

## CAPITALISM, CRISIS AND THE PROSPECTS FOR WORKER PARTICIPATION AND SELF-MANAGEMENT

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### INTRODUCTION

This paper seeks to demonstrate that the basic economic and legitimation crises in capitalist industrial states have progressed to a stage whereby participatory movements are increasingly likely to contribute to transitional shifts and structural change. The events of very recent years suggest that the continual and moderate work reforms which some have dismissed as superficial, have indeed contributed to altered levels of consciousness and facilitated authentic transfer of control. The challenge remains one of strategies for change based on an approach which distinguishes more ephemeral from more consequential reforms within Western societies. Such strategies must be founded on practice and experience in recent years, including legislative reforms, trade union policies, efforts to control capital and worker education.

### THE CRISIS OF THE WEST

Since the Depression of the 1930s and the rebuilding after World War II there has been a perspective in Western Europe and North America, predicated on Keynesian economics, which has stressed economic growth and individual advancement. The assumption has been that aggregate national output and per capita earnings and consumption will continue to rise. It is precisely that promise which has motivated industrial workers and generated the ethos of work commitment and belief in the system. Yet, in the 1970s the crisis which Marxists have declared as imminent, has become obvious to even the most conservative observer. The system had failed to "pay-off" and workers have increasingly questioned the basic underlying assumptions.<sup>1)</sup> The international economic

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<sup>1)</sup> On this point see Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb, *The Hidden Injuries of Class* (NY: Random House, 1972); Claus Mueller, *The Politics of Communication* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1975); Howard Wachtel, "Class Consciousness and Stratification in the Labour Process", in R. C. Edwards, M. Reich D. Gordon (eds.), *Labour Market Segmentation* (Lexington: DC Health & Co., 1975).

system has demonstrated global interdependencies and an inability for particular industrial states to solve their problems.<sup>2)</sup> It is clear that the falling rate of profit, problems of surplus, and attendant signs of economic stagnation, inflation, structural unemployment are abundant.<sup>3)</sup> The fiscal crisis of the state<sup>4)</sup> is manifest not only in occasional bankruptcies, currency devaluations and international trade deficits, although these are all critical issues for the Western industrial nations (including Japan). The most far reaching consequences of the economic crises penetrate into all facets of the social-political structures as well as the basic political economies of the mature capitalist states.<sup>5)</sup>

The economic realities have become obvious and governments have been forced to intervene increasingly and the role of the state has become even more critical. For example, after a generation in control the Social Democrats lost power in Sweden in 1976, and the more conservative or moderate government has increased support to undergird bankrupt enterprises. In France the recent election focused upon the basic economic crises and the inability of the government to solve the fundamental problems of unemployment, inflation and the pattern which has eroded workingclass life-styles. The U.S. Congress seems ever more likely to pass new legislation attempting to expand the role of the federal government in economic planning, in the face of run-away mills and plant shut-downs, and in response to permanent high structural unemployment.

While Marxists suggest that we are witnessing the evidence of internal contradictions within capitalist structures, non-Marxists join in their articulation of the fact that the economies of the West are failing to stem the tide of crisis.<sup>6)</sup> What is especially relevant in this discussion is that the manifestations of discontent are ever more focused around production and economic activity. The 1960s unleashed a major outpouring of movements of opposition — the movements for racial liberation, the movement for student power, the antiwar, anti-draft, anti-militarism mo-

<sup>2)</sup> Illustrations of this genre of analysis include, Joyce Kolbo, *America and the Crisis of World Capitalism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1974); Howard Wachtel, "Self Management in Mature Capitalist Economies: Problems and Prospects", *Economic Analysis and Workers' Management*, 11 (#1/2, 1977): 41—50.

<sup>3)</sup> URPE, *U.S. Capitalism in Crisis* (NY: Union for Radical Political Economics, 1978).

<sup>4)</sup> The leading analyst here is James O'Connor, *The Fiscal Crisis of the State* (NY: St. Martin's Press, 1973) with a substantial body of literature since that time following his lead.

<sup>5)</sup> See, for example, Wachtel, 1977, *op. cit.*, Branko Horvat, "Paths of Transition of Workers' Management in Developed Capitalist Countries", *Economic Analysis and Workers' Management*, 11 (#3/4, 1977): 214—237; Michael Harrington, *The Twilight of Capitalism* (NY: Simon & Schuster, 1976); Alan Wolfe, *The Limits of Legitimacy: Political Contradictions of Contemporary Capitalism* (NY: The Free Press, 1977); Norman Birnbaum, *et al.*, *Beyond the Crisis* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1977). This issue is, of course, at the core analysis of capitalist economies. For additional perspectives by non-Americans, see Pierre Jalee, *How Capitalism Works* (NY: Monthly Review Press, 1977); Rikard Stajner, *Crisis: Anatomy of Contemporary Crises and a Theory of Crises in the Neo-Imperialist State of Capitalism* (Belgrade: Socialist Thought and Practice, 1976).

<sup>6)</sup> The best recent illustration is Robert Heilbroner, "Economic Crises", *The New Yorker* (August 28, 1978): 52—73.

vements, the women's movement. Present expressions are more and more focused on economic issues. Farmers, teachers, policemen, miners and industrial workers in the U. S. were on strike this year. There are growing factory take-overs in North America and Western Europe and workers are increasingly militant over issues of economic control and decision-making. The connection between these movements is logical and probably inevitable.<sup>7)</sup>

The essential theme of the 1960s was that of self-determination and participatory democracy. Minority communities within the U.S. and Third World nations called for the rights of self-determination, the end of oppression and external control. Anti-colonialism and neo-colonialism made allies out of Africans and Afro-Americans or Native-Americans. Citizens advocating community control of schools or police based their arguments on a political theory nurtured by a reading of democratic and communitarian principles. The practical political message to the American citizen was that participation is good and active engagement in the political process is necessary. Only in the 1970s did it become increasingly apparent that there was a contradiction between nurturing democratic participation in the community while half of one's waking hours are spent at work and are acted out in essentially non-democratic work environments.

The push for participatory democracy which was located in communities, schools and in general spheres of citizen life has finally come to the workplace. But along with this has come a demonstrable increase in cynicism, and a challenge to existing authorities. There is a mass of evidence in the United States suggesting this pattern; from public opinion poll data revealing loss of respect and confidence in officials and institutions to the continuing decrease in electoral participation. The crisis in legitimation is a hallmark of Western capitalist nations with the erosion of legitimacy and undergirding of authority structures.<sup>8)</sup> This is an important factor in explaining the push going beyond participation and towards workers' control. Workers, especially perhaps the mass of young workers socialized in schools and communities during the past decade

<sup>7)</sup> See Jeremy Brecher and Timothy Costello, *Common Sense for Hard Times* (Washington: Institute for Policy Studies, 1976); Root and Branch, *The Rise of the Workers' Movements* (Greenwich: Fawcett Books, 1975); Stanley Aronowitz *False Promises: The Shaping of American Workingclass Consciousness* (NY: McGraw-Hill, 1973); Sidney Peck, "Current Trends in the American Labour Movement", *Insurgent Sociologist*, 5 (Winter 1975): 423—440. For a review of the rising worker discontent tied to structural underpinnings also see: Steven Deutsch, "The Sociology of the American Worker", *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 10 (June 1969): 47—70; Patricia Cayo Sexton and Brendan Sexton, *Blue Collars and Hard Hats* (NY: Vintage, 1971); Sar Levitan (ed.), *Blue Collar Workers* (NY: McGraw-Hill, 1971); Irving Howe (ed.), *The World of the Blue-Collar Worker* (NY: Quadrangle, 1972); Harold Sheppard and Neal Henrick, *Where Have All the Robots Gone? Worker Dissatisfaction in the 1970s* (NY: The Free Press, 1972); Benram Silverman and Murray Yanowitch (ed.), *The Worker in "Post-Industrial" Capitalism* (NY: The Free Press, 1974); Andrew Levison, *The Working Class Majority* (NY: Coward, McCann & Georgehegan, 1974).

<sup>8)</sup> See Jurgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973); Mueller, *op. cit.*, Harrington, *op. cit.*, Wolfe, *op. cit.*, Birnbaum, *et al.*, *op. cit.*, Wachtel, 1977, *op. cit.*, Horvat, *op. cit.*

or two, have come to challenge the same authorities — be they in government or industry. No longer is it assumed that "the captains of industry" are best endowed to be at the helm of the ship; workers have shown their capacities to run industries and offices. The growth of collectively run and cooperatively owned enterprises is an important illustration. A national poll in 1975 in the United States revealed explicitly that two-thirds of those questioned preferred the idea of working in a worker-owned enterprise.<sup>9)</sup>

It is, of course, the case that "workers' control is more than just that".<sup>10)</sup> The push for economic democracy is part of a larger effort to restructure the social and economic structure. Environmentally sound alternatives which stress decentralization and hence accountability are regularly being introduced.<sup>11)</sup> This has come to mean labour intensive and scaled down operations and ones which are democratically organized. Community development corporations are not just a replacement for the global corporation; they stress a sensitivity to the working and community environment and they work to build a self-managing structure. The key point here is that the assumptions only *begin with a stress on participation but move quickly towards one of control*. Even if the ownership is not transferred and remains in corporate hands, the immediate goal is one of maximizing control and accountability by the workers and those whose lives are most directly associated with an office or factory. While this was an inherent part of socialist theory in the past, it has now increasingly become part of the agenda for a growing number of American unions, state and local government agencies, political organizations, and community organizations. The shift in public consciousness is quite dramatic and there is sufficient evidence to show that authentic moves to go beyond participation and towards workers' control are seen as legitimate and desirable.

The key issue ultimately has to do with the malleability of capitalist economic systems. How far is structural reform possible within market economies and what are the consequences of continuing challenges to traditional corporate control?<sup>12)</sup>

<sup>9)</sup> Jeremy Rifkin, *Own Your Own Job: Economic Democracy for Working Americans* (NY: Bantam Books, 1977).

<sup>10)</sup> Andre Gorz, "Workers' Control Is More Than Just That", in G. Hunnius, D. Garson, and J. Case (eds.), *Worker's Control* (NY: Random House, 1973).

<sup>11)</sup> This theme is examined in Steven Deutsch, "Environmental Politics—Participatory Structures and Social Change", in Zdravko Milnar and Henry Teune (eds.), *The Social Ecology of Change* (Beverly Hills, Cal.: Sage, 1978). Also see Steven Deutsch and Donald Van Houten, "Environmental Sociology and the American Working Class", *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*, 2 (Winter 1974): 22—26.

<sup>12)</sup> For provocative discussions of this theme see Horvat, *op. cit.*, and Lars-Erik Karlsson, "Swedish Companies Owned by Workers", *Economic Analysis and Workers' Management*, III (#3/4, 1977): 356—361. Some interesting case studies and examination of theoretical issues may be found in Branko Horvat, Mihalo Marković and Rudi Supek (eds.), *Self-Governing Socialism* (NY: International Arts and Sciences Press, 1975); J. Vanek (ed.), *Self-Management: Economic Liberation of Man* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1975).

## RESPONSE TO CRISIS

The response to the emerging worker discontent at the end of the 1960s was multifaceted, but was aimed primarily at channeling the concerns of workers into avenues acceptable to management and with consequences which could be measured in traditional terms such as reduced absenteeism, control of alcohol and drugs on the jobs, and rising productivity. As the state has come to articulate the needs of capital so the report under the Nixon Administration, *Work in America*,<sup>13)</sup> called for efforts at job redesign, work humanization and alternations in the schooling/work linkage.<sup>14)</sup>

There is a substantial literature on developments of this decade which have attempted to restructure worklife in capitalist economies. What is important by way of summary is to appreciate that the overall thrust of most of these schemes has been in the traditional managerial reform mode, with a topdown approach, even where there are so-called joint labour-management committees. Some are informed by liberal social psychological theories which speak to the intrinsic rewards of humans taking greater mastery over their lives including the work-place. Thus, joint consultative committees, labour-management committees concerned with quality of working life and the most enlightened socio-technical redesign school urges better methods of harmonizing work environments to allow individual and organizational goals to mesh.<sup>15)</sup>

The basic limitations of this work humanization approach has been well detailed.<sup>16)</sup> In essence, the response by management and the state has been to introduce a reformist strategy for participation in the enterprise, just as there is participation in the political system, with no cont-

<sup>13)</sup> HEW, *Work in America* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1973).

<sup>14)</sup> James O'Toole (ed.), *Work and the Quality of Life* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1974); also Jerome Rosov (ed.), *The Worker and the Job* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974).

<sup>15)</sup> The literature is very large, but the following are illustrative: Michael Maccoby, "Changing Work: The Bolivar Project", *Working Papers for a New Society*, 3 (Summer 1975): 43—55; Fred Emery and Einar Thorsrud, *Democracy at Work: The Report of the Norwegian Industrial Democracy Program* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976); Gerald Susman, *Autonomy at Work: A Sociotechnical Analysis of Participative Management* (NY: Praeger, 1976); J. Hackman and L. Suttle (eds.), *Improving Life at Work: Behavioral Science Approaches to Organizational Change* (Santa Monica, Cal.: Goodyear, 1977).

<sup>16)</sup> See Andrew Zimbalist, "The Limits of Work Humanization", *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 7 (Summer 1975): 50—59; Paul Goldman and Donald Van Houten, "Managerial Strategies and the Worker: A Marxist Analysis of Bureaucracy", *The Sociological Quarterly*, 19 (Winter 1977): 108—125; Ivar Berg, "Worker Discontent, Humanistic Management, and Repetitious History", in Roy Fairchild (ed.), *Humanizing the Workplace* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1974); Ivar Berg *et al.*, *Managers and Work Reform* (NY: The Free Press, 1978); Stephen Marglin, "Catching Flies with Honey: An Inquiry into Management Initiatives to Humanize Work", paper at First International Conference on the Economics of Workers' Management, Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia (October 1978). For an historical overview demonstrating that participation schemes have been used by management to attempt to secure labor's compliance when managerial authority is felt to be challenged, see Harvie Ramsey, "Cycles of Control: Worker Participation in Social and Historical Perspective", *Sociology*, 11 (Sept. 1977): 481—506; Harry Braverman, *Labour and Monopoly Capital* (NY: Monthly Review Press, 1974).

rol over it. This is a feature of liberal reformism itself, which is predicated on the legitimizing of unchallenged capitalism.<sup>17)</sup> Inevitably, as political participation and involvement has increasingly come to challenge the state, the issue of capitalism *versus* democracy has been discussed. The Trilateral Commission concluded that for capitalist government to function as desired, there needs to be a reduction of democratic participation and practice.<sup>18)</sup>

#### ISSUES OF SELF-MANAGEMENT AND CAPITALIST TRANSITION

Since the greatest theoretical activity and motion around issues of worker self-management are in Western nations, the debate is not so much *if* it is possible, but *when* and with *what consequences* it is possible to push for workers' control under capitalism. Thus, Hunnius<sup>19)</sup> speaks with optimism about Canadian developments, yet paraphrases Rosa Luxemburg to the effect that specific industrial demands must be translated into general political demands before a revolution can take place. The evidence is increasingly clear that the malleability of capitalism is simply enormous and that the capacity for implementing systems of self-management in various settings, to varying degrees and with variable success is substantial within the Western nations, *even under existing conditions*. The critical point is that those conditions are anything but stable.

There is a growing debate over the matter of social ownership in Western European capitalist states. Falling short of socialist self-government,<sup>20)</sup> the realities still push in the direction of altered ownership and control, going beyond the marginal nationalization measures which have been used to bolster economically weak units.<sup>21)</sup> Many writers recently have focused on the case of Sweden.<sup>22)</sup> The great majority of ca-

<sup>17)</sup> This theme is developed in Finn Valentin, "Self-Management—Strategy for Autonomy or Integration?" in Tom Burns, Lars-Erik Karlsson and Veljko Rus (eds.), *Work and Power: The Liberation of Work and the Control of Political Power* (Beverly Hills, Cal.: Sage, to appear in 1979).

<sup>18)</sup> Wolfe, *op. cit.*

<sup>19)</sup> See Geny Hunnius, "The Transition Towards Self-Management in the Industrially Advanced Countries", *Autogestion et Socialisme*, 41—42 (June—Sept. 1978): 122—137.

<sup>20)</sup> This point is succinctly discussed by Zagorka Goltubović, "Socio-Cultural and Human Conditions for the Realization of Self-Government", *Sociološki Pregled* (special issue for ISA Congress), Belgrade: 1978.

<sup>21)</sup> See especially Bogdan Denitch, "Western Europe's New Left Socialism", *Working Papers for a New Society*, 4 (Winter 1977): 68—77; also Karlsson, *op. cit.*

<sup>22)</sup> There is a large recent literature on Sweden. Some more useful articles include: Edmund Dahlström, "The Role of Social Science Working Life Policy: The Case of Post-War Sweden", in Hans Berglund, et al. (eds.), *Sociology of Work in the Nordic Countries* (Uppsala: Scandinavian Sociological Association, 1978); Rudolf Meidner, et al., "Employee Investment Funds", *Economic Analysis and Worker's Management*, 11 (#3/4, 1977): 237—243; Ted Mills, et al., *Industrial Democracy in Europe: A 1977 Survey* (Washington: American Center for Quality of Life, 1978); Ake Bouvin, "New Swedish Legislation on Democracy at the Workplace", *International Labour Review*, 115 (April—May 1977): 131—144; Horvat, *op. cit.*; Walter Korpi, *The Working Class in Welfare Capitalism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978).

pital in Sweden is privately owned and there are growing concentrations of private and corporate wealth. Yet, the social climate appears to be congenial for expanding worker control over economic life, increasing industrial democracy and for supporting some transitional processes for increasing worker ownership and control over capital.

Although there is no necessary guarantee that ownership by workers or by the state — a conventional socialist strategy for democratization — will lead to democratic relations at work, there is a clear rationale for the taking over of ownership.<sup>23)</sup> It is precisely because Western capitalist economies are in difficulty that we see the substantial move towards cooperatives and efforts to save jobs through transfer of ownership if not out-right governmental subsidies and nationalization.

In recent years there have been numerous efforts by workers to save their jobs, be it by taking over the plants, buying the enterprises or attempting to gain governmental support for converting the enterprise into a worker or community owned plant. The Youngstown, Ohio steel plant is the largest scale illustration in the United States<sup>24)</sup> and helps to pose the fundamental question of whether such efforts will succeed — either in terms of economic viability or organizational-productive capability. While efforts to respond in the face of plant closings constitute but a minuscule component of Western capitalist economies, there is considerable theoretical significance in the French and Italian systems of "retention" whereby unions have pressured the government and private sector to provide for job security. What has not happened is worker control over capital surplus which is a key point in theoretical and practical strategies for transformation of Western capitalist economies.

... if workers' management is to be part of a transition to socialism, it must include control over the process of capital accumulation. Control over the processes of production is not enough. Workers' management can provide significant economic gains for workers. But as long as profits are retained by the private enterprise itself or paid as dividends to shareholders — as long as workers do not control the process of capital accumulation — it is at best a very tentative move toward socialism. It can become a move toward socialism only if control of the processes of production is preliminary to or part of a move toward control of the accumulation of capital.<sup>25)</sup>

<sup>23)</sup> See Karlsson, *op. cit.* On the issue of participation deriving from employment rather than ownership, see Horvat, *op. cit.*

<sup>24)</sup> See "Wanna Buy a Used Blast Furnace? Socialism Knocks at the Back Door", *Mother Jones* (April 1978) special issue with articles by Ron Chernow, Paula Cizmar and Derek Shearer, exploring the Youngstown, Ohio situation, alternative economics and strategies of economic democracy; also Daniel Zverdling, *Democracy at Work* (Washington: Association for Self-Management, 1978).

<sup>25)</sup> Daniel Fusfeld, "Workers' Management and the Transition to Socialism: Some Issues and Problems", paper presented at the First International Conference on the Economics of Workers' Management, Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia (October 1978): 5.

One of the important issues, then becomes that of control over capital. While most worker participation schemes limit involvement in decisions concerning investment, profit and marketing, there are means whereby workers through unions have exerted leverage. The vast amount of capital controlled by union pension funds has recently been understood and unions in Scandinavia and elsewhere have moved to exert new controls.<sup>26)</sup> In the United States there is a massive movement being organized not only around "public money", but tied to union pension funds.<sup>27)</sup> This is coupled with larger programmatic strategies to place economic democracy on political agendas.<sup>28)</sup> What I have argued here is that the composite of these various practical moves to shift some control to workers has a long-term transformative potential. It would be misleading to believe that altered forms of ownership, particularly in the marginal sectors, really leads to control or a very essential threat to the dominant forms of capital. However, such strategies of worker control over capital through union and legislative means are important new developments in Western Europe and North America, and suggest areas of maneuverability within what Heilbroner calls "planned capitalism."<sup>29)</sup>

The international developments are truly significant with a vast literature on legal machinery to facilitate industrial democracy, transition to worker owned enterprises, etc.<sup>30)</sup> The Economic and Social Committee of the European Community in 1978 endorsed expanding worker participation at several levels<sup>31)</sup> while the Trilateral Commission in the summer of 1978 concluded that "U.S. management may be compelled to follow the Western European and Japanese trends and allow a greater degree of participation by workers in managerial functions".<sup>32)</sup> National commissions have been organized in many countries and the international exchange of information is considerable among researchers, managers, trade unionists, as well as those in government. In short, the issue of industrial and economic democracy is clearly on many agendas, quite a

<sup>26)</sup> See Meidner, *et al.*, *op. cit.*; Valentin, *op. cit.*

<sup>27)</sup> The best discussion of this in the United States is a very powerful analysis by Jeremy Rifkin and Randy Barber, *The North Will Rise Again: Pensions, Politics and Power in the 1980s* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978).

<sup>28)</sup> Illustrations of this include, Gar Alperovitz and Jeff Faux, "Building a Democratic Economy", *The Progressive* (July 1977): 15-19; Tom Hayden, *Make the Future Ours* (Santa Monica: 1976; continued expressions through publications of the Campaign for Economic Democracy, a statewide California organization).

<sup>29)</sup> Heilbroner, *op. cit.*

<sup>30)</sup> This literature is vast indeed. Some useful sources include Mills *et al.*, *op. cit.*; Denitch, 1977, *op. cit.*; Garson (ed.), 1977, *op. cit.* Other sources are: Paul Blumberg, *Industrial Democracy: The Sociology of Participation* (NY: Schocken Books, 1969); David Jenkins, *Job Power* (NY: Doubleday, 1973); Michael Poole, *Participation in Management* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975); Solomon Barkin (ed.), *Worker Militancy and Its Consequences: 1965-1975* (NY: Praeger, 1975); André Sorge, "The Evolution of Industrial Democracy in the Countries of the European Community", *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 14 (Nov. 1976): 274-294; International Labour Organization, *Workers' Participation in Decisions Within Undertakings* (Geneva: ILO, 1976).

<sup>31)</sup> International Labour Organization, "Opinion on Employee Participation", *Social and Labour Bulletin*, #2 (1978): 136.

<sup>32)</sup> "More Worker Participation Seen Possible in US Firms", *Washington Post*, (June 14, 1978: D10).

shift from the more timid earlier calls for participation and job redesign. The crises in Western European market economies have led to strong social unionism, a rise in left political movements and a legal apparatus which has moved strongly to facilitate worker participation in management of these forms vary between nations and contrast with the situation in North America.

One cannot avoid the conclusion that an elaborate network of events tied to the contradictions of industrial capitalism have caused growing dilemmas for the West, all of which have increased opportunities for change or participation. The pressures on management to negotiate sharing of power with workers and unions mounts as experiments are discussed across national boundaries. Unions are anxious to defend the threats of multinational corporations who use world markets and their mobility to undermine worker job security. This has led to pressure by unions to intervene in areas of managerial decision-making, including plant locations and decisions to move plants. "... Many of the issues which are threatening the continued existence of unions in the U.S. involve questions of greater control over decisions made by management".<sup>33)</sup> The point revolves around the rights of workers in capitalist economics. Irving Bluestone, Vice-President of the autoworkers union states that, "The concept of workers' rights in the decision-making process has taken root. It will flower".<sup>34)</sup> This posture is increasingly being taken by progressive union leadership and while American unionists have feared efforts which by-pass the collective bargaining machinery, there are some new initiatives being taken to implement worker participation and control over work environments.

#### WORKER EDUCATION — CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS CHANGE

The developments toward industrial democracy in Western Europe have largely been achievements of legislative acts<sup>35)</sup> while the development in the United States<sup>36)</sup> are largely voluntaristic.<sup>37)</sup> Yet, there is evidence that there will be a growth in legislative actions to assist worker cooperatives and transitions in ownership, to provide capital in such

<sup>35)</sup> Russell Lansbury, "Prospects for Industrial Democracy Under Liberal Capitalism", *Journal of Industrial Relations*, (Dec. 1978): 439.

<sup>36)</sup> Irving Bluestone, "Creating a New World of Work", *International Labour Review*, 115 (Jan—Feb. 1977): 10.

<sup>37)</sup> See Sorge, *op. cit.*; Mills, *et al.*, *op. cit.*; Charles King and Mark Van de Vall, *Models of Industrial Democracy: Consultation: Co-determination and Workers' Management* (The Hague: Mouton, 1978); Steven Deutsch, "Voluntaristic and Constitutional Approaches to Worker Participation", *Comparative Labour Law*, 2 (August 1977): 110-121. On Swedish developments in recent years see Bouvin, *op. cit.*, and other references in footnote 22. For German developments see references in footnote 30 and also Hans Nutzinger, "Co-determination in the Federal Republic of Germany: Present State and Prospects", *Economic Analysis and Workers' Management* III (#3/4, 1977): 318-322; Johannes Schrege, "Co-determination in the Federal Republic of Germany — A Comparative Review", *International Labour Review*, 117 (Jan—Feb. 1978): 81-98.

<sup>38)</sup> See Zerdling, *op. cit.*

<sup>39)</sup> See Deutsch, "Voluntaristic...", 1977, *op. cit.*

cases, to provide funding for worker education and job retraining and to provide justice on the job and controls over health and safety at work. These are all significant developments and will expand.

What is needed is a substantial increase in education on the current laws and means whereby workers may increase control over their work-lives.<sup>38)</sup> Worker education has been given a major new level of governmental support in Canada.<sup>39)</sup> In France, since 1971 there has been required corporate funding for worker education. There has been a recent major expansion of public worker education in American universities, financed through public universities in the largest part. Building on progressive laws such as the Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1970, the U.S. Department of Labour has recently implemented a commitment to expand worker occupational health and safety to a considerable degree. This strategy for reform has already had important consequences in Scandinavia<sup>40)</sup> and should impact on union efforts to increase worker rights on the job floor. In addition, unions and universities are expanding programs to educate workers on issues of job justice, greater control over work environments, and corporate financial planning which affects workers and the local community.

The lessons to be learned over the past century, since Marx helped to shape world thinking, is that there are complexities which add on to the relationships which people have to the means of production, the connection between ownership and control, and the global political economy. The latter has undergone severe changes in very recent years involving anti-imperialist and nationalist movements and the alterations of power based on energy sources. The relationships between so-called free market economies and so-called planned economies have shifted as they have themselves evolved internally. Most of these macro and historical changes impinge on all workers.

But the ultimate test of the prospects for increased participation by workers in the West in controlling their work lives comes in the form of new experiments and relationships. The efforts to gain dignity, healthy and safe working conditions, increased participation in shop-floor decisions, and involvement in larger economic decisions with benefits for workers, are all important developments in this struggle. Worker education has those objectives before it and therefore should play a significant role in the continuing transition in the United States and other capitalist nations.

<sup>38)</sup> On links to political strategy, see Leo Panitch, "The Importance of Workers' Control for Revolutionary Change", *Monthly Review*, 29 (March 1978): 37-48.

<sup>39)</sup> For a review of Canada linking industrial and political strategies see Hunnius, 1978, *op. cit.*

<sup>40)</sup> Bjorn Gustavsen, "A Legislative Approach to Job Reform in Norway", *International Labour Review*, 115 (May-June 1977): 263-276.

## KAPITALIZAM, KRIZA I PERSPEKTIVE RADNICKE PARTICIPACIJE I SAMOUPRAVLJANJA

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### R e z i m e

Autor konstatuje postojanje krize u razvijenim kapitalističkim zemljama Zapada. To je, po njemu, pre svega ekonomska kriza (reč je o periodu 1973-78, i to u SAD) koja se očituje u rastućoj nezaposlenosti, inflaciji i pogoršanju radnih uslova. Kao reakcija na takvo stanje javlja se pritisak za uvođenje ekonomske demokratije: u početku u vidu participacije da bi brzo prerastao u zahtev za radničkom kontrolom. Promene u svesti radnika su radikalne; postoji niz promena koji ukazuje na to da se autentični potezi koji idu dalje od participacije (u pravcu radničke kontrole) smatraju legitimnim i poželjnim. Jedna nacionalna anketa u SAD 1975. godine, na primer, otkrila je eksplicitno da bi dve trećine ispitanika preferiralo rad u preduzećima u svojini radnika. Radnici su pokazali svoje sposobnosti u upravljanju preduzećima: rastući broj preduzeća u zadružnom vlasništvu i sa kolektivnim upravljanjem ilustruje ovu tvrdnju.

Odgovor menadžmenta i države na rastuće nezadovoljstvo radnika sastojao se u uvođenju reformističkih strategija, to jest, participacije u preduzeću na isti način kao što postoji participacija u političkom sistemu, to jest, bez kontrole nad njima. Međutim prema mišljenju autora, sadašnja kriza je takve prirode da tradicionalistička reakcija na nju neće biti uspešna. Drugim rečima, različiti oblici participativnih inovacija kriju u sebi potencijal čiji razvoj pruža mogućnosti za izmenu postojećih ekonomskih i političkih struktura.

Nekoliko važnih pojava kojima je obeležena sredina ove dekade u Severnoj Americi i Zapadnoj Evropi omogućuje, po autorovoj oceni, da naznačene mogućnosti postanu stvarnost. Reč je pre svega o ekspanziji obrazovanja radnika (Kanada, Francuska, SAD), ulozi novih zakonodavnih inicijativa koje favorizuju radničko upravljanje i svojini, promeni stava sindikata koji, u želji da se odbrane od opasnosti multinacionalnih kompanija (koje koriste svetska tržišta i njihovu mobilnost da podriju sigurnost zaposlenja), teže da preuzmu neke od takozvanih menadžerskih prerogativa (na primer, pitanje lokacije nove i dislokacije stare fabrike, i slično). Sve ove promene, pored niza drugih, po mišljenju autora, veoma su značajne, jer današnja ekonomska kriza (i kriza legitimnosti) u razvijenim kapitalističkim državama dostigla je takav stupanj da su porasle šanse participativnih pokreta da doprinesu strukturnim promenama odnosno prelazu u novo nekapitalističko društvo.