Document generated on 04/23/2024 6:02 p.m.

Relations industrielles
Industrial Relations

Paul F. CLARK : *The Mines Fight for Democracy*. Arnold Miller and Reform of the United Mine Workers. New York State School of Industrial and Labour Relations, Cornell University, 1981, 190 pp.

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Volume 39, Number 1, 1984

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/050018ar
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7202/050018ar

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Publisher(s)

Département des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval

ISSN

0034-379X (print)
1703-8138 (digital)

Explore this journal

Cite this review

Phillips, P. (1984). Review of [Paul F. CLARK : *The Mines Fight for Democracy*. Arnold Miller and Reform of the United Mine Workers. New York State School of Industrial and Labour Relations, Cornell University, 1981, 190 pp.] *Relations industrielles / Industrial Relations*, *39*(1), 210–211. https://doi.org/10.7202/050018ar

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n'expliquent pas comment ils y sont arrivés, sinon qu'on croit comprendre que les informateurs qu'ils ont interviewés ont dû mettre l'emphase sur cette dimension des conflits. Cela indiquerait que les auteurs ont accepté les rationalisations des acteurs de ces grèves illégales sans poser de question. Pourtant, il est plutôt étonnant que des syndiqués acceptent de se placer dans l'illégalité, de perdre des revenus et de subir le courroux de l'opinion publique, simplement pour des questions d'incompatibilité de caractère. C'est une explication qui relève autant du sens commun que celle qui veut que les problèmes de relations de travail sont attribuables à la mauvaise foi de quelques chefs syndicaux (ou patronaux selon le point de vue où on se place) qu'il suffisait de remplacer pour ramener la paix industrielle.

Cette étude, malgré son titre prometteur, ne fait qu'effleurer le phénomène des grèves illégales et n'atteint pas son objectif d'en comprendre les causes, faute de s'être appuyée sur un cadre d'analyse rigoureux et sur une méthodologie appropriée. En plus, la présentation est de piètre qualité; les tableaux, par exemple, qui ont pour objectif de synthétiser l'information, sont tellement touffus qu'ils risquent plus de confondre le lecteur que de l'éclairer. Il y a de nombreuses fautes typographiques et le texte est parsemé d'anglicismes («cédule» pour horaire, «dû à» pour à cause de, etc.) et de répétitions inutiles. L'École de relations industrielles de l'Université de Montréal a publié, depuis 1973, des **Monographies** de haute qualité; malheureusement, cette addition à la série est un accroc, exceptionnel, souhaitons-le, à cette tradition.

Gilles DUSSAULT

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The Miners Fight For Democracy. Arnold Miller and Reform of the United Mine Workers, by Paul F. Clark, New York State School of Industrial and Labour Relations, Cornell University, 1981, 190 pp.

Of all the major figures in American labour history there are few that can compare with John L. Lewis for eloquence, dramatic leadership or charisma. Ruthless with dissidents, jealous of contenders, authoritarian in administration, Lewis in forty years at the helm of the United Mine Workers of America converted the union into a centralized, autocratic fiefdom. Such personal control was not without its benefits. In the heyday of the Lewis reign in the 1940s and early 50s, the miners achieved considerable economic gains including an industry financed welfare, medical and pension scheme. But the price, as Clark notes, was high.

> UMW members, however, sacrificed more than lost wages and the public's goodwill to win these great victories. They also relinguished any control they still possessed over their union and its officers. Throughout this period, with the centralization of bargaining authority in the office of the president, Lewis directed policy, strategy, and mobilization like a field marshall directing his troops. The effects of this one-man control and the blind obedience that permitted it, while initially positive, would be devastating to hundreds of thousands of coal miners and to the entire region of Appalachia in the years to come. (p. 15)

The destruction of any semblance of democratic control of the UMW during the Lewis era, and with it any alternativ leadership, was to produce its effects after Lewis retired in 1960. Tony Boyle, a long time Lewis aide, succeeded to the presidency in 1962. He also succeeded to the power of the authoritarian regime. But Boyle was no Lewis and corruption, nepotism and weak union leadership in organizing and bargaining followed, though it was seven years before an organized reform opposition emerged headed by a long time union activist and official, Jock Yablonski. Boyle defeated Yablonski in the election for the union presidency in 1969,

though irregularities were later to overturn the official results, only after it was too late. Twenty-two days after the election, Yablonski, his wife and daughter, were gunned down in their beds, murders for which Boyle was later convicted.

This is just the background to Clark's account of the rise (and fall) of the reform movement (Miners for Democracy) in the United Mine Workers under the leadership of Arnold Miller in the period 1972-1979. Miller emerged from relative union obscurity to capture the Miners for Democracy nomination for president to contest the 1972 election ordered by the courts and supervised by the Federal Government as a consequence of the election frauds in 1969. Boyle, not yet charged with the Yablonski murders though still convicted on other counts of corruption, remained the establishment candidate. Nevertheless, Miller was elected with 56 per cent of the vote along with his slate of reform candidates. This was, as Clark notes, "the first, rank-and-file challenge to the UMW hierarchy in the Union's history". (p. 31) It also raised the question of whether such an inexperienced rank-and-file organization could, in fact, administer such a large and complex organization.

Despite the reform victory, however, this account raises some disturbing questions about American unionism and the attitudes of its members. Given a free election, why in the face of convictions for corruption, obvious suspicions of his involvement in the Yablonski murders, the overturning of the 1969 election by the courts on grounds of election fraud, and a rather dismal bargaining record over the previous decade, did Boyle garner 44 per cent of the union votes cast? Perhaps some hint of the reason is given in Clark's suggestion that Miller was able to win the presidential nomination from Mike Trbovich, an early and favoured leader of the reform movement, because of Trbovich's "eastern European name" (p. 28), suggesting both a racist and "cold war" mentality among the miners. The latter, at least, was part of the stock and trade of Lewis' demogogic control and a frequent control agent of corrupt union leadership in both the US and Canada (e.g. the SIU under Banks in Canada.)

The major part of Clark's book is a recounting of the Miller period in office, the early years of rather chaotic democratization and reform of the union and its conventions, the rise of internal opposition and the decay of the Miller administration in its second term of office when its leading officers turned against Miller.

What happened to cause this decay? This is where Clarks' description becomes exceedingly frustrating. It is never clear whether it was the culmination of personal leadership defects of Miller, the failure of democracy to work in the interests of the miners, or the economic and legal straitjacket that hampered his every move. All these explanations are suggested though the first seems to be the favoured explanation. Consider the following passages:

> Given the fundamental importance of collective bargaining to any labor organization, the reform of the UMW's bargaining process and the 1974 agreement that evolved from this process stand as one of the Miller administration's greatest accomplishments. (p. 56) ...
>
> The turbulent period of strike activity occurring between 1974 and 1976 paralleled closely the chaotic leadership situation at the international level of the union caused by the constant infighting between Miller and the I[nternational] E[xecutive] B[oard]. (p. 74) ...
>
> A seige atmosphere fell over the headquarters. Miller became increasingly suspicious of the activities of his staff and officers... He centralized control of all union fonctions in his office, ironically a tactic used by the autocratic John L. Lewis in the consolidation of his kingdom. (p. 62) ...
>
> Miller's distance from the membership increased. This had been dramatized by

> confrontations with rank-and-file miners who had come to union headquarters during the strike to demonstrate. Miller caused several of these ugly situations by refusing to meet with members who had come long distances to air their views. During the course of bargaining, he had avoided irate miners, the press, and sometimes even the negotiating table itself — at the time when the union needed a strong, visible leader. (p. 132) ...
>
> Arnold Miller was no longer a reformer, and the administration he led was no longer pursuing significant democratic change within the union. (p. 136)

Why? Clark tells us what happened, but not why.

In 1979, plagued by health problems, Miller resigned and was replaced by his chosen vice-president, Sam Church, a former Boyle supporter and a practitioner of the iron hand, more in the Lewis and Boyle mold than in that pioneered by Miller.

What is the legacy of that brief period of reform? Why the relapse? Clark's book does not give us many answers. In Nova Scotia the UMW local is again under trusteeship, the first time since the Lewis years. Is there any connection? Clark's book, unfortunately, does not provide any answers.

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Trade Unions: The Logic of Collective Action, by Colin Crouch, Glasgow, Fontana Paperbacks, 1982, 251 pp., ISBN 0-00-635873X.

The Economics of Trade Unions, by Albert Rees, Chicago & London, The University of Chicago Press, 1977, pp. IX + 200, ISBN 0-226-70702-4.

Both these books break the rigid barriers between sociological and economic accounts of trade unions. Crouch argues lucidly for a fresh and rational approach to the study of union activity, and on the occasion to discuss it seems appropriate to mention also the previous book by Rees, even when in general both books do not have much in common. Crouch takes a rational-choice approach and this brings him close to economics. He takes a distance to the Marxist approach. According to him, "Whatever the value of Marxist contributions, they are marred by two crucial characteristics: the assumption that all issues can be reduced to those of capital and labour, and the search for revolutionary consciousness (...). To construct an entire theory of trade unionism around a non-existent phenomenon — the revolutionary working class — is to produce something of limited usefulness in understanding the real day-to-day choices of trade unions and their members" (pp. 37, 219-220).

The subjective perceptions and attitudes of workers are important for Crouch only as long as they say something meaningful about the **rationality** in workers' conduct. The need of people to make constant choices about means to adapt, or about the priority to be accorded different goals, or about the best means of treating conflict and obstacles (Ibid., p. 39) is the major focus of the book by Crouch.

On the other hand, A. Rees focuses on the 'rationality' of unions from a broad perspective. According to him, the economic losses imposed by unions are not too high a price to pay for their successful protection of workers against arbitrary treatment by employers. This is a way to keep the great mass of manual workers be committed to the preservation of the existing system (p. 187). There are grave dangers in doing nothing about waste and the growth of unchedked power; there are also dangers that unwise treatment can be worse than the decreases" (Ibid., p. 188).

In both books unions are treated as the permanent parts of the existing system having a vested interest to co-operate with other parts but at the same time following their