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Garfield Clack

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Cette étude mérite une attention particulière de tous ceux qui s'intéressent au fonctionnement du marché du travail; tant les praticiens que les théoriciens. L'ensemble de ces résultats ne peut évidemment pas être appliqué à la situation québécoise ou canadienne. On doit toutefois en retenir que la thèse de la segmentation offre un éclairage essentiel pour comprendre certaines dysfonctions du marché du travail, surtout dans les pays à niveau de chômage très élevé, comme c'est le cas au Canada. Il serait certainement utile d'examiner la situation du chômage des jeunes au Québec, à travers cette grille d'analyse afin de pouvoir mieux évaluer la pertinence de certaines stratégies actuelles à l'égard de l'emploi des jeunes à chômage chronique. Si la plus forte incidence de chômage et le taux de roulement plus élevé qu'ils connaissent résultent surtout des caractéristiques des segments d'emploi qu'ils occupent, les mesures pour augmenter leur «employabilité» pourraient s'avérer moins efficaces que prévu.

Lise POULIN SIMON

Université Laval

The International Labour Organisation: A Canadian View, by John Mainwaring, Ottawa, Canadian Government Publishing Centre, 1986, xvi, 206 pp.

This is an important book, authored by a person well qualified to write it. The Canadian perspective highlights the discussion of more universal themes. The book is concerned with historical and current matters, and makes sensible suggestions for increasing support, within Canada and globally, for a more effective implementation of the principles for which this U.N. Agency stands. The fundamental approach is educational.

The book is important because of its subject matter. The ILO goals are to improve the conditions of working men and women everywhere, and to promote and protect their right of association as one means to this end. There is little controversy over the organisation's efforts to help workers in developing countries through programs of direct aid, but, as the author notes, the goals «seem to imply a redistribution of wealth, causing problems for people who possess it. And while the right of association in trade unions, a fundamental ILO principle, may be strongly established in some countries, it is accepted only grudgingly in others and is forcibly resisted in many» (p. 1). The setting of standards for labour legislation, and investigations of complaints of failure to comply with agreed ILO standards, may also create tensions within member states.

Both an incisive mind and writing style add to the value of John Mainwaring's work. He has also an intimate first-hand knowledge of his subject. He was a participant at ILO conferences over nearly forty years, frequently as head of the Canadian delegation, and served as Chairman of the ILO Governing Body for a period. He shows his awareness of the blinkers of too close an attachment, and is careful to identify the expression of his personal views from the more impartial judgements which the work requires. The book is not bland: pointed criticism is made where this is seen to be warranted.

Highlighting the Canadian perspective allows more global developments to be seen in sharper focus, and makes it easier for the Canadian reader to relate distant international situations to what is happening in the world more immediately around him. For example, the relative lack of interest in THE ILO within Canada in the 1920's can be related partly to the exigencies of travel, while Canadian participation in events which led to a system of labour standards replacing the founding idea of international labour legislation, was effectively prevented

by Canada's exclusion from the Governing Body because of «dominion» status. More recently, Canadian initiative in developing the IMEC group in 1975 to keep the United States within the ILO highlights the difference between the «business unionism» of the AFL-CIO and the more politically oriented Canadian labour movement (and aids in understanding the changing power situations of these movements over the past twenty years).

A point of criticism is that the author should have given more recognition to the fact that governments' concern for a «national interest» is never pure but leans towards labour or business according to its particular political stripe. This is of some moment in North America, where there has never been a national labour government.

Mainwaring knows that history is often stale whilst judgements about current events are half-baked, but steers a judicious course by freshening his account of the early years with personal glimpses and observations and avoiding categorical statements about recent events — while still letting the reader have the benefit of his own views. A smooth transition is thus made into the speculative mode and the author's ideas for the future of the ILO.

Sensible suggestions are made for reform of the ILO system. The Conference could usefully shift its emphasis from the setting of standards to their implementation. The long-standing numbers game should be reversed and attention concentrated on the application of a few of the most important of the Conventions. Reports from member states under Article 19 should receive a more policy oriented and less legalistic treatment than they at present experience in the Committee on Applications. The potential of the Industrial Committees should be examined for the role which they might play if the internationalisation of business some day leads to international collective bargaining. The application of ILO standards on an industrial rather than a national basis may be more attuned to the continuing growth of multinational corporations. The suggestion that multinationals be persuaded to voluntarily reduce competition based on low labour standards seems less realistic, but ILO resources could clearly be used in an attempt to give social policy «a foothold in the jungle of the international trading system» (p. 189).

As a country with high labour standards, it is in Canada's interests to encourage the raising of labour standards elsewhere. More direct support, and a more widespread appreciation of the role of the ILO, within Canada would be helpful. Mainwaring proposes the creation of a National Tripartite Advisory Council on the ILO, both to help overcome the problems resulting from our federal system of government and as a consciousness raising mechanism. It would also act as another consensus mechanism for the social partners when infrastructures of this kind are so desperately needed.

This book should be particularly useful to students of the political and social sciences, not just labour specialists. In this respect, they should not be misled by the inappropriate packaging of the material: absence of the author's name on the cover, no footnotes, or the generally non-academic format of the publication. This is a book of lasting importance, worthy of republication by a university press.

Garfield CLACK

Office of International Affairs
Labour Canada