

Approaches to the Industry Council Idea in the United States **Progrès de l'idée des conseils industriels aux Etats-Unis**

Gerald J. Schnepf, S.M. and Isabelle Morello

Volume 9, Number 4, September 1954

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1022813ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1022813ar>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

Département des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval

ISSN

0034-379X (print)

1703-8138 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this article

Schnepf, G. J. & Morello, I. (1954). Approaches to the Industry Council Idea in the United States. *Relations industrielles / Industrial Relations*, 9(4), 381–395.
<https://doi.org/10.7202/1022813ar>

Article abstract

There is no exact Industry Council System in the United States, but there are in industry, agriculture and professions some real efforts of cooperative activity and integration which lead to approximations of the System itself as described in the first part of this article. Then, a specimen of those approaches is studied. The readers will find interest in learning about the constitution and functioning of that organization which accompanied by others alike, are walking toward the realization of the Industry Council System.

Approaches to the Industry Council Idea in the United States

Gerald J. Schnepf, S.M. and Isabelle Morello

There is no exact Industry Council System in the United States, but there are in industry, agriculture and professions some real efforts of cooperative activity and integration which lead to approximations of the System itself as described in the first part of this article. Then, a specimen of those approaches is studied. The readers will find interest in learning about the constitution and functioning of that organization which accompanied by others alike, are walking toward the realization of the Industry Council System.

Although no industry, agricultural group, or professional association in the United States has developed a full-pledged Industry Council System (I.C.S.), the number which have introduced approaches to such a system seems to be increasing. At least, recent research is uncovering cases where one or more principles or aspects in the Industry Council Idea are being practiced.. Later in the article we will discuss these approaches in more detail; here we merely mention them to indicate the reason why some commentators view the present situation with "cautious optimism."

Generally speaking, some indicators of a growth toward greater cooperative activity and integration can be found in labor-management relations, in agriculture, and in the professions in the United States. Let us examine some of these and then conclude this section with a quick survey of the varying attitudes among commentators and students of the Industry Council System.

SCHNEPP, S.M., GERALD J., Professor at St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas, Chairman of the Industry Council Plan Committee of American Catholic Sociological Society.

MORELLO, ISABELLE, A.B. degree in sociology from the College of Saint Francis in Joliet, Illinois, Master of Social and Industrial Relations at Loyola University in Chicago.

LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

In labor-management relations we can discern a number of developments which augur well for eventual adoption of the ICS or something like it.

1) *The area of collective bargaining has been greatly expanded.* Wilbert Moore, a prominent industrial sociologist, lists eleven areas of industrial policy in which unions have been interested and in which they have exerted their influence, to greater or less degree. These areas are: wages, hours, working conditions, recognition of the union as bargaining agent, hiring and firing policies, promotion and demotion policies, individual security, efficiency of operations, technological change, purchasing policies, and price-sales policies.¹ At the lower end—wages, hours, etc. — are clearly areas of separate union and management interest. At the upper end, unions are pressing into areas which at one time were considered exclusively management functions. In between, there are areas which conceivably could be or could become, common interests. In these changes, one can see the modification of one of the important industrial institutions of our day — collective bargaining.

This modification is generally regarded by objective observers as a desirable development. In the concluding chapter of *Employment and Wages in the U. S.*, by W. S. Woytinsky and Associates,² the late Louis Stark says that "collective bargaining as at present practiced cannot be the last word." Is there not some possibility, he asks, "of creating machinery that will give labor a continuous interest in the day-to-day operations of a concern between collective bargaining sessions?"

Professor Lloyd Garrison of the University of Wisconsin, formerly chairman of the National War Labor Board, suggests that it might "be well for us now to try the experiment of bringing together into a continuing relationship the foremost leaders of industry and the foremost leaders of labor to consider their common economic problems in relation to each other and to the economy as a whole."

It is significant that these men have stressed the necessity of raising our sights beyond the traditional limits of collective bargaining.

(1) WILBERT MOORE, *Industrial Relations and the Social Order*, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1951, pp. 401-407.

(2) The following material is summarized from GEORGE G. HIGGINS, *The Yardstick*, syndicated column, August 28, 1953.

2) *Both unions and management are demonstrating a growth toward maturity in their dealings with each other and with the public.* This is an indication of recognition of their social responsibilities — that they must be concerned not only with selfish interests but also with the general welfare. Perhaps the most dramatic evidence of this trend was the recent friendly tour of steel plants by a group which included the President of U. S. Steel and the President of the United Steel Workers of America, C.I.O. Other evidence is found in many statements of representatives of both management and labor — statements which indicate a high degree of social consciousness.

John Quincy Adams, president of the Manhattan Refrigerating Co., a Catholic, has this to say: "Our vocation as Employers is surely to practice in a special sense the virtues of prudence, justice, and charity. Employers bear serious responsibilities, spiritual and economic. . . We are all partners and members of one another. Our relations with labor must be based on mutual respect. . . We must accept labor unions as a necessary part of our economy. . . Management and Labor must become one team in the service of our community. . . The greater the opportunities which we in top-management offer our associates and workers, the healthier our economy and the happier our workers."³

True, this is a Catholic employer speaking. But we are inclined to agree with him in his further comment: "I am sure that many employers are beginning to think this way."

Labor is also concerned with its broad community function. As early as 1923, the American Federation of Labor proposed industrial planning by organized economic groups in a statement entitled "Industry's Manifest Duty." And of course the Congress of Industrial Organizations has been active in developing and promoting its own Industry Council Plan for the past fifteen years. At the 1940 C.I.O. convention, the late Phil Murray said: "Personally, I would be of the opinion that there ought to be created by the President of the United States industry-wide setups to administer efficiently the production of materials essential to the national defense and to see to it that labor is given adequate representation on each industrial board. . ."

3) *Cooperative activity is on the increase. Evidence the large number of human relations programs adopted by American industry in*

(3) JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, "Employers Associations", *Catholic Business Education Review*, 2: 23-26, February, 1951.

recent years. This new approach emphasizes the personality of the worker and applies the "discovery" that recognition and opportunities for participation are important factors in worker morale. "Teamwork" is greatly stressed in official statements by both management and labor leaders, and applied to some extent on the job.

As for labor cooperation, the National Planning Association studies — *Causes of Industrial Peace in Collective Bargaining* — contain many illustrations of such activity. For example, the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation and the International Association of Machinists collaborate in such areas as job evaluation, safety, company rules, problems of production, insurance programs, and occasionally even the company's financial position. The assistance given to hard-pressed companies by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (C.I.O.) and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (A.F.L.) is well known.⁴

Now, as long as labor-management cooperation is limited to the plant level, it is far removed from the Industry Council System. The latter implies industry-wide activity, cutting across individual firm lines. However, such local cooperation is a necessary prelude to industry-wide cooperation and so it is properly listed here as a favorable indicator.

The transition from local to industry-wide cooperation will not be easy, however. Labor organizations, it is true, seem to take the broad view, but management groups, highly favorable to plant-level cooperation, seem to be resistant to industry-wide activity. (Some exceptions are mentioned later in this paper). For example, the National Association of Manufacturers, on p. 30 of its manual, *Industry Believes* seems to oppose the Industry Council System not only in practice but also in principle:

Experience demonstrates that maximum production in peace as well as in war stems from cooperation between management and employees which can best be achieved at the plant level. . . The 'planned economy' concept is implicit in Labor-Management 'Industry Joint Councils' and, therefore, contrary to our free competitive system. Furthermore, such Labor-Management 'Industry Joint Councils' may well lead to industry-wide bargaining and to permanent government interference in labor relations.

(4) EDWARD FERRIE, *Industry Council Approaches Through Labor, Management, and the Law*, unpublished paper.

Whether this opposition is based on a detailed study of the Industry Council System, or the somewhat similar proposals of the A.F.L. and C.I.O., or upon confusion stemming from ignorance, half-truths, and indifference, it presents a formidable barrier to those who are zealously promoting the I.C.S.⁵

What about labor? As already indicated, leaders of labor organizations have made some right-sounding statements and have offered some concrete proposals. But it is not certain that the rank and file are "sold" on the idea. The readers of *Relations Industrielles* are already familiar with the reasons for this, because of the excellent article by Brother Justin in the June 1953 issue.⁶ In brief, Brother Justin found three reasons for lack of progress: the absence of a "road map which would guide us to our objective," the fear that the Plan would be used "to smash the trade unions," and the mutual suspicion and distrust which prevail in many labor-management situations.

4) *Even though joint-management cannot be claimed as a right by labor at the local level, it is nevertheless desirable that management voluntarily grant some participation. In actual fact, joint production committees have been set up in individual plants or companies, they have proved effective, and their number is increasing.* This trend should be encouraged since it may lead to the Industry Council System if both labor and management raise their sights beyond the plant or company level to the industry level and to the level of the national economy.⁷

5) *Some advance toward profit-sharing has been made in an ever-increasing number of U. S. firms.* Although it was not always so, many of these plans are now considered to be compatible with bona fide trade unionism. The Council of Profit-Sharing Industries has spear-headed important gains in this area. On the debit side, some profit-sharing schemes have failed because of lack of mutual confidence; other schemes are achieved by the sacrifice of more fundamental matters such as wage standards and the freedom of the worker.

6) *Many firms encourage their employees to purchase stock in the company at bargain prices, thus stimulating a share in ownership.* How-

(5) Ibid.

(6) Brother JUSTIN, F.S.C., *Trade Unions and the Industry Council Plan, Relations Industrielles*, 8: 302-308, June 1953.

(7) University of San Francisco, *Labor-Management Panel*, September 1953, p. 2.

ever, the employees are in the same position as other minority stockholders and do not usually have an effective voice in management.

From these six indicators it is clear that there are a number of significant approaches to the Industry Council System in the United States but it is also clear that the economy is far from being characterized by that system.

AGRICULTURE

While nothing approaching the activity found in Labor-Management relations can be discovered on the agricultural scene, nevertheless there are some indicators of potential Industry Council System development that may be briefly mentioned.

1) *Farmers are members of a network of organizations, and efforts are constantly being made to develop democratic participation in policies and programs.*

2) *Within agriculture, there are many groups working toward a greater voice in national policies for the farmer. This is a trend toward inter-industry councils.*

3) *If some observers are correct, there is a ferment among farmers to turn away from policies in their special interest toward policies in line with the general welfare. But, by and large, the effective action of farm groups is still directed toward special interests.⁸*

4) *Like labor, industry, and the professions, agriculture also periodically complains of "too much government interference," but not quite as vociferously as the other groups probably because of its great reliance on subsidies and similar "acceptable" forms of government intervention. We do not condemn agriculture for accepting this aid, but it does indicate the degree to which the principle of subsidiarity has still to be applied.*

THE PROFESSIONS

Perhaps a greater number of approaches to the Industry Council System can be cited among the Professions than in either Agriculture

(8) ALSTON P. WARING and CLINTON S. GOLDEN, *Soil and Steel*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947, p. 222.

or Labor-Management Relations. Space limitations prevent detailed discussion, but a few trends can be briefly indicated.

1) *Practically all of the professions have made great progress in standardizing the requirements for admission to the profession through insistence on minimum training in theory and supervised practice.* Self-enforcement by the profession itself is the general rule.

2) *Quasi-legal status exists as a fact in a number of professions.* Licensing of doctors and lawyers, certification of teachers and nurses is done by state agencies. Self-enforcement of standards is thus buttressed by use of legal power where necessary.

3) *One of the criteria for a profession is concern for the general welfare.* Originally the emphasis was on the individual, but more recently there has been greater emphasis on the obligation of the profession as a whole to accept its social responsibility. Correlatively, there have been isolated instances of the state using its power to enforce this responsibility, as, for example, when local medical societies were restrained from boycotting group health associations.

4) *Cooperation between segments of professional areas has been greatly stimulated in recent years.* For example, cooperative activity of doctors, hospitals, and group health associations is now common place in the United States. In the area of social research, particularly that directed toward practical ends, there has been strong support for the setting up of teams of researchers from various disciplines. *In these interprofessional and interdisciplinary activities, there are the beginnings of industry councils and perhaps inter-industry councils.*

Of course there are exceptions to these trends (and even more exceptions to those listed for Agriculture in the previous section) but these are clear indicators that the U. S. economy, in some respects at least, is moving toward what could become the Industry Council System.

AUTHORITIES ON THE INDUSTRY COUNCIL SYSTEM

In the early stages of a social movement, there is usually agreement on principles and ends but some disagreement on the means to be used. The Industry Council Movement generally conforms to this pattern. *Catholic commentators on the I.C.S. are fairly well agreed on the prin-*

principles or guide-lines such as cooperation, subsidiary function, self-government, liberty, limited state intervention, common good, quasi-legal status, organic structure, moral reform, and institutional reform.

But there is some disagreement on details of the Industry Council System itself — how the principles should be applied — as well as on the strategy which should be used in attempting to bring it to fruition. These differences of opinion are a healthy sign and should be encouraged. Out of this mutual discussion and exchange of opinion should come progress toward the common goal — an improved social order for America. Let us try to assay the position of various authorities on these aspects.

Regarding the System itself, there seems to be developing general agreement that we should gradually drop the last word of "Industry Council Plan" since the American people are opposed to anything smacking of a set plan or blue-print. Thus we have spoken in this article of Industry Council System, rather than Plan. There are other areas of agreement, of course, but our concern here will be mainly with two areas in which we find disagreement: the position of government and the binding force of the social encyclicals.

The position of government should be minimized or even omitted in our discussions, according to one group. How one can do so and still adequately discuss the application of the principles of subsidiary function, quasi-legal status, and limited state intervention has not yet been clarified. At the other extreme, there is a group which has proposed that some Industry Council ideas be included in a revised federal Labor-Management Relations Act. No one is advocating that government should set up industry councils but some feel that the government should permit by law an extension of labor-management cooperation for those who desire it but cannot go as far as they would like right now because of anti-trust legislation. In between, there is a group which favors government intervention as a last resort and says so without minimizing the implications. This may not be well received by various segments of the economy but this middle-of-the-road group feels that some government intervention must be included in discussions if a correct idea of the Industry Council System is to be driven. Who can say which of these groups has the "perfect" answer? Obviously, at the present time more exchange of ideas is necessary.

On the binding force of the social encyclicals, there are perhaps two main groups. One group feels that the Popes were not necessarily always referring to the U. S. economy in their statements. Further, that it is "dangerous" to select certain encyclical quotations and try to apply them directly to the American scene. The other group feels that papal structures against concentration of wealth and power — and this includes labor, management, agriculture, and the professions in greater or lesser degree — do apply to some extent in our country. As one put it: "Do we decide whether or not a sick person needs health? We can only decide which steps come first — but never 'whether or not' they must come." Another adds: "I still feel that a careful exposition of the Pope's basic conception would be a good thing to have on the table for guiding the necessary analysis and experimentation." In an effort to resolve these difficulties, the Industry Council Plan Committee of the American Catholic Sociological Society has set up a subcommittee whose report is now being awaited.

That much for the Industry Council System itself. Regarding means to be used, there are also some disagreements which we can mention only briefly. Some believe research is the primary need, others feel we know enough to embark on an education campaign. Some, pointing to the history of the last 100 years, believe in a policy of "leave well enough alone"; others would take an active part in steering the economy more directly toward the Industry Council System. Some say that the whole technique of the Industry Council Plan Committee has been defective and advocate a "fresh start." Others believe that the Committee has fulfilled a function in stimulating thinking and writing on the system and favor continuing from where we are now. Nevertheless the Committee has taken the lead in the formation of an Interdisciplinary Committee which is still in the process of organization.

At one time, some favored a pilot project to furnish the needed experimentation. Today this has been abandoned in favor of a program of uncovering as many actual cases of approaches to industry councils as possible. "Let us examine these approaches, and evaluate them," is now the watchword. And this leads us to *the second part of this article — a discussion of a research project along these lines.*

APPROACHES TO INDUSTRY COUNCILS

The realization of the practicability of Industry Councils will come in time with their eventual evolvement prompted by timely support by informed persons. At present with the average person having a somewhat limited knowledge of the meaning and importance of Industry Councils the eventual applicability of the principles involved in the Industry Council System say seem rather remote. *This lack of understanding of the true potentiality of the Industry Council System may be counteracted readily when it is learned that there are already in existence certain approaches to Industry Councils.*

In the United States today, for example, there are in existence certain organizations which do to a degree approximate the Industry Council System. It is true that these organizations were brought about through the efforts of individuals who undoubtedly have never heard of the Industry Council System. This is a healthy sign, however, since it signifies that the principles found in Industry Councils have been found to be practical in their own right without their having been adopted as part of a comprehensive plan. This development of approximations to Industry Councils indicates that the concepts which are an intricate part of the Industry Council System are in themselves desirable and that the eventual adoption of such principles purposely to develop an Industry Council System will be in keeping with the inclinations of industry itself and those who are intimately a part of industry.

Industry Councils is a term found to be a practical name in general for councils which will comprise an Industry Council System. Councils will exist in the professions, in agriculture, and in industry alike. Here there will be discussed the results of research concerning approaches to Industry Councils in industry only, among labor and management groups. The study revealed that there are some organizations already in existence in the United States which do approach Industry Councils in structure and purpose.

The organizations in the United States which have been studied and found to be approximations or approaches to Industry Councils are the following:

The New York City Trucking Authority.

The Millenery Stabilization Commission.

The National Coat and Suit Industry Recovery Board.

The Motion Picture Industry Council.

The Federation For Railway Progress.

The Committee of Twelve of the Anthracite Coal Industry.

The Council on Industrial Relations in the Electrical Industry.

The Industrial Relations Council of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry.

The National Coordinating Committee of the Beverage Industry.⁹

Industry Councils may exist on the local, regional, and national levels. Of the examples named here, there is representation of councils on all three levels. For example, the New York City Trucking Authority exists on a local level; the Millinery Stabilization Commission exists on a regional level; and the National Coat and Suit Industry Recovery Board exists on a national level. It is not possible here to discuss all of the approximations. Instead there will be an explanation of an approximation on one level as an illustration of how the principles compatible with the Industry Council System have thus far been incorporated into a particular industry.

In general those approximations cited above are considered to be approximations because they are organizations which fit a particular definition. Each organization is an organized effort — i. e. a board or council — made up of representatives of labor and management within a representative portion of an entire industry on a national, regional, or local scope for purposes of solving the problems of the industry and thereby directly contributing to the good of the industry itself and indirectly at least to the welfare of the country as a whole.

An organization which complies with this definition has certain attributes which are considered to be essential to Industry Councils. Within the organization workers and employers are acknowledging their common bond of unity brought about by the fact that they are performing a like social function. There is a democratic representation of those within a specific industry — or portion thereof; *workers and employers are considered to be approximations. Most important of all is the fact that workers and employers are working together for the com-*

(9) For a detailed discussion of these, see ISABELLE MORELLO, *U. S. Approximations to the Industry Council Plan*, unpublished dissertation. Chicago: Loyola University Library, 1954. Also, same author, *Approximations to the Industry Council Plan in American Industry*, *Catholic Business Education Review* 5: 57-66, June, 1954.

mon good of their industry and in all likelihood for the common good of the country as a whole.

The organization which will be described here is the New York City Trucking Authority which is an example of an approximation to the Industry Council Plan on a local level. That is to say that *the organization and purposes of the New York City Trucking Authority do to a degree resemble proposed Industry Councils.*

The New York City Trucking Authority was created on March 30, 1951 by the Five Year Peace Pact in the Trucking Industry in New York. The purpose of the Five Year Peace Pact — a no-strike, no-lockout pact — was to overcome the storminess of the industrial relations activities which had prevailed in the industry for years and had received widespread publicity. Since the signing of the Peace Pact there has been no further serious trouble of any kind in the industry.

The New York City Trucking Authority provided for the arbitration of disputes, the enforcement of the collective bargaining agreement, establishment of a public relations program, and development of an instrument for research into economic problems in the Trucking Industry. Through the Agreement there was created an office of an Impartial Chairman, appointed by the United States Secretary of Labor, who has specific rights and duties.

The Impartial Chairman presides over a Labor-Management Panel. The Panel consists of six representatives from labor or the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen and Helpers (in this case Truck Drivers Local Union No. 807 and Highway and Local Motor Freight Drivers, Dockmen and Helpers, Local Union No. 707) and six representatives from industry or the Motor Carrier Association of New York.

Whenever the Authority acts as provided for in the contract, it may do so *only* by tripartite agreement. That is to say, the position of the Authority has to be stated by the Impartial Chairman and an equal number of representatives of labor and management on the Labor-Management Panel.¹⁰

(10) All information concerning the New York City Trucking Authority was taken from a pamphlet printed by them *Five Year Peace Pact and Code of Procedure*, 1-9.

The New York City Trucking Authority is considered to be an approximation to the Industry Council System because it complies with the definition of an approximation which was stated earlier. It is a council made up of representatives of labor and management, in this instance on a local level, for purposes of solving the problems of an industry, and thereby it contributes directly to the good of the industry itself and indirectly at least to the welfare of the country as a whole. Since it may be assumed that the trucking industry is on the whole beneficial to those whom it serves, it may be concluded that an organization the purpose of which is to promote the prosperity of the trucking industry will benefit generally those in the country where it exists.

Workers and employers in the New York City Trucking Authority are acknowledging their common bond of unity for they are persons who perform a like social function who are working together to promote prosperity and harmony in a portion of a particular industry. *Therefore, the New York City Trucking Authority is something like an Industry Council on a local level.*

It is to be noted that there are not only representatives of labor and management in the council established by the Five Year Peace Pact but also that there is an Impartial Chairman appointed by an official of the government — the Secretary of Labor. Advocates of the Industry Council System have felt that a representative of the public or of the government would promote further the Industry Council purpose since it would further the common good to have someone from outside the industry participate in activities of concern to the industry.

The New York City Trucking Authority is only an approximation to the Industry Council System *and not an actual Industry Council because there is in reality no actual integrated Industry Council System in the United States.* The scope and purposes of the New York City Trucking Authority are seriously limited so that the Authority can be considered an approximation only.

As in the case of the New York City Trucking Authority, the other approximations to the Industry Council System which were listed earlier all have deficiencies which make it obvious to even a casual observer that they are in no way actual Industry Councils. These approaches are indications, however, that the Industry Council ideal is no idle dream conceived in an ivory tower. The concepts held as necessary to true functioning of an Industry Council System are in part in operation in

actually existing organizations. *The gradual development of the kind of approximation herein described leads to the conclusion that a real beginning has been made toward the realization of the Industry Council System in the United States.*

SOMMAIRE

PROGRES DE L'IDEE DES CONSEILS INDUSTRIELS AUX ETATS-UNIS

Bien qu'aucun groupe industriel ou agricole ni aucune profession libérale aux Etats-Unis ne se soit organisée complètement selon le *Système des Conseils Industriels*, (SCI) le nombre de ceux qui en ont posé les jalons semble aller en s'accroissant.

D'une façon générale, certains indices d'une tendance vers une coopération plus grande et une intégration peuvent se rencontrer dans les relations employeur-employés, dans l'agriculture et dans les professions libérales aux Etats-Unis.

Dans les relations employeur-employés, on peut discerner certains faits nouveaux qui augurent bien pour une application future du SCI ou de quelque chose d'analogue. a) Le champ des négociations collectives s'est étendu considérablement; b) les syndicats ouvriers comme la direction des entreprises manifestent une maturité plus grande dans leurs rapports mutuels comme dans ceux qu'ils ont avec le public; c) les formes de collaboration se multiplient. A preuve, le nombre considérable de programmes de relations humaines adoptés par les entreprises américaines en ces dernières années; d) Même si la co-gestion ne peut être réclamée comme un droit des travailleurs sur le plan de l'entreprise, il est désirable que la direction accorde volontairement une certaine participation. Actuellement, des comités conjoints de production ont été établis dans plusieurs entreprises: ils se sont montrés efficaces et leur nombre s'accroît; e) La participation aux bénéfices s'étend à un nombre de plus en plus grand d'entreprises américaines; f) Plusieurs entreprises encouragent leurs employés à acheter leurs actions à des prix avantageux, stimulant ainsi la participation à la propriété.

Ces six constatations nous manifestent clairement qu'il y a un courant vers le *Système des Conseils Industriels* (SCI) bien qu'il soit aussi évident que celui-ci est loin de caractériser l'économie américaine.

Si on ne peut rencontrer dans l'agriculture rien de comparable à ce que l'on trouve dans le monde industriel, certains indices n'existent pas moins qui y manifestent aussi une possibilité du développement du SCI. a) Les agriculteurs appartiennent à tout un réseau d'organisation et font des efforts constants pour améliorer leur participation démocratique à des politiques et à des programmes communs. b) Au sein de l'agriculture il y a plusieurs groupes qui s'efforcent d'obtenir pour les agriculteurs une voix plus grande dans les politiques nationales qui les concernent. Entre ces groupes il y a une tendance vers la création de conseils de coordination. c) Si certains observateurs ont vu juste, il y a un mouvement chez les agriculteurs vers une compréhension plus grande des problèmes du bien commun. d) Tout comme dans le monde industriel, et dans les professions, l'agriculture aussi se plaint d'une immixtion trop grande du gouvernement, mais on ne le fait pas aussi bruyamment que les autres groupes parce qu'on compte beaucoup sur des subsides ou d'autres formes d'aide gouvernementale.

C'est peut-être dans les professions libérales que l'on peut découvrir davantage les signes d'une tendance plus grande vers l'application du SCI. a) Pratiquement toutes les professions ont fait de grands progrès dans la standardisation des conditions d'admission à la profession en insistant sur un minimum de connaissances théoriques et en surveillant la pratique. b) Beaucoup de professions ont en fait un status quasi-légal. c) Un des critères d'une vraie profession, c'est son souci du

bien général. Si originellement dans les professions, prédominait l'individualisme, aujourd'hui de plus en plus, elles tendent à tenir compte de leur obligation corporative à accepter leurs responsabilités sociales. d) En ces dernières années, le champ de collaboration entre les diverses professions s'est élargi. On y a même formé des organismes permanents de collaboration.

Les auteurs catholiques qui traitent du *Système des Conseils Industriels* sont généralement d'accord sur les principes ou les grandes lignes de la collaboration, de la fonction supplétive, de l'autonomie, de la liberté, de la limitation de l'intervention gouvernementale, du status quasi-légal, de la structure organique, de la réforme des institutions et de la réforme des mœurs. Cependant, il y a des divergences d'opinion sur les détails du SCI en lui-même — sur l'application des principes — aussi bien que sur la stratégie qui doit être utilisée pour le réaliser. Ces divergences sont fructueuses et doivent être encouragées.

On s'accorde généralement aujourd'hui à remplacer ce que l'on désignait autrefois de Plan des Conseils Industriels par le *Système des Conseils Industriels*. Selon un certain groupe, le rôle de l'Etat dans l'organisation du Système des Conseils Industriels n'a pas grande importance et même on devrait l'exclure des discussions. A l'autre extrême certains proposent que des éléments du SCI devraient être incorporés à la loi fédérale des relations industrielles. Tout le monde s'accorde cependant à ce que l'Etat ne doit pas organiser lui-même les Conseils industriels mais seulement favoriser par ses lois une extension de la collaboration employeur-employés au-delà de ce que permettent les lois anti-trust.

Au sujet de l'autorité des encycliques sociales, on rencontre deux groupes principaux. L'un soutient que les Souverains Pontifes, dans leurs déclarations, ne réfèrent pas toujours nécessairement à l'économie nord-américaine et qu'il est dangereux de choisir certaines citations et de les appliquer directement à ses problèmes. L'autre soutient que les positions des papes contre la concentration des richesses et de la puissance économique — et ceci comprend le travail, le capital, l'agriculture et les professions libérales à des degrés plus ou moins grands — s'appliquent dans une certaine mesure à notre pays.

Quant aux moyens d'établir les Conseils industriels, on n'est pas non plus d'accord. Les uns croient que l'on devrait commencer par faire des études scientifiques de la question, d'autres qu'il s'agit surtout d'entreprendre une grande campagne d'éducation. Certains, signalant l'histoire des cent dernières années, croient à une politique de « laisser-porter »; d'autres voudraient une politique plus directement orientée vers les Conseils industriels. Certains soutiennent que toute la technique de comité constituée pour promouvoir les SCI s'est montrée défectueuse et devrait être remise à neuf. Enfin il y en a qui soutiennent que ce comité a rempli sa tâche de stimuler la recherche et la pensée en faveur du SCI et qu'il doit continuer son travail à partir de ce qui a été fait. Toutefois ce comité a pris l'initiative de se réformer. Actuellement des études sont entreprises pour découvrir dans certaines industries ce qui se fait dans le sens des Conseils Industriels.

Les organisations aux Etats-Unis qui ont été étudiées et où l'on rencontre certains éléments des SCI sont les suivantes: The New York City Trucking Authority; the Millinery Stabilization Commission; the National Coat and Suit Industry Recovery Board; the Motion Picture Industry Council; the Federation for Railway Progress; the Committee of Twelve of the Anthracite Coal Industry; the Council on Industrial Relations in the Electrical Industry; the Industrial Relations Council of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry; the National Coordinating Committee of the Beverage Industry.

Dans toutes ces institutions, on rencontre la participation de la direction et des syndicats, soit sur le plan local, régional ou national dans un organisme pour résoudre les problèmes de l'industrie, contribuant ainsi au bien commun de l'industrie et au bien général de la nation.

Le New York City Trucking Authority, créé en 1951 est en ce sens un modèle.