less skilled job and said he would rather take a temporary layoff without pay until there was work for him in his regular job. The superintendent argued that management must be able to assign workers where they are needed in order to get out production, and that if Bob refused to take this temporary assignment, he would be subject to discharge. Bob said in reply, "I was hired as a precision die-maker and that's what I intend to do." Suppose the company then went ahead and fired Bob.<sup>14</sup>

Responses to this type of situation were categorized in terms of: (1) those who claimed occupational identity, that is, those who felt that the skilled employee in this situation was unfairly discharged in view of his claim to the preservation of his occupational identity; (2) those who did not claim occupational identity, that is, those who felt that management acted in a justifiable manner in this situation in view of the refusal of the employee to accept an assignment to a lower skilled position outside his occupational line, and (3) those who were undecided or ambiguous in their responses to this situation.

Table 21 reports the distribution of responses by occupational

**TABLE 21**

**CLAIMS TO OCCUPATIONAL IDENTITY AS A MITIGATING FACTOR IN DISCHARGE AMONG INDUSTRIAL WORKERS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION**

(Percentages)

<i>Claims to occupational identity <sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Occupational classification <sup>b</sup></i>			
	(1) <i>Cler.</i>	(2) <i>Spec.</i>	(3) <i>Semi.</i>	(4) <i>Skill.</i>
Claim occupational identity	5	9	20	44
Do not claim occupational identity	95	55	48	28
Undecided or ambiguous		36	32	28
	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	20	11	34	39

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from the categorized verbal interview responses of samples of employees at four San Francisco Bay area private industrial plants.

<sup>b</sup> See table 19, footnote b, for a description of occupational classifications.

<sup>14</sup> In interviews with white collar employees (clerical and staff specialist personnel), the same situation was presented for comment, but the subject of the situation, "Bob," was presented as a skilled accountant.

classification. The table suggests that skilled manual workers were much more likely than those in other occupational categories to support the principle of occupational identity. These claims are most likely to be strongly expressed by skilled workers in a plant situation in which there is an especially marked contrast between the status of skilled manual workers and semi-skilled production workers, as is illustrated in the following comments of skilled automobile assembly plant employees to the hypothetical situation presented above:

I don't think a company should just come out and fire a man under these circumstances. If he doesn't want to work in a lower classification, let him take a layoff. It's certainly his prerogative to say whether he wants to work in a lower classification or not. He'd be better off to take a layoff and come back when there was more work on his job. (Maintenance machinist—Interview 046.)

Well, the company didn't really have any right to do that if he hired in as a diemaker. They would have a right to lay him off, or they could give him a choice. We had an example of this right here. We had some machinists who had to do something else, so some of them went on the production line and some of them took a layoff. (Welder—Interview 052.)

This man definitely has a grievance here. In an arbitrator's decision it was ruled that any craftsman here after an apprenticeship does not have to work under another job classification. They can take another job if they want to, but the company was definitely wrong in firing the man for refusing to take the other job. After eight thousand hours of apprenticeship, you feel that after all that training you are lowering yourself to take another job. It's just like a doctor being put back as an intern. (Maintenance electrician—Interview 055.)

Yes, this man would have a grievance. You can take a layoff any time you want to—you don't have to work for less money. Why, that happened to me, but I took the production line job because there was no temporary work on the outside. So I worked on production, but I could have taken the layoff if I had wanted it. (Millwright—Interview 051.)

Such claims to occupational identity, however, are not limited to skilled workers in this type of plant. They are also found in other industrial settings:

I don't think the company would be right in taking that action. Take me, for example. I'm a carpenter, and if they didn't have any work in the carpenters' shop for me, but they had work in the cleaning shop, I don't see why I should have to take the job until work opened up again in the carpenters' shop. Some companies might do that, but I don't think it's fair. (Carpenter, aircraft maintenance base—Interview 105.)

That would be a pretty raw deal, I would say, and it certainly wouldn't get by the union. Not in this day. I wouldn't take another job like that, either, unless it were an extreme emergency, or for a friend, or something like that. I mean, it wouldn't even be a choice for me; I would insist on taking the layoff. (Tool and diemaker, hardware manufacturing plant—Interview 085.)

If I'm hired as an electrician and then when my work slacks down they want to put me doing something else, I'd tell them, "Well, I don't want to work." This would depend on a man's chances of getting another job, how his purse stands at the moment, how he feels about the company, etc. I would go along with the idea that I take a leave of absence and come back when I got my regular job back. I believe the man has a right to say whether he stays and takes the temporary job or whether he takes the leave of absence. Management is absolutely wrong in discharging him for that. (Maintenance electrician, cement plant—Interview 030.)

Managerial attitudes and policies on the protection of occupational identity apparently vary somewhat. Data from the interview study of the responses of personnel executives on managerial attitudes and practices in Bay area firms indicate that only 25 per cent of those firms accept without qualification the principle of occupational identity. Fifty per cent of those surveyed indicated rejection of the principle, and 25 per cent were undecided or ambiguous.

Various reasons were given by those indicating acceptance of the principle in practice. In response to the same hypothetical situation, some personnel executives pointed out the relevance of skilled trades labor agreement provisions *and yet emphasized that their policy would probably be the same, regardless of the specific provisions of collective contracts:*

I don't believe the company would be within its rights in firing this man. Our agreements for trades and crafts would not allow this sort

of thing. Employees must be given the option of a temporary layoff. Yet even if a contract were not specific on this matter, we would be very shortsighted to fire a man simply because he refused to take a less skilled job—skilled people are not easy to get. (Steel manufacturing company—Interview 200.)

Most contracts provide that a man must be retained in the field for which he was hired and paid accordingly. This is particularly true for skilled workers. But even if the contract is silent on this point, the man should have the option of a temporary layoff. I might point out that this principle is recognized in the case of the United States Unemployment Compensation Law—an unemployed man does not have to accept a job at a lower skill than his normal trade. (Electronics equipment manufacturing company—Interview 209.)

Others indicated that understanding at the time of hire is a particularly important consideration relevant to occupational identity:

If a company fired a man under these circumstances, then there would be good grounds for him to file a grievance on the basis of his understanding that he was hired in a particular job classification. However, if the reassignment were within this job classification, then discharge under the above circumstances could be justified. (Shipyard—Interview 214.)

Still others emphasized the importance of retaining a previous rate of pay on reassignments:

We have this kind of problem right along. We sometimes have to transfer coil winders to less skilled jobs. They will usually take the less skilled job, but we let them go home temporarily if they want to. But if we did transfer a man to a less skilled job temporarily, we would give him his regular rate of pay. (Electrical equipment manufacturing company—Interview 207.)

Finally, some directed particular attention to the comparability of reassignments in skilled trades:

One of our arbitrators ruled that certain reassignments in skilled trades are a *bald* violation of occupational identity. For example, an electrician may not be required to do a carpenter's work. However, it might not be a bald violation for a machinist to be required to do cer-

tain kinds of assembly line work. Therefore, in reassignments, one has to raise the question about whether certain skills are black or grey—that is, whether they overlap with each other or not. Thus a tool and diemaker might legitimately be transferred to machinists' work; but if his reassignment were to a production line job which could be considered bald violation of his skill, then he would have a legitimate right to complain—unless he were given the option of a temporary layoff. (Automobile assembly plant—Interview 203.)

The most frequent reason given by personnel executives for rejecting the principle of occupational identity was that, in the absence of contractual provisions to the contrary, they felt that this principle violates a fundamental management prerogative of assignment and reassignment of work:

Some contracts specifically give an employee a choice of taking a layoff or accepting another job (at the employee's regular rate) under such conditions. If the contract is silent on this matter, then the employee should take the new assignment or he is guilty of insubordination. (Paper products manufacturing company—Interview 217.)

Management is always within its rights to offer an employee other work, and no employee has a right to tell the company what he will or will not do. The company has the right to discharge a man if it goes this far. It is a basic right of management to assign work. We once fired a union president because he refused to do a certain work assignment. (Petroleum products company—Interview 221.)

Management would be right in a case like this if they let the man go. He certainly shouldn't be able to tell management how to run their business. (Petroleum products company—Interview 220.)

Others pointed out that their companies have an understanding at the time of hiring which obligates employees to accept any work assignment:

We hire our employees to do any work available, under our understanding with the industrial union. Then a man has no recourse if he is told to do another job, except where there are special craft union agreements involved. Under the industrial union situation, a man would have to take the assignment to other work, even at a lower rate of pay. (Can manufacturing company—Interview 201.)

We would ask a man under these conditions to accept a transfer to a lower rated job. If he refused, we would point out to him that, regardless of the occupational category at which he was hired, he was employed primarily to work for the bank. Then we would feel that we were right in asking him to take another assignment. If he didn't accept, we would have to release him. (Bank—Interview 306.)

Finally, some personnel executives claimed that the seasonal nature of their operations caused fluctuations in production which made temporary assignments to lower classifications necessary:

Without contractual obligations to the contrary, management can downgrade employees according to production needs. I think employees have an obligation to go along with this. Our operations vary considerably in terms of the number of employees required at various times of the year. Our operations are geared to orders from canneries. We need the skill reservoirs to man additional production lines when they are required. The unions have recognized the need to transfer employees under these conditions. (Can manufacturing company—Interview 202.)

The number of companies included in the study is probably too small to permit reliable and valid generalizations about tendencies in American industry as a whole. However, the data collected do permit the tentative conclusions that managements in steel, automobile, electronics, and ship repair industries are likely to recognize the principle of occupational identity in personnel policies. On the other hand, managements in petroleum, tin can, food processing, and financial institutions and industries seem to be less likely to recognize it. The tendency not to recognize occupational identity is most frequently associated either with a history of particular emphasis upon strong management prerogatives and weak union organization (as in petroleum manufacturing and financial institutions) or with an extremely variable production schedule which requires flexibility in the placement and transfer of personnel (as in food processing and can manufacturing enterprises).

As for the claims by employees to occupational identity, the limited data available indicate that claims are most likely to develop among more highly skilled manual workers. Furthermore, claims to job identity by skilled workers seem to be more common in industrial situations where the contrast between



more highly skilled and less skilled employees is most emphatic, for example, in an automobile assembly plant where the status distinction between skilled workers in the maintenance department and the semiskilled workers on the assembly lines is quite pronounced in workers' minds.

Another type of claim to special privilege which lends particular support to an occupational career orientation in an industrial setting is that to special consideration by virtue of advanced seniority. Those whose career orientations are directed toward the development of occupational expertise and prestige are not necessarily dependent upon seniority rights in every type of work situation; for example, in the construction industry the principle of seniority has received little emphasis because workers in skilled construction trades normally are not dependent upon attachment to a particular employer for their career development. In chapter ii, however, it was pointed out that the principle of seniority has gained general recognition and acceptance in the policies and practices of manufacturing establishments, especially with regard to layoff policies and somewhat less frequently with regard to promotion policies. The principle of seniority in some cases has come to be considered a mitigating factor in cases of disciplinary discharge.

In the interview study of industrial employees in Bay area plants, comments on the principle of seniority as a mitigating factor in disciplinary discharge were elicited in response to the following hypothetical situation:

George had worked for the Smith Company for twenty years and had a record as a good employee. However, one day George got into an argument with another employee named Phil who had only been at the plant for a year and a half. The argument got more and more heated, and finally George and Phil stepped outside and began to get into a fight with each other. Just after the fight started, however, their foreman came by and broke it up. Then the foreman asked, "Who started the fight?" Neither George nor Phil would answer the question—each man said that he guessed they had both started the fight at the same time. Then the foreman recommended that they both be discharged. He said, "You both know that the penalty for fighting on company property is automatic discharge, and since neither one of you will say who started the fight, I am going to have both of you discharged." Phil didn't complain about the discharge action, but George said, "You mean you would fire me after the

twenty years of good service I put in here at the Smith Company?" The foreman said, "In something like this, it doesn't make any difference how many years you have been here." But George still felt that it was unfair to discharge him for this action, even though he felt it would be fair if he had to take a lesser form of discipline, since he admitted that he was as guilty as Phil was.

The responses to this situation were categorized in terms of: (1) those who claimed that seniority should be considered a mitigating factor in disciplinary discharge, that is, those who felt that the employee of longer service should have received a lesser measure of discipline in view of his long service, (2) those who claimed that seniority should not be considered a mitigating factor in disciplinary discharge, that is, those who felt that the longer service employee should be disciplined with a severity equal to the discipline of the shorter service employee, assuming equal degree of guilt, and (3) those who were undecided or ambiguous in their responses to this situation.

Table 22 presents data on the distribution of workers' responses

**TABLE 22**

**CLAIMS TO SENIORITY AS A MITIGATING FACTOR IN DISCHARGE AMONG INDUSTRIAL WORKERS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION (Percentages)**

<i>Claims to seniority <sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Occupational classification <sup>b</sup></i>			
	(1) <i>Cler.</i>	(2) <i>Spec.</i>	(3) <i>Semi.</i>	(4) <i>Skill.</i>
Claim seniority as mitigating	25		24	38
Do not claim seniority as mitigating	35	73	61	46
Undecided or ambivalent	40	27	15	16
	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	20	11	34	39

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from the categorized verbal interview responses of samples of employees at four San Francisco Bay area private industrial plants.

<sup>b</sup> See table 19, footnote b, for a description of occupational classifications.

according to their occupational classification. It indicates that staff specialists (predominately with organizational career orientations) were least likely to claim seniority as a mitigating factor in disciplinary discharge, but that skilled manual workers (predominately with occupational career orientations) were most

likely to claim seniority as a mitigating factor. At the same time, a larger proportion of the skilled workers interviewed (46 per cent) did *not* claim seniority as mitigating than those who did (38 per cent).

The contrast between the per cent of skilled workers who claimed seniority as mitigating (38 per cent) and those who supported the principle of occupational identity (44 per cent, as shown in table 21) indicates the relatively greater importance of occupational identity over seniority to the career orientations of skilled workers. Staff specialists are dependent upon neither principle; their security is tied to their identification with what they see as management values.

Skilled manual workers are dependent primarily on occupational identity and secondarily on seniority rights for the support of their career aspirations. Obviously, the normal career progression is upset whenever occupational identity is violated. It is also true, but perhaps less obvious, that normal career progression is sometimes made less secure where seniority rights are weakened. Under conditions of modern industrial production, career progression in skilled jobs is frequently tied to company promotion policies. For example, in the aircraft maintenance base visited in the Bay Area Employee Survey there were four basic categories of mechanics' jobs: mechanics' helpers, mechanics second class, mechanics first class, and master mechanics. Men are normally hired without extensive previous experience and trained as mechanics' helpers. Then after requisite "time in grade," qualified individuals may be trained for the higher mechanic second class position. Their promotion to still higher positions is also dependent upon passing trade examinations. The same procedure is followed up the promotional ladder to the master mechanic level. Promotions to higher skilled mechanics' jobs are normally from within.

Thus, to the extent that training and promotion in a skilled trade are controlled by the company, as in this case, rather than by members of the trade themselves, as in the older tradition of apprenticeship, company seniority is of considerable importance to a worker who has reached a higher skill level. If he should lose his position with a firm operating in this manner, it would probably be more difficult for him to "carry his skill with him"; he would probably have to start with another company at a lower level on the promotional ladder.

Less skilled manual workers and clerical employees are not so concerned with seniority rights because they tend to view their present work as "just a job"; these workers may go elsewhere without much fear of losing skill status, since they had none, or very little, previously.<sup>15</sup> Staff specialists are not so interested in seniority rights because their whole concern tends to be directed toward promotional opportunities based upon "merit" (performance which gains the approval of management). Orientation, in this case, is basically inimical to the principle of seniority so far as it tends to displace considerations of merit in all aspects of career progression, including promotion, layoff, and disciplinary action. Workers in skilled trades, however, are not so concerned with achieving recognition for outstanding service in the eyes of management as they are with security. In a sizable proportion of modern industry, such security is dependent upon continuous attachment to a particular employer.

Where skilled workers in the interview study claimed seniority as a mitigating factor in disciplinary discharge, they frequently framed their responses to the above situation in terms of consideration for the "investment" made by the senior employee in his trade and employment with a particular company:

In a case like that, having twenty years' service, he should have known better. Yet on second thought, I don't think he should be discharged. If he's given a company all that time, he shouldn't be fired just like that. If it's only the first offense, he should have been taken in and given a talking-to. He should have been given some consideration, especially if he's had a good record. I don't think the foreman should have taken the responsibility on himself to fire this man. (Electrician, cement plant—Interview 012.)

I don't think it would be fair to fire this man after twenty years of service. If the man had a good record, I certainly don't think he should be discharged after twenty years. On the other hand, if they were lenient with the longer service man, they might also have to be lenient with the man who had only been there a year and a half. (Tool and diemaker, hardware manufacturing plant—Interview 082.)

In that case, I do think that if he'd been good enough to keep for twenty years, I don't think he should be let go like that. He should

<sup>15</sup> This conclusion is supported by Robert H. Guest's findings regarding automobile assembly line workers as reported in "Work Careers and Aspirations of Automobile Workers," *American Sociological Review*, XIX (1954), 155-163.

be disciplined, there's no doubt about that, but discharge is too severe. (Maintenance electrician, automobile assembly plant—Interview 049.)

I surely don't condone fighting like that. I would agree that disciplinary action should have been taken. On the other hand, the twenty years should have been taken into account also. To me you have invested something in a company for every year that you have put in with them. Then over forty, you have a hell of a time getting another job. You are paid for a year of work at twenty, but at forty, you can't go to another company and say, "Well, now, I'm going to take some of these years and work for you." You don't have that same year to give them, and maybe they don't want you either. Then what are you going to do? A company is foolish to fire a man who has put so much time in a company and knows so much about it. (Instrument mechanic, aircraft maintenance base—Interview 117.)

Claims to seniority as a mitigating factor were expressed more frequently by employees at the aircraft maintenance base than by employees at the three other plants included in the study. This may have been a result partly of the proliferation of fringe benefits at the base, like reduced travel rates, clubs and recreational programs for employees, and so on, which are not available in most firms. These extensive fringe benefits may cause employees to identify their career aspirations more closely with a particular company than they would otherwise—hence the added interest in seniority rights. Also this may reflect a reaction to the highly developed in-plant promotional program at the maintenance base, discussed earlier.

A comparison between skilled and semiskilled industrial employees with company seniority held constant still indicated that skilled workers were more likely to claim seniority as a mitigating factor, in spite of the fact that skilled workers tend to have higher seniority than less skilled workers. The claim to seniority as a mitigating factor in disciplinary discharge seems to be more a function of occupational category than of length of service.

Interviews with personnel executives in Bay area firms indicated that company personnel policies and practices recognize seniority as a mitigating factor in disciplinary discharge more frequently (in 38 per cent of the cases) than they recognize the principle of occupational identity (25 per cent). Twenty-eight per cent of the companies surveyed reported that they did not

recognize seniority as a mitigating factor, and 34 per cent were undecided or ambiguous on the principle.

Some typical management comments in support of seniority as a mitigating factor were expressed in the following terms (in response to the same hypothetical situation used in the interviews with employees):

In this case management was within its rights. However, if this were the first time this happened, I would be inclined to give less severe discipline. The employee would certainly have grounds to complain in view of his long service. (Public utilities company—Interview 225.)

This is a tough situation. If it involved two short-time people, it would probably be better to get rid of them both. If this were a twenty-year man, then I just wouldn't see the fight. I mean that! I would say to the other men around the plant, "Say, I heard a rumor that there was a fight out here the other day between George and Phil. Did you see it?" Then after everybody said, "No, I didn't see it," I would forget about it and George would probably appreciate what I had done. On the other hand, if it developed so that I had to administer discipline, I would let the younger man go and I would try to keep George after a severe warning, saying, "You know I could fire you for this" and then perhaps give him a week's suspension. If a twenty-year man were discharged for an offense like this, he would certainly have cause to complain, since too many years of his life and livelihood would be tied up in the years of service he had given the company. (Petroleum products company—Interview 221.)

If the company rule had been strictly enforced in the past, then there is no question that both the long-service and the short-service man should be discharged. However, if there had been any variation in enforcing rules according to circumstances, as we have here, then twenty years' service certainly should be taken into account in modifying the discipline. (Aircraft maintenance base—Interview 212.)

At this firm, if an employee has been with you for twenty years and he has been a satisfactory employee during that time, he certainly deserves special consideration. So I feel an employee would have grounds to complain under these circumstances. The penalty of discharge is far too severe in view of his long service. (Insurance company—Interview 308.)

I'm unfamiliar with this sort of situation, but if something like this happened here, I would call both fellows in and try to find out the

cause and see if we could eliminate the cause. If I could not, I would be disposed to transfer the men involved, thus separating them. If we did fire a long-service employee under these circumstances, he would have cause for complaint. Twenty years of good service does not warrant discharge—a transfer would be sufficient. (Bank—Interview 306.)

Two principal reasons were given by personnel executives for refusing to recognize seniority as a mitigating factor in a hypothetical situation like that presented for their comment. One reason concerned the severity of the offense committed:

The foreman and the company were right in taking this action in regard to fighting, provided they had consistently enforced this kind of rule in the past. Fighting is not excusable, unless a man is simply attacked and thus is forced to defend himself. The more years of service a man has, the more he should know not to get into fights at work. Fighting, drunkenness, insubordination, and dishonesty are all inexcusable offenses. (Paper products company—Interview 217.)

Management here was within their rights. It should make no difference in discipline who starts a fight—the employees should get their differences ironed out another way. Both men are equally wrong, whether they started the fight or not. Also it makes no difference how long a man has been on the job. We had one case of fighting on company property like this. One man had considerably longer service than the other, but both men got fired. The longer service man wanted to put in a grievance, but the union agreed with us that management action was proper in this case. (Electronics manufacturing company—Interview 206.)

Another reason was related to the principle of uniform treatment in preference to a case-by-case application of discipline:

What is fair for one is fair for all. It is most important to avoid discrimination in discipline, regardless of length of service, so I would agree with the management action in this case. (Food processing company—Interview 224.)

Management was within its rights here. You can't have two standards of punishment—one for high-seniority and one for low-seniority employees. Discipline has to be applied across the board, or otherwise you are open to the charge of discrimination. (Cement and aluminum plant—Interview 219.)

We may summarize this discussion by suggesting the tenta-

tive conclusion that managements in public utilities, petroleum extraction and refining, aircraft maintenance, banking, and insurance enterprises seem to be more likely to recognize seniority as a mitigating factor than managements in other types of enterprises. These types of companies, in general, tend to be those which have developed more elaborate forms of promotional policies and fringe benefits tied to employee seniority. These are the companies where management values the long-term loyalty of employees most highly. Among employees themselves, it seems that skilled manual workers are those most likely to develop claims to the recognition of seniority as a mitigating factor. Finally, claims among skilled workers tend to be more frequent in enterprises like the aircraft maintenance base, where incentives to continued long-term employment are emphasized because of the promotion system and fringe benefits.

The data presented here have also indicated that a higher proportion of skilled employees claimed occupational identity (44 per cent) than the proportion of companies which recognized the principle of occupational identity in their personnel practices (25 per cent). The expectation that occupational identity should be respected in personnel practices, therefore, seems to originate more in the job security needs of skilled employees than in the organizational requirements of industrial enterprises, which tend to place greater emphasis upon flexibility in the placement and transfer of personnel. Claims to the recognition of seniority rights, on the other hand, were expressed by an equal proportion of company spokesmen and skilled workers (38 per cent). In both cases, the proportion of individuals or companies emphasizing seniority rights was in the minority; most skilled employees and most companies do not place great emphasis upon this principle. Claims to special privileges by skilled workers seem to be more precarious and less commonly accepted than other types of employee rights.

#### THE CONSEQUENCES OF CLAIMS TO SPECIAL PRIVILEGE

In the previous chapter it was concluded that career involvement among employees tends to support their claims to employee "rights," that is, limitations upon the arbitrary exercise of managerial power in the employment relationship. It has been maintained that the *direction* of career orientations operates



further to influence the specific types of "rights" claimed by employees occupying certain statuses in industry. Staff specialists and skilled manual workers both tend to be typically career oriented in their work perspectives; they are both inclined to sacrifice present work gratifications for future aspirations. At the same time, the fact that their aspirations tend to be oriented in different directions affects profoundly the character of their present claims to special privileges. The organizational career orientation which predominates among staff specialists predisposes them to be particularly sensitive to promotional opportunities into the management hierarchy; the occupational career orientation of skilled manual workers predisposes them to be particularly sensitive to job security, and thus to make special claims for the protection of occupational identity and seniority rights. Thus individuals in industry, especially those in skilled trades and staff specialist positions, tend to see themselves not simply in the role of "employee" but also as occupants of a *special status* conditioning their expectations of treatment from others. As occupants of particular statuses, they are more than simply "human beings"—they expect special respect and privileges befitting their present positions and their career perspectives for the future.

The claims to occupational identity and seniority rights which are expressed most frequently by skilled workers tend to place specific limitations upon the exercise of managerial authority and control. The data of this study show that only a minority of managements (from 25 to 38 per cent) recognize such claims without serious qualification. This indicates that a basis for conflict between what management considers its prerogatives and what skilled workers consider their rights exists in a large segment of American industry. Three lines of amelioration of such a conflict would be possible: (1) that managements modify their conception of their prerogatives in relation to employee claims to occupational identity and seniority rights, especially in disciplinary discharge actions, (2) that the career opportunities of skilled workers, especially, be modified in a way which would permit their movement more readily into supervisory and managerial positions, and (3) that compromise solutions be worked out through collective agreements (which probably has been the most common solution to date to the special claims of occupational identity and seniority rights).

On the other hand, the claims to adequate promotional opportunities which are expressed most frequently by staff specialists in industry tend to place little or no limitation upon the exercise of managerial authority and control. So far as industrial managements at higher levels are concerned with the recruitment of well-educated and well-qualified persons into managerial positions, the career interests of staff specialists and higher level managerial personnel coincide.

Therefore, we may conclude that, whereas the universalistic, specific, and reciprocal character of the supervisor-worker relation for both staff specialists and skilled workers tends to predispose individuals in these groups to make claims to employee rights, the types of rights claimed by skilled workers lead to specific limitations of managerial power in the employment relationship, but the types of rights claimed by staff specialists do not necessarily lead to such a limitation.

## **CHAPTER VI. THE MANAGEMENT OF DEVIANCE**

Discussions in the two previous chapters have implied that we would expect organizational "efficiency" in industrial enterprises to be increased by strengthening the authority of management, that is, the mechanisms by which management directives are voluntarily accepted by employees as legitimate, and by recognizing the special status claims of employees in management policies and practices. In other words, the successful exercise of managerial power in these directions may be expected to lessen the conflict between organizational goal-achievement needs and career-achievement needs of employees. At this point, we are not considering whether the maximization of organizational efficiency in this manner is completely desirable, particularly from the standpoint of the development of individual freedom in industry. It is sufficient merely to assume that management is impelled to maximize organization efficiency, for without maximum

*efficiency*, maximum *effectiveness* (successful achievement of the goals of the firm) cannot be attained.

But what happens if organizational efficiency cannot be achieved satisfactorily by “legitimate” means, that is, enlistment of the *voluntary* coöperation of employees? Every industrial organization is at one time or another faced by the problems of a few, or perhaps more than a few, troublesome employees who refuse to coöperate in a way satisfactory to management. The problem of individual deviance from organizational requirements introduces the need for mechanisms of *control*. “Social control” is the manifestation of power in social relations that rests not upon voluntary acceptance of directive communications as a result of their origin in a source of authority or prestige, but instead upon *instrumental* considerations of the anticipated consequences of obedience or disobedience. Social control is exercised in informal interpersonal relations as well as in formalized contexts. A smile of approval or a frown of disapproval may be a powerful gesture of social control among close friends. In an analogous manner, industrial management typically uses various types of sanctions to reinforce its power over employees. In management practice, control is manifested in its positive aspects by the use of financial, promotional, and other incentives. In its negative aspects managerial control is manifested by the development and application of disciplinary policies and procedures, and it is in this area that expectations regarding employee rights normally arise.

The process of managerial control of deviance among individual employees in order to enhance organizational efficiency is similar to the process of managerial control over the technical aspects of production (e.g., quantity control, quality control, cost analysis, etc.) in order to enhance organizational effectiveness. Both types of control include three principal components: setting acceptable performance standards, assessing the degree of individual or group conformity to these standards, and correcting individual or group deviations wherever they may be found.

Although managerial control is not directly dependent upon the voluntary acceptance of the individual employee being disciplined, the ultimate success of disciplinary procedures is, of course, dependent upon the acceptance of *most* employees, or at least those who are in positions of informal influence among

their fellow workers. Therefore, our approach in this chapter, as in the two previous chapters, will be to examine employee attitudes on these matters in the light of managerial practice. Our special concern again will be with any significant variations in employee expectations by principal occupational categories and also with possible variations between the expectations of employees, on the one hand, and the expectations and practices of management representatives, on the other. In so doing, we hope to show the way in which institutionalized limitations on managerial control are linked to the basic nature of the employment relationship in modern industry.

### SCOPE OF MANAGERIAL CONTROL

Students of large-scale bureaucratic organizations have all been aware of limits to the scope of managerial power over individual members of employees. Max Weber, for example, pointed out that in the bureaucratic form of organization there is an obligation to obedience only within "the sphere of rationally delimited authority" in the organizational hierarchy.<sup>1</sup> Somewhat similarly, Chester Barnard wrote about the "zone of indifference" and Herbert Simon discussed the "zone of acceptance," within which the directive communications of superiors are likely to be accepted by subordinates as governing their contributions to the collective effort.<sup>2</sup>

It should be emphasized that these authors were all talking principally about the zone of acceptance of (or indifference to) managerial *authority* rather than managerial *control*. We might suggest that as the zone of acceptance of managerial *authority* (i.e., the voluntary acceptance of managerial work directives) decreases under certain conditions, management will attempt to increase the scope of its *control* (i.e., its ability to manipulate employee conformance through the use of positive and negative sanctions) in order to maintain efficient operation. Indeed, the problem of increasing managerial control has become particularly important in view of the probably decreasing zone of accept-

<sup>1</sup> Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1947) p. 330.

<sup>2</sup> See Chester Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), especially pp. 167-169; see also Herbert Simon, *Administrative Behavior* (New York: Macmillan, 1954), especially pp. 12, 16, 116, 131-133, 204.

ance of managerial authority in modern American industry. Herbert Simon has briefly discussed this trend, pointing out that there is probably "a fundamental change in social attitudes as to what it is 'proper' for an employer to ask an employee to do."<sup>3</sup> The development of many "human relations" techniques, in part at least, represents managerial attempts to compensate for weakened authority by means of the more sophisticated use of manipulative controls.<sup>4</sup> In some cases the effort at subtle manipulation has even involved attempts at the ideological seduction of employees' wives in support of managerial goals.<sup>5</sup>

There are other factors besides declining managerial authority, however, which significantly affect expectations regarding the scope of managerial control over individual employees. Three such factors will be especially considered here: the degree to which an employee's behavior in a particular instance affects the legitimate production and sales goals of the firm, the character of the firm's product or service, and the character of the community surrounding the enterprise. We shall examine in more detail how these factors affect the degree to which most employees are likely to accept managerial discipline outside the normal confines of activities in the employee role.

In the study of the attitudes of employees in Bay area industries, comments about the proper scope of managerial control were elicited in response to the following hypothetical situation:

Joe went out with a bunch of the boys on Saturday night. Unfortunately Joe had a little too much to drink and he got into a brawl at a tavern. The police came and arrested Joe along with some of the others, and Joe spent the night at the city jail. Also, at the time of the fight at the tavern, Joe's foreman happened to be walking by, so he saw Joe being hauled off in the police wagon. When Joe reported for work on Monday morning, the foreman told him that he was giving Joe a five-day suspension without pay, because Joe had acted on Saturday night in a manner "unbecoming an employee of our company." The foreman said, "It is very important for our company to have a good name in town, and we can't have a good name if our employees get into trouble like you did." Joe, however, felt the

<sup>3</sup> Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>4</sup> See chapter iii for a discussion of the manipulative aspects of human relations practices.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, William H. Whyte, Jr., "The Wives of Management," *Fortune*, XLIV (1951), 86 ff., and "The Corporation and the Wife," *Fortune*, XLIV (1951), 109 ff.

five-day suspension was unfair. Joe said, "What I do on my own after working hours is my affair—it's none of the company's business."

Employee responses to this situation by occupational category are summarized in table 23. It is shown that semiskilled manual

TABLE 23

ATTITUDES TOWARD SCOPE OF MANAGERIAL CONCERN WITH EMPLOYEE EXTRA-WORK BEHAVIOR AMONG INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION

(Percentages)

Attitudes of employees <sup>a</sup>	Occupational classification <sup>b</sup>			
	(1) Cler.	(2) Spec.	(3) Semi.	(4) Skill.
Management has <i>no</i> concern over the extra-work behavior of employees	25	18	68	38
Management has a legitimate concern <i>under certain specified conditions</i>	55	73	20	49
Management has <i>unspecified</i> concerns over extra-work behavior	20	9	12	13
	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	20	11	34	39

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from the categorized verbal interview responses of samples of employees at four San Francisco Bay area private industrial plants.

<sup>b</sup> The occupational classifications included in the various categories are as follows: (1) clerical employees (predominantly female); (2) staff specialists in engineering, accounting, sales, and similar occupations (predominantly male); (3) semiskilled workers in machine operator, driver, repairman, finisher, assembler, inspector, mechanic's helper, and similar occupations (predominantly male); and (4) skilled workers in tool and diemaker, machinist, electrician, millwright, welder, steamfitter, carpenter, mechanic, and other skilled trades (predominantly male). See Appendix A for a more detailed summary of the occupations included in these classifications.

workers are most likely to feel that management has *no* legitimate concern over the behavior of employees outside their place of work, whereas staff specialists are most likely to say that management has a legitimate concern with the behavior of employees outside their place of work *under certain specified conditions*.

Typical responses of lesser skilled manual workers to the hypothetical situation were along the following lines:

Well, I think that what a man does on his own time, like Joe here, should not have any effect on his employment. He didn't do it on

company time. He didn't do it on company property. I don't see how it would give the company a bad name. I just don't think it would affect his job. If he had done it on company time, that would be different. (Box maker, cement plant—Interview 014.)

The company only pays me for eight hours. After my eight hours are up, they have no right to say anything about my social life whatsoever. I think the foreman in this case is wrong. I would try to encourage the man to be discreet about his actions if I were the foreman, but I would not *tell* him. No company has a right to tell me what to do when I'm off work. They have rights over me while I'm here during my eight hours. I have a responsibility to do things right then, but after my eight hours are up, they have no rights over what I do. (Repairman, automobile assembly plant—Interview 056.)

I would think that Joe was right in this case. After work, it's his own private life. If he'd gotten into a fight at the company, that would be different, like if it were on working hours. But after working hours, you have a right to your freedom. (Production worker, hardware manufacturing plant—Interview 089.)

I would say the employee's right. After I leave the company grounds, what I do is my own business. A lot of guys get into fights and stuff, but it's none of the company's business. A guy here got into a fight like that over in the city. The boss told him, "Well, what you do on your own time is up to you, but you can't call in the next day that you're sick, see." They don't care what you do outside as long as you get to work the next day. (Ramp helper, aircraft maintenance base—Interview 112.)

These comments by semiskilled manual workers are suggestive of their lack of interest and lack of strong career orientations in their work. To the typical less skilled manual worker, work means simply that he has sold his time and performance to an employer in a strictly specified measure (eight hours); he has in no way sold an interest in his personal past or future.<sup>6</sup> This he considers his "private life," and more than in any other major occupational category in modern industry, the less skilled manual worker jealously guards his private life from the intrusions of work

<sup>6</sup> For a further discussion of the variations in the specific meaning of work in different occupational categories, see Eugene A. Friedmann and Robert J. Havighurst, *The Meaning of Work and Retirement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954).



concerns. This is in accord with the diffuse, particularistic, and unilateral character of the supervisor-worker relation for less skilled manual workers, as discussed in chapter iv. Typically, this type of employee is more concerned with close personal relations with those who work in close proximity, that is, to him informal relations frequently become more important than formal work requirements and discipline. It is significant that the well-known Hawthorne studies, showing the relatively greater importance of informal group norms over formal managerial controls, were based mostly upon observations of the work behavior of semiskilled production workers rather than journeymen.<sup>7</sup> Their findings might have been somewhat different if the researchers had studied skilled employees.

Again, we maintain that this special interest of less skilled workers in protecting the integrity of their private lives develops out of the *meaning of employment* for them; it is not simply a result of what has been forged into collective agreements out of the labor-management struggle. Instead, it is more reasonable to view the mechanism of collective bargaining as a *means of collective expression* of employee claims to rights and protection.<sup>8</sup> The origin of these claims is more deeply imbedded in the character of the employment relationship, especially for lesser skilled manual workers. For example, the following comment mentions first what the employee believes to be his "natural rights" in the situation; then he mentions the enforcement role of the union:

Well, I would be there right beside Joe. The company has no business to tell the man what he can and can't do while he's off duty, regardless of what they feel this might be doing to the company's name. If the supervisor hadn't happened along, no one would have known about it anyway so I don't see what difference it makes. I don't know of any company that will do that. They hadn't better do it, because the union won't stand for that. (Truck driver, cement plant—Interview 024.)

Staff specialists, on the other hand, were more likely to perceive specific situations in which management might be concerned legitimately with the behavior of an employee outside

<sup>7</sup> See F. J. Roethlisberger and W. J. Dickson, *Management and the Worker* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949).

<sup>8</sup> For a detailed analysis of relevant trends in collective bargaining and arbitration decisions, see Orme Phelps, *Discipline and Discharge in the Unionized Firm* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959.)

the work situation. It was pointed out, for example, that this would be the case where it could be shown clearly that such behavior directly affected either the work performance of the employee or the reputation of the firm in the larger community:

It's hard to say. I've heard that complaint before from a lot of people, that the time they are away from work is their own. In this case I don't know whether the company has any right to say anything or not. They might have if he were injured in a brawl and could not report to work the following day. Working in a company, people are expected to get to work; so if something of this type happened, I could see it. On the other hand the company also has a right to expect you to act like a gentleman. If a city is overrun with people who have a tendency to fight, I think the city would be after that company, especially if these people all worked there. If there are a lot of brawls and fights, the reputation of the company would be injured, if not their production. It might prevent other people from working there. Yet one or two people getting into a fight might not have much effect. (Accountant, cement plant—Interview 039.)

Others pointed out that companies tend to have more concern with the outside activities of employees identified with management than with nonmanagerial personnel:

I agree with Joe here all the way, providing you identify Joe as a member of labor, not a member of management. This might make a difference. What the supervisor said in this case, "You represent the company on your off hours," might be somewhat true of management personnel. But as for nonsupervisory employees, they do not have that function of representing the company, and their lives are already too much regulated as it is. Even secretarial help identify themselves with management, but as for their having this responsibility, I don't think the company should have any control over their off-duty activities. (Industrial engineer, cement plant—Interview 034.)

Still others maintained that the type of community in which an offense occurred might affect the scope of managerial control:

Well, I think that's a rather touchy situation. If it happened in a small town, I could see where the conduct of the company employee would have a lot of bearing on the reputation of the company. In a big city, however, it's just one chance in a million that the supervisor happened to be coming by, so in that case the theory that it is no business of the

company would tend to hold. (Staff artist, hardware manufacturing plant—Interview 091.)

Finally, some staff specialists pointed out that the character of the product or the specific nature of the sales relation of a firm with its customers would affect the scope of managerial control:

This is kind of a tough question. I think the man's right in that what he does on his own time is not the company's business in some ways. But that would depend partly on what kind of company it was. If he worked for an advertising firm, or if he went around insulting his employer and thus contributed to poor advertising in that way, then they would have reason to lay him off for five days. If he was just another person in a bar and nobody knew who he worked for and the supervisor just happened to see him, it wouldn't make too much difference. Here men in the airport terminal have been disciplined for things like this, and I think they should be, because in the terminal you are representing your company and you should remember that you are an advertisement for the company. But if a man worked for someone and didn't advertise the fact that he worked for such-and-such company, I think it would make no difference. (Publications editor, aircraft maintenance base—Interview 109.)

The attitudes of staff specialists in this matter conform more closely to company practices than the attitudes of other occupational groups. The interviews with personnel executives in Bay area firms indicated that 75 per cent of the companies surveyed follow the policy that they have a legitimate concern with outside activities of employees *under certain specified conditions*. Eighteen per cent reported that they had *no* concern with the behavior of their employees outside working hours, and 7 per cent, at the other extreme, expressed unlimited concern with employee behavior at all times.

An example of the latter point of view was stated as follows:

Five days' suspension may have been a little too severe in this case, although the company was certainly within its rights to impose a one- or two-day fine for this kind of behavior. Employees have to be good citizens as well as good employees. Suppose this were I who behaved this way; this would certainly reflect on the company. On the other hand, I think this standard of behavior is just as important for refinery workers as it for office workers. Off-work behavior does reflect on one's company. (Petroleum products company—Interview 221.)

This policy was substantiated by the training director of this same firm, who pointed out, "We continually tell employees that you *are* ——— Company, not that you *work for* ——— Company."

On the other hand, a few personnel executives maintained that their companies were not concerned with the outside activities of employees, assuming their performance on the job was not directly affected:

In a case like this the employee would have a grievance as long as his conduct outside the plant did not affect his job inside. Here we had a case of a man who cut his wife with a knife in an argument and was sent to jail. We would have re-employed him after he got out, even though he had only been here a short time. However, we did not re-employ him because we did not have an opening then. But we were not concerned with what he did at home. (Electrical manufacturing company—Interview 207.)

The more commonly expressed management opinion, however, was that management has rights to discipline employees under certain specified conditions for conduct outside the scope of work assignments. The nature of the specified conditions tended to coincide with those previously expressed in the comments of staff technicians. For example, personnel directors generally recognized that managements have a greater concern for the off-duty behavior of managerial personnel and other employees in positions of special responsibility to a company than for the outside behavior of ordinary production workers:

The reputation of a company is not related to what hourly workers do outside a plant. This would be different, however, for the personnel director or some other management person. In this case, the offense would probably be reported in the paper along with the individual's job title. (Automobile assembly plant—Interview 204.)

If the employee were working as a laborer in a construction job, say, without public contact and he wasn't fouling up his work detail, the company would be harsh if it took this action. On the other hand, if he was in a position of some kind of public trust, as in a bank, then management would have some reason to discipline him. (Bank—Interview 305.)

Whether management were right would depend upon the position of the employee in the company. Generally, what a man does in his spare time is beyond the purview of company interests. If he were a production employee in a reasonably large community, his behavior off the job would not reflect on the company. On the other hand, if he had a job concerned with an important safety item and his reputation was one of being drunk every Saturday, this would be another type of problem. In this latter case, however, management would have to *prove* that this behavior affected company interests. We've had some rough cases and lost some in arbitration because we couldn't prove in the arbitration hearing that the off-duty behavior affected company interests. (Aircraft maintenance base—Interview 212.)

Several personnel executives made the point that the burden of proof commonly rests with management to show that an alleged off-duty offense affects either the job performance or the employee involved or the reputation of the company:

Management has no concern with off-duty behavior unless the employee were informed previously of the company's position with respect to conduct off the job, and unless the company can *demonstrate* that their reputation would be impaired in this instance. (Electronics manufacturing firm—Interview 205.)

Others mentioned the importance of the size of the community in considering the scope of managerial control:

We have had some cases where we were concerned with off-duty offenses. Many smaller places are more or less company towns along the railroad. Our policy in such cases would be to call the man in first and see what he has to say about his behavior. If necessary, we could fire a man in such cases in order to protect the company's reputation. We could do this under the company rule stating that people of "poor moral quality" need not be retained as employees. (Railroad transportation company—Interview 226.)

We have members of minority groups who work here who seem to alternate and spend every other weekend in jail. This is mostly the case in the canning industry—the union sends us help from the hiring hall and we take them on as they come, so we can't be very particular. However, in most places we don't care what they do on Saturday night—just so they get to work sober on Monday morning. But in a small town a firm would certainly be concerned with how its employees acted off the job. We have small town operations of this type.

This would not be the case in a metropolitan area, however. (Food processing and packing company—Interview 224.)

Finally, some mentioned the importance of differences in the nature of a company's product or service:

Outside activities of employees are not considered the company's concern in this company. But whether outside activities become the concern of a company or not depends upon the nature of their product. For example, if a firm were making Bibles, then this kind of off-duty activity might be related to an employee's work and the company's reputation. (Paper products—Interview 217.)

If a man were a policeman, for example, his behavior on and off duty would be related. But in this kind of case, there would be an understanding about this at the time of employment. It would be similar for a minister or a schoolteacher. But in the case of an iron-worker, for example, so long as he reported properly for work, the company would have no concern for his off-duty behavior. (Shipyard—Interview 214.)

Thus the scope of managerial control over employees tends to be limited to those actions which directly affect the production and sales goals of the enterprise, except in situations in which the position of the employee, the firm, the nature of the product or service, or the character of the community predisposes management to have an increased concern with the outside behavior of employees. Even in these "exceptions," however, the increased concern of management with the private lives of employees is tempered by the relation of activities to the legitimate goals of the enterprise. In this manner corporate enterprises are impelled to protect their effectiveness, that is, their ability to achieve their goals successfully. At the same time, in a cultural context which lays great stress upon individual freedom, employees are motivated to protect as much as possible their private lives. The employment relationship, then, characteristically reflects a resolution of these concerns.

The employment relationship is not the same for every type of employee. For less skilled manual workers, it tends to be more of a *segmental* type of relationship; these workers typically see themselves as simply selling a certain amount of time and labor to their employer. Therefore they feel that he has no legitimate

right to attempt to influence or discipline them for any behavior outside immediate work activities. On the other hand, skilled manual workers, clerical employees, and especially staff specialists tend to see themselves in positions where they are evaluated *not only by what they do at work but also by the kind of persons they are outside work*. They recognize that their behavior in the larger community is more likely to reflect upon the reputation of their employer. Therefore, their relationship to their employers tends to be relatively more a *total* relationship; they are more likely to see themselves as "organization men" who *are* the company, rather than as those who simply *work for* the company.

### CONSISTENT ENFORCEMENT OF DISCIPLINE

In chapters ii and iii it was pointed out that personnel agencies in modern industrial enterprises typically perform the dual function of restraining line management both with regard to "human" factors in personnel practice and to the bureaucratic imperative of consistency in the administration of personnel policies. Where personnel departments do not exist, there is no structural mechanism for the regulation of personnel administration in line operations. The result may be the development of serious inconsistencies in the application of regulations.

The concern of personnel directors with consistent administration of personnel policy was especially noteworthy in interview responses to the following hypothetical situation:

Harry was smoking one day in an area in which there were posted "no smoking" signs. His foreman saw Harry violating the company rule and recommended that Harry be given a disciplinary layoff for five days. Harry complained that this rule had not been enforced for many years and that many other employees were in the habit of smoking in this same area. Harry said, "I can't understand why I was picked out among all the others who have also violated this rule." The foreman said in reply, "We have been worried for some time now about laxity of the observance of safety regulations in this plant, and we figured that it is about time we began to enforce them. If we don't enforce safety regulations, somebody is liable to get hurt. So we had to make an example of you, Harry, so everybody would get on the ball." But Harry still didn't feel that it was fair to pick on him.

In commenting upon this situation, 86 per cent of the personnel directors interviewed stated unequivocally that management would be in error in taking such action because a rule should have no effect on discipline unless it is consistently enforced. No one among these personnel executives maintained that an employee may be subject to discipline for the violation of a rule regardless of whether it has been consistently enforced before the violation in question. Typical comments on this were as follows:

The employee could file a grievance in this case on the grounds of unfair discrimination in the administration of discipline. The company should have published its intention to change past practice in this regard, and then after adequate warning, they should consistently enforce discipline. (Electronics equipment manufacturing—Interview 205.)

Management was way at fault here in being lax itself. They should advise all employees first about enforcing the rule. This business of giving adequate notice in advance of enforcing personnel regulations is pretty much a cardinal procedure in personnel management everywhere now. (Aircraft maintenance—Interview 212.)

The employee was wrong in this action. At the same time management would lose respect from the other men at the shop if they did this, because management would not be acting the way employees *expected* them to act. Management must give fair warning here in order to change the expectations of workers with regard to the enforcement of this rule. Management rights have no meaning if they are not confirmed in the expectations of employees prior to their exercise. (Food processing and packing—Interview 223.)

If I had been Harry, I would have felt that I had been wronged. The employer should have warned everyone first and then enforced the rule. This rule was not being enforced and he was being picked on. (Department store—Interview 303.)

Fourteen per cent of the personnel directors were somewhat ambiguous in their answers to the question. This minority was more likely to agree that the employee should have been disciplined, but that management was nevertheless in error in not having enforced the rule previously:

The employee would have no grounds for a grievance here. It's a well-known principle of jurisprudence that one lawbreaker does not



justify another. Still, I think that management should have given advance warning that they were going to enforce the rule. (Clothing manufacturing—Interview 222.)

Unfortunately, the rule hadn't been enforced, but still the man was violating the posted rule and should be disciplined. I don't think he'd get to first base on a grievance on this. But at the same time, the supervisor should be checked on why the rule hadn't been enforced. (Steel manufacturing—Interview 200.)

In contrast, employees tend to be more divided in their attitudes toward consistency in the enforcement of discipline. Table

TABLE 24

ATTITUDE TOWARD CONSISTENCY IN THE ENFORCEMENT OF DISCIPLINE AMONG INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION

(Percentages)

<i>Attitudes of employees <sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Occupational classification <sup>b</sup></i>			
	(1) <i>Cler.</i>	(2) <i>Spec.</i>	(3) <i>Semi.</i>	(4) <i>Skill.</i>
A rule has no effect on discipline unless it is consistently enforced	50	46	44	33
A rule is effective in discipline whether it is consistently enforced or not	40	36	53	56
Undecided or ambiguous	10	18	3	11
	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	20	11	34	39

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from the categorized verbal interview responses of samples of employees at four San Francisco Bay area private industrial plants.

<sup>b</sup> See table 23, footnote b.

24 indicates that a slight majority of manual workers in both skilled and semiskilled occupations maintained that a rule is effective whether it is consistently enforced or not. In response to the same hypothetical situation presented to personnel directors, typical opinions emphasized the responsibility of individual employees to obey rules, particularly safety regulations, regardless of whether they have been enforced previously. They commented that a violation of an important safety regulation might result in serious injury or damage to the employee, his fellow workers, or his employer's property:

The employee was wrong in this case. Regardless of whether he was the one being picked on or not, it just happened to be his hard luck that he got caught. If he said others hadn't been punished, why others just hadn't been caught, that's all. He endangered property and lives, so the company could do whatever they liked with him. (Machinist, cement plant—Interview 026.)

Well, you're not supposed to pick on somebody, but he did violate the regulations. Whether it's him or anybody else, they're posted and he has to abide by them. Safety regulations may mean my life, or yours, or somebody else's. That's the way I feel about that. (Repairman, automobile assembly plant—Interview 057.)

There's always a guinea pig in any crowd. If he was smoking in that area and smoking on company time, when you say there were "no smoking" signs all around him there, the company's got the right to suspend him for two days, five days, or more. They're all big boys. They know their work and everything. Like smoking out here—you're not supposed to smoke within fifty feet of any of those planes. (Mechanic, aircraft maintenance base—Interview 100.)

A sizable proportion of manual workers, however, and a somewhat larger proportion of staff specialists and clerical employees maintained that to discipline an employee for a rule that had not been enforced consistently in the past would be unfair:

If they had been lax about enforcing the rule for a long time and permitted others to do it, then I wouldn't like it either to be picked out and made an example of. I think if they intended to tighten up on discipline there, they should have put up a notice to let people know what they intended to do. After things have been allowed to be violated for so long, why that just does away with the rule, it seems to me (Metal plater, hardware manufacturing plant—Interview 068.)

It depends on how much smoking had been going on there previously. If it were common practice and everybody else was doing it, why should that man be picked on and punished differently from the rest? But if it wasn't too common practice, then he wouldn't have any cause to complain about being disciplined. If we assume that it was formerly common practice, why then management should have given notice to everyone that the rule would be enforced in the future (Accountant, cement plant—Interview 037.)

I don't think a man should get a suspension right out of the blue. Now if everybody had been doing it and the company warned the employees that they were going to enforce the rule, then the man has no complaint. But this sounds as though both sides admitted the rule had not been enforced, and then they just came up and slapped it on someone right out of the blue. That's not right. (Stock clerk, automobile assembly plant—Interview 040.)

In summary, these data and examples suggest that consistent administration of discipline is generally more a management than an employee concern. A principal function of personnel agencies in modern enterprises is to check and regulate line management with regard to a consistent personnel policy. Many employees, on the other hand, also expect consistency in the administration of discipline. In some cases, however, and particularly in violations of important safety regulations, the concern of employees for consistent treatment is outweighed by the sense of possible danger to life and property. On the other hand, whether they disagree about the justification of disciplinary action in a particular case or not, almost all managements in their practices and most employees in their expectations agree that it is a management responsibility to avoid erratic and arbitrary administration of discipline. Thus management is constrained to be consistent in disciplinary practice primarily by the organizational requirements of large-scale enterprises and also by the expectations of a sizable number of employees.

Some employees, particularly manual workers, see company rules as based primarily upon the arbitrary will of management, which they have agreed to accept in the context of work activities. Other employees, particularly white collar personnel, view company rules as grounded in something more permanent than the arbitrary will of management. They consider rules as institutionalized expressions of common practice. Where management and employee views coincide about the importance of rules, management is especially constrained to observe its own precedents and to recognize the right of employees to protection against the sudden violation of precedence in discipline.

#### PROCEDURAL ASPECTS OF DISCIPLINE

The previous discussion has pointed out that the arbitrary exercise of managerial control over employees in modern industry

is typically limited both in the scope of managerial control over the activities of employees outside the worksite and also in the consistent application of discipline inside the place of work. Further limitations in managerial control occur in the ways in which industrial discipline is administered. These limitations may be classified roughly into two types: management responsibility to allow employees adequate warning and opportunity to correct their defects, and management responsibility to establish adequate proof of malintent before discipline is administered.

Information on management practices and attitudes regarding the warning of individual employees before taking disciplinary action were elicited from personnel directors in Bay area firms in response to the following hypothetical situation:

One afternoon after his work shift was completed, Sam Brown was given notice by his foreman that he was fired for not doing his job the way it should be done. Sam got mad about what the foreman did and went to see the superintendent in charge of the whole shop. Sam said to the superintendent, "Everybody knows I always do my job and I do it right—what right have you guys suddenly to say that I'm not doing the work now the way it should be done?" The superintendent then answered Sam by saying, "I'm going to stand behind what my foreman did, because it has always been management's right to determine whether workers are performing their jobs properly, and furthermore, you know our union contract states that management has the right to discharge workers for 'inefficiency.'" But Sam said, "Well, I agree that the contract says management can fire for 'inefficiency,' but the very fact that we have a union contract means that we are supposed to be treated fairly, and this doesn't seem like fair treatment to me."

Ninety-three per cent of the personnel directors surveyed reported that their firms ordinarily did not attempt to discipline employees without advance warning to individuals of their deficiencies. Only 7 per cent (three individuals) were somewhat ambiguous in their statements.

Personnel executives were almost unanimous in feeling that the treatment of the employee in this hypothetical situation would be "unjust" and a violation of employee rights. Their responses were typically expressed as follows:

There are grounds for a grievance here. There must be adequate warning before discharge. An employee has a right to expect fair play in

this regard. Discharge is the most serious penalty we can inflict. Therefore, we must develop proper expectations with regard to its exercise ahead of time (Electronics equipment manufacturing—Interview 209.)

Management would have the right to discharge this man if the man had been adequately warned in advance about his defects and if efforts had been made to help him improve and to work with him. The failure of management to let a man know that his work is unsatisfactory means tacitly that the company accepts the man's work. (Paper products manufacturing—Interview 217.)

This is an example of arbitrary treatment. I would want to know of the foreman, did you warn the man previously and did you make a record of the warning? Very often foremen try to get rid of men without putting in the personnel records a notice of previous warning, as they should (Railroad transportation—Interview 226.)

We would consider this action unjust. The man was never given any notice of the standards that were expected of him. Furthermore, the supervisor should not have discharged the man without an approval from the Personnel Office. If this happened, the employee would have grounds for complaint. (Department store—Interview 302.)

Many personnel executives also commented upon the employee's statement in the hypothetical situation that "the very fact that we have a union contract means that we are supposed to be treated fairly." Some agreed that a union-management contract implies fair treatment of employees and procedural safeguards in the administration of discipline:

I would agree with the implication of the employee's statement regarding the nature of a collective contract. A basic reason for having a contract is to assure the provision of just and impartial treatment. Our contracts have clauses which expressly prohibit unjust treatment. But a collective contract by its nature implies just treatment whether there are specific clauses on this or not. (Railroad transportation—Interview 227.)

Others expressed the opinion that it is through union organization and collective agreements that workers' rights become especially articulated and enforced:

I would agree with what the employee said about the contract. One function of a union contract is that it makes employees aware of their

rights. With salaried (nonunion) employees, however, it is the responsibility of management to treat employees fairly. If management does not do this in the case of the nonunion employee, he then has only two alternatives: he may either quit and look elsewhere for a job, or he may seek the aid of some other outside organization to help him assert and maintain his rights. (Clothing manufacturing—Interview 222.)

Still others maintained that collective contracts are important in establishing mutual expectations about what may be considered fair treatment in specific types of situations:

Aside from contracts, a worker by the mere fact of going to work expects to be treated fairly. Thus the employer-employee relationship implies fair treatment. Contracts are important in that they set up mutual expectations about what specific kinds of treatment in specific types of situations will be considered fair by employers and employees. Nevertheless, expectations with regard to fair treatment are not limited by contractual agreements. (Food processing and packing—Interview 223.)

The latter point of view, that mutual expectations of fair treatment have their *origin* in the nature of the modern employment relationship rather than in collective contracts *per se*, was the prevailing opinion among personnel executives:

It is true that a contract implies fair treatment. On the other hand, it is *inherent* that employees should be treated fairly, whether there is a collective contract or not. (Shipyard—Interview 214.)

A union contract is not necessary for fair treatment. We tell our people all the time that they should try to do the right thing, and not merely adhere to what the agreement requires them to do. The right thing to be done is not controlled primarily by the agreement, because what is "fair" by contract may be changed every time a new agreement is reached (Can manufacturing—Interview 202.)

Table 25 indicates that the vast majority of employees in all occupational categories were in agreement with personnel executives in their emphasis on advance warning as an essential requirement of a fair disciplinary policy. This viewpoint was most frequently emphasized by semiskilled manual workers. Their comments were typically as follows:

TABLE 25

ATTITUDES TOWARD ADVANCE WARNING IN DISCIPLINARY PRACTICE  
AMONG INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION

(Percentages)

Attitudes toward advance warning <sup>a</sup>	Occupational classification <sup>b</sup>			
	(1) Cler.	(2) Spec.	(3) Semi.	(4) Skill.
An individual should not be disciplined without advance warning of deficiency	75	73	94	69
Individuals may be disciplined without advance warning of deficiency	5	9		3
Undecided or ambiguous	20	18	6	28
	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Total number of cases	20	11	34	39

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from the categorized verbal interview responses of samples of employees at four San Francisco Bay area private industrial plants.

<sup>b</sup> See table 23, footnote b.

If that man thinks he did his work right, why he should certainly file a grievance on this action, by all means. He has some rights as a human being. If it were me, I would feel that it was pretty arbitrary, the suddenness of it and all. I would feel I should have some warning about it. (Screw machine operator, hardware manufacturing plant—Interview 077.)

That story doesn't say whether the foreman spoke to the man beforehand or not, but I believe the foreman should have gone to him, showed him what he was doing wrong, and what the proper procedure was. Then if he still did it wrong, he could be fired, but you don't have any right just to walk up and summarily fire a man without any explanation of what is wrong. (Spray painter, automobile assembly plant—Interview 059.)

Most employees in other job classifications made similar remarks:

I think this man would have a grievance, mostly because he was never warned that he wasn't doing the job efficiently like the foreman wanted it done. If the man was not doing his job efficiently, the foreman should have warned him and told him either to bring it up to what they wanted or get fired. Management was not fair in this case. (Master mechanic, aircraft maintenance base—Interview 096.)

We had some cases like that in some of the places I have worked. One man who had worked there for seven years was notified very suddenly one day, and that was it. I feel that it is too abrupt to discharge a man suddenly who has worked and served a company well for seven years. (Accountant, hardware manufacturing company—Interview 067.)

I think that before anyone should be fired, the immediate supervisor should talk to him, tell him why he's doing it wrong, and then give him a chance to try to do it right. That's the way I feel. I think they should at least give them some warning before they fire them that way. (Key punch operator, cement plant—Interview 038.)

Therefore, expectations regarding employee rights to adequate warning in advance of disciplinary action are not a function of any status differences or differences in career-development needs of employees in an enterprise; they are held in common by all employees by virtue of their common participation in the employment relationship. As an "employee," a person expects he will be given adequate warning and a chance to correct his deficiencies before he is disciplined for them.

In the matter of adequate evidence and proof in disciplinary actions, information on management practices was elicited from personnel directors in response to the following hypothetical situation:

In a certain company, tools had been reported missing from benches in the shop for some time. Then one day, a worker in this plant by the name of Tom was stopped by a plant guard while Tom was going out the gate to lunch. The guard found a crescent wrench in the pocket of Tom's overalls. Then Tom was taken to the office of the plant superintendent. The superintendent said to Tom, "I am going to have you discharged from your job, because you know that it is against company rules to go out the gate with company tools in your pockets. We have had too many tools stolen or lost recently, and as I recall, there were some tools missing from your bench last month." Tom answered, "I have always tried to be careful with tools. Today, I just forgot that wrench in my pocket. It was only a mistake on my part." But the superintendent felt that Tom's answer was not good enough for him, so he insisted that Tom be discharged from his job as an untrustworthy employee. Tom felt the superintendent was being unfair.



Seventy-seven per cent of the personnel directors surveyed reported that their firms adhere to the practice of not disciplining employees without adequate proof of intent to violate a company regulation. Another 18 per cent maintained that in certain cases it is proper to discipline individuals for overt acts of rule violation, without necessarily establishing proof of intent. The typical idea expressed by the latter individuals was that management action in the above situation would be proper merely on the basis that the employee *did* in fact violate the rule, without regard for whether he had intended to steal or not. Another 5 per cent of those interviewed were ambiguous in their responses.

Personnel officials typically made comments like the following on the importance of adequate proof of intent:

This case indicates that a hasty decision was made. We would look at a man's past record first. Unless there was other evidence of stealing and unless intent to steal is proved—and this is hard to do—then management would not be within its rights in taking this action. For example, we would want to investigate whether the man made careful preparation to conceal the item, as evidence of intent. We have found in the past that we can't make discharges for stealing stick if we have not proved intent. We have changed our approach on this through experience with this kind of thing. (Aircraft maintenance—Interview 212.)

On all these cases we would really need more facts. This is always the case in disciplinary actions anywhere, incidentally. We would want to know this man's seniority, his previous record, if there were any statements made by the man to other employees that he intended to walk out the gate with tools, etc. We've had cases like this here. If we felt it was just an accident, we only warned the man not to let it happen again. (Automobile assembly—Interview 203.)

This case involves a question of fact. Did he intend to steal the item? This might be bolstered by more information on the other supplies missing. The bank, for example, is very careful in suggesting that someone has taken money. In the case above, however, they have not established that the employee was stealing. There is not enough information upon which to base such a serious accusation. Therefore, they had no right to take this action against the employee. (Bank—Interview 307.)

**TABLE 26**

**ATTITUDES TOWARD PROOF OF INTENT IN DISCIPLINARY PRACTICE AMONG INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION<sup>a</sup>**  
(Percentages)

<i>Attitudes of employees</i>	<i>Occupational classification<sup>b</sup></i>			
	(1) <i>Cler.</i>	(2) <i>Spec.</i>	(3) <i>Semi.</i>	(4) <i>Skill.</i>
An individual should not be disciplined without adequate proof of intent	60	64	59	56
Individuals may be disciplined without establishing proof of intent	5	18	24	18
Undecided or ambiguous	35	18	17	26
	100	100	100	100
Total number of cases	20	11	34	39

<sup>a</sup> These data are tabulated from the categorized verbal interview responses of samples of employees at four San Francisco Bay area private industrial plants.

<sup>b</sup> See table 23, footnote b.

A majority of employees in all occupational categories also expected management to maintain adequate standards of proof of intent in disciplinary actions, as indicated in table 26. They characteristically felt that it would be unfair to discipline an employee for a serious offense of this type without establishing his intent to commit the offense. Following are some typical comments on the matter:

Anybody can forget something like that. Everybody does forget at times. I've even done that with money—gone home with company money in my pocket, but I brought it back the next morning. It was just an oversight. If a company disciplines a man for something like that, I don't think that was fair, unless they really investigated it. They could do that very easy. Every company has its own detectives. So they should investigate it more. (Driver, cement plant—Interview 024.)

I am very much against that, especially employees walking out with other employees' tools. Yet this is another case where it should be looked into and found out more about the facts. They should find out whether the man did this intentionally or not. (Pipefitter, automobile assembly plant—Interview 048.)

I think this kind of thing would probably depend on the person. It could have been an honest mistake and then again it might not

have been. I think they would have to look into it more before they discharged him. I should think that they would be able to tell if they looked into it more whether he deliberately attempted to take company property or not. (Statistical clerk, aircraft maintenance base—Interview 103.)

It is noticeable that with regard to limitations in the administration of discipline there is a fairly close agreement between the expectations of employees and managerial practice. In regard both to advance warning and to adequate proof of intent, a large majority of employees agree with the practices of a large majority of companies. There was a lesser degree of correspondence between employee expectations and managerial practice with respect to the extent of managerial control over the private lives of employees and the importance of consistent enforcement of discipline. Thus we see here in the procedural limitations upon the arbitrary exercise of managerial power in the employment relationship what are perhaps the most institutionalized types of employee rights—the right to adequate warning and a chance to improve before disciplinary action and the right to a fair investigation of employee intent before the imposition of disciplinary sanctions.

Moreover, mutual emphasis in management practice and employee expectations regarding adequate warning and the establishment of employee intent reflects important aspects of the basic nature of the employment relationship common to all types of employees. To the parties involved, *the "contract of employment" implies that both parties to the relationship have entered into it in good intent.* It is expected that each party will make every reasonable effort to assist the other party in carrying out their specified tasks. Where an employee has failed to perform in his role expectations through no fault of his own, because he has not been adequately informed about what he is required to do, or because he has involuntarily violated the expectations of management, it is considered unfair to discipline that employee. On the other hand, where discipline and especially discharge are imposed, the good faith of management in attempting to be fair and just in its treatment of individual employees can best be evidenced by the procedural safeguards of a "fair trial" or hearing. As one personnel director pointed out, "Discharge is the most severe penalty we can impose." It is

severe because it separates a person from a relationship in which he has, in many cases, invested a part of himself and his future. Typically, his livelihood and that of his family depend upon his career with a particular employer. Very often it is difficult or impossible for him to start over again elsewhere. For these reasons, the common welfare of employees *and* the interests of business enterprises, so far as they are dependent upon the morale of their employees, require limitations in managerial control.

In summary, we may point out that this analysis of various aspects of managerial control has indicated that the employment relationship in modern industry is typically not a *total* relationship, although it may involve more aspects of the lives of some employees than of others. Ordinarily, it involves only those aspects of individual behavior which directly or indirectly affect the production and sales goals of the employing enterprise. Also the employment relationship is not typically a relationship based upon acceptance of arbitrary and sudden actions of either party. Both parties usually expect the actions of the other party to be predictable within the context of the relationship. Finally, it is a relationship based upon good faith and cooperative intent. The burden of proof falls upon whoever claims that a party to the relationship intends to undermine its legitimate objectives.

**CHAPTER VII. THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE:  
AUTOMATION AND EMPLOYEE RIGHTS**

This chapter summarizes the previous discussion of the relation between the character of the employment relationship in American industry and the development of employee rights and, further, speculates very briefly upon possible future trends in the coming age of automation.

One of the principal tasks of this study has been to explore what employment relationship means to different employees. Those who are engaged in different types of work, performing different basic functions in an enterprise, view their employment in different ways. Therefore, their claims to employee rights differ significantly. We may summarize these various perspectives by discussing differences in basic roles typically found among employees in modern industry.

SUMMARY: EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AT PRESENT

The data previously discussed have suggested that there are role configurations or patterns of expected behavior associated with four basic types of industrial occupations. These role configurations are partly the result of different job requirements within enterprises and partly the consequence of the various life perspectives or career orientations which individuals bring to these jobs. For example, the necessity of having unskilled (or semi-skilled) manual workers to operate production lines, skilled workers to handle certain craft production and maintenance activities, staff specialists to provide certain specialized services, and clerical personnel to keep records is fairly obvious in establishments oriented to mass production and the distribution of economic goods. Furthermore, individual clerical workers and unskilled manual workers are typically expendable; they can be replaced easily because a firm ordinarily does not have a large investment in them from the standpoint of training. With a minimum of orientation and on-the-job instruction, any clerical employee (with perhaps minimum typing skills) may be substituted for any other.<sup>1</sup> This is essentially true for unskilled manual workers. It is not true for skilled manual workers and staff specialists, however, under present conditions. They are hired, not to perform a relatively simple task, but *to apply a special skill*. This involves more prolonged training and interest in self-development on the job, that is, a career orientation. It requires a skill which is typically learned outside the particular enterprise, and the employee can ordinarily take this basic skill with him if he decides to transfer and to seek work with another employer. Nevertheless, these employees are frequently required to learn special techniques and applications in work with a particular employer, and it might be difficult to take this knowledge with them to a different organization with different products and methods. For example, certain work of mechanics, particularly that requiring only the proper use of tools, may be done anywhere; however, it may not be so easy for a well-qualified automobile mechanic to transfer to a high-level position in an

<sup>1</sup> This generalization, of course, is not true of those clerical employees with special skills, such as ability to take shorthand. However, we might suspect that the increased use of dictaphone devices has decreased the demand for and importance of such skilled clerical personnel in many business establishments.

aircraft maintenance shop, since the latter job requires knowledge of a different mechanical system.

For this reason, it is understandable that employees with special skills are particularly concerned with what they consider to be their rights relative to their employment security. Career orientations in many instances are bound up with a certain company. After a worker has spent a considerable period of time learning special processes and products in a company, to lose the job would mean "starting all over again" with another company, where the methods, products, or both, may be significantly different. Loss of a job may also mean a severe financial hardship to an unskilled manual worker or a clerical employee; yet in cases where these individuals are able to obtain jobs elsewhere, it would not mean a loss of occupational *status*, as in a transfer from a master mechanic's job to a lower mechanic's position.

Concern with employee rights varies not only according to the character of the positions in which individuals are employed but also according to the different perspectives individuals bring with them to these positions.

In the first place, however, all employees expect management recognition of certain rights by virtue of their common participation in the employee role. They feel that they entered into the role in good faith, with intent to fulfill the requirements of their jobs in the best way possible. Their feeling is that the burden of proof is upon him who claims that anyone has failed to perform his job as required. They commonly assert that it is incumbent upon management to warn employees in advance of disciplinary action, and once such action is taken, to prove conclusively any malintent or undue negligence. Furthermore, most employees feel that it is management's responsibility to enforce consistently those rules and regulations to which they hold employees accountable. Rules are therefore seen as having their basis in expectations regarding fair and consistent practice, rather than in the arbitrary will of management. Management officials recognize these common expectations. As one personnel director put it: "Employees like to have a tight-run ship. They like to know that their supervisor will take the same action each day. They like to have rules and to have a part in creating them. They expect their discipline to be fair."

In other words, all employees, by virtue of their common status as employees, expect that they be treated, in a certain sense, as

*citizens*, with certain rights as citizens of the industrial community (which are analogous to certain rights in the national community). These rights transcend the specifications of collective agreements; they are commonly claimed by union and non-union employees alike in connection with their performance of the employee role. As another personnel director pointed out: "There are two kinds of rights—human rights and rights of contract. In respect to human rights, we might think of the preamble to the Declaration of Independence, mentioning rights to 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' In the employment relationship, employees also have such rights as human beings, such as rights to fair treatment and the right to be recognized as an integral part of a productive enterprise."

In addition to these rights commonly claimed by all employees, there are also special privileges of status claimed by certain types of employees which support their specific career orientations. These employees and their claims may be briefly reviewed as follows.

*Staff specialists.*—For staff specialists in engineering, accounting, personnel, and other functional specialties, the employment relationship tends to be impersonal (universalistic and specific). They expect their supervisors to evaluate them primarily on the basis of how well they perform their jobs rather than how well they get along with other people on the job. Data supporting this conclusion were presented both for government ordnance workers and workers in private industries. This expectation is also supported by most managerial personnel in staff specialist occupations. Moreover, staff specialists tend to be deeply involved in their work.<sup>2</sup> They typically look upon their jobs as an integral part of a lifetime career, and they expect to participate in managerial decision-making relevant to their jobs. Their career

<sup>2</sup> This conclusion is compatible with the findings of other studies on the meaning of work to persons in different occupational categories. For example, one study showed that those in "middle class" occupations tend to have a greater interest in the nature of their jobs, a greater sense of accomplishment from work well done, and less desire to change jobs if the opportunity arose; Nancy C. Morse and Robert S. Weiss, "The Function and Meaning of Work and the Job," *American Sociological Review*, XX (1955), pp. 191–198. Another study found that the high valuation of the nature of the work performed is not a function of a greater average degree of job satisfaction among middle class occupational categories in contrast to working class categories; Elizabeth L. Lyman, "Occupational Differences in the Value Attached to Work," *American Journal of Sociology*, LXI (1955), pp. 138–144.



orientation is almost always in the direction of upward movement into managerial positions.

Therefore, it is understandable that the response of staff specialists to many specific matters of employee rights tends to be sympathetic with a managerial position. Perhaps the only kind of special privilege which staff specialists claim is the right to be given fair consideration for promotions into managerial positions before outside recruiting.

*Skilled manual workers.*—As with staff specialists, the employment relationship for manual workers in skilled trades tends to be impersonal (universalistic and specific). These workers expect personal considerations to be separated from work concerns on the job. Again, this expectation is supported by most managerial personnel in skilled trades. Like staff specialists, skilled manual workers tend to have considerable self-involvement in their work.<sup>3</sup> They typically look upon their jobs as part of a lifetime career, and they often expect to participate in managerial decision-making on topics relevant to their jobs. However, unlike staff specialists, their career orientation is generally in the direction of progression from lower skilled jobs to higher skilled jobs *within the area of their trade*. As indicated previously, these employees may become dependent upon employment in a particular firm since the possibility of reemployment elsewhere at their previous level of skill is restricted.

Therefore, claims to special privilege tend to be focused upon the protection of job identity and seniority rights. Management officials, however, frequently see these claims as conflicting with managerial prerogatives to assign and transfer workers in a manner judged to be in the best interests of the enterprise.

*Unskilled manual workers.*—Unlike skilled manual workers, unskilled and many semiskilled manual workers see the employment relationship in more personal terms. Perhaps in revolt against the routinization of much unskilled and semiskilled work in industry, these workers are particularly prone to engage in output restriction and other forms of protest against the intrinsically uninteresting nature of their work and against their

<sup>3</sup> Eugene A. Friedmann, *et al.*, have also found that skilled workers more frequently view their work in terms of self-respect and purposeful activity than do less skilled workers, who more often think in terms of monetary gain and routine activity; *The Meaning of Work and Retirement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), p. 173.

lack of control over the work process.<sup>4</sup> They are more inclined to form close personal attachments and friendships with fellow workers and supervisors than is usual among other types of employees. Their supervisors are also more inclined to feel that they should maintain their closest friendships with their subordinate employees, rather than with other supervisors.

Since they are typically not career oriented in the sense that they do not see their work as part of a lifetime sequence of status progression, unskilled workers do not ordinarily claim special privileges as frequently as do skilled workers or staff specialists. Neither do they have any great desire to participate in managerial decision-making in matters relevant to their jobs. Their outstanding desire is to be left alone, free from management interference in their lives outside immediate work concerns. Their view of the employment relationship is one in which an individual has sold a part of his time and energy to his employer, albeit a limited part, in return for an adequate wage. Unlike staff specialists and more skilled workers, they do not tend to build up a high degree of personal involvement and commitment to a particular employer.

Therefore, the types of employee rights which unskilled manual workers are apt to assert are a right to a relatively large sphere of private life free from managerial control and a right to be treated with particular regard for mitigating circumstances and with personal consideration in disciplinary actions.

*Clerical employees.*—Unlike unskilled workers, clerical employees, who are typically females, do not tend to develop close friendships with fellow workers.<sup>5</sup> They expect their relations with supervisors to be impersonal and uniform in character. They are typically not career oriented and they do not ordinarily desire to participate in supervisory decision-making.

<sup>4</sup> For further discussion of quota restriction practices, see Edward Gross, "Some Functional Consequences of Primary Controls in Formal Work Organizations," *American Sociological Review*, XVIII (1953), pp. 368-372; Donald Roy, "Quota Restriction and Goldbricking in a Machine Shop," *American Journal of Sociology*, LVII (1952), pp. 427-442; Donald Roy, "Efficiency and the Fix: Informal Group Relationships in a Piecework Machine Shop," *American Journal of Sociology*, LX (1954), pp. 255-266; and "Work Satisfaction and Social Regard in Quota Achievement: an Analysis of Piecework Incentive," *American Sociological Review*, XVIII (1953), pp. 507-513. Friedmann and Havighurst also found that unskilled and semiskilled steel workers tend to experience no meaning in their work except routine activity and financial reward, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>5</sup> This generalization is probably less true for the minority of females who are career oriented in their work.

Consequently, their claims to employee rights tend to be minimal, emphasizing only those rights commonly claimed by all employees: uniform treatment under consistently enforced rules, adequate warning before disciplinary action, and disciplinary treatment in accord with adequate standards of evidence.

Thus from the perspective of employees, employee rights are of two types: those claimed by virtue of *common employee status*, and those claimed by virtue of *special status* and associated career aspirations, as is the case particularly among skilled manual workers and staff specialists. From the perspective of management, on the other hand, the recognition of employee rights represents serious limitations in managerial power over employees. These limitations have become most institutionalized in modern industry especially in the consistent enforcement of disciplinary regulations, adequate warning before disciplinary action, and adequate standards of proof of malintent prerequisite to serious disciplinary action. It is in these areas that the expectations of employees and management are in closest agreement. In contrast, the recognition of employee rights to special privileges of status (especially those of occupational identity and seniority) seems to be most precarious and therefore most dependent upon inclusion in collective agreements for their stability and protection. Claims to these types of special privilege by certain types of industrial employees has been largely a function of the career aspirations of these employees. However, we may expect the career patterns of manual workers and staff specialists alike to be upset by certain anticipated changes in job structure as a result of automation. These changes, in turn, may also be expected to affect relevant types of employee rights.

#### AUTOMATION AND CHANGES IN JOB CHARACTERISTICS

In preindustrial society the development of capitalist institutions was dependent upon instilling into individuals a work ethic which emphasized the virtues of self-discipline and hard work, acquisition and thrift, and individualism and competition, as Max Weber pointed out in his study of the economic consequences resulting from the "Protestant Ethic" in western society.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. by Talcott Parsons (London: Allen and Unwin, 1948).

Paradoxically, however, Henry Ford and others who believed in and practiced the protestant ethic, also helped to undermine it. The assembly line and methods of mass production began to reduce the necessity for personal motivation, effort, and judgment in work activities. The assembly line worker no longer produced a whole product by his skill and ingenuity. Assembly line work became fractionalized, and workers became appendages to machines and mass-production technology. Yet it has remained for automation to deal the final blow to individual responsibility in the productive process.

Various writers have pointed out that automation may be defined in many ways. It is not our task, at this point, to discuss the various types of automation, such as those concerned with machines to control the operation of other production machines or computers to solve statistical and clerical problems. Instead, it is sufficient for our purposes simply to point out that the object of all types of automation techniques is "the accomplishment of a work task by an integrated power-driven mechanism entirely without the *direct* application of human energy, skill, intelligence, or control."<sup>7</sup> Bernard Karsh has substantiated this conclusion by statistical data. For example, he pointed out that in one automated automobile engine plant, one man operates a transfer machine performing more than 500 machine operations, whereas former methods required 35 to 70 men for the same operation. In another example, on a radio assembly line turning out 1,000 radios a day, two workers now produce more than 200 workers did under the old method.<sup>8</sup>

The point of these illustrations is not simply that automation may result in technological unemployment, but rather that automation has led to the displacement of certain *human* skills by *machine* skills. One, or a small number of operators, now operates the control panels on complex machines which replace the separate tasks of many skilled and semiskilled workers. At the same time, there is a final divorce between individual initiative and machine productivity. The operator of the automated machine is primarily a button pusher. It makes no difference whether he pushes the button with considerable force or with a light touch—in either case the machine performs in the same

<sup>7</sup> Bernard Karsh, "The Meaning of Work in an Age of Automation," *Current Economic Comment*, XIX (1957), p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

way and at the same speed. It becomes difficult, if not impossible, to restrict output. As Karsh has put it:

A modern continuous tin mill operates almost wholly independently of the worker who watches lights, dials, gauges, perhaps a television picture tube or a spectroscope. In operations of this kind, muscular fatigue is replaced by mental tension, the interminable watching, the endless concentration.<sup>9</sup>

Thus the process of automation apparently leads to the displacement of many of the unskilled production workers and also many of the semiskilled and skilled machine operators and machinists formerly needed in industry. But at the same time, the importance of other highly skilled engineers, programmers, and designers increases with automation. The need for craftsmen with a highly skilled knowledge of one type of job or trade is being replaced by the need for technicians with a high degree of training and knowledge of a wide variety of technical matters associated with automated production. Masters of one skill will be replaced by experts in the whole process. This fact was recognized by Hervey G. de Bivort when he wrote:

More important, perhaps, will be the need for maintenance workers, whose skills will of necessity vary from those of the traditional maintenance mechanic. The proportion of these workers has increased already in automated plants, and in the case of electronic feedback and computer technologies a relatively new occupation is gaining in importance, that of electronics technician. The importance of these workers in the new type of plant is evident, since the economic advantage obtained by the use of this equipment depends primarily on "keeping the process going," and stoppages therefore become increasingly costly.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>10</sup> Hervey G. de Bivort, "Automation—Some Social Aspects," *International Labour Review*, LXXII (1955), p. 22. Automation in office situations may also result in upgrading of skill requirements in some cases, although it is probable that many clerical workers will be doing jobs similar to those previously performed; see Jack Stieber, *Automation and the White Collar Worker* (Michigan State University, Labor and Industrial Relations Center, 1957); Edward B. Jakubauskas, "Adjustment to an Automatic Airline Reservation System," *Monthly Labour Review*, LXXXI (1958), pp. 1014–1016. James R. Bright has found that automation may result in decreased skill requirements for operators and increased skill requirements in certain designing, programming, and maintenance functions; see James R. Bright, *Automation and Management* (Boston: Harvard University, Graduate School of Business Administration, Division of Research, 1958), pp. 170–197.

Georges Friedmann also wrote of the complexity of automated machines and the result in a necessity for maintenance repairmen and operators alike to have knowledge of a variety of skills:

. . . the toolrooms and repair shops are nurseries of new artisans who add to their skills a certain versatility and, in order to be able to respond to the unceasing, ever-changing movement of modern techniques (some of which in industrial labor often cover several trades, such as those of joiner, electrician, mechanic, blacksmith, molder), have to be capable of acquiring training in several trades.<sup>11</sup>

Thus before automation, attempts to rationalize the organization of production characteristically resulted in *job specialization*, which was discussed earlier as one of the essential characteristics of a bureaucracy. Under conditions of automation, however, the functions formerly performed through the specialization of labor and jobs are largely taken over by machines. Job design comes to be characterized more by *job enlargement* rather than by job specialization.<sup>12</sup>

These facts are well known to students of automation. Perhaps less well known and less commonly recognized are the changes in job character which we may expect at the other end of the organizational hierarchy. Since the problems of social adjustment of operators to machine processes over which they have practically no control are magnified and alienation from work has become a more serious problem than ever before, there is greater need for specialization in the "science of management," that is, the proper motivation and control of the "human" factor in production. For example, automation is likely to cause isolation of individual operators and disruption of the informal relations which were so significant to workers under the old processes of production.<sup>13</sup> Under such conditions, there is increased need for leadership skills on the part of supervisors and managers. This fact is recognized in the responses of personnel executives in a Bureau of National Affairs study of the effects of automation.

<sup>11</sup> Georges Friedmann, *Industrial Society: the Emergence of the Human Problems of Automation*, Harold Sheppard, ed. (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1955), p. 198.

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of job enlargement, see Robert H. Guest, "Job Enlargement—a Revolution in Job Design," *Personnel Administration*, XX (1957), pp. 9–16.

<sup>13</sup> William A. Faunce, "Automation in the Automobile Industry: Some Consequences for In-plant Social Structure," *American Sociological Review*, XXIII (1958), pp. 401–407.

More than three-fourths of the respondents were of the opinion that automation will entail greater supervisory training. As one personnel executive put it:

In those departments where automatic machines can be efficiently utilized, there will be less need for the labor "pusher" type of foreman and more need for the supervisor who can plan and coördinate production through the machinery. Higher skilled employees will require adroit leadership. Training will have to be geared to meet this demand. (W. E. Harwick, Labor Relations Manager, Campbell Soup Company.) <sup>14</sup>

But students of leadership know that those who are most competent in technical skills are often least competent in leadership ability. Management of men requires an expertness distinctly different from that associated with technical knowledge. This is recognized in the number of "general management" courses in academic schools of business administration. If this trend continues, the split between the general manager (whose primary concern is with the organization and motivation of human beings in a coöperative endeavor) and the engineer or technician will become more and more pronounced in the future.

If this analysis is correct, then we may expect three significant results of automation in the character of the work force: the relative decline of unskilled, semiskilled, and even skilled manual workers in the older craft specialties; the relative increase of technicians and staff specialists in the newer, more generalized technical areas related to automatic machine operation, maintenance, and design; and the segregation of the job requirements and career patterns of technical specialists from those concerned with general or personnel management. These changes, in turn, may be expected to have important effects on the development of claims to and recognition of employee rights in the future.

#### EMPLOYEE RIGHTS IN AN AGE OF AUTOMATION

In the age of automation, employees will be judged not so much by what they do with their hands but rather by what they do with their brains. Machines will do the work. The pre-

<sup>14</sup> *Automation*, Personnel Policies Forum Survey No. 33 (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of National Affairs, 1955), p. 5. See also, de Bivort, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

mium will be placed upon the ability to design, operate, and repair new machines. Competitive survival of business enterprises will depend more than ever upon the creativity of their technical personnel. As Rocco C. Siciliano, Assistant Secretary of Labor, said before a conference in San Francisco on problems of automation:

In the future we need men and women with creative and imaginative minds who are flexible and uncommitted in the ways they think about their jobs. This highly educated type of manpower cannot be created overnight. Years of schooling and specialized training are necessary to prepare a "systems" engineer who can switch his activities from one production process to another with only a temporary loss of effectiveness.<sup>15</sup>

Of course, creativity and adaptability to new problems will not necessarily be called for in all types of positions in automated establishments. This will be the case more especially for technicians and staff specialists. But it may be maintained that such specialists will have a *key* role in the industry of the future, since the survival and success of industries in a competitive economy will be highly dependent upon the degree to which broadly trained specialists are available and able to create effectively.

If this assumption is correct, then there will be a need for whatever special mechanisms can further the career development of creative technicians. As skilled manual workers in the old crafts decline in importance, their special claims to seniority rights and the protection of occupational identity will lose their importance. As Nelson Foote has pointed out:

If there is to be security for personnel, it will come not through trying to freeze the status quo, as in the building trades, but through acquiring generally transferable techniques guided by theory: not to cling to dry land, as it were, but to float.<sup>16</sup>

In other words, there will be more need for experts who are flexible and adaptable to a rapidly changing technology. There

<sup>15</sup> *Conference on Automation, Changing Technology, and Related Problems* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, Institute of Industrial Relations, 1957), p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> Nelson N. Foote, "The Professionalization of Labor in Detroit," *American Journal of Sociology*, LVIII (1953), p. 373.



will be less need for specialists in particular manual trades. In order to avoid technological unemployment many skilled manual workers will have to become technicians and engineers.

However, there is a fundamental difficulty in this over-simple solution to the labor problems of automated industries. The expertness of technicians and engineers differs significantly from the skills of manual workers. Engineers and many technicians are typically trained in a school environment outside the context of employment. Furthermore, the experience and knowledge they gain from employment in a particular firm is more readily transferable than the specific skills of craftsmen, because the usefulness of technicians and engineers to an employer depends largely upon the variety of their experiences with different types of production processes. On the other hand, the special contribution of skilled manual workers is found in their knowledge and ability in performing specific predefined tasks. It may be said that, in a very real sense, technicians and engineers make their own jobs within an enterprise, whereas skilled manual workers simply fill preëxisting jobs in a bureaucratic structure.

Therefore, it seems likely that the career patterns of technicians and engineers will become more and more separated from those of skilled manual workers. Job mobility and company mobility in the background of engineers are likely to be more advantageous to the individuals and to the organizations than was true for skilled manual workers. For this reason, the work perspectives of technical specialists are likely to differ from those of skilled manual workers.<sup>17</sup> Since the skills and theoretical knowledge of technicians and engineers typically are not learned in the employ of one particular firm and since the experience they acquire with a particular employer is more readily transferable, they will probably deëmphasize for themselves the claims of skilled manual workers to occupational identity and seniority rights in a given company. Their identification with a particular employer tends to become minimized and their identification with colleagues in related technical fields and in the engineering profession tends to become maximized. As production processes become more complex as a result of automation, it will be less possible for them to retain any restricted self-image of themselves; they will be more likely to work in teams where their

<sup>17</sup> For a further discussion of this tendency, see Robert K. Merton, "The Machine, the Worker, and the Engineers," *Science*, CV (1947), pp. 79-84.

concern is focused upon ways and means to improve the entire production process.<sup>18</sup>

Thus claims to occupational identity and seniority rights in a particular firm are likely to be less tenable under conditions of automation. Managements and unions accustomed to thinking in terms of narrow and rigid job classifications will need to broaden their perspectives. This also applies to thinking about seniority units.<sup>19</sup> Trade unions have already given considerable thought to the need to revise and broaden seniority classifications.<sup>20</sup>

On the other hand, technical specialists in automated industries may also have to give up claims to promotional opportunities into general management positions, characteristics of staff specialists in the present study, since their increasingly specialized competence in technical matters may act more and more as a "trained incapacity" for filling general management positions. It is reasonable to anticipate that general management personnel, that is, those concerned primarily with the organization and management of people, will identify themselves more and more with the interests of the enterprise itself, whereas engineering personnel will identify themselves more and more with the technical interests of their colleagues in technical fields and in the engineering profession.

Thus automation may weaken further the precarious claims of staff specialists and skilled manual workers to certain types of special privilege. On the other hand, the high value of individual creativity in industry may place increased emphasis upon those types of employee rights which are especially associated with individual autonomy.

William H. Whyte, Jr., has written about the ideology of the "organization man"<sup>21</sup>—the man who not only works for an organization, but *belongs* to it as well. He sees certain dangers in the power of organizations over those individuals in "middle management" (staff specialists?) who are especially prone to identify

<sup>18</sup> An example of this trend is the increasing number of those who call themselves "nuclear engineers" in the atomic energy field.

<sup>19</sup> See George B. Baldwin and George P. Shultz, *Automation: A New Dimension to Old Problems*, Publications in Social Science (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1954), p. 7.

<sup>20</sup> See especially *Labor Looks at Automation* (Washington, D.C.: AFL-CIO Department of Research, 1956), p. 23.

<sup>21</sup> William H. Whyte, Jr., *The Organization Man* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1956).

their career aspirations with the organizations where they are employed. However, *the needs of industrial enterprises themselves may prove to be the force which contradicts the pervasiveness of the ideology of the "organization man."* Future enterprises will not need blind commitment by employees so much as they will need independent initiative, particularly by engineers and technical specialists who perform the key roles within their organizations. It will be management's task to develop an organizational environment favorable for the fulfillment of this need.

Whyte pointed out that in industrial research laboratories the team project methods, coupled with the prevailing concern for "practical" discoveries of immediate utility rather than the development of basic theory, have inhibited creativity. Two industrial laboratories, however, proved to be important exceptions to this generalization—the General Electric and the Bell Laboratories. Whyte noted that the chemical industry has not produced outstanding scientific personnel, according to the judgment of their colleagues.<sup>22</sup> In this regard, it is perhaps interesting that an individual interviewed in the Bay Area Personnel Management Survey, who had formerly held personnel management positions in both the General Electric Company and a leading chemical company, had this to say about their respective personnel policies:

I have encountered two schools of thought. . . . At [the chemical firm], one is expected to be an "X" company employee twenty-four hours a day, particularly in the case of management employees. At General Electric, on the other hand, what you do on your own time is your own business.

In other words, this comment indicates that the chemical company, at least in the past, has expected its employees to be "organization men," whereas the opposite has been true at General Electric, where employees have been able to develop their individual creative talents with a more outstanding result.

Although examples to support speculation in this area are distinctly limited, we may conclude with reasonable certainty that the needs of organizations for creative technical specialists in response to the problems of automation will be a force which

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228.

will compel them to try to establish an organizational environment favorable to creativity. Such an environment requires strong management recognition and institutionalized support for certain types of employee rights. Among these are the rights of employees to a sphere of private life free from arbitrary management interference. If we can make any valid conclusion from the comparison of the effects of personnel policy at the chemical company and General Electric, it would indicate that creativity is more likely to flourish where employees are not treated like "organization men," but where individual autonomy is allowed its widest possible scope.

Furthermore, it is reasonable to expect individuals to put forth their best efforts in creative activities where they feel protected from what they consider to be unfair treatment in disciplinary actions. Such protections include rights to adequate warning in advance of disciplinary action, fair standards of proof regarding alleged misconduct, and treatment in accord with rules which are consistently enforced.

In summary, we may expect the needs of business enterprises under conditions of automation to reinforce more strongly the common claims of employees to those rights which are most closely associated with the autonomy and individual creativity of employees in a climate free from arbitrary treatment, whereas claims to special privileges associated with seniority and a limited occupational identity are likely to become even more precarious. Whether these conclusions will be borne out by the growing experiences of automated industries is a matter of speculation at present. The true course of automation and its long-run effect upon the lives and security of individual employees can be determined only by further study.

## APPENDIX A. COMPOSITION OF THE SAMPLES

This appendix summarizes in general terms the occupation, sex, and union affiliation characteristics of the samples providing the basic data for this study.

### ORDNANCE SURVEY

*Occupational characteristics.*—The specific occupational characteristics of this sample have been described in detail in another source.<sup>1</sup> However, this sample contained the following numbers of nonsupervisory personnel in various occupational classifications: (1) clerical personnel, 523; (2) staff specialists, 209; (3) unskilled manual laborers, 621; (4) semiskilled manual la-

<sup>1</sup> Howard M. Vollmer and Jack A. Kinney, *Identifying Potential Supervisors*, Research Series No. 12 (Iowa City: University of Iowa, Bureau of Labor and Management, 1956), pp. 41-46.

## Appendixes

borers, 478; and (5) skilled manual laborers, 89. The following numbers of personnel in supervisory and managerial classifications were included in this survey: (1) clerical supervisors, 93; (2) staff specialist supervisors, 197; (3) unskilled manual labor foremen, 294; (4) semiskilled manual labor foremen, 153; and (5) skilled manual labor foremen, 60.

*Sex characteristics.*—Most personnel included in this study were male, except for some nonsupervisory personnel in clerical and unskilled manual labor classifications. Among the clerical personnel surveyed, 458 were female and 65 were male. Among the unskilled manual laborers, 120 were female and 501 were male.

*Union membership.*—None of these government employees in this sample worked under union contracts.

### WESTERN ARSENAL SURVEY

*Occupational characteristics.*—This sample consisted of the following numbers of nonsupervisory personnel in various occupational classifications: (1) clerical personnel, 69; (2) staff specialists, 16; (3) unskilled manual workers, 179; (4) semiskilled manual workers, 65; (5) skilled manual workers, 32.

*Sex characteristics.*—All clerical personnel in this sample were female. All other personnel were male.

*Union membership.*—Like the Ordnance Survey, none of these government employees worked under union contracts.

### BAY AREA EMPLOYEE SURVEY

*Occupational characteristics.*—This sample consisted of the following numbers of employees in private industrial establishments in the San Francisco Bay area, according to occupational category: (1) clerical personnel, 20; (2) staff specialists, 12; (3) semiskilled manual workers, 6 female, 30 male; (4) skilled manual workers, 39 male.

*Sex characteristics.*—The following sex distribution occurred in this sample for the various occupational categories: (1) clerical, 17 female, 3 male; (2) staff specialists, 1 female, 11 male; (3) semiskilled manual workers, 6 female, 30 male; (4) skilled manual workers, 39 male.

*Union membership.*—The following union memberships were

reported in this sample: United Auto Workers, 23; International Association of Machinists, 22; Transport Workers' Union, 16; Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, 8; Teamsters, 3; Operating Engineers, 3; Cement, Lime, and Gypsum Workers, 3; Metal Polishers and Platers, 3; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, 2; Boilermakers, Steamfitters, and Pipefitters, 2; and Carpenters, 1.

#### BAY AREA PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SURVEY

*Occupational characteristics.*—All those interviewed in this survey were personnel or industrial relations executives in their respective firms.

*Sex characteristics.*—There were 42 males and 2 females in this survey.

## **APPENDIX B. METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS IN EMPLOYEE SURVEYS**

The objective of this appendix is not only to record the basis for certain methodological decisions in connection with the four surveys reported in this study, but also to present certain experiences which might possibly prove useful to others engaged in similar surveys of employees in business establishments. The problems faced in this endeavor may be roughly classified under the standard headings of "sample selection," "data collection," and "data analysis." Some of the problems discussed here are common to all types of survey research. Others are more peculiar to the conditions of surveys of employees *in* business enterprises, in contrast to the more common types of community surveys.

### **PROBLEMS OF SAMPLE SELECTION**

In deciding whether to attempt to survey workers in business enterprises on company time, or whether to interview them in



their homes outside their place of work, one must weigh the relative advantages and disadvantages of each type of procedure.

The principal advantage of interviewing workers in their homes is *ease of access*. If one wishes to survey a representative sample of the population of a community, there are standard probability methods for selecting samples from ecological maps, city directories, and so on. An interviewer may then contact subjects directly. After proper introduction and explanation, the community survey researcher may expect few problems of access. A small proportion of those selected in the sample may refuse to be interviewed, but this proportion is ordinarily too small to present a serious biasing factor. Furthermore, there are ways of checking the extent of refusal bias and compensating for it.

The problem of access is greater where one wishes to survey employees of particular firms, but to interview these employees in their own homes rather than within the companies themselves. In order to select a representative sample for a survey of this type, one must have access either to employee lists of the company or to membership lists of trade unions. The first alternative depends upon management's acceptance of the purpose of the project, the sponsorship of the study, and the way in which the results are to be used. If management disapproves of any one of these factors, the researcher is likely to be denied access to employee lists, which are necessary in order to select his sample.

His other alternative is to obtain lists from the offices of trade unions. However, their willingness to make their membership lists available is similarly dependent upon their approval of the purpose, sponsorship, and anticipated use of the survey. Furthermore, union membership lists are limited in that they do not contain the names and addresses of nonunion employees. If a survey is concerned only with attitudes among union employees of particular companies, this is no problem. However, if the objective of the survey is to make a comparative analysis of attitudes of manual workers, who are more often unionized, and white-collar clerical personnel and technicians, who are more often nonunionized, as was the concern of this study, then trade union membership lists are obviously inadequate as a basis for sample selection.

There is another difficulty for the researcher in surveying employees in their homes in comparison to surveying them at

their place of work. Where employees are likely to live in a widely dispersed area, the cost and time involved in traveling from one house to another may become excessive. Frequently, the interviewer is unable to schedule appointments consecutively among persons who live in close proximity to each other, and he may find himself spending more time traveling across town than in actual interviewing. This disadvantage is eliminated where employees may be scheduled for interviews in close sequence at a central location within a business enterprise.

Another disadvantage in surveying persons in their homes results from the failure to be able adequately to control the circumstances of the interview situation. Each home situation is different. In one case, a person may have the distraction of a television or radio program in the same room or in an adjacent room. In another case, children or pets may interfere with the interview climate. In a third case, an interviewee may turn to his wife for the answers to certain questions, or an overtalkative wife may voluntarily attempt to dominate the interview herself. A skilled interviewer can minimize most of these distracting influences, but it is unlikely that his efforts will be completely successful. It is not easy to suggest that a wife be quiet, or that children be kept out of the room, or that favorite television or radio programs be turned down or shut off in the interviewee's own home. At the place of employment, however, interviews with every employee may be conducted in a private room appropriate for the purpose. External stimuli in the interview situation are controlled, and the situation is the same for each person interviewed. Although more subtle influences may vary in individual interviews, such as those associated with the time of day of each interview (especially proximity to lunch time or quitting time), other more serious influences associated with the presence of family members and the physical layout of the interview room are eliminated.

What is possibly a more serious disadvantage of surveying employees in their own homes, rather than at their work situation, is associated with the objective of the survey. If the objective of the survey is to gather data regarding employee attitudes toward leisure-time activities, then the home may be the most appropriate setting in which to obtain this information. However, if the objective is to gather information regarding employee attitudes toward certain aspects of their work situations, the

most appropriate place to gain accurate information of this nature is at the place of work. General working conditions, relations with supervisors or fellow employees, and other similar matters may seem quite unsatisfactory to certain employees while they are at their place of work. At home, on the other hand, when the employee is likely to be more relaxed and to feel more separated from pressures of the work environment, these matters may not seem so bad after all. Since there is considerable evidence that individuals tend to remember pleasant experiences and to forget unpleasant experiences, this psychological mechanism of selective recall may operate to the disadvantage of those interested in gathering accurate data. While the individual is still at work, he is more apt to remember unpleasant aspects of his work experience, as well as pleasant ones. In sum, it seems that where anonymity and the security of respondents is protected, *the degree of accuracy of survey data regarding attitudes is a direct function of the degree of proximity between the survey situation and the locus of human experience under investigation.*

If this principle is correct, it would be a reasonable presumption that surveys of work experience would be even more fruitful if they were conducted in the actual shops or offices where people worked, rather than in an interview room. In theory, this would seem to be true. However, this would be impractical for the reasons presented earlier—the interview situation would not be held constant for each person interviewed. Obviously, for reasons of noise factors alone, many shops and offices are impractical for interview purposes. Furthermore, the presence of an interviewer at the actual place of work would probably cause a disruption in operating work groups which would not be approved by management, whereas calling out individual workers to report to a central location for interviews ordinarily is no cause for disruption of production schedules.

For these reasons, then, it was thought most expedient for the purposes of the study to select representative samples of employees from company personnel lists and to survey these employees at their place of work. In the Ordnance Survey, the Western Arsenal Survey, and the Bay Area Employee Survey, management gave the researcher complete lists of employees. These lists were then divided into the four occupational categories basic to this study: unskilled and semiskilled manual workers, skilled manual

workers, clerical employees, and staff specialists. Upon determination of the number of employees to be sampled in each category within each establishment, every *n*th person was selected to obtain the desired number in the various samples. It is believed that this procedure resulted in samples of employees who were representative of the occupational categories in the firms studied.

In the first two surveys of government employees, data were collected by means of written questionnaires administered to groups of approximately 100 employees in centralized auditoriums or conference rooms at those installations included in the study. In the Bay Area Employee Survey, information was gathered by individual interviews with employees in conference or interview rooms adjacent to personnel offices at the various companies.

It may be pointed out here that in order to obtain management cooperation in a project of this type, it is not only necessary that management approve the purpose, sponsorship, and utilization of the study, but also that they see some kind of direct or indirect benefit from it for themselves. In such a procedure, they are asked to release a specified number of employees from their regular work assignments to participate in the survey. Since employees are still on company time, however, they are still paid at their regular rate of pay. This means an expense to the participating firm which is directly related to the numbers and classifications of employees participating. Furthermore, a considerable proportion of time may be spent by personnel technicians to explain the purposes of the study to line supervisory personnel and to obtain their approval for release of participants in the survey. Also personnel specialists typically have the job of scheduling individuals or groups of employees for interviews or questionnaire sessions at times convenient to the researcher and to production schedules, which is a sizable task in itself. It is therefore understandable that management would wish to receive some kind of relatively tangible return for their time, effort, and cost.

In rare instances, managements may be induced to participate by an appeal for a contribution to general research knowledge in a particular instance. However, managements are too frequently subjected to such appeals, and they are inclined to react unfavorably if they do not see some more tangible return to their own company. Also, they tend to reject any appeals of this type which they see as simply a thinly disguised rationale for subsidizing a

student's thesis or dissertation project. Management officials have pointed out that they are constantly besieged with such requests from graduate students.

Management coöperation in a project of this type is more easily obtained if the project is sponsored by a university agency or research institute which has previously offered valuable research and educational services to the firm concerned. Where this is the case, management coöperation represents an expression of appreciation for previous services rendered, and perhaps also an anticipation of future services.

Coöperation is most likely to be obtained where it can be shown that the results of a survey will provide them with information about employee attitudes with which they are concerned and about which they do not now have adequate information. This was my approach to the four companies which participated in the Bay Area Employee Survey, in combination with implicit emphasis upon the services that the Institute of Industrial Relations at the University of California has rendered to the community and to business enterprises. Management officials were promised and later provided with confidential reports on various aspects of job satisfaction within the companies surveyed.

Before the four companies had agreed to participate in this Bay Area Employee Survey, three other companies had declined to participate. In one case, the reason was given that production workers were operating under a group incentive system which would make it especially difficult to remove members of work crews for the purposes of a survey. In another case, management officials reported they would be unable to give the time and attention necessary for arranging this project because they were then in the process of reorganization of operations and transfer of certain operations to another location. In a third case, management officials explained that their own company conducts periodic surveys of their employees and that company policy does not permit outside agencies or individuals to conduct surveys.

There were no special problems of access and coöperation in the surveys of government employees, since these surveys in both cases were sponsored previously by the Office, Chief of Ordnance, or the installation concerned.

The method of sample selection in the Bay Area Personnel Management Survey, however, differed significantly from that used in the selection of samples of employees in the three other

surveys. The criterion of sample adequacy applied in this survey was not that of *representativeness* of a certain population, but rather that of *leadership* in a particular area of behavior and organizational policy. Representativeness is the appropriate criterion where a researcher is concerned with obtaining information about typical or average characteristics of a given population at a particular time. However, in the Bay Area Personnel Management Survey, the fundamental objective was not to obtain a picture of personnel practices in the typical Bay area firm, or in firms of certain types and classes, but rather to obtain a picture of personnel practices and policies in firms which are considered by qualified persons to be leaders in personnel management in various industries. The leadership criterion of sample selection is more appropriate when one is especially interested in *future* trends rather than *present* realities. This was the primary interest in the Bay Area Personnel Management Survey.

The procedure followed in the selection of the sample for this survey was as follows: Lists were obtained from Chambers of Commerce and other sources giving the approximate number of employees in different Bay area firms. It was assumed that those firms which are largest in terms of employment are more apt to be leaders in personnel practices than smaller firms. Then this tentative sample list was discussed with several experts in personnel and industrial relations matters, who were asked to give their views on whether these firms actually represented leaders in personnel policy developments. In a few cases, larger firms were dropped from this list and smaller ones were added as a result of this scrutiny. It is believed that the forty-four firms which were finally surveyed do represent leading firms in the Bay area, and in many cases, in the nation as a whole, since a sizable proportion of personnel executives interviewed were divisional officials in nation-wide firms.

#### PROBLEMS OF DATA COLLECTION

As indicated previously, data were collected in the Ordnance Survey and the Western Arsenal Survey by use of written questionnaires administered to groups of employees, whereas data were collected in the Bay Area Employee Survey and the Bay Area Personnel Management Survey by means of individual inter-

views. In each survey special care was taken to assure individual participants of anonymity. It was explained, both by advance letters or memoranda and by the verbal comments of the interviewer or questionnaire administrator at the time of the survey, that nothing any individual said or wrote in the survey would be identified with his name or specific firm.

Nevertheless, there seem to be certain advantages to the questionnaire technique in comparison with individual interviews so far as the problem of anonymity is concerned. Where groups of approximately 100 employees are assembled and asked to check categorized answers to questions to which they are instructed *not* to sign their names, employees are apt to have no doubt in their minds that the researcher will respect his pledge to anonymity. How can he possibly identify individuals out of such a large group? The only doubt which may arise among a few employees is in connection with detailed background information items on a questionnaire. Some employees may feel that it would be possible for a researcher to identify individuals if he has information about their sex, age, education, length of service, specific job title, and so on. For this reason, it is necessary to take special precautions to assure employees that this information is necessary to make the results of a survey meaningful, but that they have the guarantee of the researcher that background information will not be used to identify individuals.<sup>1</sup>

In individual interviews, on the other hand, it is obvious to the participant that the researcher is capable of breaking his pledge to anonymity if he so desires. Therefore, in this situation, the researcher must be even more careful to assure employees that what they say will be treated as confidential and will not be identified with them as individuals. This is easier to do where the researcher represents an agency outside management, which has a reputation of commitment to impartiality and objectivity in research. It is possible for an interviewer to make some kind of assessment of the degree to which an employee has accepted the promise of anonymity by the rapport in the interview and the

<sup>1</sup> In some cases it may be necessary in employee surveys to identify individual participants in order to correlate survey data with other information in personnel records. If this is necessary, there are various ways of making identifying markings on employee questionnaires which will not be recognized by individual participants. Where such a method is used, however, the researcher has a serious obligation to act in good faith in his relation with participants, so that there is no question that survey results might fall into the hands of unauthorized agencies or individuals.

degree to which the employee seems to be uninhibited in his discussion of any negative aspects of his work experience. Judging from this criterion, it is my impression that there were only two cases out of more than 100 interviews with employees where the participants seemed to be inhibited and suspicious of the interviewer. I feel that the good rapport achieved in the vast proportion of the interviews was, in large part, a result of the good reputation of the sponsoring agency.

In brief, the advantages of questionnaires over interviews in employee surveys seem to be largely in terms of the ease with which one can assure employees that anonymity will be respected. The questionnaire method also has the obvious advantage of being less expensive to administer to large numbers of employees, whereas the interview method has the counteradvantage of being more amenable to probing questions designed to get at the *meaning* behind employee responses. Since the objective of this study was primarily to get at the meaning of claims of employees to job rights in relation to their work experience, rather than to survey the more superficial opinions of a wide number of employees, it was decided to use the individual interview method in the surveys sponsored directly for this project. Where the objectives of a survey are more *exploratory* in nature, rather than oriented toward the confirmation of previously developed hypotheses, the interview technique is usually more appropriate than written questionnaires.

In the interview surveys other problems arose in connection with the specific method to be used for recording data. On written questionnaires this problem solves itself, since the completed questionnaire forms provide a written record of the data. However, special techniques must be used to record data in interview situations. Three principal techniques are available to the researcher: he may take notes himself; he may use a mechanical recording device; or he may use a third person to record information.

There are, of course, cost advantages to certain techniques relative to others. Aside from these considerations, there are other advantages and disadvantages in the use of certain techniques. Where the interviewer takes notes himself, his attention and the attention of the person being interviewed must constantly shift from the matters being discussed to the motions of the interviewer in recording information upon a piece of paper.



This problem is less serious where the interviewer has categorized answers which he may merely check, or where he possesses shorthand skill so that time in writing is minimized.

Since neither qualification applied in this exploratory study, it would have been a distinct disadvantage for me to attempt to record the data myself, especially in the Bay Area Employee Survey, where maintaining good rapport was perhaps more difficult than in the Bay Area Personnel Management Survey. In the latter survey I did record the data myself, but not without difficulty at times in keeping up with what personnel executives had to say.

However, the problem was not as serious here as it would have been in the interviews with industrial employees. Personnel executives are used to surveys of this type. They expect interviewers to take notes. An interview is a familiar experience for them. Among many employees, however, this is not the case. Many have never participated in a survey of this type. It is a strange experience. The strangeness of the situation may be minimized, however, if the interviewer is as informal as possible in his manner and simply talks to the employee. Formality and consequent strain in the interview situation is increased where the interviewer must pause or shift his attention, however briefly, after each question to record an answer. These movements of attention by the interviewer can cause various kinds of reactions in an employee being interviewed: "Did I make the right answer that time?"; "What's he writing down—is it something about me personally?"; and so on. To avoid the possibility of such reactions disturbing rapport, I did not record the data myself in the Bay Area Employee Survey.

Another method which may be used to record data is by means of a mechanical recording device. This is particularly advantageous for verbatim transcriptions of interviews. Since this study was an exploratory investigation into the meaning of job rights claims among employees, it was thought advantageous to have a verbatim record of comments. However, it is disadvantageous for rapport to ask employees to make their comments into a microphone attached to a recording device. This also would be a strange and inhibiting experience for many employees. Moreover, it might cause further anxiety about whether their comments would be kept anonymous or not. It is much harder to convince people that what they say will not be linked to their names nor

used against them in any way where their comments are obviously being recorded word for word. Everyone knows that a mechanical device records not only *what* a person says, but *how* he says it. It is my feeling that employees are much more likely to open up, to give vent to their feelings, and to make aside-type remarks in interview situations where they are not inhibited by the presence of mechanical recording devices. Again, this would be a different story for executives who are used to talking into dictaphones and similar apparatus. Employees without this experience, and particularly those in manual labor classifications, may even feel inhibited when they talk into a telephone. For these reasons, it was decided not to use a mechanical recording device in any of the surveys.<sup>2</sup>

The remaining alternative was to use a third person, a stenographer with shorthand skill, to record the comments made in interviews. This was done in the Bay Area Employee Survey.

Some question was raised as to whether the presence of a third person would interfere with rapport in the interview situation. It was my experience in previous situations where this technique had been used that this would not be the case. This experience was borne out in the Bay Area Employee Survey. The stenographer was placed in an inconspicuous position in the interview room aside from the direct line of vision between interviewer and interviewee. In most cases, the employees being interviewed did not even glance in the direction of the stenographer after they were introduced. In a few cases, employees glanced in the direction of the stenographer as if to seek a nod of approval or a smile for a humorous remark. However, since it was explained at the beginning that "Mrs. ——— is here to take a few notes to help me remember what we talked about," employees seemed to accept the stenographer's presence as a perfectly natural thing. I don't think they would have been as ready to accept the presence of a mechanical recording device in the interview room.

A few comments may also be in order here about the use of a "projective" technique to elicit responses regarding problems of employee rights in the interview surveys. One approach to eliciting information from employees on their attitudes regarding

<sup>2</sup> Some thought was given to the possible use of hidden recording devices. However, this idea was rejected in view of the difficulties of handling the apparatus and also because of the great danger to rapport which would be involved if the apparatus were discovered or even suspected.

employee rights is simply to ask them direct questions, for example, "Some employees feel that they have a right to their jobs. What do you think employees mean when they talk about their job rights?" A direct question of this type was used in the interview surveys. However, most employees seemed to have difficulty in interpreting such a question. The concept of job rights may not be clear to employees. For this reason, a series of seven cases were designed, based upon arbitration cases involving employee rights problems, and employees were asked to respond to verbal presentation of them, with the following questions: "Do you think management treated the employee in the proper manner in this case, or do you feel the employee would have any cause to file a grievance?"<sup>3</sup> Thus these cases represented situations into which employees were encouraged to project their own feelings and thoughts. The comments in response to these projective devices, as reported throughout this study, indicated their effectiveness. It is perhaps a fair generalization from this experience to state that *wherever one wishes to elicit information from interviewees about concepts and principles which are not explicitly formulated in their mental processes, use of projective techniques of this type presents a particularly fruitful method.*

#### PROBLEMS OF DATA ANALYSIS

It has been stated repeatedly in this study that its orientation has been *exploratory*, rather than *confirmatory*. It may be most accurately described as what Herbert Hyman has called a *diagnostic* survey; it involves a search for possible explanatory factors in a relatively unknown realm.<sup>4</sup> The procedure followed has not been to attempt to test a number of preformulated hypotheses against empirical data, but rather to explore the phenomenon with which we are concerned, employee rights in the context of the employment relationship, in order to develop hypothetical generalizations from this investigation. The approach is analogous to the physician's diagnostic examination of a patient. The physician does not approach the patient with a blank mind; on the contrary, he may be full of knowledge about the relation of specific types of symptoms to various conditions of disease

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix C.

<sup>4</sup> Herbert Hyman, *Survey Design and Analysis* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1955), p. 66.

and physical disorder. But as yet he knows nothing about the condition of health of this particular patient. Similarly with the social scientist—he approaches his subject, for example, employee expectations regarding rights in their jobs, with a considerable degree of knowledge resulting from past studies of the meaning and conditions of work in industry. Still he knows nothing, or very little, about the specific phenomenon under study, expectations about employee rights. Our object was to expand this preliminary knowledge.

However, some important questions may be raised about the method of data analysis followed in this study. These may be grouped primarily in terms of two general methodological questions: in view of the methods of analysis used in this study, how valid are the conclusions, and how justifiable is the scope of the conclusions?

The first type of question is concerned with whether the information presented in this study is really an accurate assessment of the attitudes of different types of employees toward various matters concerned with employee rights. Of course, the accuracy of information may be affected by response bias, that is, bias in the survey situation. Some problems in this connection have been discussed earlier. However, at this point the question may be raised as to whether generalizations about occupational differences in attitudes toward employee rights, for example, are random (chance) differences, or whether they represent “true” differences among the occupational types studied.

This question leads us to consider why statistical tests of significance were not used in this study. Statistical tests are certainly important in research oriented toward description of selected characteristics of a finite population; however, the decision was made that their use would be inappropriate both to the objectives and to the type of data involved in the present study.

Statistical tests of significance have not been used in this analysis of occupational and other subgroup differences because it was believed that the use of chi square (or some other test of significance) for the comparison of differences in data by categories to which subjects have not been randomly assigned may be misleading to a reader. Hannan Selvin and others have pointed out that problems of lack of randomization and correlated bias factors are frequently involved in sociological survey research,

making the use of statistical tests of significance a doubtful, if not an inappropriate procedure.<sup>5</sup> Selvin has essentially agreed with the authors of *Union Democracy*, who maintained that in *exploratory* research, in contrast to *confirmatory* research, replication of intergroup comparisons is likely to be a more fruitful basis for empirical generalizations.<sup>6</sup>

As an example, one might refer to tables 8 and 9 in the present monograph, dealing with the career orientations of government ordnance workers and private industrial workers, respectively, by occupational classification. In presenting these data, I was not primarily interested in description of the magnitude of the percentage differences for occupational categories in each table, which is undoubtedly affected by sampling error. (There is considerable variation in the data reported in table 8 compared to table 9; that is, 74 per cent of the male semiskilled ordnance workers reported that they think of their present job as part of a working career, whereas only 33 per cent of the semiskilled private industrial workers expressed this opinion.) Instead, concern was focused merely upon the comparative *direction* of the occupational differences in each table; for example, in both samples, semiskilled workers were less likely than skilled workers to think of their present jobs as part of a working career.

Unfortunately, comparable data from ordnance and private industrial samples were not available for many of the types of data reported herein. Nevertheless, it is believed that replication studies to reexamine these findings concerning attitudes toward various types of employee rights and the like, in different work contexts, are desirable before statistical tests are applied to the data.

Use of a statistical test of significance implies that determination of the importance of a relation between two variables is to be based upon, or at least influenced by, whether the null hypothesis can be rejected on the basis of the test or not. However, in exploratory studies, the importance of findings regarding the relation between variables should be determined by factors other than the degree to which the test shows the relation could not have occurred as a result of chance. For example, it may be

<sup>5</sup> Hannan Selvin, "A Critique of Tests of Significance in Survey Research," *American Sociological Review*, XXII (1957), pp. 519-527.

<sup>6</sup> Seymour M. Lipset, Martin A. Trow, and James G. Coleman, *Union Democracy* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1956), p. 430.

argued with considerable justification that an empirical relationship which is nonsignificant, but yet which is in a direction compatible with theory resulting from the logical interpretation of other data, should be investigated further before it is dismissed solely on the grounds of the statistical analysis. Or, conversely, it may be argued that empirical relationships which are statistically significant may be misleading because of the presence of correlated biasing factors, which in turn may be more basic causal determinants than the independent variable presented in any given analysis.

Robert McGinnis and others have disputed Selvin's point of view concerning the use of statistical tests of significance. McGinnis' argument throws additional light on the subject; yet actually it concedes Selvin's basic point:

The extent to which a relationship is constant among different populations is an empirical question which can be resolved only by examining different populations at different times in different places.<sup>7</sup>

Thus statistical tests may be appropriate where one is interested in making accurate descriptive generalizations within determinate sampling error limits about populations for which data are available; whereas consistency of findings is the only basis for inferences about broader populations for which data are not now available.

Since the findings of the present study are generally compatible with the organizational theory presented, it is hoped that they will serve as a stimulus to further replication studies in other work contexts. Thus it is believed that the validity of the tentative conclusions in this study rests upon the results of further research, rather than upon statistical refinements of the present data.

Another important question may be raised with regard to the scope of the conclusions of this study. It has been pointed out that these conclusions are tentative, based upon an exploratory

<sup>7</sup> Robert McGinnis, *American Sociological Review*, XXIII (1958), p. 412. Other critiques of Selvin's point of view have included: David Gold, "Comment on a Critique of Tests of Significance," *American Sociological Review*, XXIII (1958), pp. 85-86; James M. Beshers, "On a Critique of Tests of Significance in Survey Research," *American Sociological Review*, XXIII (1958), p. 199. Replies by Hannan Selvin have included: "Reply to Gold's Comment on a Critique of Tests of Significance," *American Sociological Review*, XXIII (1958), p. 86; "Reply to Beshers," *American Sociological Review*, XXIII (1958), pp. 199-200.

study. However, one may also point out that all conclusions in the social sciences are tentative. They are more often than not based upon insufficient evidence and subject to revision in the light of new evidence and changing conditions. It is simply the case that conclusions drawn from "exploratory" studies are *more* tentative than conclusions based upon "confirmatory" studies.

As for this study, its conclusions obviously do not apply to the employment relationship and employee rights under all conditions. It was emphasized in the first three chapters that concern herein is limited to the effects of the employment relationship upon expectations regarding employee rights *in large-scale bureaucratic enterprises within the United States*, with particular consideration given to manufacturing industries. We have not considered other national contexts nor certain deviant types of industrial situations in the United States, for example, the construction industry. Moreover, in view of the sample limitations of the present exploratory study, one should use appropriate caution in extending his conclusions to large-scale industries in varying contexts. Other studies which show how the generalizations presented here may be modified or perhaps contradicted in specific types of communities, industries, and work situations should be welcomed as contributions to cumulative knowledge regarding this subject.