
Maxwell Flood
and the structure of the interviews and
the knowledge of the persons interview-
ed were such as to bring into the dis-
cussion a broad range of the current
issues as they saw them. Also, the
method has to be weighed against pos-
sible alternatives. As one whose work
for many years involved a seeking after
tests of the efficacy of legislation, I
know how difficult it is to collect reliable
data on which to base an assessment.
Such records as there are of the various
tribunals in which unfair practice cases
have been adjudicated are difficult to
come by and, if collected, might provide
little more than a quantitative measure.
The informality surrounding settlements
achieved through accommodative me-
ths leaves the researcher without
objective data. Field studies are slow
and expensive.

Once the limitations of the method
are understood and accepted, the reader
can proceed to derive considerable in-
sight from the study. The survey was
worth while and has been well organized
and reported. An additional contribution
is made by the personal work of the
two authors.

The comparative study of the relevant
United States federal labour law is a
useful chapter in the report. The author
has wisely confined it to a brief des-
cription of the method of handling un-
fair labour practice cases in the United
States and the role of the trial examiner,
the National Labor Relations Board,
the courts and the arbitrator. It does
not purport to do more than point out
the main differences from the Canadian
system, and suggest areas where further
examination of the United States expe-
rience would be fruitful.

The project of interviews with mana-
gement and union representatives who
had been directly involved in unfair
practices proceedings before the Ontario
Board obviously had to be curtailed for
lack of time. Among the questions there
were some designed to inquire into the
effect of the complaint on the work life
of the individual involved in the dispute,
but no results are reported of this
inquiry. Perhaps that would have to be
a subject for a case study extending
over a longer period of time. The in-
terviews did reveal some sobering facts
about the relationships between the
parties after the complaint proceedings.
In most cases the union succeeded in
getting certified, but only in about half
of the cases did the parties eventually
make a collective agreement.

In their personal assessment, the
authors see the law as reasonably satis-
factory, except in the area of picketing
where they recommend a codification
which would clearly identify what is
legal and that is illegal, but they would
make changes in administration. Juris-
diction over the whole range of unfair
practices, including illegal strikes and
picketing and failure to bargain in good
faith, should, in their view, be assigned
to a specialized tribunal such as a
labour relations board. An important
advantage would be the opportunity that
would be afforded, if the tribunal was
required to give reasons for decision,
to build up a consistent labour relations
jurisprudence that would, in time,
clarify such matters as the duty to bar-
gain in good faith. Unfair practices
which are also breaches of a collective
agreement they would, in general, leave
to arbitration. They would retain the
accommodative approach in the settle-
ment of unfair practices issues through
the use of field officers.

The study makes a useful addition
to the scanty Canadian literature on
unfair labour practices provisions.

Edith LORENTSEN

Industrial Conversion and Workers' Atti-
titudes to Change in Different indus-
tries, by Jan J. Louser and Michael
Fullan, Study no 12, Task Force on
Labour Relations, Ottawa, Privy

This study, like many others in the
highly commendable series commission-
ed by the federal Task Force on Labour
Relations, investigates an important area
of Canadian labour relations that has
been neglected in the past. While the
impact of industrial change is a matter
of importance to industry, government,
labour unions, and the general public
in any modern, industrial society, the
dynamic nature of our economy and the
need to fully utilize and positively mo-
tivate our labour force confers an added
importance upon this area of concern in Canada.

The authors state that « the main purpose of this study is to examine the impact of industrial change on workers and their attitudes »; They explicitly identify a number of important premises that underlie their approach to the problem:

(a) that industrial change is a permanent state of industry;
(b) that attitudes to change are not governed solely, or even mainly, by utilitarian considerations; and
(c) that attitudes to industrial change are often deeply rooted in factors seemingly remote from the direct impact of the change.

Such considerations lead the investigators to adopt a comprehensive approach to the problem in terms of their general frame of reference which, in the main, utilizes a sociological perspective but does not veer away from the consideration of psychological and social psychological factors where these are felt to contribute to meaningful analysis. This comprehensive approach makes sense in terms of the very complex nature of the phenomenon under study. What the study went after originally was an understanding of the relationship between an industrial change-event and workers' attitudes. What they should have gone after, as they discovered as a result of the research, was a pre-post analysis of workers' attitudes within the context of an industrial change-event. Apparently, the authors realised that their initial failure to conceptualize in terms of a pre-post model, plus sampling and other methodological problems, reduced their study to the level of a « pilot ». It appears that the original intention was to conduct something more than a pilot study but since this is the status that is eventually claimed for it then it is in these terms that it must be assessed.

While the study sampled some categories of employees of sixteen firms from six industries — automobile, chemical, electrical products, oil, printing, and steel — it is pointed out that industries, as such, were not sampled, nor were firms within industries sampled. The consequence of this, recogniz-

ed by the authors, is that the findings cannot be generalized to the various industries nor to Canadian industry as a whole. Another serious methodological problem here is that unskilled workers were excluded from the sample.

The procedure used in the study was to survey a sample of employees by mail and while the response of 50.3% is claimed to be « an excellent rate » of response for this kind of procedure, it cannot be claimed that it is generally satisfactory.

The study describes the change events in the sixteen firms that they used and here it becomes clear that a major error was made in failing to locate impending changes in advance. This is underscored by the fact that they are hard pressed to claim significant change had occurred at all in many of the firms. This will be a factor of major importance to be considered in any future research in this area.

The survey tapped perception of change, attitudes to change, attitudes to the job, technological differentiation, workers' relations to the company, and workers' attitudes to the labour relations atmosphere and their unions. Throughout, are used the three control variables of age, education, and structural atmosphere.

All that can be claimed, and, indeed, all that is claimed is that a few trends emerge from the data: job satisfaction tends to be correlated with positive attitudes to change; a positive labour relations atmosphere tends to be correlated with positive attitudes to change; and job satisfaction and positive atmosphere in the plant are correlated. In summary, then, it was found that job satisfaction, atmosphere of labour management relations, and evaluation of the company are all related. As the authors state the important task now is to ascertain the relative strength and direction of these important relationships.

The study has merit as a pilot study and should be closely examined by anyone doing research in this area. The authors have cleared the way for further, empirical work.

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